

Fiddle Competition Schedule at Homestead National Monument

(Beatrice)-- Kick-off your summer with the Tallgrass Prairie Fiddle Festival (previously the Monumental Fiddling and Acoustic Band Championships) to be held on Saturday, May 23, 2015, at Homestead National Monument of America's Education Center. The battle for \$3,000 in prize money, shared between the four divisions, will start at 12 noon. During the afternoon the four divisions competing will include: Junior Division (less than five years' experience), Senior Division (five years of experience or more), Legends Division (past 1st place winners of the Senior Division), and the Acoustic Band Division. The youngest fiddler, oldest fiddler, and best left-handed fiddler will be recognized. This event is for everyone who enjoys music whether you compete or join the fun by being in the audience.

Contestants will play three pieces; a hoedown, waltz and tune of choice. The Coffin Family Foundation will sponsor a total of \$3,000 in prize money. The Grand Ole Opry in Nashville will provide a pair of tickets to the winners of the Senior and Legend Divisions. Nancy Rohn, a violin maker from Corvallis, Oregon, donated a fiddle that will be presented to one of the lucky contestants. There are no participant or registration fees. The event is free to all.

Prior to the start of the competition, a fiddle playing workshop will be presented at 10 a.m. Then at 11 a.m. a harmonica workshop will be offered. These classes are open to everyone free of charge, harmonicas can be purchased prior to the workshop at the Homestead Bookstore located in the Homestead Education Center. Participants wanting to join the fiddle workshop will need to provide their own fiddle.

This popular event celebrates music from the homesteading period. Music was a common thread among pioneers of all ages. The Tallgrass Prairie Fiddle Festival is an opportunity to highlight this historic activity and heighten awareness and enthusiasm for fiddling.

"This event has grown tremendously over the years and is a great family event," said Mark Engler, Superintendent of Homestead National Monument of America. "We're lucky to have the team of Greenblatt and Seay back for another great year to manage the competition and to be a part of this fun music filled day."

Music fans wanting to spend the day at the Monument can do so. Back Alley Eatery will be on hand to serve lunch and drinks.

Remember, Homestead National Monument of America has an exciting schedule of events planned for 2015. Keep up with the latest information by following us on Twitter (HomesteadNM) and Facebook (HomesteadNM).

Homestead National Monument of America is a unit of the National Park Service located four miles west of Beatrice, Nebraska and 45 miles south of Lincoln. Hours of operation are 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Admission is free of charge. For additional information, please call 402-223-3514 or visit <http://www.nps.gov/home/>.

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