

Five days of fiddling around at championships

The 63rd Canadian Open Old Time Fiddle Championship runs through Sunday (Aug. 11) in Shelburne.

Sponsored by the Rotary Club of Shelburne, the event will feature Canada's top fiddlers in competition for thousands of dollars in prizes. Community events in conjunction with the Canadian Open Old Time Fiddle Championship include camping, a giant fiddle parade, an open air market, Saturday afternoon Cape Ceol fiddle and stepdance show, fiddle jam sessions, concert by Everything Fitz with special guests Nate Douglas and Emily Flack, beer garden, Battle of the Bands, non-denominational church service, 24-hour meals and entertainment at the Legion, and community pork barbecue. Local bands, That 60s Show and Glory Days (Bruce Springsteen tribute), will perform at the Entertainment Gardens.

The Canadian Open Old Time Fiddle Championship starts with the playdowns tomorrow (Friday at 1 and 7 p.m. at the Centre Dufferin Recreation Complex (Shelburne arena). Classes that will compete in the afternoon include the young (nine and under, 12 and under) and the young at heart (56 and over). The evening will feature the remaining classes.

The contest finals will happen Saturday (Aug. 10) at 6 p.m. with the best fiddlers competing for more than \$17,000 in prizes. The evening will also feature entertainment by the Black Family, as well as the judges' showcase. The judges for this year's competition are renowned fiddlers Ian Hamilton, Brian Hebert and Doug McNaughton.

The Black Family consists of 10 children ranging in age from five to 21. They have made music a large part of their family life. Their music has taken them to many small towns in Ontario. Their music, ranging from old-time fiddle tunes to vocal favorites from years past, has added many happy times, memories and laughter to their family life. They are sure to get your toes tapping and your hands clapping!

Today (Thursday) at 7:30 p.m., the Rotary Club will be pleased to welcome Everything Fitz, a six-piece family band featuring four of Canada's finest young musicians. With roots in the Canadian old-time fiddle tradition and Ottawa Valley step dancing, their high energy stage show combines a variety of musical styles ? everything from traditional jigs and reels, bluegrass, swing, Celtic and gospel to novelty numbers and choreographed dance routines.

The group features Julie Fitzgerald, the 2009 Canadian Grandmasters Fiddle Champion and 2010 Canadian Grandmasters and Canadian Open winner, as well as her brother Tom, who won both the 2012 Canadian Open Fiddle Championship as well as the Canadian Grandmasters.

The family group will be joined by special guests Emily Flack and Nate Douglas. Emily, a multi-talented performer has been a guest artist with Leahy and Natalie MacMaster and will provide vocal numbers as well as piano and step dancing. Nate is a graduate of the music programs at Western University and Humber College. He is a much sought-after guitar player and recently toured with Natalie MacMaster.

For tickets, call 519-925-8620 or stop in at Holmes Appliances, 135 Main St. West, Shelburne, 519-925-3037. Also visit them online at www.ShelburneFiddleContest.com