



# The Fiddleheads Gazette



Our Violin & Fiddle Community Newsletter

Volume 8 - Christmas 2007 - Number 2

This Issue: "Celebrations"



## More Music & Business Awards

### Celebrating Two Wins - For the Second Year Running

October provided "winning" news for Fiddleheads and its owner, Rhiannon Schmitt. The 30-year-old violinist and young entrepreneur took home two more pieces of prestigious hardware within 10 days.

Rhiannon was declared winner of the **Okanagan Music Awards "Classical Artist of the Year"** and the **Shuswap Business Excellence Awards "Green Award."**

She was also a winner in both awards events last year and feels incredibly validated having won two consecutive years from both venues.

The repeat wins are also strong indication she has successfully developed her artistic and business endeavors simultaneously.

### Classical Artist of the Year - Okanagan Music Awards

Rhiannon found herself on stage for an unexpected second time in Kelowna on October 10. She'd played electric violin backing up teen singer/songwriter **Raquel Warchol** at the opening of the awards. Soon after Rhiannon was asked to return to the stage to receive an award, a surprise she had not anticipated two years in a row.

This year's Okanagan Music Awards voting region included Salmon Arm, Kamloops,

Kelowna, Vernon and area. A select few finalists in each category were asked to submit a music sample for the judges' panel, consisting of several Okanagan and area musicians and media professionals, to review.

Rhiannon's sample featured her playing on Celtic harpist **Caroline Mackay's** album "Tidings of Light" as well bits of a Dvorak piece with pianist **Anita Liebich**.

Also included were segments of a live jam and a fiddle tune with guitarist **Les Copeland**. The duo had opened for Scotland's **Shooglenifty** at a Folk Music Society concert last January.

All four Salmon Arm acts which were nominated came home with an award this year! Other winners were Gospel Artist **Greg Sczebel**, Blues Group **The Salmon Armenians** and Bluegrass Artist **Blu Hopkins**.



▲ The expectant mother with her new awards

### Inside This Issue "Celebrations"

Award Wins 1, 2

Publication Info 2

The Violin That Saved  
Frank Smith's Life 3, 4, 6

Instruments for Sale 5

Christmas Gift Ideas 6

School News 7

Violin Society News 7

Sheet Music to "O Little  
Town of Bethlehem" 8

(AWARDS Continued on page 2)

# The Fiddleheads Gazette

Vol. 8 • Christmas 2007 • Number 2

Copyright © 2000-2007 Fiddleheads Violin Shop & School

Published by **Rhiannon Schmitt** of  
**Fiddleheads Violin School**  
and **Fiddleheads Violin Shop**

In Full Colour at [www.Fiddleheads.ca](http://www.Fiddleheads.ca)

## Title Page Violinists:

**Maria Wallis**, 10, began learning at Fiddleheads Violin School in January 2007 and has enjoyed learning fiddle and classical pieces.

**Submissions & Comments:** [info@fiddleheads.ca](mailto:info@fiddleheads.ca)

PO Box 49 • Canoe, BC V0E 1K0 • Canada



## Shari Plays a Gold Prism

Our popular **Prism** carbon-fibre violin bows are endorsed for Fiddleheads by Canadian recording artist **Shari Ulrich**.

Violin bows in ten stunning metallic colors:  
\$145 CAD/USD & Free Shipping

Viola, Cello and Bass Bows also available.

**"What's your colour?"**

[www.fiddleheads.ca](http://www.fiddleheads.ca) • 250-833-5626



(AWARDS Continued from page 1)

## Green Business Award - Shuswap Business Excellence Awards

Readers will recall Rhiannon won the "People's Choice Award" in the Business Awards last year and made a repeat with on October 20 in Salmon Arm with the new "Green Business Award." The honour is reserved for a recipient who shows "commitment to environmental friendly practices" and:

*Acts in a responsible manner in all environmental issues, demonstrates a commitment to green space and workplace enhancements and employs significant efforts in waste control measures, air quality improvements and reduction in water or energy consumption.*

Rhiannon, an avid environmentalist, initiated a green policy for her violin shop and school in 2006. Though she is most known locally for her school branch of the business, 95% of her work goes into her online shop which serves customers around the world and is receiving high praise and increasing sales. With this success comes responsibility.

Rhiannon said, "Though my violin business operations could hardly be considered harmful to our environment, I strongly feel we business owners can no longer be complacent in our actions."

She believes, "The time is ripe to raise our standards to a more environmentally conscious level and work to reduce waste and pollution."

Rhiannon has made significant changes in product packaging & shipping, office supplies and equipment, recycling, going digital to save paper and by educating others on her discoveries. She also drives a hybrid vehicle and gets double the mileage over her previous vehicle: a whopping 55MPG!

Being a home-based business her family and work lives converge and have allowed Rhiannon and her family to become more efficient in their day to day lives. Rhiannon uses low-energy lighting, has the furnace on a timer and has replaced energy and resource-hogging appliances with efficient models.

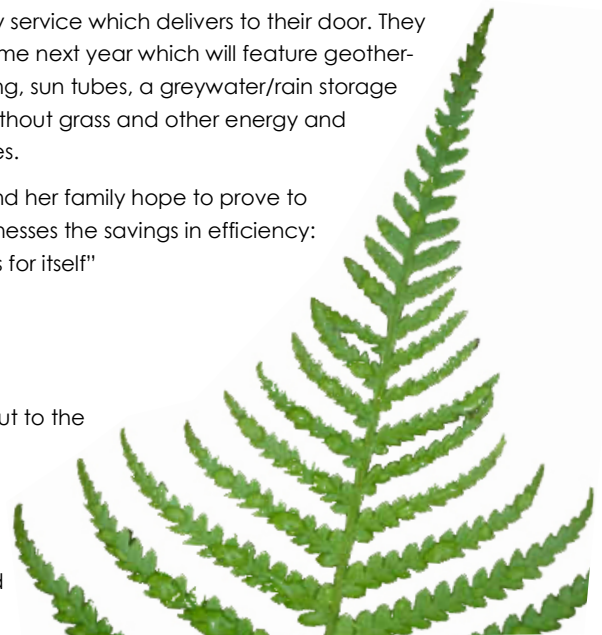
She recycles all packaging and containers, even storing plastics for a year until the recycling fair comes to town. They use cloth bags for shopping and buy eco-friendly soaps, cleaners and products in limited or no packaging.

The family also sponsors a child in Guatemala and subscribe to an organic produce delivery service which delivers to their door. They plan to build a new home next year which will feature geothermal heating and cooling, sun tubes, a greywater/rain storage system, xerascaping without grass and other energy and resource saving features.

In the end Rhiannon and her family hope to prove to other families and businesses the savings in efficiency: that "going green pays for itself"

## Special Thanks!

Post-event thanks go out to the awards organizers and Rhiannon's family, friends and customers who have supported her music, business and projects. 🎵





# *The Violin That Saved Frank Smith's Life*

**A discovery which would open up his memories and his heart  
...was simply waiting under the bed**

## **Frank put up with music.**

He put up with it much like the way that a sleeping cat deals with a toddler tugging on its tail: ears folded back in disdain and tail twitching in obvious annoyance, but stubbornly refusing to move to an uninterrupted space.

**By Rhiannon Schmitt of Fiddleheads.ca**

Usually Frank blocked out music, and sometimes he just plain avoided it. When he heard it on the speakers at the corner store during his frequent cigarette trips, his hairy ears recognized it as unnecessary noise, a waste of his time and a waste of airspace. He greeted the tune by coughing loudly and nastily, thick phlegm rattling in his ribs, and usually setting off the young nurse in training who worked the cash register late nights.

"Cough's not getting any better," she chirped with a sickening, sugary smile to the old man, who usually responded with a well-rehearsed scowl as he snatched up his three nightly packs of life-saving nicotine.

Frank was in his late 70's and looked far older for the scornful expression he always wore. Though he retired from automotive sales over 25 years earlier, his most unfortunate wardrobe was kept in commission.

He was reasonably clean, well, at least for a man who'd never had a wife to nag him to bathe and clip his

nails regularly.

Frank was never the marrying type. He wasn't any type at all. He was simply isolated and closed-minded.

Frank lived alone in a dark basement suite below a dry-cleaning business and kept the yellowed heavy curtains shut even on the sunniest and loveliest

of days.

It was on a senior's savings day in mid-December at the local discount food warehouse when music finally made its way into Frank's lonely life. He was orcing a squeaking grocery cart burdened with instant oatmeal, Kraft dinner and other gluey bachelor meals past blue-haired matrons buying ingredients for the weekend's Christmas dinner and other grimacing old men in timeworn polyester trousers when something from above him made the fuzz in his ears twitch.

It was a high sound, a sweet and beautiful sound and it was surrounding him. Frank almost plowed into a pyramid of canned corn for to find the origin of this most pleasing and wondrous noise. A young violinist was busking outside the store as she had been for the past two years, come sun or snow, every weekend.

Frank had learned to ignore her squeaks and squawks. But today was different. She was playing a simple and almost ancient tune with finger-

less gloves in the harsh winter cold.

The simple melody of only a few notes wafted up and down, but oh, it was so heavenly. Frank suddenly realised it was the very tune mother played for him every night as he went to sleep as a small child.

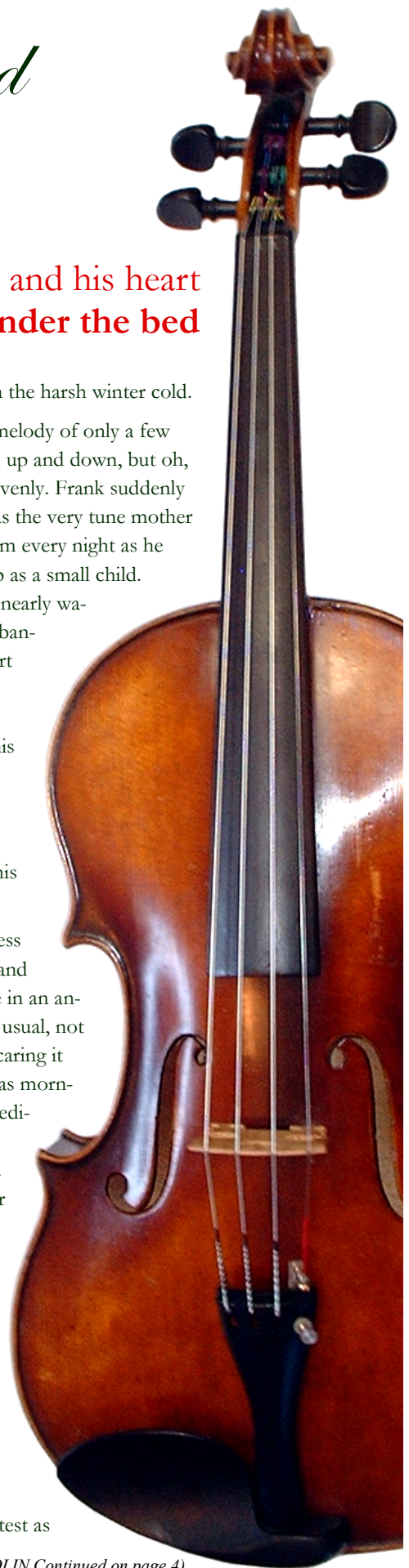
Frank's eyes nearly watered as he abandoned his cart and fled the store for the comfort of his home, away from any more music.

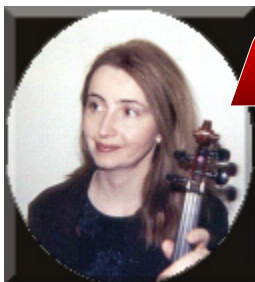
Away from his memories.

A few sleepless days passed and Frank awoke in an angry mood as usual, not knowing or caring it was Christmas morning. He immediately began looking for a plastic lighter which he was sure he dropped under the bed in the middle of the night.

The old man's joints and muscles ached in protest as

(FRANK'S VIOLIN Continued on page 4)





# A long-lost Twin?

It's said that every person has a "twin," someone who looks almost

identical to them, somewhere in the world. I never guessed my "twin" would be a violinist too!

Recently I was searching on Google Images for photos of violinists and stumbled upon an unfamiliar picture of me and my violin.

Wait a minute! That's not me! But wow, she sure looks a lot like me!

**Luiza Nelepku**, I learned, is Principal Second Violinist with the New Westminster Symphony Orchestra in BC. She's immigrated to the same country

and province as I did!

Small world.

Luiza was born in Romania and began violin lessons at the George Enescu School when she was six years old.

Later she graduated from the Bucharest Academy of Music. In Vancouver she is active as a free-lance musician performing with various orchestras, including the Vancouver Island Symphony and the BC Chamber Orchestra.

She teaches privately and is also on faculty with the Langley Community Music School and the Arts Connection



**Rhiannon**



**Luiza**

in Richmond.

What would be really interesting and spooky would be to learn we share the same birthday... My mother would have some explaining to do! 🎵

.....

*(FRANK'S VIOLIN Continued from page 3)*

he got down on all fours to retrieve the escaped tool for his dirty habit. His eyes narrowed on a dark shape under the iron bed frame. He reached out tentatively past the dust bunnies and pulled out a black, coffin shaped box about 2 feet in length.

It was his mother's violin. "Esther Smith: Leaf Rapids, Manitoba" was hand-written on the tag attached to the handle of the case. His hands shook as he opened the case to find the violin sleeping serenely under a silk scarf. His mother's scarf. She left it to him this way so many years ago.

Frank remembered the last time she played it, lying in bed frail and pale. It was just before his sixth Christmas and he didn't understand why mother couldn't get up and celebrate the day; he didn't understand sickness or death.

Mother pulled the bow weakly across the strings, but still the old instrument cooed like a soft white dove. She played the song that only a few old fiddlers still knew from their homeland, a song that was almost entirely lost with their relocation to Canada and that only a handful of players knew.

"Mother is tired dear," she coughed. "Please put my violin away for me." He obeyed. "And Frank," she said. "Make sure that it never stops singing." As he left the room Esther Smith fell into a peaceful sleep and never woke again.

The violin was the only thing Frank was allowed to keep when the social workers took him. He put up a such a strong fight that three grown adults conceded and allowed the child to take it on the long rail trip to BC. Frank was then passed from distant relatives to cousins and then on to foster homes until he was grown. The violin always stayed with him, but also stayed shut away in its box.

For the first time in over 70 years Frank opened the violin case and discovered a completely unexpected Christmas gift. He smelled his mother's flowery perfume on the silk scarf cocooning her violin. And there, kneeling beside his bed on the cold, wooden floor, Frank wept for the loss of his mother for the first time.

- -

The violin consumed Frank. What used to be days of chain smoking and literally watch-

ing the wallpaper peel away from the wall became days of scratching the bow across the strings, experimenting and improving.

As winter passed he treated the violin to a new set of strings and a polish and the bow to a new ribbon of white horsehair. Soon he opened the curtains and let the new spring sunlight warm his skin and glisten off the tiger-striped grain of the instrument. The violin and Frank both seemed to have awoken from a long coma and were enjoying their new life together.

As the months went by, Frank found he no longer made any late night trips in the slushy snow to the corner store for his cigarettes, but rather hastened trips to the library and local violin shop to get his eager hands on more sheet music.

At the bus stop Frank whistled chirpy tunes through yellowed dentures and made happy conversation with people he used to pass in silence. He felt connected to the world around him and people were no longer foreign objects which frightened or threatened him.

At home in his basement suite he taught

*(Continued on page 6)*





**J. P. Chr. Emde**  
Liepzig 1841  
\$800 CAD



**Carlo Bergonzi**  
\$550 CAD



**P. Blanchard,**  
Lyon, 1912  
\$3900 CAD



**Sun VN-103,**  
2006  
\$1950 CAD



**Maggini**  
(copy)  
\$450 CAD



**Angela Moneff,**  
2007  
\$4450 CAD



**JMJ WBF,**  
1921  
\$600 CAD



**Decorative #1**  
\$700 CAD



**Amatus**  
\$850 CAD



**Ivan Stankov**  
\$4500 CAD  
*reduced*



**Klotz**  
\$4900 CAD



**Oscar B. Heintz**  
1939  
\$3490 CAD



**Concerto**  
\$890 CAD



**Inlayed Violin**  
\$850 CAD

Also available:

Sun VN-100 2007 \$549 · E.L. Stone 3/4 outfit \$750 · Emile Blondlet \$4500 · Otis A. Tomas, Cape Breton 2005 \$3900



Full Size **Cello**  
from Violin  
Society of Amer-  
ica Silver Award-  
winner  
**Xuechang**  
**Sun.**

**Maestro Soloist**  
**CL-304:** Deluxe  
Antique Oil Var-  
nish 4/4 size.  
\$7490 CAD



Violins and  
Violas from  
the work-  
shop of  
**Ming**  
**Jiang Zhu,**  
2-time VSA  
Gold Medal  
Winner.

Special  
orders from  
\$1995 CAD



**Amati-Strings Violin Outfits:** Handmade.  
Seasoned, flamed wood. Fully setup with nice  
cordura case & wood bow. Sizes: 1/16 - 4/4:



**fiddleheads violins**

Many other instruments (violins, violas, cellos) and accessories available for trial. Shop online or by appointment.

*Fiddleheads and Rhiannon Schmitt have won several business awards for outstanding customer service, creativity, entrepreneurship and musicianship.*

**[www.fiddleheads.ca](http://www.fiddleheads.ca) • (250) 833-5626**

*(FRANK'S VIOLIN Continued from page 4)*

himself the 12 major and minor scales and the notes and chords by name, "A, C-sharp, E." He played the classics by the masters, show tunes, fiddle sets and even learned the theme song to a commercial he heard on the radio during his bus rides around the city.

His crowning achievement was the development of a healthy, yet trembling, vibrato which grew stronger with each 4-hour practice session. One particular day he was producing a sweet tone he decided, with a near giggle, was worthy of his mother's memory.

"Now it's time to play her song," he smiled.

His old, arthritic fingers found their way expertly around the fingerboard and suddenly he was playing Mother's homeland song. He had tried all those years to force the song out of his out for fear he would feel the pain of his loss, but the music was still there. It was waiting to be born from his hands.

This same song had revisited him at the grocery store that fateful day several years back and wouldn't leave his mind since. After all that practice he was finally playing mother's song and was giddy with joy and disbelief. His grimace was permanently replaced with a wrinkled yet childlike grin of satisfaction and joy.

--

Frank's newfound happiness survived the grueling tests at the hospital in the coming months. Music notes swam in his head like golden coy when his doctor explained how the cancer was spreading. Frank was in another world, a world of music and wonder, and death didn't scare him anymore. His had learned to live and knew not even death could take that away from him.

Once again he found himself fighting off adults who later resigned to let him take the violin with him into the intensive care ward. He played it for dying people and for himself when the others were too tired or weak to listen anymore. He prayed that the music might touch their lives as it touched his.

At night in the darkness and silence Frank reflected how that little wooden box with strings had changed his life and connected him to his mother in a way he had never imagined was possible. It was like he was breathing the same air she was. The violin was a conduit to her spirit and memory and her love. His only regret in life now was that he hadn't discovered it all sooner.

It was on a snowy Christmas Eve night that Frank Smith stopped breathing and passed away, peaceful and contented. The morning nurse discovered the violin, wrapped in a sweet-smelling silk scarf inside the relic of a case. An envelope accompanied the package.

"May this violin find its way to the musician whose music found its way to me," it said on the envelope's face. Scribbled beside it was the name of a supermarket.

The card inside read, "To the kid with the fiddle: Merry Christmas! Make sure that it never stops singing." 🎵

***Merry Christmas from Fiddleheads and the Schmitt Family***

## *A Violinist's Christmas List from Fiddleheads.ca*

✓ *Manhasset Orchestra Stand:*  
*Reg \$90, Our Price \$65*



✓ *Also stand lights, shelves & handy accessories for your Manhasset stand*

✓ *Strings sets from \$20*

✓ *Christmas Music Books - Many titles for beginners, duets, fiddle, etc in stock*



✓ *Prism Carbon Fibre Bows*  
*in 12 colours \$145*

✓ *Tuner/Metronome combo \$42*

✓ *Deluxe Cases from \$135*

✓ *L.R. Baggs violin pickup (Natalie McMaster uses one) with carpenter jack, Sale \$259*

✓ *Bon Musica Shoulder Rests \$60*

✓ *Rosin & stocking stuffers*

✓ *Violins: beginner student models to stunning master certificate instruments*



Call **250-833-5626** to shop by appointment or online anytime at  
**[www.fiddleheads.ca](http://www.fiddleheads.ca)**



# Fiddleheads

## Fiddleheads Violin School News & Events

### Nomination Thanks

Thanks to the students and customers who nominated Fiddleheads and me for the recent music and business awards!

### Winter Trimester

The second, or winter, lessons session commences **December 4**. Fees are due by week 2, please. Amounts can be found online or in the front of your "black books."

There is a **2-week of winter holidays starting December 24**. Lessons resume the week of January 8, 2008. A calendar is online at [www.fiddleheads.ca/school/](http://www.fiddleheads.ca/school/)

### New Look on Website

Visit [www.fiddleheads.ca](http://www.fiddleheads.ca) to see the new look of our shop & school website. I'd love to hear your feedback.

### Orchestra News

Auditions were held for the School District #82 String Orchestra. Former Fiddleheads student **Rory Cleveland** kept her position as Concertmaster.

Current Fiddleheads Violin School students **Charlotte Moores** and **Elise Vanderhoek** were made Assistant Concertmaster and Assistant 2nd violin, respectively. **Jill Cranswick** is 3rd chair, 1st violin and **Meg Pratt-Johnson** is Principal 2nd.

Congratulations for all your diligent practicing, ladies. I am proud of all of you. A special thanks for **Dr. Warren Bell** for holding the auditions and dedicating time to each player.

### Fiddleheads Violin Ensemble

"The Fiddleheads" rehearse on Friday nights from 6:15-7:00. The first rehearsal was crowded but plenty of fun! I was particularly impressed with volunteers to play solos!

There are 2 returning members, **Jame Wona-cott** and **Abby Matheson**, and other new players marking the group's 8th season.

### Memorial Recital: November 18



A recital was hosted in honour of young Fiddleheads student **Alisha Pearson** who passed away July 28. Over \$200 was raised and put in a fund in Alisha's name: Salmon Arm Savings and Credit Union Memorial Trust Acct #1415140.

As a group students performed "Dixie," "Grandpa's Western Reel" and "Hedwig's Theme from Harry Potter." Other students performed solos and **Rhiannon Schmitt** and **Anita Liebich** also performed classical selections by Rhiannon's father, Fred Nachabur, and W.A. Mozart.

Thanks to **Tim Horton's** for the coffee and to the players and audience for their support and donations.

### Christmas Recital: December 21

All students are welcome to play at the annual Christmas Recital. The Fiddleheads Violin Ensemble will also perform.

This event is usually sold-out. Formal dress or black and red is encouraged.

Admission \$4, free for playing students or for food donation. All proceeds to Salmon Arm Food Bank. Last year over \$100 and a trunk load of food was donated to the Food Bank.

**Saturday, December 21, 2007, SAGA Public Art Gallery: 70 Hudson Ave NE, Salmon Arm. Starts 7:00pm, students please arrive and tune by 6:30pm.**

### Fiddleheads on Facebook

Students, customers and friends are welcome to join our Facebook group. Search "Fiddleheads" on [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)

### Baby & Maternity Leave

We're less than six months from my May 3 due date and very excited. We will have a baby shower after baby has been born.

I will teach until the end of the second term (which ends the week of February 19), perhaps continuing into March before Spring Break for another 3 weeks if I feel up to it.

I will teach in April (pending my energy) but only to students who are playing in the Shuswap Music Festival. Festival is most likely to be held in the middle of April.

Please indicate if you would like to participate in festival by the beginning of January 🎵

## Shuswap Violin Society News

*Provided Courtesy of Fiddleheads Violins*

### Instrument Bank

SVS Instrument Bank applications are accepted on an ongoing basis.

Please contact the SVS to loan/donate an instrument or if to contribute funds.

### Directors, Members & Volunteers Needed

The Society is seeking motivated supporters of violin music as directors, society members and volunteers. Email [info@violinsociety.ca](mailto:info@violinsociety.ca).

### Fiddle Contest

The 6th Annual Strings Alive Fiddle Contest is scheduled to be held at 7pm, **May 16, 2008** at the SAGA Gallery in Salmon Arm.

IMPORTANT - Judges are

needed as well as an emcee and an event organizer to fill in for Rhiannon who will have a newborn to care for.

Rules and details on the Society website at [www.violinsociety.ca](http://www.violinsociety.ca)

# O Little Town of Bethlehem

Andante

Brooks/ Redner

Violin I

Violin II

Viola in Treble

Cello & Bass

Phillips Brooks, an Episcopal priest, was inspired when he was visiting the town of Bethlehem in 1865. Three years later, he wrote the poem for his church and his organist, Lewis Redner, added the music. Redner's tune, simply titled "St. Louis", is the tune above and is used most often for this carol in the United States and Canada. Meanwhile, the English tune "Forest Green", adapted by Ralph Vaughan Williams, is the tune most often used for this carol in the UK and sometimes in the US, especially in the Episcopal Church.

This string quartet version arranged by Rhiannon Schmitt for the Fiddleheads Violins - Copyright ©2002 & 2007 Rhiannon Schmitt