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2023

## Swayed Pines Festival, 1974-2000: Community Building through Music, Crafts, Food & Fun [2023]

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I was an archivist before I knew what an archivist was...and this poster about the first Swayed Pines “fiddle contest, music festival and crafts fair” is a prime example. As a first-year Bennie, I saved this poster and treasured it for years, eventually donating it to the Archives when I became the archivist and discovered *nobody had saved it*.

First Swayed Pines poster, 1974, from the personal collection of the archivist; donated to SJU Archives

SJU Archives, 35/4 Box1

Tree photo: O:\Archives\SJUArchives\Images\Negative Film Collection - PC 02\Vol 13\13-073 Campus Photos 1977\TIFF\SJU Archives image21 Swayed Pine--trees

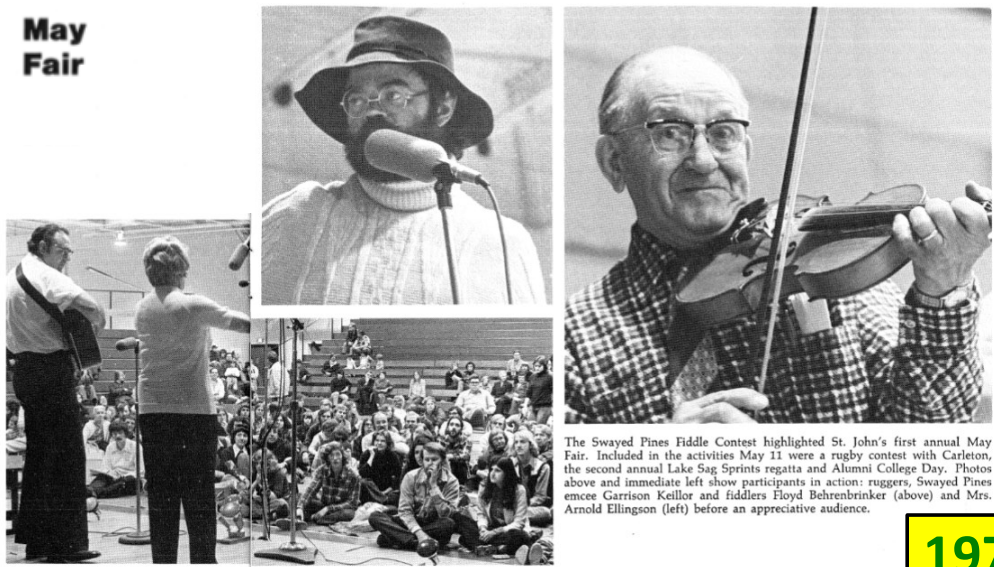


I delighted in the happy imagery and the whimsical fonts. I had been there, and I knew that, indeed, there had been rain – a lot of it – and the small print about the move into the then-new Palaestra had come to pass. And I loved the “HOORAY!” – with “for generous souls” – in the small print!

First Swayed Pines poster, 1974, from the personal collection of the archivist; donated to SJU Archives

SJU Archives, 35/4 Box1

**May  
Fair**



The Swayed Pines Fiddle Contest highlighted St. John's first annual May Fair. Included in the activities May 11 were a rugby contest with Carleton, the second annual Lake Sag Sprints regatta and Alumni College Day. Photos above and immediate left show participants in action: ruggers, Swayed Pines emcee Garrison Keillor and fiddlers Floyd Behrenbrinker (above) and Mrs. Arnold Ellingson (left) before an appreciative audience.

**1974**

Here are a few photos from the first annual Swayed Pines Fiddle Contest, part of what was initially dubbed "May Fair" in 1974 at SJU.

1974 spring *SJU Alumni Magazine* p. 20-21

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/5491/rec/1>



## ST. JOHN'S NEWS REVIEW

### Variety of events comprise first annual May Fair

May Fair (the first annual) was the umbrella name for a variety of events at St. John's on a cold, damp, windy May 11.

The day's activities combined regional crafts and music, collegiate sports and academic lectures. Featured were the Swayed Pines Music Festival, the "Lake Sag Sprints," a rugby match and Alumni-College Day.

A crafts fair and fiddle contest highlighted the music festival sponsored by the Institute for Regional Culture. Top fiddler was E. Craig Ruble of Minneapolis. Participants ranged in age from 6 to 75. Emcees were Garrison Keillor, writer-humorist and sometime-KSJR-FM radio personality, and Tom Kay (Karnowski '68), music director of a St. Cloud radio station.

The young St. John's - St. Ben's rowing team, host of the second annual Lake Sagatagan regatta, invited experienced clubs from Duluth, St. Paul, Minneapolis and the University of Minnesota and St. Cloud State College novices. The SJU-CSB club finished fifth overall.

In rugby, the Johnnies fared better, defeating Carleton 15-10.

Lectures by SJU professors, including discussions on such topics as exorcism, economics, household plants and poetry; reunions; dinner; and a concert by the St. John's Men's Chorus marked the annual Alumni-College Day.

An estimated 750 visitors braved the weather to attend St. John's first May Fair.

### Craig Ruble- A Minnesota fiddler who passed too soon.



father.

Craig Ruble was born in Austin, MN on May 19th, 1948. He grew up in Oakland, MN. His five brothers all played instruments. He and three of his brothers had a bluegrass band called the Ruble Brothers. Craig's father, Jim, taught him to play fiddle at a young age. Jim knew the old Norwegian tunes of his heritage. After graduating from the University of Minnesota, Craig served in the army and played in a country band.

By the mid-seventies he was considered one of the best, youngest fiddlers in the state. He played on many studio recordings at that time.

He was in several bands and won the first annual Swayed Pines Fiddle Contest at St John's University. He played for the Minnesota

Scandinavian Ensemble where he got to play the tunes he learned from fellow Minnesotan fiddlers Selmer Ramsey, Casey Aslakson, and his

Here's a story about that "May Fair," published in the spring 1974 alumni magazine – and a Wikipedia article about the then-25-year-old Minnesota fiddler who won that first fiddle contest, something noted on a blog tribute.

1974 spring *SJU Alumni Magazine* p.

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/5491/rec/1>

<http://minnesotafiddle.blogspot.com/2011/12/craig-ruble-minnesota-fiddler-who.html>

"The first annual Swayed Pines Festival was organized by a group of students in the spring of 1974. The ringleader was a student from South Dakota, David Kemp, who had attended a similar event in his home state."

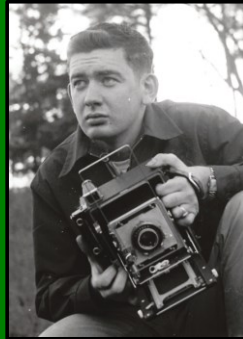
"Plans were to hold the first event on the football field in the shadow of the tall pine trees that rim the western edge of the natural bowl. Westerly winds over the years have given the row of trees an 'easterly lean,' hence the title, 'Swayed Pines.'"

"It rained much of the day, so the entire program was moved into the athletic facility, the Warner Palaestra [which had just been built]."

"Later organizers of Swayed Pines never again considered moving outdoors."

"I think calling it the 'first annual' was something of a joke."

Lee Hanley, SJU Public Information Director



Next is Swayed Pines which just celebrated its 24<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The "first annual" Swayed Pines was a student production. I was on campus for a separate alumni event and dropped by the Warner Palaestra to hear the last few contestants in the fiddle contest. Convinced that Swayed Pines was a good "fit" for this Benedictine institution's commitment to community, outreach, service and hospitality, Mike Ricci '82 and I urged Fr. Michael to help us to make it an annual event. Fr. Michael agreed, promising to provide \$1,500 to help sponsor it in the second year, and a lesser amount, if needed, in the third year. "Find a way to make it break even by then." Fr. Michael said, "or it will be dead in the water." Thanks to throngs of enthusiastic volunteers and selling lots of T-shirts and Coca Cola, Swayed Pines seems alive and well nearly a quarter of a century later. Here, for one day each spring, persons representing a true cross section of humanity - young, old, healthy or physically challenged in a variety of ways - have what might be their only glimpse of this rare Benedictine atmosphere that all Johnnies know so well.

**Lee Hanley later became the Swayed Pines maestro. These are his words. [read slide]**

Some of Lee's remarks here were published in the summer 1997 alumni magazine, p. 4 <https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/5542/rec/125>

Kemp photo: 1971-72 *Student Directory*

Hanley photo: O:\Archives\SJUArchives\Images\People\Hanley, Lee\Hanley, Lee with bellows camera Hanley Coll v1 p8 no1.jpg

## Swayed Pines folk fest features fiddlers

Fiddles, food, folk dances and fun have been scheduled as part of the second annual Swayed Pines Festival at St. John's April 26, 27.

The highlight of the weekend will be a fiddle contest Saturday from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. Musicians will play a waltz, hoedown and selection of their choice; Rudy Darling, runner-up in last year's contest, and Kaye Okaw, third-place finalist, will be among the 20 fiddlers from throughout Minnesota playing for more than \$200 prizes and six trophies.

Seeing the contest will be Garrison Keillor, host of Minnesota Public Radio's "Prairie Home Companion," and a hostess, WCCO-FM air personality.

The festival, to be held in the Warner Palaestra, is sponsored by the SJU Institute for Regional Culture in conjunction with the Minnesota Catholic

Aid Society. All activities during the two-day fest are free and open to the public.

Festivities will get underway at noon Saturday with an arts and crafts exhibit that will run through Sunday. Following the fiddle contest will be a square dance and examples and demonstrations of ethnic music, polkas and other dances.

An ethnic food fair and contest will be held at 4 p.m. Sunday with additional cultural music presentations during the day.

Last year about 300 people attended the festival, the name of which is derived from the tall, swayed pine trees adjacent to the Warner Palaestra. Because of the success of the first festival, Fr. Brian Millette, festival coordinator, expects many more persons will attend this year.

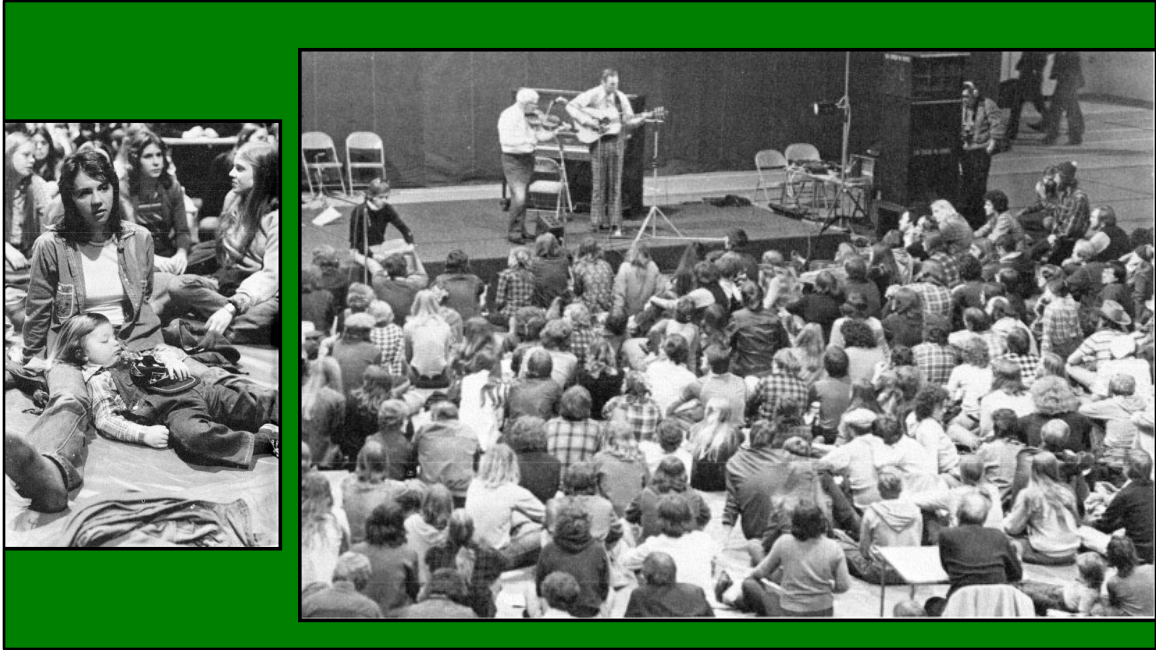
### Highlights:

- Two days of festivities
- 1974 runner-ups would be competing for more than \$200 and 6 trophies
- Garrison Keillor as co-emcee
- A square dance and demonstrations of ethnic music, polkas, etc.
- Ethnic food fair contest

The 1975 Swayed Pines event was promoted in this piece in the *Community* newsletter. It mentions that, in 1974, the first year, an estimated "300 people attended the festival." The festival coordinator expected many more for the second annual event.

1975 April 23 *Community* p. 1

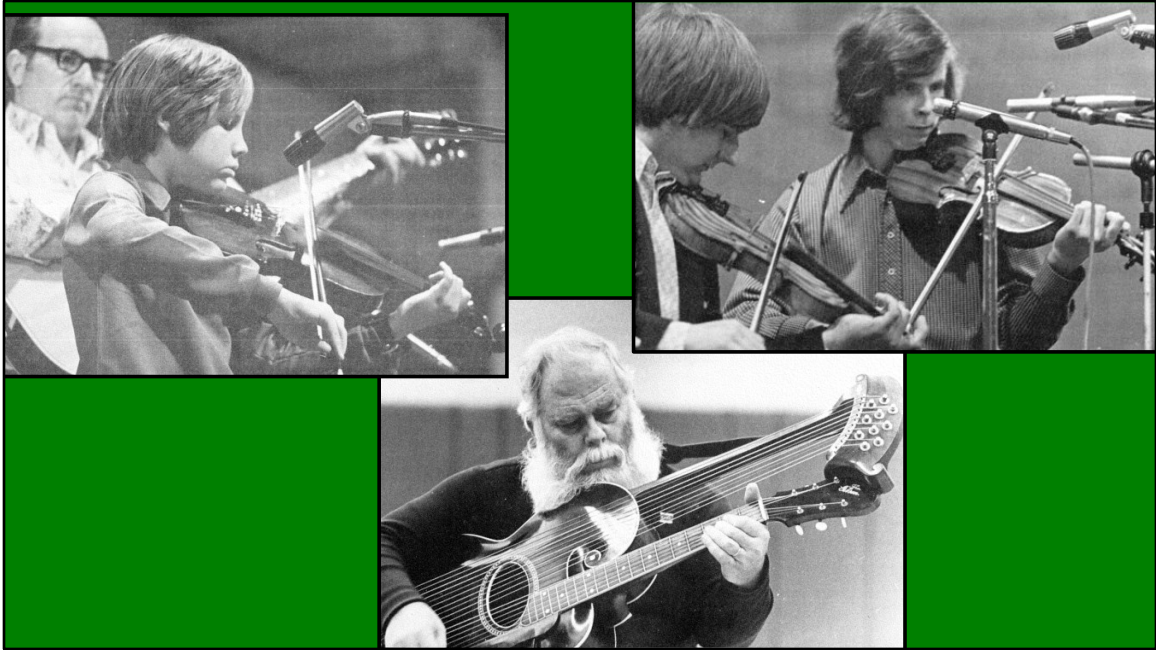
<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/50498/rec/5>



**Indeed, photos from the 1975 event (some by Lee Hanley and Thom Woodard) reflect the size of the crowd and the laid-back audience...**

*Saint John's Magazine* Spring 1975 p. 2

An estimated 3,000 persons attended the festivities



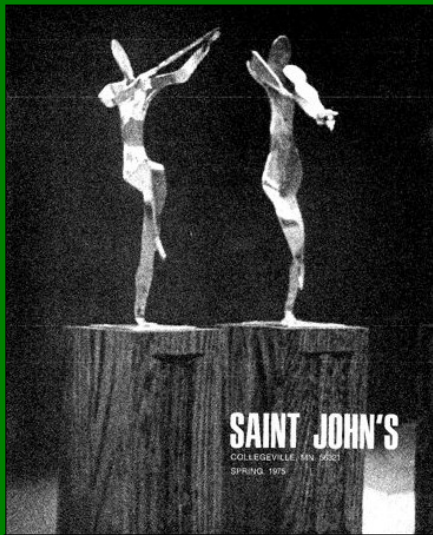
**...but also the serious demeanor of the contestants, such as a ten-year old accompanied by his father; Paul Dahlin, the overall winner in 1975; and an intent harpguitarist. [bottom photo]**

*Saint John's Magazine* Spring 1975 p. 2-3

Left: Fiddlers with varied backgrounds and ages (including 10-year-old Bruce Hoffman, who was accompanied by his father) participated in the fiddle contest.

Middle: Minstrel Neil Christian, here playing the harpguitar, was one of many musicians participating in the second annual affair.

Right: An impeccable Swedish style of fiddle playing gave Paul Dahlin (right) the top prize in the contest.



## 1975 Trophies for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Swayed Pine Fiddle Contest winners

**ON THE COVER:**

Trophies awarded to winners of the Second Annual Swayed Pines Fiddle Contest were crafted by Steve Meyer of red oak from the St. John's woods and brass.

Trophies awarded to winners of the Second Annual Swayed Pines Fiddle Contest were crafted by Steve Meyer of red oak from the St. John's woods and brass.

*Saint John's* Vol. 14, No.4 Spring, 1975, cover

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/5534/rec/3>



**F**or a century now young men at St. John's University have been studying the works of Tchaikovsky, Mendelssohn and Paganini. This spring, however, two days were devoted to celebrating a different style of music, a style that was created by men who never heard of dissonance, counterpoint or chromatics, men who spent their lives in coal mines and behind horsedrawn plows. During the entire weekend of April 26-27 — from noon to midnight each day — more than three thousand people sat, clapped, frolicked and danced in the new Warner Palaestra at the Second Annual Swayed Pines Folk Festival.

This year's event included an old-time fiddle contest, an arts and crafts fair, a square dance and performances by many talented musicians. President Michael Blecker, OSB, who founded the Festival last year, arranged sponsorship for this year's event through the Catholic Aid Society and the SJU Institute for Regional Culture; Brendan Doyle and Steve Meyer, lifelong Collegeville residents, acted as chief organizers, in association with Fr. Brian Millette, OSB, this reporter and others.

The high point of the festival was Saturday afternoon's fiddle contest featuring 30 Midwestern fiddlers. Tom Ambrose '68 of WCCO-FM and Garrison Keillor of Minnesota Public Radio (MPR) were masters of ceremonies. Keillor, K5JN-FM's Prairie Home Companion, presented the top three performers trophies hand-crafted by Meyer from brass and red oak taken from St. John's forest.

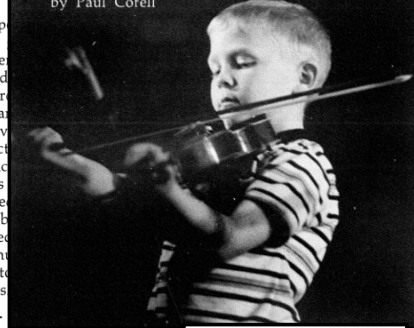
The Warner Palaestra's arena was divided into two main areas, one for musical goings and other for the arts and crafts fair where displayed and sold work in pottery, to glassware, handweaving, engraving and quilting, beadwork, toymaking and ca. Also exhibited were homemade fiddles, thumb pianos and fretless banjos, complete with enthusiastic explanations on how you can make yourself.

During the two days musicians played fiddle, banjo, steel-string and classical guitar, harp, hammered and plucked dulcimer, dobro, mandolin, harp guitar, piano and other instruments: much of it was tape-recorded. On Saturday evening a square dance from the St. Cloud area demonstrated various reels and promenades and then instructed the audience in doing the art of square dancing.

Planners believe the Swayed Pines festival has a special purpose: that some of the present and fading lifestyles of our area will be remembered and perhaps even revitalized. Gone are the days of a man carving a masterpiece with his own hands and using it to accompany his singing of traditional, ethnic songs.

## SWAYED PINES: ETHNIC MUSIC, CRAFTS ABOUND

by Paul Cofell



Youngest fiddler: six-year old Todd Goehring, Hitchcock, SD.

The author: Paul Cofell, a former St. John's student, is an artist-musician living near campus. He is the son of William Cofell, SJU education professor.

**...and a photo of a six-year-old contestant accompanied an article about the festival by Paul Cofell, himself a Collegeville musician. (His brother David would fit that description years later.)**

*Saint John's Magazine* Spring 1975 p. 1-3

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/5534/rec/3>



**Garrison Keillor's morning radio program in Collegeville, "A Prairie Home Companion," was picking up momentum as a live weekly radio variety show on Saturdays, a take-off on the Grand Ole Opry radio program.**

SJU Archives photo, Events p74

... by William Patterson will be exhibited at the St. John's University Engel Hall Art Gallery through April 15.

Patterson is an assistant professor of art at the University of Massachusetts and features the intaglio technique in his prints. The processes in an intaglio print include etching, dry-point, mezzotint, aquatint, sugar lift, soft-ground and graving. Also represented in the show are wood engravings, graphite drawings and color etchings and drawings.

\*\*\*\*\*

Fiddlers and craftsmen will get a chance to "show their stuff" April 25 in the third annual "Swayed Pines Folk Festival" at St. John's University.

Last year more than 2,500 people attended the affair which featured 20

The fourth annual Swayed Pines Folk Festival at St. John's University will be held Saturday, April 30, Fr. Roger Botz, OSB, announced late last week. The festival features a fiddle contest and crafts fair.

Last year the festival attracted about 25 contestants, 30 craftsmen and artists and an audience of 3,500 people.

Minnesota Public Radio's "Prairie Home Companion" will also be at St. John's that day, broadcasting from the Main Auditorium. Host Garrison Keillor, who will emcee the fiddle contest with Mary DuShane, will be joined on the show by top fiddlers.

The folk festival in the Warner Palaestra will be open free of charge to the public from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

fiddle contestants. The festival is sponsored by the SJU Institute for Regional Culture.

Fr. Roger Botz, festival director, explains the Institute "seeks to promote and enhance the ethnic heritage of the people of Minnesota. We feel the state's various cultural backgrounds can be better understood if they are shared by all. Hopefully our Swayed Pines festival gives all of us at least a little exposure to some of our traditions and heritages."

This year's festival has been recognized as an official bicentennial event, he adds.

Fiddlers interested in competing for cash prizes in two categories and artists wishing to sell their crafts should contact Fr. Botz.

### Swayed Pines Folk Festival '76



1. Hand-crafted trophies await top fiddlers at the 1976 Swayed Pines Folk Festival in April; 13-year-old Bruce Hoffman (here accompanied by his father, Ed) gained prizes as youngest contestant and top "fiddle" fiddler." 2. Jim Price was best "master fiddler." 3. Enthusiastic crowd of 3,000 enjoyed the day. 4. Radio personality Tom Kay (Karnowski '68) served as an emcee.



Thom Woodard photos

**The 1975 contest brought out 20 contestants and more than 2500 people. The Fest was even bigger in 1976, with 25 fiddler contestants, 30 craftspeople, and about 3500 attendees.**

1976 March 24 *Community* p. 4

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/50671/rec/8>

Photos by Thom Woodard: 1976 Spring *SJU Alumni Magazine* p. 10

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/5495/rec/7>

Statistics from 1977 March 9 *Community* p. 2

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/47413/rec/12>

# COMMUNITY

Published by the St. John's University Office of Communications

Wednesday, April 13, 1977 25/72-77

The fourth annual Swayed Pines Folk Festival at St. John's University will be held Saturday, April 30, Fr. Roger Botz, OSB, announced late last week. The festival features a fiddle contest and crafts fair.

Last year the festival attracted about 25 contestants, 30 craftsmen and artists and an audience of 3,500 people.

Minnesota Public Radio's "Prairie Home Companion" will also be at St. John's that day, broadcasting from the Main Auditorium. Host Garrison Keillor, who will emcee the fiddle contest with Mary DuShane, will be joined on the show by top fiddlers.

The folk festival in the Warner Palaestra will be open free of charge to the public from 11 a.m. to midnight; the contest will run from noon to 4:30 p.m. "Prairie Home Companion," billed as radio's last live show, begins at 5:30 p.m.; admission is \$1.50.

Evening events for the festival will be announced at a later time.



Garrison Keillor and Mary DuShane will emcee the fourth annual Swayed Pines Folk Festival fiddle contest April 30 in the Warner Palaestra. At 5:30 p.m. that day, he will host the Minnesota Public Radio "Prairie Home Companion" broadcast live from St. John's Main Auditorium and she will perform in the "Powdermilk Bleuet Band."

1977 March 9  
*Community*

The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Swayed Pines Fest in 1977 featured Garrison as co-emcee again, also his 4<sup>th</sup> time doing so; this time he also broadcast his increasingly popular "A Prairie Home Companion" radio show live from the SJU Auditorium. He did it again in 1979, too – which was his last Swayed Pines appearance, as he was becoming a national radio celebrity. [He did come back to do another show at St. John's in the summer of 1982 – broadcast live from the football stadium! – when it *didn't* rain.]

1977 March 9 *Community* p. 2

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/47413/rec/12>

1977-04-13 *Community* p.1

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/47418/rec/156>



Folklorist Guy Carawan plays the hammered dulcimer April 30 during the fourth annual Swayed Pines Folk Fest. Nearly 4,000 people attended the fiddle contest and crafts fair. Thom. W. Woodward photo.

## Folk singers in SJU concert

The singer who introduced "We Shall Overcome" to the Civil Rights Movement in 1960 will be joined by a former area musician in concert April 27 at St. John's University.

Guy Carawan and John McKutcheon, a St. John's graduate who has performed often in Minnesota, will sing folk songs and play guitar, banjo and dulcimer.

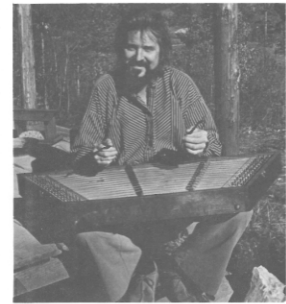
Highly regarded internationally for his songs and knowledge of Appalachian music and ethnic lore, Carawan has performed in the Soviet Union, in China and throughout Europe. Pete Seeger says Carawan is "reaching out, as musicians should do, to bring people together. He's still collecting old folklore, bringing it back to the people."

Although Carawan is originally from California, he has been working for 15 years with music, culture and social change at the Highlander Center in New Market, Tenn. He has collected a great deal of music and oral history over those years and, along with his wife, Candie, has put out numerous record albums and several books.

His first book, in 1963, was entitled

## Organ recital set for Thursday

Organist Michael Murray will give a recital at St. John's Abbey and



Guy Carawan

*We Shall Overcome: The Songs of the Southern Freedom Movement*; his most recent work is *Voices from the Mountains*, folksongs and commentary about the "rich songs and poor people" of Appalachia.

He has appeared at several hundred colleges, concert halls and folk festivals and will be featured in the Swayed Pines Folk Fest at St. John's on April 30 at 9 p.m. in the Warner Palaestra.

McKutcheon now lives in Appalachia where he studies mountain music and lore, builds instruments and records.

Admission to the concert in the Main Auditorium is \$.75, free with SJU or College of St. Benedict ID card.

**The 1977 evening concert, after the radio show and a square dance, featured Guy Carawan, credited with introducing the song "We Shall Overcome" to the Civil Rights Movement. 1977 April 20 *Community "Folk Singers in SJU Concert"* p. 2**  
<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/47419/rec/16>  
 1977 May 11 *Community* p. 1  
<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/47422/rec/19>



**And this 1977 photo shows one of the trophies – a block of Saint John’s wood with an engraved plaque and a pine seedling, made annually by a craftsman in Abbey Woodworking – originally David Landwehr ’74. [brother of the Archivist, who donated a spare trophy to the SJU Archives in 2023.]**

1977 *Saints* yearbook, p. 52

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/38827/rec/11>





**One of those crafters was David Landwehr '74, who made these trophies for years afterwards (and donated one to the Archives).**

Photo: Swayed Pines trophy "spare" made by David Landwehr '74, who first make Swayed Pines trophies when employed by St. John's Abbey Woodworking. He continued to make them for years afterwards in his own woodshop. He donated this one to the SJU Archives in April 2023 at the request of his sister, the CSBSJU Archivist!

## Swayed Pines

### Fiddlers invade Palaestra

By Bill Budzien

The Swayed Pines Folk Festival has become perhaps, the best-attended non-sports event at St. John's. The agenda for this year's folk fest includes a fiddle contest, crafts fair, square-dancing exhibition, live broadcast of a radio program and a concert performance.

The festival begins at 11:00 a.m. tomorrow in the Warner Palaestra with a crafts fair, which will include the sale of pottery and glass-blown, wood-carved, and batik-dyed articles. Most of the participating craftsmen will also give demonstrations of the techniques of their craft.

From noon to 4:30 p.m., a fiddle contest will be featured. Around twenty-five fiddlers from the neighboring states will compete in one of the four fiddling categories. Contestants must play one waltz and one fast tune of their style for preliminary competition, and one tune of their choice if they make it to the finals. Prizes include hand-crafted trophies and a cash prize of \$100 to first-place and \$50 to second-place finishers in each of the four divisions. Emcees for the fiddle contest are Garrison Kellor and Mary DuShane.

Following the contest at 5:30 p.m., Minnesota Public Radio will broadcast Kellor's "A Prairie Home Companion" live from SJU's Main Auditorium. The show is a weekly radio program of



folksy bluegrass tunes. Mary DuShane will join Kellor as part of the "Powdermilk Biscuit Band." Admission for students is \$1.00.

The square-dance demonstration begins at 7:30 p.m. The Key Rowettes of St. Cloud, in full costume and with their own caller and band, will explain the art of square-dancing and then put on a performance in which all are invited to join.

The folk fest will conclude with a concert by Guy Carawan at 9:00 p.m. Carawan, who performed with SJU alumnus John McKatehon this past Wednesday in the Main Auditorium, is renowned for his traditional and contemporary folk music. Carawan has written three books and has cut several albums.

The coordinator of the entire shindig is Mike Bauer of the St. John's Development Office.

"Also on sale will be sandwiches, St. John's Bread and, to help defray expenses, 'Swayed Pines T-Shirts.'"

### Swayed Pines fest Saturday

It's billed as a "family fun day" and it's free; it's the fourth annual Swayed Pines Folk Festival at St. John's University this Saturday.

Featured events include a fiddle contest beginning at noon, a recital by Appalachian folk singer Guy Carawan at 9 p.m. and a crafts fair all day in the Warner Palaestra.

Emcees for the fiddle contest are Garrison Kellor, host of Minnesota Public Radio's "Prairie Home Companion," and "Fiddling Mary" DuShane. Three films on fiddling will also be shown during the day.

The crafts exhibit includes a sale and demonstration of wood carving, batik dyeing and potting.

Also on sale will be sandwiches, St. John's Bread and, to help defray expenses, "Swayed Pines T-Shirts." Sponsors of the festival are SJU and Viking Coca-Cola of St. Cloud.

Following the fiddling contest at 5:30 p.m., Minnesota Public Radio will broadcast Kellor's show live from St. John's Main Auditorium. DuShane will join him as part of the "Powdermilk Biscuit Band." Admission is \$1.50, \$1 for students and \$.50 for children.



Festivities return to the Warner Palaestra at 7:30 p.m. for a square dance and demonstration and Carawan's performance.

Fiddlers include two of last year's winners competing Saturday in the master/Southern category: Jim Price, who won in the master bracket, and Bruce Hoffman, who was the youngest at 11 and best "fiddlin' fiddler" (novice).

Other categories are master/Northern and senior fiddler. The top two contestants in each of the four areas will be given cash prizes and a hand crafted trophy topped by a live pine tree.

Additional participants are Nancy Duncanson of St. Paul, Peter A. Lindberg who first won a fiddle contest trophy in 1926, eight-year-old Todd Goshing from South Dakota, Oliver Counter from Avon who learned by ear 59 years ago and St. Cloud's Ann Stevens.

Highly regarded internationally for his songs and knowledge of Appalachian music and ethnic lore, Carawan has performed in the Soviet Union, in China and throughout Europe. Pete Weeger says Carawan is "reaching out, as musicians should do, to bring people together. He's still collecting old folklore, bringing it back to the people."

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The 1977 Festival got a lot of publicity, with this feature in *The Record* as well as multiple entries in the campus's *Community* newsletter. The event was growing every year. Now you could go to listen to the music, watch the fiddle contest, see demonstrations by potters, glass blowers, wood carvers, and many other artists in dozens – eventually hundreds – of booths, inside and outside of the Palaestra. You could buy Johnnie bread, pizza, sandwiches, Cold Spring bakery goodies, Coke products and Swayed Pines T-shirts.

1977 April 29 *The Record* p. 3

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/CSBArchNews/id/35083/rec/3>

1977 04 27 p. 1 *Community* "Swayed Pines Fest Saturday"

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/47420/rec/17>



**The T-shirts featured the 1974 poster's now-familiar fiddler logo. To finally give credit where credit is due (since she never received any royalties!), that image was created by class of 1974 art major K (Kay) Stevenson from Saint Cloud, who taught art at the Prep School for several years and went on to be an art professor at a college in Oregon. K and some of her friends were in that initial group of students who worked to make the first Fiddle Fest happen. Kay told me she remembers "the first year or two in particular - because 'the gang' was very much a part of helping Dave (Kemp) get things organized."**

Swayed Pines logo from 1986 Winter alum mag p.25

T-Shirt in the SJU Archives

Inset photo: <https://www.weber.edu/sustainability/faculty-teaching-sustainability.html>



## WSU Gives Lindquist Award to Professor Who Enhances Community with Art

March 26, 2019

OGDEN, Utah – For her commitment and work to use arts for social awareness, advocacy and change, Weber State University visual art and design professor Kathleen “K” Stevenson will receive the John A. Lindquist Award during a Center for Community Engaged Learning (CCEL) celebration, April 8 from 1:30-3 p.m. in the Shepherd Union Ballrooms.

Stevenson earned her Master of Fine Arts in printmaking from the University of Notre Dame and joined the Weber State faculty in 2001, in the Department of Visual Art & Design in the Telitha E. Lindquist College of Arts & Humanities. In 2014, she was appointed director of printmaking.

According to Stevenson, students often worry about declaring art as a major and wonder how they will make a living; however, she said their education provides them tools for problem-solving, innovation, creativity, reflection and revision, and they come to know the pleasure and purpose of an artist’s role in contributing to the community — locally and globally.

“We live in an era that is accelerating exponentially,” Stevenson said. “For example, scientists tell us we see twice as many images every day than just three decades ago. With this visual proliferation, increasingly the role of artists and designers calls for awareness and purpose. It is rewarding and enjoyable to be involved with this significant work.”



Swayed Pines logo from 1986 Winter alum mag p.25

Web page: [https://www.weber.edu/WSUToday/032819\\_LindquistAward.html](https://www.weber.edu/WSUToday/032819_LindquistAward.html)

**Swayed Pines fest Saturday**

A fiddle contest and a concert featuring bluegrass and old-time music highlight the fifth annual Swayed Pines Folk Fest at St. John's University on Saturday. All of the activities are open free of charge to the public.

Fiddle contestants competing for cash prizes and hand-crafted trophies range in ages from 9 to 79. The contest begins at 1 p.m. in the Warner Palaestra.

"Wry Straw" will be in concert at 7 p.m. in the Warner Palaestra. "Wry Straw" features fiddle tunes, Carter Family songs, ragtime pieces, banjo, dulcimer instruments and authentic Appalachian old-time music based on extensive research. Playing in the trio are John McCutcheon, a 1974 St. John's graduate who directs a federal project collecting traditional music throughout the South; Tom Bledsoe, an expert on the ethnic heritage of southwest Virginia; and Rich Kirby, who has written textbooks and articles on folk music and on Appalachia.

A discussion of the ethnic heritage of Stearns County at 11 a.m. in the SJS Science Center will open Swayed Pines activities. There will also be a craft fair beginning at noon and a square dance at 5:30 p.m. in the Warner Palaestra.

The Swayed Pines Folk Fest is sponsored by St. John's and Village Occasions of St. Cloud; additional assistance has been provided by the Minnesota Renaissance Commission. A free-will donation and sale of T-shirts with fiddler logo will help offset expenses.







**Swayed Pines Folk**

PHOTO COURTESY OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

John McCutcheon, an SJU alumna, will be performing Saturday at Swayed Pines Festival at SJU.

**The 1978 (5<sup>th</sup>) Swayed Pines was significant in that it was the first time a class of '74 alum from Wisconsin named John McCutcheon was a feature in the evening concert (although he had appeared the year before in a Wednesday concert with Guy Carawan). For his senior year January Interim, John had hitchhiked away from SJU to follow his passion to learn as much as he could about folk music; his Appalachian band, "Wry Straw," would headline the Swayed Pines concert for two years in a row, and then, as a soloist, John would ultimately perform for Swayed Pines about 20 times, emceeding many of the fiddle contests as well.**

Besides John McCutcheon, performers over the years included John Prine, Taj Majal, Tom Paxton, Schooner Fare, Libba Cotton (composer of "Freight Train"), Guy Carawan (composer of "We Shall Overcome"), Claudia Schmidt, Bryan Bowers, Livingston Taylor, Loudon Wainwright III, Richie Havens and Arlo Guthrie (twice).

1978 April 19 *Community* p. 1

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/47446/rec/27>

1980 April 24 *Community* p. 1

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/47484/rec/41>

April 3, 1986 *Community*, p. 1

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/22881/rec/78>

1996 April 25 *The Independent* p. 16

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/CSBArchNews/id/4002/rec/61>

Color photo: O:\Archives\SJUArchives\Images\Public Relations Office Photos - PC  
08\Vol 03\03-045 Swayed Pines 1994\TIFF\image11 John McCutcheon.TIF



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The Swayed Pines Folk Fest is sponsored by St. John's and Viking Coe-Ole of St. Cloud; additional assistance has been provided by the Minnesota Humanities Commission. A free-will donation and sale of T-shirts with fiddler logo will help offset expenses.



Vry Straw with John McCutcheon. '74 (right)

### RESPONSE:

From Dr. Michael Olson, Director of SJS Center for Student Development  
To attribute "massive out-of-control V.D., the lowest birth rate in history, the record number of legal divorces, 'the teenage pregnancy plague,' abortion as a means of birth control, gay liberation, suicides, and other gloominess of liberated sex" to the "widespread

- 1978: A discussion of the history of Stearns County
- 1979: A panel discussion on the creative genius of Central Minnesota
- 1981: A panel discussion n Minnesota rural life

### Swayed Pines Planned for the 25th

Folk tales, cookbooks, sausage stuffing, and quilting are all part of the eighth annual Swayed Pines Folk Festival at SJU on Saturday, April 25. As always, the events of the festival are free and open to the public, except the evening concert which costs \$1 per person.

In addition to the traditional fiddle contest, crafts fair, and evening concert, this year's festival will feature a morning symposium on "Minnesota Rural Life: Past and Present." Topics to be discussed or presented during the symposium will include changes in rural life, rural schoolhouses, sausage-stuffing, quilting, Minnesota folk tales, and rural parish cookbooks.

At 9:30 a.m. in the Alumni Lounge a panel discussion on "Minnesota Rural Life: Past and Present" will feature an address by Frederick Manfred, a Minnesota writer and long-time rural Minnesotan. Manfred will discuss the uniqueness of rural life and the effect of the communications revolution on rural people. Two historians, Fred Peterson and Ben Michalek,

**SWAYED PINES FOLK FEST AGENDA**  
 10 a.m.--Minnesota Humanities Commission panel discussion on "Creative Roots of Central Minnesota"--Science Auditorium  
 11 a.m.--Crafts Fair and Fiddle Fest kick-off.  
 Senior Fiddlers  
 Master/Southern Fiddlers  
 Fiddling Fiddlers  
 Master/Northern Fiddlers (divisional playoffs held immediately after completion of competition in each category)  
 Grand finale between the four division winners if time allows  
 5 p.m.--Afternoon events wrap-up  
 5:30 p.m.--Garrison Keillor and the Prairie Home Companion Show live broadcast in the Main Auditorium over KSTP Radio

The 1978 Swayed Pines festival was one of several that had an academic component to it as well. Workshops, presentations and lectures were sometimes given, and were always free and open to the public, in an effort to preserve and share the ethnic heritages of Central Minnesota. One, for 1978, was a discussion of the ethnic heritage of Stearns County; in 1979, it was about the creative genius of Central Minnesota; and in 1981, they discussed Minnesota rural life.

1978 April 19 *Community* p. 1  
<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/47446/rec/27>  
 1979 April 18 *Community* p. 8  
<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/50856/rec/34>  
 1981 April 16 *Community* p. 1  
<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/22577/rec/50>

## Southeast Asian Theme for Swayed Pines

The contributions of our newest neighbors, the Southeast Asian refugees, will be the focus of the ninth annual Swayed Pines Folk Festival gets underway on campus the morning of Saturday, April 24. The festival, begun in 1974, is expected to attract 4,000-5,000 spectators. As always, the events of the festival are free and open to the public, except the evening concert which has an admission charge of \$2.

In addition to the traditional fiddle contest, crafts fair, and evening concert, this year's festival will feature a morning symposium on "Asians In Our Midst: Our Newest Neighbors." The symposium will be held at 9:30 a.m. in the Alumni Lounge. Symposium speakers and panelists will discuss the Southeast Asian refugee program and cultural traditions of the several groups and nationalities represented among Southeast Asians.

According to William J. Van Cleve, symposium director, the purpose of the program is to contribute to appreciation of Southeast Asian refugees as the "newest link in the long chain of immigration that provides us an enriched, strengthened, and diverse culture."

Speakers for the symposium will be Dr. Rudolph Vecoli of the Immigration History Research Center at the University of Minnesota and Dr. Timothy Dunigan.

1982:  
American immigration history, including the Southeast Asian refugee program and the similarities and differences among the cultures of various peoples of Southeast Asia



Thanks to a grant from the Minnesota Humanities Commission, the traditional music focus of the 1982 Swayed Pines Folk Festival was expanded to include traditional dancing performed by area Southeast Asian refugee school children. Various Southeast Asian components of the day's program were intended to welcome our newest settlers and to introduce Central Minnesotans to the richness of the heritages which refugees are adding to our regional culture (Photo by Tom Wilch '84).

1982 April 8 *Community* p. 1

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/22588/rec/57>

Right image: 1982 Summer *Alumni* magazine, p. 23

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/5511/rec/59>

## SWAYED PINES ATTRACTS FIDDLERS, LARGE CROWDS



Archie DeLong, 70, of Minneapolis, tunes up for the competition in the Stearns County Fairgrounds. He is one of the many fiddlers who are expected to play at the festival.



Two men, Archie DeLong (left) and Bob DeLong, (right) are one of the many fiddlers who are expected to play at the festival.

By Andrew Nelson  
Staff Writer

By 10 a.m. the Stearns County Fairgrounds were filled with the sounds of fiddling. The Stearns County Fairgrounds were filled with the sounds of fiddling. The Stearns County Fairgrounds were filled with the sounds of fiddling.

Eight fiddlers, including a fiddler and his wife, played in various styles. The Stearns County Fairgrounds were filled with the sounds of fiddling.



Not only fiddlers but banjo players participated in Stearns County Fairgrounds. The young musician practiced his banjo outside the museum.



Fiddlers competing in the contest usually were accompanied by pianists as well.

Panel Discussion continued from page 240

The "Stearns County Syndrome" discussion, co-sponsored by the Minnesota Humanities Commission and the Stearns County Historical Society, took place as a part of the Swayed Pines Folk Festival held Saturday, April 26, on campus. The Swayed Pines Folk Fest began seven years ago as an effort to "preserve and share the ethnic heritage of Central Minnesota." The "Stearns County Syndrome" topic was chosen by the planning committee because of local interest in the topic. And indeed, much of the audience hailed from Stearns County. Many took notes as moderator Cliff Mitchell of KAMU Radio in Albany introduced each of the panelists and allowed them time to speak.

However, those desiring a hot debate over the issue were disappointed. The four panelists, William Coffell of Saint John's, Sr. John Christine Wolkerstorfer of Saint Catherine's, Ron Kliesch of Duluth, and Dr. Kathleen Conzen of the University of Chicago, were complete in their agreement of what Kliesch called "a need to respond to questionable journalism." The general consensus of the group was that the residents of Stearns County were not affected by a syndrome, but rather that they were possessors of a special culture.

"I have found no evidence of syndrome, but have presented here ways in which such a myth could arise: through prejudice, a want of tolerance, and wartime hostility," Coffell remarked. Sr. Wolkerstorfer declared Walburn's article to be "activist propaganda; unfounded criticism enforcing a prejudicial attitude."

Dr. Conzen, too, maintained the fallacy of a syndrome. "There are distinctive characteristics," she said, "but these are not a part of the myth; rather, they are part of a unique culture." Conzen ended her speech with a comment which summarized the mood of the entire place: "Stearns County needs a more careful look and a more careful appreciation."

And the audience cheered.

## 1980: "Stearns County Syndrome: Myth or Reality?"



The topic that got the most attention in the media was in 1980, which asked whether the (so-called) Stearns County Syndrome was a myth or a reality.

1980 May 1 *Community* p. 2-3

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/47486/rec/3>

1980 *Saints* yearbook p. 79

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/39141/rec/36>



**Here are just a few images to give a better sense of the ambience of Swayed Pines:  
the crowd on their lawn chairs inside the Palaestra...**

1983 *Saints* yearbook, p. 51

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/42365/rec/61>



**Musicians – of all ages – jamming outside...**

1983 *Saints* yearbook, p. 53

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/42367/rec/61>

1987 *Saints* yearbook, p. 82

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/44710/rec/82>





**...more musicians...**

Left: 1980 Swayed Pines Mandolinist

SJU Archives photo, Events p77

(similar photo printed in Summer 1980 *SJU Alumni Magazine* p. 16

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/8685/rec/43>)

Right: 1980 May 1 *Community* p. 3

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/47486/rec/3>





**Bands playing in the parking lot...**

O:\Archives\SJUArchives\Images\Public Relations Office Photos - PC 08\Vol 03\03-156 Swayed Pines 1995\TIFF\Image09.TIF



**...Artisans and crafters demonstrating and selling their work...**

*Saint John's Magazine* Spring 1975 p. 3

Wood carver with mallet: 1977 May *SJU Alumni Magazine* p. 13

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/5499/rec/18>

Wheelwright: 1987 *Saints* yearbook, p. 82

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/44710/rec/82>

Weaver: 1991 summer *Saint John's Magazine*, p. 21

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/9620/rec/111>



**...filling up the east half of the Palaestra basketball arena. The event featured as many as 150 crafts booths, inside...**

(with folding chairs: O:\Archives\SJUArchives\Images\Public Relations Office Photos - PC 08\Vol 01\01-026 Swayed Pines Arts Crafts 1975\TIFF\Image10.TIF & Image12.TIF

O:\Archives\SJUArchives\Images\Public Relations Office Photos - PC 08\Vol 03\03-043 Swayed Pines 1994\TIFF\Image07.TIF



**...and outside.**

Color: O:\Archives\SJUArchives\Images\Public Relations Office Photos - PC 08\Vol 16\16-018 Swayed Pines 1975-1983\TIFF\image03 Swayed Pines 1983.TIF

Right: O:\Archives\SJUArchives\Images\Public Relations Office Photos - PC 08\Vol 03\03-043 Swayed Pines 1994\TIFF\Image07.TIF





**...and performers entertaining the crowds with juggling, dancing, unicycling...**

Dancers: 1988 *Saints* yearbook p. 26

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/43273/rec/87>

1980 Swayed Pines Juggler - SJU Archives photo, Events p76,

Printed in Summer 1980 *SJU Alumni Magazine* p. 16

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/8685/rec/43>

Unicyclist: 1992 *Saints* year book, p. 176

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/43799/rec/112>



**...and breathing fire.**

O:\Archives\SJUArchives\Images\Public Relations Office Photos - PC 08\Vol 03\03-045 Swayed Pines 1994\TIFF\Image07.TIF



## 14th annual Swayed Pines held April 25

Over 10,000 people attended the 14th annual Swayed Pines Folk Fest at Saint John's April 25. The day-long event featured the work of over 100 craftsmen, a fiddle contest and an evening concert with John McCutcheon and Greg Brown.



**... HUGE crowds would show up if we were lucky enough to have great weather the last Saturday of April...**

1987 Summer *SJU Alumni Magazine* p. 12

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/9350/rec/86>



**And yes, parking was a challenge! Swayed Pines became a huge campus event, attracting as many as 12,000 visitors for the day. [- Lee Hanley]**

O:\Archives\SJUArchives\Images\Public Relations Office Photos - PC 08\Vol 03\03-149 Swayed Pines 1994\TIFF\Image23.TIF

Lee Hanley:

“We would have 60-70 fiddlers competing in half a dozen categories of playing.”

“The young kids were always particularly popular with the crowd. In the final few years, we had as many as a dozen fiddlers under 12. We liked to think that this event and others like it were being successful in passing the folk art of fiddling along to another generation.”

Swayed Pines “was strangely popular among Saint John’s employees, who turned out in droves to volunteer as workers for the day.”

In its heyday (pun intended) “we would have 60-70 fiddlers competing in half a dozen categories of playing...[read slide]. The young kids were always particularly popular with the crowd. In the early years we usually had one or two fiddlers under the age of 12. In the final few years we had as many as a dozen under 12. We liked to think that this event and others like it were being successful in passing the folk art of fiddling along to another generation... We employees helped out, too. The event “was strangely popular among Saint John’s employees, who turned out in droves to volunteer.”

Girl, Left: O:\Archives\SJUArchives\Images\Public Relations Office Photos - PC 08\Vol 03\03-155 Swayed Pines 1995\TIFF\Image16.TIF

Banjo: O:\Archives\SJUArchives\Images\Public Relations Office Photos - PC 08\Vol 01\01-023 Swayed Pines 1970s\TIFF\Image02.TIF

Hanley photo: O:\Archives\SJUArchives\Images\People\Hanley, Lee\Hanley, Lee Matted Photo Coll Box7 no6.jpg

# Swayed Pines cancelled for this summer

■ Annual folk festival loses out to unforeseen scheduling conflicts

By ERIN ADLER

STAFF WRITER

The annual Swayed Pines Folk Festival will not be held this year as planned. The festival, which ordinarily features a craft fair and a fiddle contest, will not occur due to "unavoidable scheduling conflicts on the Saint John's campus," according to Gil Hayes, CSB/SJU executive director of institutional marketing and communications.



June, only to encounter additional conflicts with fiddlers and artists already committed to other festivals."

Instead of the customary folk festival, CSB and SJU will be sponsoring a concert by Grammy-nominated folk artist John McCutcheon, who has performed at Swayed Pines in past years to much acclaim. The concert will take place on Saturday, April 24 at 2 p.m., at the Benedicta Arts Center at CSB. Said Hayes, "We did not want to sacrifice quality, so the decision was made to

that the festival, which has a 25 year tradition, would not be held this year. According to Lisa Vallez, CSB sophomore, the event was enjoyed by many students, not just fans of folk music. "I went last year and really enjoyed seeing the booths with handmade crafts and woodwork. I was disappointed to hear that the craft part would not be held this year."

Hayes also commented on the future of the Swayed Pines Folk Festival. "For 25 years, Swayed Pines has always been, and it

**And then the bad times came. Scheduling conflicts led to the cancelling of the Festival in 1999, though John McCutcheon still came to do a concert on that last Saturday of April...but he performed in the BAC at St. Ben's, not at St. John's.**

1999 04 22 p.3 *The Record* "Swayed Pines cancelled for summer"

2000 April 30 (Sunday) "27th annual" booths & music but no contest or concert; Pinestock on Saturday

2001 April 28 (Saturday) no festival, but John McCutcheon concert in BAC, 8 pm [last JT]



FEBRUARY 10, 2000

## Swayed Pines is back for a 27th year at Saint John's University

Saint John's University and Viking Coca-Cola proudly announce the 27th annual Swayed Pines, a better-than-ever, fun-filled day of crafts, food and music for you, your family and friends. Preparations are now being made for the Sunday, April 30 festival at SJU. The event will take place from 12 to 5 p.m. at the Warner Palaestra and surrounding grounds on the SJU campus. Parking is free at the event and bus service will be provided to and from parking lots at SJU during the festival.

Swayed Pines has taken on a slightly different, improved look as we enter 2000. The event, which has moved back to its original weekend, will take place on Sunday, April 30.

In addition to the many unique artists' booths and the tempting varieties of foods found at Swayed Pines, this year's entertainment will run all day, completely free and open to the public. Guests will be entertained with unique folk and Bluegrass music throughout the day, replacing the fiddling contest and evening concert. This year's entertainment will include the "Pretty Good Bluegrass Band" and "Big Skyota."

Swayed Pines coordinators are currently recruiting volunteers to assist with the event. If you are interested in volunteering the day of the event, please contact Nicole Ruhn at (320) 363-2594.

Volunteers are needed for parking, to staff the information booth, to check-in crafters and food vendors, and to mark craft and food booths before the event.

Applications for the craft fair can be obtained by calling (320) 363-2594 or by checking out the Swayed Pines web site at <http://www.csbsju.edu/swayed-pines>. The deadline for crafter applications is Feb. 15.

2000

<http://www.csbsju.edu/Connections/news4.htm>

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connections CAMPUS NEWS

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But in 2000, *The Record* and the online campus newsletter *Connections* both promoted the "27<sup>th</sup> Annual" Swayed Pines event – with *The Record* referring to it as "slightly different" and "improved," and again featuring food, artist booths, and musicians – but it was held only from noon-5 pm on the last *Sunday* of April, with *no fiddle contest or evening concert*. Contributing to its demise was the tightening funding, the difficulties finding volunteers, some years of nasty weather, and the retirement of founder and chief advocate Lee Hanley.

2000 02 10 p.2 *The Record* "Swayed Pines is back for 27th year"

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/CSBArchNews/id/34314/rec/73>

2000-04-27 to 2000-05-03 p. 4 *Connections Online*

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/CSBArchNews/id/33981/rec/74>

# Swayed Pines revisits mysterious past

By Doug Truam  
dtruam@csbsju.edu

CSB/SJU used to host Swayed Pines Music Festival, one of the largest bluegrass festivals in the country. Today, few people remember the festival.

Junior MJ Bach is trying to do something about that. Bach has organized a group of students and community members that hopes to resurrect the glory of the extinct festival. This group will host Swayed Pines Revisited Sunday at noon on Watah Peninsula.

Word about the festival traveled by month. Bach heard about the festival from senior Richard Cava.

"Richard told me about the festival and asked me to help her to bring it back to campus," Bach said.

And when they brought the festival back, Cava wanted to add a sustainable element by using local foods and using compostable dinnerware.

Cava made a list of tasks they had to do for the event, but completing all the tasks proved challenging.

"I wish that we had another year to plan," Bach said. "Over the summer it was way too hard to get things done when we couldn't meet face-to-face."

**Finding musicians**

Swayed Pines of the past had included noted bluegrass acts like Arlo Guthrie, Big Mule and SFL alumnus John McCutcheon.

Bach had hoped to get McCutcheon to headline the festival.

"When I talked to John McCutcheon he was really excited and he asked us to pick a day that we would be able to come," Bach said.

So they set the date for Sunday when

## SET LIST

Noon - 1 p.m. Arlo More!  
1-2 p.m. Gary Jepperson & co.  
2-3 p.m. Culliganville Station  
3-4 p.m. Bill & Kate Isles  
4-5 p.m. Mark Kreitzer Band

McCutcheon was free. But when Bach tried to book him she found out that he charged \$5,000 plus airfare to play. Working with no funding, Bach had to scratch McCutcheon from the festival.

Likely, Bach found some acts that would play for free.

"Mark Kreitzer is playing for free because he played at Swayed Pines with a different band so he was just excited to be a part of it again," Bach said.

Bill and Kate Isles, a folk act from Duluth, also agreed to play for free.

Swayed Pines will include a student act, Axel More!, made up of seniors Ben Schulte and Pat Hayes.

"They play guitar and rocks their socks off," Hayes said. "I play keyboard and fiddle their oculars out."

Hayes had heard of the Swayed Pines festival, but when he saw the event listed on Facebook, he asked if they needed anyone else to play.

Hayes said their music blends many influences including techno, folk and polka.

"We call it neo-folk," he said.

KJNH, the campus radio station, agreed to compensate musicians for their traveling costs. Campus Green, a club that promotes sustainability, funded the pot-and-poppies and compostable dinnerware.

**The History**

Although Bach organized this year's Swayed Pines, she admitted that she doesn't know much about the original festival.

"I know that the first Swayed Pines was in '73 and one happened every year for at least 20 years," Bach said, "but other than that I don't know a whole lot."

Bach did get a clue about the festival's past from physical plant electrician Gary Jorgensen. Jorgensen told her that he estimated Swayed Pines crowds once reached 15,000 people. Jorgensen also told her Lee Hanley, who formerly worked in the communications department, founded the festival.

"When I contacted Hanley, he said he was the founder; it was a group



Kate and Bill Isles perform at the Knife River Folk Festival.

## IF YOU GO

When: Noon - 5 p.m., Sunday  
Where: Watah Peninsula  
Cost: A \$5 suggested donation

# Swayed Pines

SJU sophomore aims to restore annual folk music festival to its early heyday



PHOTO COURTESY OF SIERRA KAPPAN'S FACEBOOK  
Minnesota folk band Cedar Coast performs during the 2014 Swayed Pines

By Nicole Pederson  
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Like the row of leaning trees by Clemens Stadium for which the concert is named, Swayed Pines is an event that has deep roots in the history of CSB/SJU.

Ask alumni of any generation and they will all tell you the same thing.

"I still miss it," said Peggy Roske, a '77 graduate of CSB and current CSB/SJU archivist who attended the first Swayed Pines and many after that.

"It was always fun with good music that you're not used to hearing all of the time," said Pat Pederson, '83 graduate of SJU.

"I remember one year Arlo Guthrie came and sang his popular song 'Alice's Restaurant.' It was an anti-Vietnam War song and he sang for 25-30 minutes. It was amazing to see it in person," said Larry Schug, a resident of St. Joseph that attended a number of Swayed Pines in the 90s.

This year, SJU sophomore George Dornbach is coordinating the event with the aim to restore

the idea of it enticed me," said Dornbach, theater major and Japanese and art minor. "They always remembered it as the outdoor festival with great folk music. That setting and atmosphere to me gives me goosebumps."

Dornbach has not been able to attend a Swayed Pines yet as last year's concert was cancelled.

This year, however, Dornbach will be coordinating Swayed Pines with hopes to revive the historic spirit of Swayed Pines. The event will take place from 7-10 p.m. on Tuesday at the Great Hall at SJU.

The first Swayed Pines was a weekend festival in the spring of 1974 and was organized by a group of students. It began as a fiddle contest for that also included a concert with folk singer John McCutcheon, a '74 graduate from SJU, and the event was emceed by Garrison Kellor, author and host of Minnesota Public Radio's "Prairie Home Companion."

"I remember Garrison shouldering his auto-harp to play, along with some of the fiddlers or John during the concert," Roske said.

From there, it only rolled on

members and musicians would flock to. Attendees would include anyone from a four-year-old fiddler strumming for the contest to a 90-year-old music enthusiast. A craft fair was added that displayed the arts of about 75-100 vendors. In later years, hot air balloon rides gave students the birds-eye view of the event.

Swayed Pines' heyday lasted about 25 years until it trailed off in the late 90s after being defunded. During this time began the reign of PineStock (now known as the Pines concert series). After a short hiatus, attempts were made to revive the spirit of the historic Swayed Pines. The concert series began again, but without the same zest of the past.

"The event has kind of dwindled in years," Dornbach said. "That happens as time passes and music changes and people's views change as well, but I still think it's an important event."

Dornbach, seeing the potential to restore Swayed Pines to its former glory, was determined to "strum life back into the event."

Swayed Pines this year will still exist from the past by start-

2015

2008

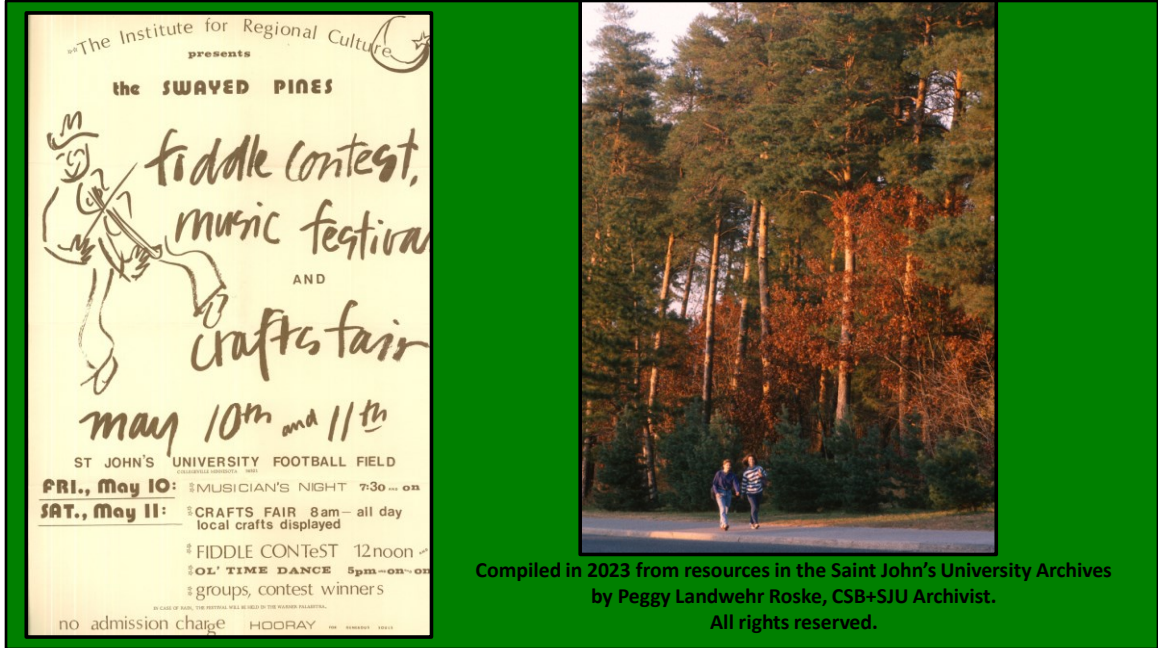
Years later, there were a few attempts to "revisit" or "restore" Swayed Pines (or at least to resurrect the name), but the momentum had been lost. A significant disadvantage was the change to the academic calendar; when the January Interim month requirement was removed in 2001, commencements moved up to Mother's Day weekend instead of the end of May, so the last weekend of April was now close to finals week, and there were just too many events to squeeze into April.

2008 09 11 p.4 *The Record* "Swayed Pines Revisits Mysterious Past"

2015 10 09 p.4 *The Record* "SJU sophomore seeks to restore annual folk music festival"

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/CSBArchNews/id/29898/rec/76>





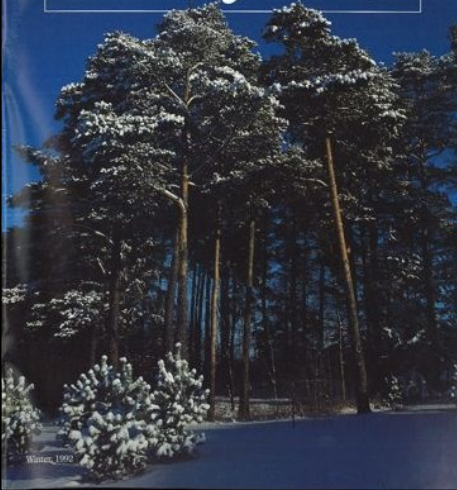
**So now the term Swayed Pines really does refer only to the trees themselves.**

First Swayed Pines poster, 1974, from the personal collection of the archivist; donated to SJU Archives

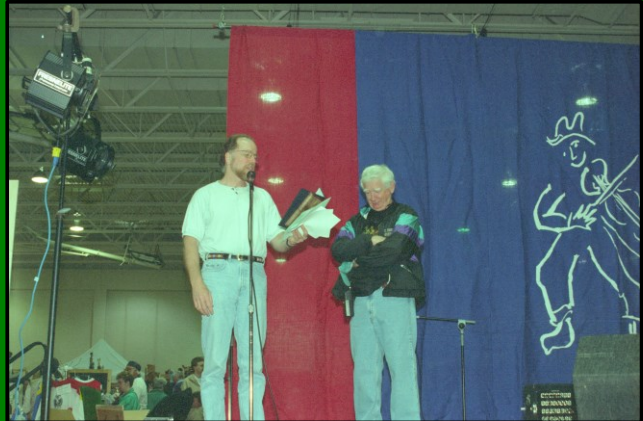
SJU Archives, 35/4 Box1

Photo: O:\Archives\SJUArchives\Images\Public Relations Office Photos - PC 08\Vol 04\04-008 Swayed Pines - Trees, not Festival 1989\TIFF\image09.TIF

# SAINT JOHN'S

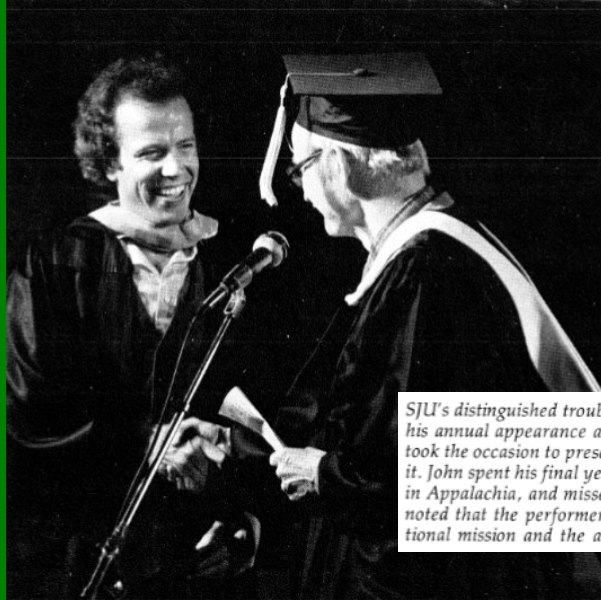


## Addenda



1992 January (winter) The Swayed Pines grace the *Saint John's Magazine* cover  
<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/5524/rec/113>

1997: Lee Hanley, retiring from Saint John's, being thanked by John McCutcheon  
O:\Archives\SJUArchives\Images\Public Relations Office Photos - PC 08\Vol 03\03-088 Swayed Pines 1997\TIFF\Image03.TIF



1983:  
Troubador  
John McCutcheon  
gets his diploma

*SJU's distinguished troubador John McCutcheon '74 returned to the campus April 30 for his annual appearance at the Swayed Pines Festival. SJU Registrar William Van Cleve took the occasion to present John with his degree – ten years after he completed work for it. John spent his final year of college performing and doing research on traditional music in Appalachia, and missed his own commencement. In presenting the degree, VanCleve noted that the performer "represents the union we so much prize between our educational mission and the arts." Photo by Bob Jensen.*

1983 Summer *SJU Alumni Magazine*, p. 23

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/5512/rec/67>

1974 First Swayed Pines – emcees Garrison Keillor, Tom Kay  
 1975 Saint John's article by Paul Cofell – emcees are Garrison Keillor and WCCO-FM's Tom Ambrose  
 1976 Garrison emcees; no concert headliner; only one day, unlike two previous events  
 1977 Garrison does PHC from Festival w/Mary DuShane; Guy Carawan & John McCutcheon do Wed. evening concert, Guy does Saturday concert  
 1978 Included a panel on Stearns Co. history. Wry Straw ("John McCutcheon Trio") for Saturday concert  
 1979 John McCutcheon & Wry Straw again; included panel on "the creative genius evident in Central Minnesota"; PHC show from auditorium  
 1980 "Stearns County Syndrome" morning panel; John McCutcheon ("4th time") & Reel World String Band  
 1981 included symposium; on Saturday before students back from break.  
 1982 Concert: Elizabeth Cotten, Mike Seeger, John McCutcheon, and the New Prairie Ramblers  
 1983 John McCutcheon & Bryan Bowers ; John gets his diploma from Bill Van Cleve  
 1984 John McCutcheon  
 1985 Doc Watson  
 1986 John McCutcheon in SBHS Friday night; Taj Mahal concert Sat. night  
 1987 April 25 (Saturday) Fiddle Fest included hot air balloons; Greg Brown & John McCutcheon  
 1988 John McCutcheon & Claudia Schmitt  
 1989 Arlo Guthrie & Tom Paxton  
 1990 John McCutcheon & Tom Chapin  
 1991 John McCutcheon & Gregory Gladkov  
 1992 John McCutcheon & Schooner Fair  
 1993 John McCutcheon & John Prine  
 1994 John McCutcheon & Holly Near & "Roots & Wings" workshops  
 1995 Guthrie & Livingston Taylor  
 1996 John McCutcheon & Eddie Havens  
 1997 April 26 (Saturday) John McCutcheon  
 1998 April 25 (Saturday) "25th annual" John McCutcheon's 17th time; contest, crafts, food  
 1999 April 24 (Saturday) festival cancelled due to scheduling conflicts; John McCutcheon concert in BAC, 2 pm  
 2000 April 30 (Sunday) "27th annual" booths & music, but no contest or concert; Pinestock on Saturday  
 2001 April 28 (Saturday) no festival, but John McCutcheon concert in BAC, 8 pm [last JT]

## **Complete List of Swayed Pines Festival Performers 1974-2000**

Swayed Pines reminiscences, written by Lee Hanley, May 1, 2006

The first annual Swayed Pines Festival was organized by a group of students in the spring of 1974. The ringleader was a student from South Dakota, David Kemp, who had attended a similar event in his home state.

Plans were to hold the first event on the football field in the shadow of the tall pine trees that rim the western edge of the natural bowl. Westerly winds over the years have given the row of trees an "easterly lean," hence the title, "Swayed Pines." I think calling it the "first annual" was something of a joke. It rained much of the day so the entire program was moved into the athletic facility, the Warner Palaestra. Later organizers of Swayed Pines, which continued for 25 years, never again considered moving outdoors.

I was on campus for an unrelated alumni event that day and happened to stop by the Palaestra to see what had attracted a crowd. They were in the midst of the fiddle contest and it was clearly a success and a crowd pleaser. I was impressed by the variety of people in the crowd – old people, young people, kids in strollers, people in wheelchairs, representatives of a variety of ethnic groups. It seemed a delightful cross section of humanity. It struck me that far too few academic campus events attract and serve such an impressive variety of people.

The next week I approached a colleague, SJU Development Director Mike Ricci, and suggested that we look into sustaining Swayed Pines as an annual event. He was persuaded, and the two of us approached the president, Fr. Michael Blecker, and made our case. He responded that he would budget \$1,500 for each of the next two years to assist in keeping the event alive. "However," he said, "If you are not able to make it break even by the third year we will discontinue it."

The first two Swayed Pines were weekend or two-day events. A traditional German band played old time dance music on the Palaestra stage on Sunday afternoon. This part of the program proved to be too much work and less successful and it was discontinued in the third year. Swayed Pines always broke even or realized a small profit. Whenever there was a profit planners were authorized to carry it over and invest it to enhance or strengthen the next year's production. As an example, one year we used part of the profits from the previous year to contract with a Peruvian pan pipe group to perform outside on the lawn throughout the afternoon.

1995 01 *SJU Alumni Magazine* p. 20

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/10090/rec/2>

Typically we would have 60-70 fiddlers competing in half a dozen categories of playing. The young kids were always particularly popular with the crowd. In the early years we usually had one or two fiddlers under the age of 12. In the final few years we had as many as a dozen under 12. We liked to think that this event and others like it were being successful in passing the folk art of fiddling along to another generation.

In addition to the fiddling competition the event also featured a crafts fair with as many as 150 crafts booths in and outside.

Swayed Pines also featured an evening concert each year – the only part of the day-long program that required a ticket for entrance. John McCutcheon was a featured performer for at least 20 of the 25 years. John would play the first half of the show and then we would present another big name from the folk tradition. Our performers over the years included John Prine, Taj Majal, Tom Paxton, Schooner Fare, Libba Cotton (composer of Freight Train), Guy Carawan (composer of We Shall Overcome), Claudia Schmidt, Bryan Bowers, Livingston Taylor, Loudon Wainwright III, Richie Havens and Arlo Guthrie (twice).

When the first Swayed Pines was organized Garrison Keillor was still broadcasting from the Saint John's University MPR affiliate. He emceed the first program and for approximately eight years, until his Saturday afternoon Prairie Home Companion show took his attention on Saturday afternoons, he returned each year to co-emcee the fiddle contest.

Swayed Pines became a huge campus event, attracting as many as 12,000 visitors for the day. It was strangely popular among Saint John's employees who turned out in droves to volunteer as workers for the day. Saint John's owes special gratitude to the-late Joe Faber of Viking Coke and the wonderful Viking staff. Especially in the second and third year, Viking's sponsorship helped to secure Swayed Pines as an annual event. The Viking staff, all volunteer, would set up their booth and sell Coke and popcorn throughout the day. All proceeds were turned over to the event. Faber told me that his employees were so excited about being a part of the event that they would begin signing up as volunteers as early as February. (Swayed Pines was always the last Saturday of April.)

Swayed Pines was discontinued in 1999. I had retired in 1997 so I am not informed on the details. I recall that the Warner Palaestra was undergoing a major renovation during that year so our event had temporarily lost its home.

Lee Hanley, May 1, 2006

Some of Lee's remarks here were published in the summer 1997 alumni magazine (page 4?) <https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/5542/rec/125>