



Fred Beavers
Fiddler

In 1991, Fred Beavers won the coveted Grand Championship of the Louisiana State Fiddlers' contest. He'd come a long way since he started playing the fiddle at the age of 13. He now owns ten fiddles and repairs fiddles in his spare time. Sometimes referred to as "Fiddlin' Fred," Beavers entered the competition four times before he won the championship. Each year, he would place in the senior division only to be defeated in the grand championship round.

Beavers, who is from north of Simsboro, learned to play the fiddle by listening to other fiddlers. He still plays by ear rather than by reading sheet music. He worked as a management technician for Arkla Energy Resources in Ruston, Louisiana. Beavers was a member of "The Grey Eagles String Band." The old-time country string band tradition in north Louisiana draws on the upland south string band tradition including Texas swing and the mountain music of northern Arkansas and Alabama. "The Grey Eagles String Band" also showed the influence of live country music radio, especially as it was played at the Louisiana Hayride in the 1940s and 1950s. The band still plays the breakdowns and waltzes familiar to Louisiana families and communities.

Mr. Beavers has not only played at the Louisiana Folklife Festival, the Dixie Jamboree in Ruston, and in several local dance clubs, but has also performed with his group at the Claiborne Parish Fine Arts Festival and the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival. He has also served as a judge in the Louisiana State Fiddle Championship.

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