

# THE CLAY PIPER

## First Coast Highlanders Newsletter

Volume 7, Issue 3

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November 2022

### Member Spotlight



This month in our member spotlight we wanted to recognize one of our up and coming student pipers, Yuri Brown. Yuri is 11 years old and home schooled by his mother at the sixth grade level.

He came to us 3 years ago interested in learning to play the pipes and jumped in with a great curiosity. Yuri is currently playing with First Coast Highlanders Provisional students. He continues to work hard at joining the piping circle as a full time piper. Yuri continually also participates at many of First Coast Highlanders events and continues to grow, advancing his piping skills. With the majority of the band members being in the upper age bracket its nice to know Yuri is the future of First Coast Highlanders. I asked Yuri to provide us with a little bit of who he is and he responded with "I'm just a kid."

**WHERE ARE YOU FROM?** I was born in Elizabethtown, Kentucky. Shortly after that we moved to Jacksonville, FL, where I spent half of my childhood. We now live in the small town of Lawtey, FL. .

**WHAT DO YOU DO FOR A LIVING?** I am just a kid and I spend a lot of time learning everything. I had a job feeding horses for my neighbor, but they no longer have horses. My family has a small homestead where we have 14 chickens, 3 bunnies, and a jungle of a garden of which I share in assigned chores along with my school work.

**CURRENT FAMILY:** My dad Chad and mom Sofya. I have one brother Alec. Besides our farm animals we also have a cat Mittens and our yellow lab Summer.

**HOW DID YOU COME TO First Coast Highlanders?** My dad showed me a video of a person playing Bagpipes, and I thought it sounded cool. Thinking that bagpipes were only played and taught in Scot-

land, we did an internet search and amazingly we found First Coast Highlanders where I have been for the past three years learning to play. It was also great that First Coast Highlanders meets just across the street from the music school where I take my violin lessons.

**WHAT HAVE YOU ACCOMPLISHED AT YOUR YOUNG AGE?** Participated in the Longleaf Pine Youth Fiddle Contest receiving 3<sup>rd</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place. I hold a Grey Belt in Jiu Jitsu. During a recent trip to Central Asia, visiting my grandmother, I am arguably one of the first person to bring Scottish bagpipe music there.

**WHAT ARE YOUR FUTURE GOALS?** I like to cook and prepare meals, I want to advance my skills in the culinary arts.

### CONGRATULATIONS

**Nikki Herbst** has been advanced to First Coast Highlanders Provisional Piper level. Nikki has dedicated the past several months improving her piping skills while on Vacation. She has been advanced from the student level. She recently acquired a set of David Booth pipes at an auction while in Pennsylvania.

### WELCOME

A hardy welcome from First Coast Highlanders to **Joe Schnur**. Joe comes to us as an experienced piper of 20+ years. He is rekindling his bagpipe skills after a little break, saying "he is older and learning is much slower." We also want to welcome our new piping students **Brett Darling** and **Aaron Kinman**. Both come with musical experience and it won't be long before they will be playing bagpipes. First Coast Highlanders also has new drumming students in our wings. **Corey Morris**, & brother /sister **Zarak** and **Samantha White**. Corey, Zarak, and Samantha are receiving instruction on the snare drum. With an aging drum section it's good to have young blood in the band. **WELCOME ABOARD TO YOU ALL**

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Thanks for all your support.

## Up and Coming Events

Nov. 11, 2022—Friday— 11:00 am—**Veteran's Day Memorial Service**—Magnolia Cemetery, Orange Park

Nov. 12, 2022—Saturday—12:00 pm—**Middleburg Fall Festival**—Palmetto Street, Middleburg, FL

Dec. 17, 2022—Saturday—TBA—**Battle of the Bulge Militaria Show**—North Florida Military Museum, Green Cove Springs, FL

### NEW YEAR 2023

Jan. 12, 2023—Thursday—11:00 am—**Ron Parker Memorial Service**—Ron Parker Park, St. Augustine Beach, FL

Jan. 23, 2023—Sunday—10:30 am—**Kirkin of the Tartan**—Saint Simon Island Presbyterian Church, St. Simon Island, GA

Jan. 30, 2023—Sunday—10:30 am—**Kirkin of the Tartan**—1st Presbyterian Church, Jacksonville, FL

Feb. 19, 2023—Sunday—10:00 am—**Kirkin of the Tartan**—Saint Giles Presbyterian Church, Orange Park, FL

Feb. 25, 2023—Saturday—9am-5pm—**NE FL Scottish Games**—Clay County Fairgrounds, Green Cove Springs, FL

## Past Events



Just completed the USO Armed Forces 1/2 Marathon. This is always a fun event with great folks, good food and some awesome awards. First Coast Highlanders entertained the running veterans with some bagpipes and drums playing our military song set: Army, Marines, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard tunes. We also received a special finish the race medal playing Scotland the Brave over the finish line.

Lots of Fun.

September 24th First Coast Highlanders entertained the crowds with bagpipes and drums at the 2022 SHED (Scottish Heritage Education Day) event in Green Cove Springs, Clay County Fairgrounds. This event was organized by the St Andrew Society of Jacksonville. A great day to explore your Scottish heritage. Food trucks were there to feed the masses as well as the several events to explain Scottish History. Dancers, Bagpipes, Scottish speaking educators. Great Day.



## Scottish New Year

It may surprise many people to note that Christmas was not celebrated as a festival and virtually banned in Scotland for around 400 years, from the end of the 17th century to the 1950s. The reason for this and so it was, right up until the 1950s that many Scots worked over Christmas and celebrated their winter solstice holiday at New Year, when family and friends would gather for a party and to exchange presents which came to be known as Hogmanay.

It is believed that many of the traditional Hogmanay celebrations were originally brought to Scotland by the invading Vikings in the early 8th and 9th centuries. These Norsemen, or men from an even more northerly latitude than Scotland, paid particular attention to the arrival of the Winter Solstice or the shortest day, and fully intended to celebrate its passing with some serious partying.

There are several traditions and superstitions that should be taken care of before midnight on the 31st December: these include cleaning the house and taking out the ashes from the fire, there is also the requirement to clear all your debts before "the bells" sound midnight, the underlying message being to clear out the remains of the old year, have a clean break and welcome in a young, New Year on a happy note. Immediately after midnight it is traditional to sing Robert Burns' "Auld Lang Syne". Burns published his version of this popular little ditty in 1788, although the tune was in print over 80 years before this.

Happy New Year to you all.



## Music — Author - AMAZING GRACE

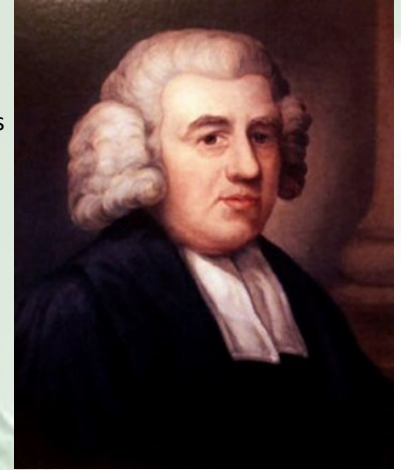
Amazing Grace - The origin of the melody is unknown. Most hymnals attribute it to an early American folk melody. Some speculated that it may have originated as the tune of a song the slaves sang. Amazing Grace is often referred to as the Cherokee National Anthem. In 1972 the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards recorded an instrumental version arranged for the bagpipes. It hit number 1 in the UK singles chart, spending 24 weeks total on the charts.

Who wrote the lyrics of Amazing Grace? It was written by John Newton, born in London July 24, 1725. His mother, who had died of tuberculosis when he was six years old, just gave him an early religious instruction. John, while his father - a commander of a merchant ship which sailed the Mediterranean - was at sea, spent some time at school where he was mistreated because of his headstrong disobedience. At the age of eleven, he joined his father on a ship as an apprentice. When his father retired John was forced to enlist on a British man-of-war. Finding conditions on board intolerable, he deserted but was soon recaptured and publicly flogged and demoted from midshipman to common seaman. Finally, the disgraced sailor was exchanged to the crew of a slave ship bound for Africa. John Newton ultimately became captain of his own ship, one which plied the slave trade.

One night of May 10, 1748, on a homeward voyage, a terrible storm battered his vessel so severely that he became frightened enough to call out to God for mercy, a moment that marked the beginning of his spiritual conversion. He recorded in his journal that God had addressed him through the storm and that grace had begun to work for him.

Newton's conversion was not immediate, and he continued in the slave trade; however, he saw to it that the slaves under his care were treated humanely. In 1750 he married Mary Catlett, with whom he had been in love for many years. By 1755, after a serious illness, he had given up seafaring forever. He began studying theology.

He decided to become a minister and applied to the Archbishop of York for ordination. The archbishop refused his request, but Newton persisted in his goal, and he was subsequently ordained (at his 6th attempt) by the Bishop of Lincoln and accepted the curacy of Olney, Buckinghamshire. Newton's church became so crowded during services that it had to be enlarged. He preached not only in Olney but in other parts of the country. In 1767 the poet William Cowper (a gifted writer who had failed at a career in law) and John Newton became friends. Cowper helped Newton with his religious services. Their goal was to write a new hymn for each weekly prayer meeting. Together, their effect on the local congregation was impressive and they met an increasing number of parishioners. "Amazing Grace" was written to illustrate a sermon on New Year's Day of 1773. Newton died in London at the age of 82, blind, and continuing to preach until the last year of life.



**1. Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound,  
That saved a wretch like me...  
I once was lost but now am found,  
Was blind, but now, I see.**

**3. Through many dangers, toils, and snares...  
we have already come.  
T'was Grace that brought us safe thus far  
and Grace will lead us home.**

**5. Yea, when this flesh and heart shall fail,  
And mortal life shall cease,  
I shall possess, within the veil,  
A life of joy and peace.**

**7. When we've been here ten thousand years  
bright shining as the sun.  
We've no less days to sing God's praise  
then when we've first begun.**

**2. T'was Grace that taught...  
my heart to fear.  
And Grace, my fears relieved.  
How precious did that Grace appear...  
the hour I first believed.**

**4. The Lord has promised good to me...  
His word my hope secures.  
He will my shield and portion be...  
as long as life endures.**

**6. The earth shall soon dissolve like snow,  
The sun forbear to shine;  
But God, who called me here below,  
Shall be forever mine.**

**8. Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound,  
That saved a wretch like me...  
I once was lost but now am found,  
Was blind, but now, I see.**

May your heart  
always be full  
&  
May your glass  
never be empty  
—  
Sláinte!

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We are registered under s.496 405, Florida Statutes, the Solicitation of Contributions Act, registration number CH36692, expiration date

June 15, 2023, and we are a 501 C (3) non-profit charitable organization, and all donations are tax deductible.

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