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## MEDIA RELEASE

# Alaskan veterinarian and son on world piping stage

August 07, 2012

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### Photos:

<http://at.sfu.ca/yVoYO> (Michael at North Berwick)

<http://at.sfu.ca/rJWPAI> (Michael at practice)

<http://at.sfu.ca/davCHt> (Michael at practice)

<http://at.sfu.ca/QAQjgR> (Carraig in orange toque, beside Pipe Sergeant Jack Lee)

<http://at.sfu.ca/HPWtrs> (Carraig in orange toque)

Michael New would be the first to admit he stands out a little in the midst of a “youth” pipe band. At 55, the piper from Juneau, Alaska has played for the past few years with Simon Fraser University’s junior band, the Robert Malcolm Memorial (RMM) Gr. 3 band, alongside pipers and drummers who are mostly in their 20s.

New, who grew up in Detroit, moved to Alaska in 1990. A veterinarian, he has been a piper for more than 20 years, playing with bands in Alaska and more recently taking lessons virtually via Skype and online with SFU Pipe Sergeant Jack Lee, along with his 13-year-old son Carraig, an RMM Gr. 4 piper who first picked up the pipes when he was six.

Both bands are in Scotland, along with SFU’s elite Gr. 1 band, to compete at the World Pipe Band Championships in Glasgow on Aug. 11.

With them is New’s 16-year old son Padraig, a drummer. And joining them for the Worlds will be his daughter Máire, a dancer, currently attending the Bolshoi Ballet dance summer intensive school in New York.

“These are some of our furthest afield members and both are very hard working pipers,” says Jack Lee, pipe sergeant of the elite Gr. 1 band and pipe major of Carraig’s Gr. 4 band.

The RMM piping pair flew down from Alaska for the recent Pacific Northwest Highland games near Seattle - where both RMM bands placed first – then continued on to Scotland.

Following the Gr. 3’s performance at the North Berwick Highland Games on Saturday in Scotland, New conceded that performing on a world stage is little intimidating. “It felt good when we played,” he says, “but I have to admit, I’m a little nervous waiting for the results.”

Both bands did well, with the Gr. 3's taking second place and the Gr. 4's, third.

The News and their bands will play performances at Glasgow's George Square on Wednesday. The rest of the week will involve intense practice as they prepare for the Worlds on Saturday.

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