

2017 Vandalia Gathering Contest Winners Announced

CHARLESTON, W.Va. – West Virginia’s champion old-time fiddle, bluegrass banjo and mandolin players, traditional pound cake and favorite family cookie bakers competed for top honors on Saturday, May 27, during the West Virginia Division of Culture and History’s 41st annual Vandalia Gathering. On Sunday, May 28, old-time banjo, lap dulcimer, flatpick guitar musicians and liars vied for awards.

Youth Old-Time Fiddle (age 15 and under)

- 1st place – Kaylee Polk, Red House
- 2nd place – Liam Farley, Chapmanville
- 3rd place – Jensine Atkins, Scott Depot

Old-Time Fiddle (age 59 and under)

- 1st place – Jenny Allinder, St. Albans
- 2nd place – Jerrica Hilbert, St. Albans
- 3rd place – Jesse Pearson, Huntington
- 4th place – Tessa Dillon, Morgantown
- 5th place – Chloe Sergent, Milton

Senior Old-Time Fiddle (age 60 and over)

- 1st place – Greg Bentle, Huntington
- 2nd place – Jim Mullins, St. Albans
- 3rd place – John Morris, Ivydale
- 4th place – Paul Epstein, Charleston
- 5th place – John Longwell, Gandeeville

Mandolin (all ages)

- 1st place – Matt Hiser, Spanishburg
- 2nd place - Dan Kessinger, St. Marys
- 3rd place – Chandler Beavers, White Sulphur Springs
- 4th place – Jake Eddy, Parkersburg
- 5th place – D.J. Kessinger, St. Marys

Bluegrass Banjo (all ages)

- 1st place – Jake Eddy, Parkersburg
- 2nd place – David Asti, Charles Town
- 3rd place – Seth Marsteller, Mill Creek
- 4th place – Al Barnett, Parkersburg
- 5th place – Bradley Thompson, Nitro

Lap Dulcimer (all ages)

- 1st place – Nick Freeman, St. Albans
- 2nd place – Ezra Drumheller, Prosperity
- 3rd place – Jesse Pearson, Huntington
- 4th place – Martha Turley, Ona
- 5th place – Leah Mabry, Beckley

Old-Time Banjo (59 and under)

- 1st place – Tim Bing, Huntington
- 2nd place – Trevor Hammons, Marlinton
- 3rd place – Nick Freeman, St. Albans

4th place – Hunter Walker, Beckley

5th place – Jarrod Saul, Sumerco

Senior Old-Time Banjo (age 60 and over)

1st place – Dave Bing, Gandeeville

2nd place – Paul Gartner, Yawkey

3rd place – Jim Mullins, St. Albans

4th place – John Morris, Ivydale

5th place – Dwight Diller – Marlinton

Youth Flatpick Guitar (age 15 and under)

1st place – Carter Eddy, Parkersburg

Flatpick Guitar (all ages)

1st place – Adam Hager, Ripley

2nd place – Robin Kessinger, St. Albans

3rd place – Jamie Rhodes, Culloden

4th place – Bryant Underwood, Charleston

5th place – Jarrod Saul, Sumerco

Liars (all ages)

Biggest Liar (1st place and *Goldenseal* magazine's Golden Shovel award) James Froemel, Maudsville

Bigger Liar (2nd place) Ian Nolte, Huntington

Big Liar (3rd place) –Pete Kosky, Charleston

Youth (age 15 and under, and *Goldenseal* magazine's Golden Shovel award) Jack Froemel, Maudsville

Favorite Family Cookies (all ages)

1st place – Ella Hoffman, South Charleston

Youth (age 15 and under) Kendall Atkins, Scott Depot

Pound Cake (all ages)

1st place – Bridget Pauley, Pinch

2nd place – Ella Hoffman, South Charleston

3rd place – Karen Cobbs, Charleston

The annual Vandalia Gathering is a free celebration of the traditional arts, music, dance, stories, crafts and foods of West Virginia. The Culture Center and State Capitol Complex grounds host this expanding family-style gathering each year on Memorial Day weekend. The unique blending of ethnic and cultural heritage combines an atmosphere as comfortable as a family reunion with the excitement of a state fair. The statewide folk festival, named for the proposed 14th colony, pays tribute to the state's ethnic heritage through a variety of exhibitions and programs.

The West Virginia Division of Culture and History is an agency within the Office of Secretary of Education and the Arts with Gayle Manchin, cabinet secretary. The division, led by Commissioner Randall Reid-Smith, brings together the past, present and future through programs and services focusing on archives and history, arts, historic preservation and museums. For more information about the division's programs, events and sites, visit www.wvculture.org. The Division of Culture and History is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.