

2018 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 bar cookie bakers competed for top honors on Saturday, May 26, during the West Virginia Division of Culture and History’s 42nd annual Vandalia Gathering. On Sunday, May 27, old-time banjo, lap dulcimer, flatpick guitar musicians and liars vied for awards.

Youth Old-Time Fiddle (age 15 and under)

- 1st place – Liam Farley, Chapmanville
- 2nd place – Silas Powell, Jane Lew
- 3rd place – Kaylee Polk, Red House

Old-Time Fiddle (age 59 and under)

- 1st place – Jake Krack, Marlinton
- 2nd place – Tessa Dillon, Morgantown
- 3rd place – Jesse Pearson, Huntington
- 4th place – Dan Kessinger, St. Marys
- 5th place – Johnny Cochran, Elkins

Senior Old-Time Fiddle (age 60 and over)

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

Mandolin (all ages)

- 1st place – David Asti, Charles Town
- 2nd place – Luke Shamblin, Elkiew
- 3rd place – Dan Kessinger, St. Marys
- 4th place – Robin Kessinger, St. Albans
- 5th place – Chandler Beavers, White Sulphur Springs

Bluegrass Banjo (all ages)

- 1st place – David Asti, Charles Town
- 2nd place – Nick Freeman, Charleston
- 3rd place – Seth Marstiller, Mill Creek
- 4th place – Cary Landis, Morgantown
- 5th place – Silas Powell, Jane Lew

Lap Dulcimer (all ages)

- 1st place – Hunter Walker, Beckley
- 2nd place – David O’Dell, Glenville
- 3rd place – Ezra Drumheller, Prosperity
- 4th place – Leah Mabry, Beckley
- 5th place – Martha Turley, Ona

Old-Time Banjo (59 and under)

- 1st place – Nick Freeman, St. Albans
- 2nd place – Hunter Walker, Beckley
- 3rd place – Pete Kosky, Charleston

4th place – David O’Dell, Glenville

5th place – Jesse Pearson, Huntington

Senior Old-Time Banjo (age 60 and over)

1st place – Jim Mullins, St. Albans

2nd place – Paul Gartner, Yawkey

3rd place – John Morris, Ivydale

4th place – Dwight Diller – Marlinton

Youth Flatpick Guitar (age 15 and under)

1st place – Hazel Riley, Hillsboro

2nd place – Silas Powell, Jane Lew

Flatpick Guitar (all ages)

1st place – Bryant Underwood, Charleston

2nd place – Robin Kessinger, St. Albans

3rd place – Matt Lindsey, Culloden

4th place – Dan Kessinger, St. Marys

5th place – Jarrod Saul, Sumerco

Liars (all ages)

Biggest Liar (1st place and *Goldenseal* magazine’s Golden Shovel award) Kennie Bass, Dunbar

Bigger Liar (2nd place) David Yaussey, Charleston

Big Liar (3rd place) Nancy Belle Anderson, Charleston

Youth (age 15 and under, and *Goldenseal* magazine’s Golden Shovel award) Zane Wilkinson, Ovapa

Favorite Family Bar Cookies (all ages)

1st place – Lisa Asti, Charles Town

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

Pound Cake (all ages)

1st place – Holly Baker, Charleston

2nd place – Karen Cobbs, Charleston

3rd place – Lynna Middleton, 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.