2003 Vandalia Contest Winners

Champion fiddle, bluegrass banjo and mandolin players today competed for prizes during the 27th annual Vandalia Gathering. Two categories of fiddlers—those 60 years of age and over and those under 60 years of age—were recognized. The other two contests included all ages.

Winners were announced as part of an awards ceremony and concert Saturday evening in the West Virginia State Theater of the Cultural Center.

The winners were:

Fiddle - 60 years of age and over
1st place ($400) - Woody Simmons, Mill Creek
2nd place ($250) - Elmer Rich, Westover
3rd place ($150) - Junior Spencer, Frankford
4th place ($75) - Virgil Ross, Clendenin
5th place ($50) - Jerry Lewis, Nettie

Fiddle - under 60 years of age
1st place ($400) - Jenny Allinder, St. Albans
2nd place ($250) - Billy Ward, Elkins
3rd place ($150) - David O'Dell, West Logan
4th place ($75) - Jake Krack, Orma
5th place ($50) - Jesse Milnes, Elkins

Mandolin - all ages
1st place ($400) - Rachel Singleton, Summersville
2nd place ($250) - Dan Kessinger, St. Marys
3rd place ($150) - John Putnam, Looneyville
4th place ($75) - Will Parsons, Rock
5th place ($50) - Tim Gillenwater, Griffithsville

Bluegrass Banjo - all ages
1st place ($400) - Rad Lewis, Winfield
2nd place ($250) - Brandon Green, Beckley
3rd place ($150) - Butch Osborne, Parkersburg
4th place ($75) - Will Parsons, Rock
5th place ($50) - Ben Harrington, Fairdale

Champion old-time banjo, lap dulcimer and flat pick guitar players competed for prizes today during the 27th annual Vandalia Gathering. Two categories of banjo pickers—those 60 years of age and over and those under 60 years of age—were recognized. The other two contests included all ages. Winners were announced as part of the festival’s closing awards ceremony and concert Sunday evening in the West Virginia State Theater of the Cultural Center.

The winners were:

Senior Old-Time Banjo
1st place ($400) - Woody Simmons, Mill Creek
2nd place ($250) - Brooks Smith, Dunbar
3rd place ($150) - Ira Southern, Princeton
4th place ($75) - Ben Carr, Wilsie
5th place ($50) - Bernard Cyrus, Fort Gay
Old-Time Banjo
1st place ($400) - Tim Bing, Huntington
2nd place ($250) - David O'Dell, West Logan
3rd place ($150) - Andrew Dunlap, St. Albans
4th place ($75) - Doug Van Gundy, Elkins
5th place ($50) - Paul Gartner, Sod

Lap Dulcimer
1st place ($400) - Alan Freeman, Renick
2nd place ($250) - David O'Dell, West Logan
3rd place ($150) - Dave Haas, Cross Lanes
4th place ($75) - Peter Snyder, Pigeon
5th place ($50) - Bernard Cyrus, Fort Gay

Flat Pick Guitar
1st place ($400) - Brandon Bentley, Sumerico
2nd place ($250) - Matt Lindsey, Dunbar
3rd place ($150) - Robin Kessinger, St. Albans
4th place ($75) - Donald Larabie, Gassaway
5th place ($50) - Will Parsons, Rock

West Virginia’s best storytellers competed today for prizes in the Liars Contest during the 27th annual Vandalia Gathering with the GOLDFENSEAL magazine Golden Shovel award going to the best tall tale.

The winners were:

Biggest Liar (first place): Justin Wood, Charleston
Bigger Liar (second place): Rich Knoblich, Wheeling
Big Liar (third place): Adam Booth, Huntington

The Liars Contest regularly draws standing room-only crowds. GOLDFENSEAL, West Virginia’s magazine of traditional life, hosts the event and publishes the winning stories each year.

The lies must be short stories—humorous, dramatic, supernatural, etc.—of two to three minutes in length. Ribbons and cash prizes are awarded, along with an official Golden Shovel “trophy” for the first place winner.