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## Cross City Train Depot fundraiser succeeds



Dixie County Sheriff's Office Citizen On Patrol Don Kofahl directs traffic at the start of the festival. Several other DCSO COP members volunteered to help keep pedestrians and motorists safe.

### Story and Photos

By Jeff M. Hardison © Oct. 15, 2017 at 11:07 a.m.

**CROSS CITY** – What may become an annual event kicked off on Saturday (Oct. 14) in downtown Cross City as a fundraiser to help restore the Cross City Train Depot.

Ruth Ann Lovelace, Bev Pivacek, and other members of the Dixie County Chamber of Commerce initiated the festival.



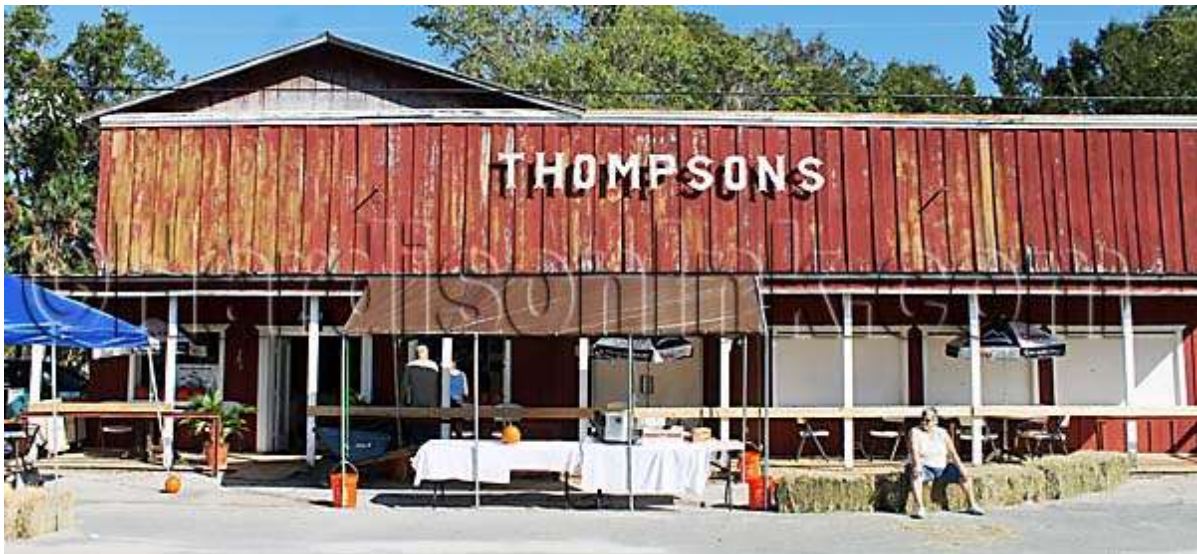
People walk along Northeast 210th Avenue in Cross City westbound near one end of the downtown festival.



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**Ed Pivacek opens a package as he prepares to place bratwursts in boiling hot water.**



**One of the few moments when there was not a crowd of people passing in front of Thompson's on Saturday provided a photo opportunity of the structure recently purchased by the Pivaceks. The couple owns and operates The Putnam Lodge, which is another historic structure in the area.**



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**Jess Hall is selling Southern Fried Pork Skins. Hall said he found this festival to be successful. He said the annual event at Cross City Airport is another great place for him as a vendor of this treat.**

Ed and Bev Pivacek were in the midst of the fun at the Thompson's store they bought and are restoring. Ed has built a wooden outdoor deck, cleared out lots of stuff that was inside.

The Pivaceks were hosting a beer and brats-themed part of the festival. Bev said Cross City's leaders gave them the go-ahead for this aspect of the festival, because they are known to be good stewards and community members.

While the beer and brats (short for bratwurst) were a blast, this festival stretched down Northeast 210th Avenue from the Dixie County Courthouse, all the way to U.S. Highway 19.

**Dara Fowler, financial specialist with the Cross City office of UF Health, mans a booth at the festival. She shared information about this facility with visitors.**





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The Saltwater Cowboys band, comprised of Glenn Bailey on lead guitar, Keith Hancock on bass guitar and John Polskey on drums, with all of them singing, performed on stage to the delight of a big audience.

**The Saltwater Cowboys band, comprised of Glenn Bailey on lead guitar, Keith Hancock on bass guitar and John Polskey on drums perform.**

**Katrina VanAernam of the Dixie County Anti-Drug Coalition stands ready to help people learn about the value of this organization in the community. Rebecca Fusco was there to help with this mission on Saturday.**



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**Sons of Confederate Veterans (from left) Harvey Resnick, Gary Poore and Ferrell Mikell are joined by a member of the United Daughters of the Confederacy - Betty Mikell. They shared information about their groups with visitors at the festival.**

**Bev Pivacek stands as Ed Pivacek prepares to deliver an order of bratwursts and Coca-Colas to patrons who were inside Thompson's on Saturday.**





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Among the many, many various articles for sale were items for tropical fish.



**Drama Free Productions had a booth at the festival. This group is performing plays, including Cheating Death on Oct. 21 and 31; Alice in Wonderland on Nov. 2; and The Rented Christmas on Dec. 10 and 16. Seen here are (back row, from left) Scott DeBerry, John Waldrop, and Misti Waldrop and (front row, from left) Audrey DeBerry, Kellie Swails and Andrea Wasson. The group was selling accents to shows as well as accepting donations for a drawing that includes Yeti items as well as food and lodging at restaurants and a lodge. Funding from that 'raffle' helps this group of amateur performing artists with this venture.**

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**Mike Michaelis of DMI Insurance stands between two Ford Mustangs in front of the Cross City office of DMI. There is another DMI office in the city of Fanning Springs.**

People in the mood to buy things found art, handmade furniture, knick-knacks, and much more. There were churches, non-profit organizations and other interests vying for festivalgoers' attention as well.

As part of this festival, there was also a car show, fan activities for children and food and drink – beyond the brats and beer.

There are old train depots in Chiefland and Trenton that help those cities' economy to some degree.

The one in Chiefland serves as somewhat of a museum, as well as providing an office meeting space for State Rep. Charlie Stone (R-Ocala, Dist. 22) and his legislative assistants on occasion to meet with constituents one-on-one. There is also a park next to the train depot in Chiefland, and it has become the location for the annual Watermelon Festival and Christmas Festival.

The one in Trenton has a very big connected platform that provides ample space for use during quilt festivals and Christmas festivals.

The train depot building in Cross City is currently abandoned.

All three train depots are adjacent to the Nature Coast Trail, which is part of the Florida State Park System. To see more about the Trail, click [HERE](#).

<https://www.floridastateparks.org/trail/Nature-Coast>

As for this inaugural festival in Cross City on Saturday, it appeared to be a resounding success. The Dixie County Chamber of Commerce meets the second Thursday of each month at noon at the Dixie County Public Library. 16328 S.E. U.S. Highway 19 in Cross City. Call 352-498-5572 for more information about the Dixie County Chamber of Commerce.