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## People enjoy Peanut Festival in Williston



**Shay Martin, Marcy Martin and Tory Martin find business brisk at Steve's Famous Peanuts stand. They were selling baked peanuts, boiled peanuts, candied peanuts and more.**

### Story and Photos

**By Terry Witt, Senior Reporter © Oct. 8, 2017 at 3:07 p.m.**

**WILLISTON** -- Heritage Park in Williston was packed with visitors Saturday (Oct. 7) for the 29th Annual North Central Florida Peanut Festival.

A strong breeze presented a temporary problem on the day before the festival when a brief storm sent two vendor tents airborne, with one landing on a nearby highway and the other hitting a tree.

One of the tents had been anchored by 15-pound weights, giving an indication of the strength of the wind gusts. No property was damaged. Festival officials chased the tents and brought them back to Heritage Park.

With the big gusts out of the way, a gentle breeze greeted visitors on Saturday. The Peanut Festival grounds were packed elbow-to-elbow with visitors. A wide, new sidewalk helped move the foot traffic smoothly.

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A-Baby Peanut queen winners (from left) are second runner-up Emery Cain, first runner-up Claire Vivian Jerrels and Queen Allee Grace Rizer.

Little Peanut Queen winners are pictured with Miss Williston Katie Taylor, pageant host, on the left and Junior Miss Williston Morgan Williams on the right. The pageant winners (from left) are second runner-up Avery Hall, first runner-up Sabri Jones and Queen McKinley Peck.



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**Baby Peanut King winners (from left) are King Lexington Fugate, first runner-up Hunter Reed Schultz and second runner-up Asher Still.**



**Little Peanut King winners are pictured with Pageant Host and Miss Williston Katie Taylor (left) and Miss Williston Junior Miss Morgan on the right. The winners (from left) are first runner-up Marshaun Douglas, second runner-up Scotty Ladd and King Sawyer Cain.**

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Little Peanut King Sawyer Cain and Queen and McKinley Peck are shown with Miss Williston Katie Taylor and Miss Williston Junior Miss Morgan Williams.

Michael Kleintank and Ashley Kline market the Williston Middle High School Band tent with a sign. The band is raising money for new uniforms.



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**Williston Elementary School Safety Patrol members were tasked with keeping the festival grounds free of trash. Pictured (from left) are Reese Corbin, Ryleigh Hiers, Jadyn Bullock, Jacob Loock and Elizabeth Allnut.**



**Williston Peanut is a well-known agribusiness organization. Representing the company at the festival (from left) are Rebecca Watson, Kimberly Mueller, Kyra Fant, Jenna Fant and Chance Steele.**

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**Melanie Warner of Ocala was busy selling boiled peanuts. She purchased her peanuts from Williston Peanut.**

The crowd arrived early to avoid the expected rainfall in the late afternoon.

“We were afraid because of all rain and all, but we succeeded,” said Crystal Curl, chairwoman of the Williston Area Chamber of Commerce committee that organized the festival.

The festival was used by the Williston Elementary School Safety Patrol to raise money for a planned trip to Washington, D.C., next year. The safety patrol picked up trash at the festival.

The Williston High School Band used the festival to raise money for new uniforms. Parent Dianne Kline said they need \$50,000 to purchase 100 uniforms. The band’s current uniforms were purchased in 2001. They chose to buy 100 uniforms for a better overall price and to allow expansion of the band in the future. The band is making a strong comeback.

One spectator attraction at the festival was the two peanut pageants.

Lexington Fugate won the Williston Baby Peanut King competition. First runner-up was Hunter Reed Schultz and second runner-up Asher Stills.

The Williston Baby Peanut Queen competition was won by Allee Grace Rizer. First runner-up was Claire Vivian Jerrels and second runner-up Emery Cain.

McKinley Peck was crowned queen of the Little Peanut Queen competition. First runner-up was Sabri Jones and second runner-up Avery Hall.

Sawyer Cain was crowned king of the Little Peanut King competition. Marshaun Douglas was first runner-up and Scotty Ladd second runner-up.