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Vendors and visitors enjoy first Spring Fling in Jena



This train for children with each part being a different aircraft was provided by the Experimental Aircraft Association Chapter 797 of Live Oak.

Story and Photos By Jeff M. Hardison © May 7, 2019 at 10:09 a.m.

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JENA – The first successful Spring Fling Art Festival provided opportunities for artists, dancers and others to have fun, learn things and enjoy the day at Jena Library Tech Center on Saturday (May 4).

This library is part of Dixie County Public Library and it is located at D-TRAC Park, 4562 Highway 358 in the Jena community.

(from left) Jena Library Tech Center Manager Alexis D’Orsi, Jena Library Tech Center Manager Jane Connors and Patricia Hurd provide a photo op. They were among the people helping folks find their way around the site of the fling. ‘We work so that you can play,’ the ladies said. This library has wi-fi, books, movies and more. It is open to the public and free to use thanks to the Dixie County Board of County Commissioners and the Three Rivers Regional Library System, which serves Dixie, Gilchrist, Lafayette and Taylor counties.



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Larry Taylor of the Family Karate Center, 386 N.E. 210th Ave. in Cross City, shows a karate stance. He was manning a table at the fling to show families how they could learn this martial art. He has been teaching in this area for 25 years. He said to call him at 352-356-3357 to schedule sessions.

Cowboys For Kids had representatives at this event. They are (from left) Beatrice 'Kil R Bea' Peterson, Karl 'Korrupt Karl' Peterson and Carolyn 'Tennessee Tall' Wiley. The Petersons are from Fort Myers and Wiley is from Steinhatchee. To learn more about Cowboys for Kids, click [HERE](#).



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Suz Nellis holds a Serama Chicken. The Serama (Malay Ayam Serama), also called the Malaysian Serama is a bantam breed of chicken originating in Malaysia within the last 50 years. These tiny chickens have huge personalities. Nellis was manning a table tagged Prima Donna Serama Rescue. She said the chicken she is holding named 'Puppet' did not meet the standards for competitive beauty contests of this breed. Her rescue group helps chickens like this one. Other interesting groups, and there were plenty, at the event included Another Way (a domestic abuse shelter group), U.F. Aquatic Animal Health, and the Big Bend Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society.

Marti Godfrey (left) and Dotti Leichner were at the fling. Godfrey is Leichner's sister and they're seen here hugging. Dotti Leichner brought her photography on canvas art to the event. There were several artists, crafts-persons and others. Another couple of artists were Mary Beroit of



Horseshoe Beach, and R.J. Morgan and V. Morgan (Baubles, Bangles and Beads). This was a very family-oriented event for vendors as well as for the visitors. For instance, Stevie Williams and her mom Wendy Hunt, both of Steinhatchee, were selling jeans, jewelry, crochet and baked goods. As for food, there was also Ken's Kettle Corn – Sweet and Salty – at the fling. Another interest that sent a representative to the event is the Good Times Marina, and the Something Salty Gifts & Boutiques Shop – which is at the marina located in Steinhatchee.

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Jena Library Tech Center Manager Alexis D'Orsi, Jena Library Tech Center Manager Jane Connors and Patricia Hurd, a member of the volunteer corps of the library, were among the helpful people at the fling who assured that all of the vendors and visitors made the most of their sojourn through the Jena area that day.

While some anticipated aspects did not come to fruition, it was a fine event.

A "train" of ground-based aircraft showed up, and that was not planned. The Experimental Aircraft Association Chapter 797 of Live Oak brought its ride and children enjoyed that.



This big water slide was available for children to enjoy for free. An equally huge bounce house was enjoyed by children as well, and a sign reminded visitors that an adult was needed for a child to use those fun, enormous, inflatable toys.

**Dixie County Anti-Drug Coalition Event
Coordinator Rebecca Fusco mans the table for this group. She is seen here with her daughter Danielle Fusco, 10, and Anthony Fusco, 7.**



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Square Dance Caller Charlie Pergrossi (right in background) directs the dancers at the fling. Among the people from the Salty Bobbers Square Dance Group who were at the fling are Don Stipp, Jessica Moore, Sylvia Moore, Doug Moore, Allen Rice, Bobbi Rice, Jeanette Geer, Carol Munt, Rick Lord and Joyce Chezem. Included in this dance shot are a couple of members of the Coboyes for Kids. The Salty Bobbers meet each Tuesday evening from 7 to 9 at the Jena Community Center (and voting precinct). Everyone is welcome to join in the fun of square dancing.

Library Manager D’Orsi on Monday afternoon (May 6) seemed pleased with the overall fling. “For our first year, we did good,” D’Orsi said. “I love that all the children came out and enjoyed the water slide.”

She noted her appreciation for help from the Dixie Chamber of Commerce.

Another local Chamber earned kudos from D’Orsi as well. The Steinhatchee River Chamber of Commerce sponsored the big inflatable water slide as well as the equally large and impressive bounce house, D’Orsi said.

The art-oriented, family-friendly event provided plenty of chances for fun at the library (and surrounding property) in Jena that day.