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October Outdoors festival at Chattahoochee Bend

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There was plenty of fall fun in the sun to be had Saturday at Chattahoochee Bend State Park, during the second annual October Outdoors at the Bend fall festival.

There were informational booths, guided hikes, family activities, kayaking instruction, live music, vendors, food and plenty of critters to enjoy at the event, which was organized by the Friends of Chattahoochee Bend.

Money raised at the event will go toward purchasing shade trees for the campgrounds at the park.

Crystal Roberts and son Chasyn enjoyed reeling in a fierce fighter on the fishing simulator.

"It's nice. They're having a great time," said Crystal's husband, Jason. It was his family's first visit to Chattahoochee Bend. "We thought we'd come check it out," he said.

The crowd was pretty steady all day long, said Dean Jackson, vice president of the local Friends organization.

Animals included the Winged Ambassadors Birds of Prey show, snakes from the Cochran Mill Nature Center, and a horse brought by Janell Jones, chairman of the Friends group's equestrian committee.

Dollar, a Tennessee Walking Horse, was a big hit with the kids. And some adults, as well.

"I fed the horse. It tickled," said 4-year-old Isaac Smith of Newnan. "I carved a pumpkin and saw big snakes."

"We had fun," said his mom, Sarah. "We're getting ready to go on a hayride."

Saturday was the first visit to Chattahoochee Bend for the Smiths, as well as the Pitts family. They were watching the birds of prey show, and Jimmy Pitts got to hold a Eurasian eagle owl and get his photo taken.

"It was pretty cool," he said of having the giant bird perched on his arm. For all his size, the bird wasn't very heavy. "It was lighter than I thought it would be," he said.

The Collins family came all the way from Birmingham, Ala. They read about October Outdoors online and decided to come visit. "We're suckers for festivals," said mom Jennafer.

Candy and Pete Mejeris and their children Sam and Drew, also first timers, were checking out the snakes.

"I enjoyed it," Pete said. "We had heard about it and it seemed like a good time to check it out."

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