

# Awards wrap up first film festival

For the News-Leader

While most people think of sun-baked beaches and charming historic homes when they think of Amelia Island, there was much more to this quiet little spot when it turned into "festival island" when film enthusiasts, filmmakers, directors, actors, producers and fans turned out for the Inaugural Amelia Island Film Festival.

The festival ran Sept. 25-28 and featured more than 45 movies, everything from short documentaries to comedy to musicals, to sci-fi gore. The AIFF venues were scattered around the island at such places as Palace Saloon, Florida House Inn, Peck Center and the Woman's Club.

The mingling began on Thursday with a filmmakers welcome reception at the Florida House Inn and was followed by a Friday night gala party and a reception Saturday at George and Barbara Sheffield's Bailey House.

During the reception, guests were invited to view "Darius Goes West:

The Roll of His Life," at the Palace Saloon. The movie is about a crew of college-age students taking Darius Weems, who has Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy, cross-country in an RV in hopes of convincing MTV's "Pimp My Ride" to customize his wheelchair. A birthday party was held for Darius's 19th birthday. Darius' older brother died of MD at the age of 19 and was not able to graduate from high school. Darius graduated in June and he hopes to outlive his brother. Participating in this film has certainly given him the motivation he needs to do that.

The four-day event wrapped up Sunday afternoon with an awards ceremony at the Hampton Inn and Suites Downtown. The awards go as follows:

- Best Musical/Comedy "Earano"  
Director: Luke Matheny with a \$500 cash award
- Best Documentary "Appalachian State Football: A Date with Destiny"  
Directors: Ray Goodrich & Kyle



SUBMITTED

The directors who attended the Amelia Island Film Festival, on the porch of George and Barbara Sheffield's Bailey House.

- Payne with a \$500 cash award
- Best Short "On the Down Low"  
Director: Thomas W. Oliver with a \$500 cash award
- Best Special/Other "Forfeit"  
Directors: Andrew & Shea Brendan with a \$500 cash award

- Best of the Fest – The Richard Widmark award:  
"Amelia Island: Isle of 8 Flags"  
Filmed by Rob Hicks of Pirate Television at the Fernandina Beach High School

For those who did not see all the showings, the Nassau County Library has agreed to circulate the AIFF Film

Library by partnering with the film festival.

All of the films shown during the festival will be available at the downtown Fernandina Beach location on North Fourth Street.

For more details about the Amelia Island Film Festival, visit [www.AmeliaIslandFilmFestival.org](http://www.AmeliaIslandFilmFestival.org).