



# Alligator Warrior Festival

Alligator Festival of Lake City Florida, Inc.

P.O. Box 1962

Lake City FL 32056-1962

[alligatorfest.org](http://alligatorfest.org)

The Alligator Festival of Lake City, Inc. is a volunteer operated 501(c)(3) public charity (Federal Tax ID# 20-8580203) dedicated to bringing early 19<sup>th</sup> century Florida history to life for the education and excitement of our region's children, families and history enthusiasts, as well as our region's visitors, seasonal residents and new residents with an interest in our community's past. We focus on the period between 1800 and 1859. These are Florida's final years as a European colony and its first years as a territory and state of the United States of America. These are the years when the US government tried to undo the treaty which had established Indian reservations in Florida barely a decade earlier, so that the Florida Indians could be relocated far away in a territory west of the Mississippi river. This prompted Florida's Indians to take up arms against the US armed forces. Although General William Jenkins Worth declared an end to the combat after seven years, on 14 August 1842, no document officially ending the war has ever been signed by both sides.

With the help of generous sponsors like you and the volunteers from all over the state, we are able to host the annual Alligator Warrior Festival at the beautiful O'Leno State Park. The Festival has several points of interest: the reenactment of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Seminole War Battle of San Felasco Hammock, the living history camps of the Florida Indians, US Soldiers, Militia, and Cracker settlers, the demonstrators of historic skills and arts, the performers of early 19<sup>th</sup> century music, the festival circle where people dance to the drum and enjoy the sound of the flute, the festival food vendors and the traders of handcrafts and art as well as the traders in factory-made items. We publicize your support in a variety of ways depending on available funding, such as advertizements in the program book, links on our web site, mention in our promotional flyers, and displaying your company banner at the 3-day festival. The Festival takes place each year, on the 3-day weekend (Fri-Sun) surrounding the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday in October.

The Alligator Warrior Festival brings reenactors and other participants to our community from all over Florida and the southeast. Our publicity packets are sent to the print and broadcast media outlets within a one hundred mile radius and more people come each year as people spread the word to their friends. Florida has the eleventh largest American Indian population in the county and the general public is interested in our state's Native American heritage but there are limited opportunities to experience it in our area, especially its historical context.



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Joe Blewette, the editor of the Lake City Reporter in the 1970's had long proposed a celebration for the early history of Columbia County prior to 1859. In 1995, Dolly Barracca and Margaret Wuest, two distinguished women from some of Lake City's oldest families, joined together with Victor Vasco, a local tribal elder, to form the Halpatter Tustenuggee (Alligator Warrior) Society which would organize the festival. They wanted to highlight the contributions of the Native Americans of that time. With the help of many others through the years, the festival continued to grow. Until her death, Ms. Barracca was the festival's mascot, known affectionately as "Miss Alligator". In 2007 the society was incorporated as a Florida non-profit, under the name "Alligator Festival of Lake City of FL, Inc". In 2010, the scope of the festival was expanded to include Alachua County and the location was moved to O'Leno State Park where the reenactment of the Battle of San Felasco Hammock became an integral part of the festival.

Thank you for considering the Alligator Warrior Festival for a donation. Please find a sponsor form attached along with copies of our event flyer and non-profit credentials. Any support that you can give is greatly appreciated by the organizers and attendees of the festival.

At your service for any additional information that you may require, we offer our most sincere gratitude for your consideration and your partnership. Our key contacts are as follows

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With our gratitude and very best regards,

*Doug Vasco*

Vice-President