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Photos by MIKE EWEN/Democrat
Spanish "soldiers" fire their muskets during a demonstration inside the fort at Mission San Luis on Saturday. Activities at the historic site's 2011 Military Muster included primitive weapons displays, blacksmithing demonstrations, cannon and musket blackpowder demonstrations, period music and more.

Visitors have a booming good time

By Kate Schofield
DEMOCRAT WRITER

Loud cannon booms and military orders shouted in Spanish were the focal point Saturday at Mission San Luis, which hosted its fourth annual Military Muster.

The event included blackpowder musket and cannon demonstrations, archery, music, theater and crafts for kids. Participants in the living-history demon-



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stration located at the mission and a three-pound cannon brought over from St. Augustine. The event marked the first public firing of the six-pound cannon.

"The loud boom set off several car alarms this morning," said lead interpreter Elizabeth Slack.

The cannons were fired three separate times during the day, and musket demonstrations occurred in between the firings.

About 40 volunteers participated, including Los Presidiales de San Agustín, a group



Clay Roberson rests during his visit to Mission San Luis on Saturday.

that travels every year from St. Augustine for this event. The group trained local volunteers how to fire the cannon.

The mission expected several hundred visitors throughout the day.

"People are always fascinated with weapons," said program supervisor Karin Stanford. "Also, we like to showcase that most of the attacking forces here at the mission were Native Americans."

Tallahassee residents Joan Kellestad and Bob Gass visited the museum with their grandson, Dylan, 9.

"He likes anything that goes 'bang,'" Gass said.

They didn't let morning thunderstorms ruin their outing.

"It was raining when we got here, but we hung out and waited for the rain to stop," Kellestad said. "We got a lot of extra instruction. It was just a lot of fun, and the weather cleared."