

Larry Joe Taylors Fall Fest 2019

For the 14th year, Melody Mountain Ranch came alive with the sounds and songs from 21 bands and Texas country singer songwriters entertaining hundreds of fun loving music fans for four days of excellent music, camping, dancing, jalapeno popper eating, a cooking demonstration, and a homebrew and wine maker competition at [Larry Joe Taylor's Fall Fest](#). What a good time!



The Music Lineup at Fall Fest

Previously known as Rhymes & Vines, Fall Fest fans started settling into their assigned campsites on Wednesday in time to kick off the music in T-Birds Garage Pub with:

Wednesday's Music at Fall Fest

Coalition



Prophets & Outlaws



Normally, the Coalition consists of Larry Joe, Dave Perez of the Tejas Brothers, and Deryl Dodd but Deryl had eye surgery and wasn't able to make it. Matt Hillyer did an excellent job of filling in for Deryl. T-Birds Garage Pub is an intimate bar and venue with an outside covered patio, full cash bar, cool pictures from previous festivals, and a larger room off to the side with a stage. In back of the stage is a VIP area with a full bar.

On Thursday the music started at 4:00 with "Fall Fest Happy Hour" in T-Birds Garage Pub and the lineup included:

Thursday's Fall Fest Lineup

Terri Hendrix with Lloyd Maines



Ross Cooper



Max Stalling



Gary P Nunn



What a great afternoon of music and one of the best sets we've ever heard from Gary P Nunn - he was on a roll and several other artists came out and joined him on stage.

Every year at Fall Fest I look forward to starting the day at 10 AM with Bloody Mary Morning with Larry Joe and Davin James in T-Birds Garage Pub. Larry Joe and Davin have been playing and touring together for years and have a strong friendship and respect for each other. But what makes their Bloody Mary Morning set special, in addition to some great songs and picking, is their bantering, story telling, funny antics, and joking back and forth. By the end of the hour my cheeks and belly were sore from laughing so hard - and the music was outstanding.



Larry Joe and Davin were followed by a cooking demonstration with Nick Pugh and then an afternoon and evening of music starting at 4 PM.

Fall Fest Lineup on Friday

The Powell Brothers



Jarrod Morris



Davin James



Walt Wilkens & the Mystiqueros



Giovannie & the Hired Guns



Bart Crow



Thank God for Bloody Mary Morning - without it, I'm not sure I would have made it up or through Saturday's music, dancin', and drinkin'. Buck Fuffalo entertained us Saturday morning for an hour as we enjoyed some delicious Bloody Marys.

Saturday morning was also when over 20 chefs and their helpers started preparing and cooking their best jalapeno popper recipes for the Jalapeno Popper Competition. And as good as the Bloody Marys were, I think sampling several delicious hot-off-the grill jalapenos was even better. I was shocked that my tongue and tummy could handle that many poppers! Wow, were they delicious and spicy! No two chefs prepared their masterpieces the same - some used shrimp, others used beef, goat, brisket, cream cheese, bacon, and lots of other delicious stuff - and I sampled one or two from every competitor!.



Graham Brewing Company won 3 awards in the Home Brew Competition and at 2:00 the music started on the Devils River Stage. And later that afternoon, a Devils River staff member walked through the fans with free shots of whiskey! Hard to beat a shot of whiskey with good music and good friends.

Saturday's Music at Fall Fest

Coby Wier



Shea Abshier & the Nighthowlers



John Baumann



Brandon Rhyder



Tejas Brothers



Larry Joe Taylor



Casey Donaheew Band



Larry Joe always closes his set with "Will The Circle Be Unbroken" and all of the singer songwriters that are still around come and join him for a verse that they have created. At the end of the song Larry Joe stated how lucky he was to have all of us as fans and to play on stage with his son who is the drummer and his grandson who came on stage to sing a verse. What a great song to end a fantastic festival.



At 11:30 PM Saturday Night, Matt Hillyer and 1100 Springs took the stage in T-Birds Garage Pub for the "After Party." I heard it was a fun and fantastic set from one of the best. The Bloody Marys, jalapeno poppers, couple shots of Devils River Whiskey, and several beers forced me to retire after the Casey Donahew Band. I also missed another night of superb pickin' and playin' around the campfires until the wee hours of the morning! It's hard getting old. The good news is that I did feel much better the next morning than most of our friends!

Wow, what a great lineup of country Texas singer songwriters. This year's lineup was a perfect mix of several musicians who played the festival for the first time and lots of multi-year veterans who've played at most if not all of the festivals.

The Music Fans at Fall Fest

Fall Fest is like a big family reunion where we get to reacquaint with friends from around Texas and people we've met over the years at previous Larry Joe Taylor Festivals. And each year we meet a lot of new people that we'll look forward to seeing again next year. Each day during the festival you'll see people high fiving, hugging, kissing, and shaking hands as they reacquaint with friends.



The crowd progressively ages and grows as the Fall Fest continues through the week. Wednesday starts with a small crowd of mostly older and largely retired music lovers - I'm guessing the average age is around 55 or 60. By Saturday afternoon, the crowd is packed under the cover of the stage and there are lots of canopies and lawn chairs spread around the grounds. And there are lots of young kids and dogs enjoying the music, the average age dropped to around 40 or so, and all ages love to be up in front of the stage.



The fans are friendly and outgoing and they love country music and a fun party.



And there is always somebody dancing just in front of the stage.



This year, a group dressed in interesting costumes started a congo line that twisted and turned back and forth through the crowd gathering people as it went.



Camping at Larry Joe Taylor's Fall Fest

In addition to excellent music and fun music fans, a large part of what makes Fall Fest fun and has kept us coming back for the last 12 years is camping and bringing your own booze and lawn chairs - no need to buy expensive warm \$7 beers or stand up the whole festival like you do at some other events. And ticket prices are unbelievably reasonable - \$79 for all 4 days!

Melody Mountain Ranch is home to over 500 assigned campsites, most of which have 30 AMP electric and access to water. Plus spread over the 300 acres of the ranch are several hundred open unassigned primitive sites. Return campers have the first opportunity to reserve the same site they had the previous year. Which means you'll get to be close to all the people you met the previous year. Fans camp in everything from hammocks to truck beds to tents of all shapes and sizes to some big motorhomes.



The campground is always alive with games, laughter, the smell of bacon or bbq, and good times. And you can always find a campsite with some picking and singing from dawn to just before the sun rises - and everyone is welcome to join in and listen, have a beer, and sing and play along!

For the last few years we've gotten VIP tickets which include back stage access and seating, a VIP full cash bar, and free very good dinners Thursday through Saturday night. One night was a delicious and tender Chicken Fried Steak with mashed potatoes, beans, and bread!

Around the perimeter of the stage area are several vendors selling everything from fire baked pizza to BBQ, burgers, corn dogs, plus Pearl Snap shirts, clothing, and more. And of course, there is the merch area with all of the artists t-shirts, koozies, CDs, and more.



Our thanks go out to the sound crew, the staff and volunteers, and the Taylor Family - LJT's wife Sherry, his son Zack and Zack's wife Martha, and LJT - that put in lots of long hours to make this festival one of the best in Texas and fun for the rest of us. See you next year!

