

Larry Joe Taylor's 31st Texas Music Festival Review



In April 2019 Larry Joe Taylor and family plus over 60,000 music and party fans helped celebrate [LJT's 31st Annual Texas Music Festival](#). And what a celebration it was with over 55 Texas singer songwriters entertaining us over 6 days on three stages. I've lost track of how many of Larry Joe's Festivals we've attended (it's at least 13) but I do remember our first one was only two days in Mingus with around 8 bands playing on a small stage to less than 600 music fans on two acres of land. Some of the reasons we keep coming back to LJT's Texas Music Festival and why you want to make sure you get tickets for next year include:

- We love Texas country music and LJT always has some of the best artists at his festivals plus several rising new stars
- RV and tent camping is an easy walk to the music stages and the campground is always alive with music and activity
- The music fans are friendly and welcoming and they provide some unequalled people watching, lots of laughs, plenty of high fives and hugging, and lots of fun
- We enjoy reacquainting with friends that we've met at past festivals and we always meet a lot of new people who we look forward to seeing again at the next festival
- The festival is BYOB and lawn chairs, the prices are reasonable, and the food vendors keep me well fed - that alone is enough to keep me coming back
- And finally, we always have a blast and can't wait to get back again



The Music Stages at Larry Joe Taylor's Texas Music Festival



Since 2003, the Texas Music Festival has been held at LJT's Melody Mountain Ranch which is around 380 acres of rolling country about 7 miles north of Stephenville. Normally the Ranch is peaceful and quiet and home to birds and wildlife and grazing cattle, but in late April the property quickly swells to hundreds of campers and music fans. Most come prepared to spend some or all of the week camping in everything from an old couch to air mattresses to tents, travel trailers, and motor homes.

This year the music started on Monday on the Hydro Pro Stage in T-Bird's Garage Pub, which is a cool bar decorated with previous festival pictures, a covered outdoor patio, a small indoor stage, and a VIP bar area and back door entrance to Allsup's Stage. T-Bird's is always a happening and fun scene at the bar and outdoor patio which overlooks the main stage. This year starting on Wednesday around 10 at T-Bird's, Randy Brown hosted several artists at "Bloody Mary Morning" - what a great way to start each day with tasty Bloody Mary's, fun fans, and excellent music!



Allsup's Stage sits at one end of a fairly big grassy area that's surrounded by campers around the perimeter. The stage is covered with an open pavilion that's always packed with side by side camp chairs. You will see blankets, chairs, coolers, cooler trailers, and lots of music fans soaking up the sun. The Allsup's Stage is our favorite because it's small and intimate and the fans sitting under the pavilion are true music fans there to listen to the music. Beginning on Wednesday the music lasts from 12:30 to around 5 on the Allsup's Stage and then the fans migrate to the Bud Light Stage less than 100 yards away.



The Bud Light Stage is a huge stage with back-stage seating, sky box seating around the inside perimeter, an excellent sound system, large jumbotrons, and a huge multi-acre field for all the fans. Around the perimeter are several food and merch vendors. By Wednesday late afternoon this stage is packed with mostly young fans (at times I think it is the entire student body from Tarleton State University in Stephenville plus a mixture of A&M, Longhorns, Baylor Bears, and other college students) shoulder to shoulder and cooler to cooler trying to get as close as possible to the front of stage. Early in the morning the field is empty but by 3 in the afternoon it's close to being packed and 10 PM it's shoulder to shoulder.



Camping at LJT's Texas Music Festival

It doesn't get any better than after a full day of music, drinking, eating, and fun than walking back to your campsite and not having to worry about driving home! Melody Mountain Ranch has over 3000 campsites that are a mixture of non-reserve able primitive sites with no water or electric and no assigned sites, reserve able sites with no water or electric, 400 reserve able sites with water and electric, and the Grove for VIP campsites which has water and electric. There are 11 different areas for camping some of which are shaded and others that are in open fields.

The first year that the festival was at Melody Mountain Ranch there was a campground party and a raffle for reserved sites. When your number was called you got to pick which site/sites you wanted and they were yours for all future festivals as long as you paid for them when the ticket box opened each year. Sites not paid for became available on a first come basis. Which means that several electric and water sites may be available each year. If you had a campsite the year before, you get the first shot at any new sites that come available.

The campground is an interesting mix of everything that you can think of for sleeping - couches from Goodwill, tents of all shapes and sizes, pickup trucks with mattresses, converted school buses, horse trailers, travel trailers, and \$300,000 fancy motor homes. Friends have purchased multiple sites together and form circles with a combo of reserve able, tents, or trailers. Showers are available, water and ice trucks cruise the sites frequently, and RV pump out services are there to empty your holding tanks. If you run out of

beer there is a beer, water, and soft drinks store. And vendors sell a variety of good food ranging from BBQ to fried chicken on a stick to burgers, hot dogs, fajitas, kettle corn, and lots more.



The campground is always alive with:

- the smell of BBQ (this festival also has a chili cook-off), bacon, and other good smelling food
- late night parties and song circles with excellent singing and picking which usually includes some of the main stage artists
- games of all types
- laughter and good times

Lots of good memories are made in the campground and several couples who met in campground are now married and several musicians were discovered in the campground picking circles and ask to play on one of the stages the following year.

A shuttle runs back and forth to some of the Stephenville hotels and there is plenty of parking for day trippers. Several RV rental companies will deliver an RV or travel trailer to your site, set it up, and pick it up at the end of the festival. There are also some glamping tents that you can call and reserve.

The Music Fans at Larry Joe Taylor's Texas Music Festival

The fans are a mix of farmers, business executives, cowboys and cowgirls, town folk, kids and some dogs, some old hippies, wannabe musicians and some very talented undiscovered musicians, lots of college students, older retired folks, and just about everything else - and they all love Texas country music and a good party! It seems like most of the fans know the words to the majority of every song by most of the artists - and they sing at the top of their range! Fans come from Texas and around the United States, as well as, several fans from across the pond.

Up close to the Bud Light stage gets wild and crazy and is packed with fans shoulder to shoulder and coolers are everywhere and used not only for beer and drinks but as a platform to use to better see the stage. Back a little further from the stage are the older folks in lawn chairs and lots of big coolers. There is always dancing, laughing, back slapping and high fiving, and lots of drinking and eating. And it's guaranteed that you'll get to meet your neighbors and lots of new people and most likely experience some unique costumes and interesting people. To see more pictures of the interesting people who attend LJT Music Festival, click on this [page of music fans](#).



You can buy single day or multiple day tickets on LJT's website at what I think are very reasonable prices for the quality and number of artists you'll get to experience! You might also consider VIP which can include some or all of the following: backstage seating at the Bud Light and Allsup's stage; skybox seating; artist meet and greet; VIPs which are very important potties that are air conditioned; Friday morning brunch; two VIP bars - one in T-Bird's Garage Pub and in back of the Bud Light Stage; a special camping area with water and electric; and some tasty dinners with all the fixins on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.

Our thanks go out to Larry Joe Taylor and his family - Zack, Martha, and Sherry. It takes a mountain load of planning, time, and money to make this festival fun, safe, and loaded with some of the best Texas country singer/songwriters. There are hundreds of volunteers, lots of security, EMS, police, and several full-time employees who deserve a lot of credit and thanks. See you next year. Before you leave this page, check the lineup for this year's festival and it will give you an idea of the variety and quality of what you can expect when you come to the Festival next year.

Monday's Music at Larry Joe Taylor Music Festival

Hydro Pros Stage

Josh Grider



Six Market Blvd



The Larry Joe Taylor Music Festival Lineup for Tuesday

Hydro Pros Stage

Randy Brown & Friends



Bud Light Stage

Presentation of Colors and National Anthem by Larry Joe Taylor, Dave Perez, and Deryl Dodd



Deryl Dodd

Wade Bowen

Pat Green



The Larry Joe Taylor Music Festival Lineup for Wednesday

Hydro Pros Stage - Bloody Mary Morning with Randy Brown

Cole Risner

Tanner Fenaglio

Giovannle & the Hired Guns



Allsup's Stage

Michael Hearne



Max Stalling



Coalition



Bud Light Stage

Adam Hood



Shotgun Rider



Shane Smith & the Saints



Casey Donahew Band



Turnpike Troubadours



The Larry Joe Taylor Music Festival Lineup for Thursday

Hydro Pros Stage - Bloody Mary Morning with Randy Brown

Jon Young



Kylie Rae Harris



Mason Lively



The Damn Quails



Allsup's Stage

Jason Eady & Courtney Patton



Katlin Butts



The Powell Brothers



John Baumenn



Ray Wylie Hubbard



Bud Light Stage

Kolby Cooper



Randall King



Flatland Cavalry



William Clark Green



Randy Rogers Band



The Larry Joe Taylor Music Festival Lineup for Friday

Hydro Pros Stage - Bloody Mary Morning with Randy Brown

Steve Helms



Pauline Reese



Grant Gilbert



Chris Colston



Allsup's Stage

Richard Leigh



Coby Wier



Tommy Alverson



Dirty River Boys



Bri Bagwell



Tejas Brothers



Bud Light Stage

Kody West



Read Southall Band



Mike Ryan



Koe Wetzel



The Larry Joe Taylor Music Festival Lineup for Saturday

Hydro Pros Stage - Bloody Mary Morning with Randy Brown

Buck Futtalo



Jamie Richards



Cottonwood Crows



Eleven Hundred Springs



Allsup's Stage

Jarrod Morris



Davin James



Walt Wilkins



Larry Joe Taylor



Bud Light Stage

Mark McKinney



Prophets and Outlaws



Kevin Fowler



Kevin Fowler always puts on a good show and gets the crowd going. This year he actually did a stage dive into the crowd and did some crowd surfing - and he never lost his hat.



Roger Creager



Josh Abbott Band



Hydro Pros Stage in T-Bird's Garage Pub

Mike McClure Band



See you next year!