

BUTTERMILK JAMBOREE

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I needed a day out of the house, so I packed up the car and headed off to the Buttermilk Jamboree at the Circle Pines Center in Delton, Michigan. My daughter May Erlewine and her husband Seth Bernard were playing at the festival there. My faithful dog Molly (short for Molotov) did not miss a cue. The moment he saw me starting to assemble daypacks, water bottle, etc. near the door, he started to droop. By the time I was ready, he was all the way to the floor and downcast. He knows what this means, that I am leaving him and he will be home all by his lonesome.

Molotov is man's best friend, at least this one's, and he had plenty of water and can go in and out of his dog door, and so on. Of course, I fed him well and even hid a couple of dog biscuits where he would find them, and he did. Still, that is not enough in his book, so there he sulked. I held his head in my hands and said goodbye, but that only made the situation worse. I had to go.

It was about an hour and a half by car, down in the lakes region of Yankee Springs to where the Buttermilk Jamboree was held on a beautiful area of some 300 or so acres called the Circle Pines Center. This is the second year for the jamboree, but I would have thought it had been there forever, so perfectly was it organized. Of course, some of my friends with a lot of experience with music festivals were there helping out, so this festival leapfrogged what I would expect for a startup. It was a great setup.

And I was treated like a king, offered food from the moment I arrived, provided with two wrist bands, including that valuable VIP orange band that let me walk around almost anywhere I wished with my camera. I also got a golf-cart tour of most of the place, down long two-tracks to the where folks swim in the lake, back up to different pavilions, past the food and art venders -- the works.

I must say that after what seems like (and is) a lifetime of being around music events, either as a player, a host, an interviewer, and so on, I naturally feel more comfortable back stage hanging with whomever is putting on the event. I don't need the VIP treatment; I just am used to helping these kind of events take place. I once counted the events I personally put on and they number over 36 conferences, either astrology, music-related, or dharma oriented. And that is not counting the dozens of music shows I have put on in our library complex or when I (heaven forbid I do it again) had a restaurant.

My daughter plays festivals all summer, mostly in the Midwest, but usually some on both coasts, so I go to them as often as I feel like it, which is not too often. Most festivals are just too much of something for me. I must say, however, I would go back to the Buttermilk Jamboree in a

heartbeat. The setting, the organization, the look and feel were just what a festival should be like. This was the third and last day; I should have gone sooner. It was that nice. I can see that the Buttermilk Jamboree has a great future.

Plus many people I knew were there, including a lot of my Facebook friends, so that was just that much more fun. It is great to meet some of you in person! I did photograph Seth and May's set, which was very nice and well received.

I drove on home into the evening, knowing that Molly would be waiting right by the door, which he was, more than ready for his dinner and glad to have me back. I mean, who else in the world leaps in the air when I walk in the room. I can't think of anyone else.