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## Texas Music Festival - Larry Joe Taylor's 25th Annual Texas Music Festival

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After 25 years, [Larry Joe Taylor's Texas Music Festival](#) remains one of the best music festivals in Texas. You might ask "what makes this one of the best music festivals in Texas?" And our answer would be: five days of music on two stages with no overlapping of the music or long walks between stages; music from some of the best singer songwriters in Texas; camping within easy walking distance to the stages plus lively jams around the campfires; a fun and very rambunctious crowd and excellent people watching; and BYOB and lawn chairs. How can you beat all of that?

Larry Joe Taylor's Music Festival started in Mingus, Texas in 1989 with one day of music, a flatbed trailer for the stage, six artists, no food vendors, and a small crowd of under 100. After outgrowing several venues, in 2003 Larry Joe purchased Melody Mountain Ranch, about 7 miles north of Stephenville where Larry Joe attended Tarelton State, and since then every year Larry Joe and family have made improvements to the ranch to make it the perfect place for music festivals. After 25 years, the LJT's Texas Music Festival has grown to include:

- ↳ 5 days of music
- ↳ over 45 of some of the best Texas singer songwriters in Texas performing their original songs and some old favorites
- ↳ 25 vendors offering good food and lots of merchandise
- ↳ more than 500 volunteers working the stage, the ticket booth, security, merch booth, and a wide variety of services
- ↳ over 380 acres with two stages, a bar and mini beer store, 4000 campsites, lots of trees and some good views and sunsets, and a few head of cattle and wildlife that scatter when the fans start to arrive and the music starts
- ↳ over 55,000 fans who love country music, a good party, and Larry Joe Taylor



We've been coming to his festival for the last 8 years and each year, Larry Joe and his family (wife Sherry and his son and daughter in law, Zack and Martha) amaze us with something new which this year included some surprising new talent, a new bar and dance hall (T-Bird's Garage Pub), an auction that raised over \$50,000 for the victims of West, some new campsites, new food vendors, a redone and improved VIP area, Monday night music and Bloody Mary Morning music at T-Birds, and another amazing lineup. Once this festival gets in your blood, it's hard to get it out and you'll find that you'll want to attend year after year. A number of the musicians have been playing the festival for years (this was Tommy Alverson's 25th), some of the artists attended the festival as a fan when they were still a student at Tarleton State, a few started playing the festival as a singer songwriter contest winner and are now headliners on the main stage, and some of the artists met their wives during one of the festivals. Thanks Larry Joe for making this such a fun event!



## Camping at Melody Mountain Ranch

There are over 380 acres which are home to over 300 water and electric sites, 3000 designated sites, and 75 acres for primitive camping. All of the sites are staked out and assigned which eliminates a lot of the chaos of trying to find a site - in fact, a volunteer will escort you to your site if it's your first time at the festival. It's hard to get one of the electric sites or sites close to the stage - once you get a site, you can keep the same site year after year. However, a few good sites do open up each year but you'll need to call early. Some of the sites are under or around the trees, others are in open fields with limited to no shade, and several are home to what looks like a round up of campers with a large area for campfires and partying.



VIP (very important potties) restrooms with hot showers are available and there are plenty of port-a-potties spread throughout the campground or you can rent your own port-a-potty and put it next to your tent! You'll find a wide variety of camping equipment from tee-pees to 3 room tents, from \$300,000 motorhomes to vintage trailers that look like they are on their last leg, from hammocks to mattress and couches on the ground, plus converted school buses, pickups with foam mattresses, old VW buses, and lots of other interesting things to let campers get a little shut eye. It's a blast to meander through the campground - you might get invited to: play a game of washers, have a cold beer, pull up a chair and pick and sing around the campfire, sample some of the BBQ from the chili cook-off chefs (oh yeah, I forgot to mention that the festival also includes a chili cookoff), or just sit and chat and meet some new friends. On Sunday in the campground, the Wednesday Night Boys have been serving a free breakfast with coffee and breakfast tacos for the last several years. To help keep the campers comfortable, cruising through the campground during the festival are some volunteers selling ice, water, and RV pump out services plus picking up trash, cleaning the port-a-potties, and putting water on the roads to keep the dust down. Each year it's great to reacquaint with our neighbor campers and meet some new friends in a nearby site or around the campfires. If you don't want to camp, Stephenville is just 7 miles or so down the road and has lots of options for lodging.



## The Stages & Vendors

Other reason we keep coming back to Larry Joe's Festival is that the two stages are close to the campsites, close to each other, and the music doesn't overlap - when the music stops on the acoustic Allsup's Stage it takes less than a minute to tote your gear to the huge Bud Light Stage. Each day, the music begins on the Allsup's Stage, which is a pavilion with a stage and lots of covered lawn chair seating plus a large outside area for chairs and coolers. The Allsup's stage attracts the serious music lovers who are there to listen to and enjoy the music - most of the party people are still sleeping in! The Allsup's Stage is home to some of our favorites like Walt Wilkins, Michael Hearne, Tommy Alverson, Gary P. Nunn, Terri Hendrix, Davin James, Ray Wylie Hubbard, Max Stalling, and more.



Mid afternoon the music stops on the Allsup's stage and the fans, coolers, and chairs migrate about 150 yards to the Bud Light Stage, which is a huge stage with speakers that can blast music to Ft Worth, two large jumbo tron screens, and VIP/sponsor seating as well as box seats overlooking the stage. In front of the stage is a large gently sloping open field that quickly fills with fans when the music starts. It's crowded with fans the closer you get to the front of the stage but there is plenty of room farther back to spread out and still enjoy the music. Fans come to the Bud Light Stage well prepared with lots to drink, lawn chairs, and coolers that hold beverages and food as well as serve as a way to get a view above the crowd. And at the front of the stage it is packed shoulder to shoulder with music fans having a blast and partying to the music - and the musicians seem to love it!





Around the perimeter of the stage are over 20 different vendors selling some merchandise and a wide variety of food from gyros to BBQ to Fajitas to Pizza. Our favorite is Kate's Cafe that servers burgers, patty melts, chicken sandwiches, fries, and more - the patty melt is to die for and we typically have at least three of them during the 5 days of music! This year Larry Joe opened a new bar that overlooks the stage and stage grounds - T-Bird's Garage Pub which starts serving Bloody Mary's early each morning and it has a covered patio that is a great place to listen to the music in the shade and enjoy a cold drink. Inside is a bar area, and a huge indoor dance floor which was where 1100 Springs played after the main stage music stopped on Saturday night. If you do run out of beer, next to the Pub is Larry Joe's Mini Super that sells cold beer and ice at reasonable prices. And if you didn't bring anything to make a frozen drink, then stop by [WOW](#) (Winery on Wheels) for a frozen margarita, pina colada, and more - nothing better than a frozen margarita on a warm spring day! The merch booth is huge and has CD, koozies, tee shirts and more from all the artists. Other vendors provide goods and services from hats to tobacco to massages.



### Larry Joe Taylor Music Festival Fans

Larry's Music Festival has to be the party of the year and with 55,000 fans you're in for some excellent people watching. As you meander through the crowd you'll see a bunch of good looking hard bodies, some very unusual outfits, a variety of home made beer bong, dogs of all shapes and sizes, a scattering of young kids, some unique ways to transport coolers and chairs and bodies to and from the stage, and thousands of fans having a great time! A lot of the fans come from colleges like A&M, UT, Tech, and what must be the entire campus of Tarelton State just down the road - and they are here for the good times, the camping, and the music. There is lots of chatter, laughter, singing, whistling at the women, and spraying beer all over each other - it's hard not to have a good time at Larry Joe's Texas Music Festival. Check this page of [pictures of the Larry Joe Music Festival](#).



### The Music At Larry Joe Taylor's Texas Music Festival

This year the music started on Monday:

#### Monday

- ↳ Thom Shepherd, Chris Hammack, and guests kicked off the 25th annual Larry Joe Taylor Music Festival in the new T-Bird's Garage Pub at 5 PM

#### Tuesday

- ↳ "Welcome Jam" with Thom Shepherd & Guests
- ↳ Larry Joe Taylor & Friends which included Dave Perez of the Tejas Brothers and Deryl Dodd
- ↳ Cody Canada & The Departed
- ↳ Pat Green



What a great evening, except that it was unusually cold for April and started drizzling during the last two sets. But that didn't stop any of the musicians including Pat Green from putting on an excellent set (with a few breaks to put his hands in his pockets to warm them up!) or dampen the spirit (it did dampen the clothes) of the thousands of fans hanging in for the music during the rainy coldweather!

### Wednesday

- ↳ Thom Shepherd & Guests kicked off a "Bloody Mary Morning" at the T-Birds Garage Pub
- ↳ Allsup's Stage - 1:15
  - ↳ Winner of the T-Birds Garage Pub Singer Songwriter Contest - Luke Wade
  - ↳ Richard Leigh
  - ↳ Midnight River Choir
  - ↳ Chris Knight



- ↳ Bud Light Stage - 4:30
  - ↳ KHYI Texas Music Showdown Winner
  - ↳ Bart Crow
  - ↳ Whiskey Myers





- ↳ Stoney LaRue
- ↳ Casey Donahew Band
- ↳ Josh Abbott Band



### Thursday

- ↳ Thom Shepherd & Guests kicked off a "Bloody Mary Morning" at the T-Birds Garage Pub
- ↳ Allsup's Stage - 12:00 PM
  - ↳ Danny Cadra
  - ↳ Chuck Pyle
  - ↳ Keith Sykes



- ↳ Mike Ryan
- ↳ Michael Hearne
- ↳ Radney Foster



- ↳ Bud Light Stage - 5:10 PM
  - ↳ The Damn Quails
  - ↳ Brandon Rhyder
  - ↳ Reckless Kelly
  - ↳ Wade Bowen
  - ↳ Randy Rogers Band



## Friday

- ↳ Thom Shepherd & Guests kicked off a "Bloody Mary Morning" at the T-Birds Garage Pub
- ↳ Allsup's Stage - 12:00 PM
  - ↳ 106.9 Ranch Showdown Winner - Travis Boltz
  - ↳ Josh Grider
  - ↳ Clay McClinton



- ↳ Walt Wilkins & The Mystiqueros
- ↳ Max Stalling
- ↳ Gary P. Nunn



- ↳ Bud Light Stage - 5:00 Pm
  - ↳ Charla Corn
  - ↳ Mark McKinney
  - ↳ Josh Weathers Band





- ↪ Six Market Blvd.
- ↪ Roger Creager
- ↪ Kevin Fowler



## Saturday

- ↪ Thom Shepherd & Guests kicked off a "Bloody Mary Morning" at the T-Birds Garage Pub
- ↪ Allsup's Stage - 12:00 PM
  - ↪ Terri Hendrix & Lloyd Maines
  - ↪ Tommy Alverson
  - ↪ Davin James
  - ↪ Ray Wylie Hubbard



- ↪ Bud Light Stage - 3:15 Pm
  - ↪ William Clark Green
  - ↪ Mike McClure Band
  - ↪ Tejas Brothers



↳ Deryl Dodd  
↳ Jack Ingram  
↳ Larry Joe Taylor



One of the highlights every year at the Larry Joe Taylor Music Festival is when all of the musicians who are still hanging around, which is most of the ones who played that day or one of the previous days, join Larry Joe on stage for a couple songs including a tribute to Rusy Wier.



↳ T-Birds Garage Pub Main Stage - 11:30 PM  
↳ Eleven Hundred Springs who played after the music ended on the main stage and they packed the house and the dance floor



Our thanks go out to the hundreds of volunteers, the VIP and sponsors, the security staff, the food and merch vendors, the stage hands, Joe Dye for the great job he does with the food and merchandise vendors, the emcees like Ray Benson from Asleep at the wheel on the Bud Light Stage on Wednesday and the Terri Hendrix and Llyod Maines on the acoustic stage, and most of all the Taylor family who work year long to make this a fun event - thanks Larry Joe, Sherry, Zack, and Martha! See you next year.



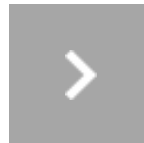


If you can't make Larry Joe's Texas Music Festival in April, then you should consider his Rhymes & Vines Festival (read our [review of this great festival](#)) at Melody Mountain Ranch in September or his "Island Time" 10 day trip to a small Caribbean island, or his January "LJT's Coastin' & Cruisin' Cruise."

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