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Music fest could draw 10,000 to Dover

Tickets now on sale for 'RRoll Over Dover'

By JIMMY SETTLE
The Leaf-Chronicle

If all goes as David E. Morgan plans, the population of Stewart County could almost double over Labor Day weekend.

That's when he and fellow organizers expect to host a three-day outdoor summer music festival they're calling RRoll Over Dover.

The festival is still in its infancy, but some are already comparing it in scope and style to Manchester's famed Bonnaroo music festival. RRoll Over Dover already has a Web site and has been hotly speculated in the area for months.

Morgan sought to put the rumor mill to rest Monday when he issued a news release detailing the status of the festival, now billed as three days of "blues, bluegrass, folk and rock" music on 200 acres of farmland in a remote area of southwestern Stewart County.

He expects to sell enough tickets for a "first-year" audience of 10,000 people. "Through Internet ticket sales, we have better control over the number of sales, so I feel like we'll have a pretty good handle on the size of the crowd that we'll have," he said.

Not Bonnaroo

Morgan, a music promoter who has assumed the title of managing director for RRoll Over Dover, added in a separate interview with The Leaf-Chronicle Monday that the word "Bonnaroo" should not be mentioned in the same breath with "RRoll Over Dover," because he doesn't want the public to have the impression that they are identical events in style or substance.

"The words, 'Bonnaroo' or 'Woodstock' should never be used to describe RRoll Over Dover, because that's not what's going to happen here," Morgan said.

"I have worked some huge festivals before, and I just felt like bringing some really good, quality music to a far-out place like this would be great for the area, especially for some of the younger, or older people of our area who don't want to have to drive to Nashville or Memphis to see entertainment like this," he said.

The specific festival dates he's pinpointed are Aug. 29, 30 and 31 (Friday-Sunday). Gates are to open on Aug. 27 for camping.

He says 40 bands and "numerous artisan vendors" will gather on the farm setting.

The current lineup of musicians includes international bluegrass superstar Rhonda Vincent, "world's greatest party band" Buckwheat Zydeco, and up-and-coming rocker Toby the Fugitive. Artists

continue to be added weekly, he said.

Tickets are on sale now for \$100 for the three-day event, which, Morgan said, includes the fee for camping on the festival site and parking. An additional \$18.50 service charge is tacked on for Internet ticket processing, he said.

Morgan owns BackStage Entertainment, LLC, and is a Stewart County resident. He said Monday he wants the event to employ local people and be a boon to the economy of Stewart County. He encourages area residents who are interested in working at the festival to be on the lookout for an upcoming RRoll Over Dover job fair.

Morgan says property for the event has been leased, but he isn't yet confirming specific names of land owners, saying only, "there are two land owners involved, but I just feel like that is all confidential."

County cautious

The prospect of an extended holiday weekend event that could bring the biggest single headcount in Stewart County's history is not without harsh skeptics.

The area where the festival is to be held is served by two-lane country roads, and there are widespread concerns about the county's ability to manage a crowd of 10,000 people with emergency police and medical services.

In fact, the Stewart County Commission was expected to take up the topic at its Monday evening meeting.

Stewart County Mayor Rick Joiner seemed cautiously optimistic about RRoll Over Dover Monday, when asked about it by The Leaf-Chronicle.

"We've had a preliminary meeting with David and their attorney, Mr. Tom Stanley, and they have asked the County Commission to support a resolution in favor of this event," Joiner said.

"We have tentatively set up a meeting with the (Tennessee Emergency Management Agency) to discuss potential traffic issues, emergency medical assistance needs and other concerns.

"They (RRoll Over Dover organizers) still continue to tell us that this is a family-oriented event. It could be something good for the county. The big issue that we're going to have is that, small, country roads are going to be used, and getting people in and out of there. (Morgan) also tells me they're bringing in private security similar to what you would find at Bonnaroo," Joiner said.

"We want this to be a positive thing for the community. It's not something that the county is sponsoring, but it could bring in revenue for the community, so we're just trying to think about it in that regard," he said.
