

FESTIVAL

Friday Evening: This being my second year to attend, I was told that the rain and madness of mud was to be prepared for this April event; dedicated attendees were well prepared...I was kind of...leaning more towards the weather being wrong, as they usually are. They weren't.

The heaven-sent buckets of rain and muddy terrain didn't stop this Festival from reaching full capacity; I did consciously bring two pairs of cowgirl boots, including my favorite pretty ones that I only wear on special occasions...not in the mud. I rolled in Friday evening, a tad late because of the storms...if you are not familiar with the campgrounds, plan your daylight accordingly.



Pet-peeve: setting camp in the dark. Off and away I go with my Texas Heartbeat VIP backstage pass, in my favorite Lucchese alligator boots caked in mud, gracefully stomping on the perfectly mud dappled red carpet to watch The Mavericks! Even though they are not a "Texas born" band, they just fit well here. I don't care if you are a stick in the mud with no lick of rhythm, I believe it would be impossible to be immobile to their signature beat.

Raul Malo of the Mavericks



Jerry McFaddin of the Mavericks

The Mavericks are just a solid talented group of cool cats who shelve themselves in many genres and eras. Just because the Fest closes at Midnight, doesn't mean it is over--who likes to come see such talented musicians that the Old Settlers gather? Other talented musicians of course, and as we all know, most musicians have a night owl hootin' in their ears. From 18 years old to 80, huddles of instruments gather, from new friends to old; it's just part of the fun Festival experience.

Saturday morning: After my princess spit bath and yummy vendor massive meat-with-collard greens breakfast sandwich, I ventured over to the Children's Talent show. Amazing to watch young artists like a 7 yr old grasping a Gibson, softly resting on her blue-jean overalls, singing with a voice like Alison Krauss. After that uplifting and youthful boost, I ventured to the vendors, which consisted of artisans of all nature.

FESTIVITIES

by Karyn Lynn



Rising Appalachia



Bruce Robison & Kelly Willis

Wicked What-Nots was officially chosen to be my main souvenir selection...they took their jar full of copper pennies, creativity and eclectic photo art and handcrafted earrings, bracelets, and pendants. Check them out online!

Onward to the music! My first band of the day to interview, Rising Appalachia, I chose specifically not just because I am fond of female musicians, but because I wasn't familiar with them and their Appalachian essence they interested me as in why they were at this Texas Festival for the first year and how they fit into this festival. Their music was hauntingly beautiful, almost as if I was standing amongst their glorious Appalachian Mountains. Tribal, eerie, moving, and inspirational vibes from the Appalachians.

"Having toured over 14,000 miles across the United States and graced many stages around the world, Rising Appalachia's vision and sound is quickly proving to be contagious to everyone it touches." During my time with Leah and Chloe, these two humbly spoke with accented kindness: They encourage musicians to "slow down and be gentle." Influences such as: World Music, Old Time Appalachian, Scotch-Irish, South African, and Louisiana-style, have all touched their souls. They released their new album, "Wider Circles" at the Festival. For more of Rising Appalachia, visit them at www.risingappalachia.com.

Another highlight of the trip was soaking in music from Texas Hill Country's own Bruce Robison and his beautiful bride, Kelly Willis. Because Bruce is a local Bandera graduate and has played The Cabaret, Arkey Blues Silver Dollar, Gruene Hall and Luckenbach, just to name a few...also you can't miss him because he's 9ft Texas Tall yet as sweet as Texas Tea. Not only has Bruce been recognized for his well-known songwriting that George Strait, Tim McGraw, Dixie Chicks and many others have recorded, but his soft melodic voice harmonized with Kelly's is truly mellow to move to. Bruce's songs aren't just songs, you don't just listen to the music, you hear it.

The words are clear and tell a story. Bruce speaks of being "inspired by and values the ones who celebrate song writing, such as Don Williams, Emmylou Harris and Willie Nelson--believe in yourself, don't be in it for the money, or you'll be disappointed; do it for the love of music; it takes effort, time, and luck."

I do not think I saw one face that didn't smile, not one person that wasn't just plain happy to be there...and that's the true feel of Festivals like this.

