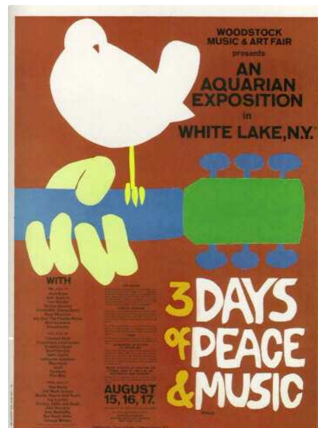
Woodstock

The last bedraggled fan sloshed out of Max Yasgur's muddy pasture more than 25 years ago. That's when the debate began about Woodstock's historical significance. True believers still call Woodstock the capstone of an era devoted to human advancement. Cynics say it was a fitting, ridiculous end to an era of naivete. Then there are those who say it was just a hell of a party.

The Woodstock Music and Art Fair in 1969 drew more than 450,000 people to a pasture in Sullivan County. For four days, the site became a countercultural mini-nation in which minds were open, drugs were all but legal and love was "free". The music began Friday afternoon at 5:07pm August 15 and continued until mid-morning Monday August 18. The festival closed the New York State Thruway and created one of the nation's worst traffic jams. It also inspired a slew of local and state laws to ensure that nothing like it would ever happen again.

Woodstock, like only a handful of historical events, has become part of the cultural lexicon. As Watergate is the codeword for a national crisis of confidence and Waterloo stands for ignominious defeat, Woodstock has become an instant adjective denoting youthful hedonism and 60's excess. "What we had here was a once-in-a-lifetime occurrence," said Bethel town historian Bert Feldman. "Dickens said it first: 'It was the best of times. It was the worst of times'. It's an amalgam that will never be reproduced again."

Gathered that weekend in 1969 were liars and lovers, prophets and profiteers. They made love, they made money and they made a little history. Arnold Skolnick, the artist who designed Woodstock's dove-and-guitar symbol, described it this way: "Something was tapped, a nerve, in this country. And everybody just came."



The counterculture's biggest bash - it ultimately cost more than $2.4 million - was sponsored by four very different, and very young, men: John Roberts, Joel Rosenman, Artie Kornfeld and Michael Lang. The oldest of the four was 26. John Roberts supplied the money. He was heir to a drugstore and toothpaste manufacturing fortune. He had a multimillion-dollar trust fund, a University of Pennsylvania degree and a lieutenant's commission in the Army. He had seen exactly one rock concert, by the Beach Boys.

Robert's slightly hipper friend, Joel Rosenman, the son of a prominent Long Island orthodontist, had just graduated from Yale Law School. In 1967, the mustachioed Rosenman, 24, was playing guitar for a lounge band in motels from Long Island to Las Vegas.

Roberts and Rosenman met on a golf course in the fall of 1966. By winter 1967, they shared an apartment and were trying to figure out what they ought to do with the rest of their lives. They had one idea: to create a screwball situation comedy for television, kind of like a male version of "I Love Lucy".

"It was an office comedy about two pals with more money than brains and a thirst for adventure." Rosenman said. "Every week they would get into a different business venture in some nutty scheme. And every week they would be rescued in the nick of time from their fate."

To get plot ideas for their sitcom, Roberts and Rosenman put a classified ad in the Wall Street Journal and The New York Times in March 1968: "Young Men With Unlimited Capital looking for interesting, legitimate investment opportunities and business propositions." They got thousands of replies, including one for biodegradable golf balls. Another seemed strange enough to work as a real business venture; Ski-bobs, bicycles on skis that were a fad in Europe. Roberts and Rosenman researched the idea before abandoning it. In the process, the two went from would-be television writers to wanna-be venture capitalists. "Somehow, we became the characters in our own show," Rosenman said.

Artie Kornfield, 25, wore a suit, but the lapels were a little wide and his hair brushed the top of his ears. He was a vice president at Capitol Records. He smoked hash in the office and was the company's connection with the rockers who were starting to sell millions of records. Kornfeld had written maybe 30 hit singles, among them "Dead Man's Curve," recorded by Jan and Dean. He also wrote songs and produced the music for the Cowsills.

Michael Lang didn't wear shoes very often. Friends described him as a cosmic pixie, with a head full of curly black hair that bounced to his shoulders. At 23, he owned what may have been the first head shop in the state of Florida. In 1968, Lang had produced one of the biggest rock shows ever, the two-day Miami Pop Festival, which drew 40,000 people. At 24, Lang was the manager of a rock group called Train, which he wanted to sign to a record deal. He bought his proposal to Kornfeld at Capitol Records in late December 1968.

Lang knew Kornfeld had grown up in Bensonhurst, Queens, like he had. Lang got an appointment by telling the record company's receptionist that he was "from the neighborhood." The two hit it off immediately. Not long after they met, Lang moved in with Kornfeld and his wife, Linda. The three had rambling, all-night conversations, fueled by a few joints, in their New York City apartment.

One of their ideas was for a cultural exposition/rock concert/extravaganza. Another was for a recording studio, to be tucked off in the woods more than 100 miles from Manhattan in a town called Woodstock. The location would reflect the back-to-the-land spirit of the counterculture. Besides, the Ulster County town had been an artists' mecca for a century. By the late 1960s, musicians like Bob Dylan, The Band, Tim Hardin, Van Morrison, Jimi Hendrix and Janis Joplin were moving to the area and wanted a state-of-the-art studio.

Lang and Kornfeld were searching for seed money for the festival and money to build the recording studio. They never saw the "young men with unlimited capital" ad, but their lawyer recommended they talk to Roberts and Rosenman. The four met in February 1969. "We met with them in their apartment on 83rd Street in a high-rise," Lang recalls. "They were kind of preppy. Today, I guess they'd be yuppies. They were wearing suits. Artie did most of the talking, because I think they seemed puzzled by me. They were curious about the counterculture, and they were somewhat interested in the project. They wanted a written proposal, which we had but we didn't bring with us. We told them that we would meet again with a budget for the festival.

To this day, the founders of Woodstock disagree on who came up with the original idea for the concert. And, dulled by time, competition and countess retelling, no one recollection is consistent. Lang and Kornfeld say Woodstock was always planned as the largest music festival ever held. At the second meeting, Lang recalls discussing a budget of $500,000 and attendance of 100,000. Lang said he had started looking at festival sites in the fall of 1968, which would have been well before he'd hooked up with Kornfeld or Roberts and Rosenman. But Rosenman and Roberts maintain that they were the driving force behind the festival. As Rosenman and Roberts recall it, Kornfeld and Lang primarily wanted a studio, hyped by a party for rock'n'roll critics and record company executives. "We would have cocktails and canapes in a tent or something," Rosenman said. "We'd send limos down to New York to pick everyone up. Tim Hardin or someone could sing. Maybe, if we were lucky, Joan Baez would get up and do a couple of songs."

At some point, Rosenman and Roberts focused on the party idea and decided that it really ought to be a rock concert. "We made a deal," Rosenman said. "We'd have the party, and the profits from the party would be used to pay for the recording studio. Ultimately, we had the money, so what we said went."

By the end of their third meeting, the little party up in Woodstock had snowballed into a bucolic concert for 50,000 people, the world's biggest rock'n'roll show. The four partners formed a corporation in March. Each held 25 percent. The company was called Woodstock Ventures, Inc., after the hip little Ulster County town where Dylan lived.

The Woodstock Ventures team scurried to find a site. Real estate agents across the mid-Hudson were scouring the countryside for land to rent for just a few months. Feelers went out in Rockland County, then in Orange. For $10,000, Woodstock Ventures had leased a tract of land in the Town of Wallkill owned by Howard Mills, Jr. "It was a Sunday in late March," Rosenman said. "We drove up to Wallkill and saw the industrial park. We talked to Howard Mills and we made a deal." "The vibes weren't right there. It was an industrial park," Roberts interjected. "I just said, 'We gotta have a site now.'"

The 300-acre Mills Industrial Park offered perfect access. It was less than a mile from Route 17, which hooked into the New York State Thruway, and it was right off Route 211, a major local thoroughfare. It has the essentials, electricity and water lines.

The land was zoned for industry; among the permitted uses were cultural exhibitions and concerts. The promoters approached the town planning board and were given a verbal go-ahead because of the zoning. Nonetheless, Lang was unhappy with the site. It was missing the back-to-the-land ambience Woodstock Ventures was selling. "I hated Wallkill," Lang said. Ventures set to work on the Mills property, all the while searching for an alternative.

Rosenman told Wallkill officials in late March or early April that the concert would feature Jazz bands and folk singers. He also said that 50,000 people would attend if they were lucky. Town Supervisor Jack Schlosser thought something was fishy. "More than anything else, I really feel they were deliberately misleading the town," Schlosser said. "The point is, they were less than truthful about the numbers. I became more and more aware, as discussions with them progressed, they did not really know what they were doing. I was in the Army when divisions were 40,000 or 50,000 men," he said. "Christ almighty, the logistics involved in moving men around... I said at one point, 'I don't care if was a convention of 50,000 ministers," I would have felt the same way."

In the cultural-political atmosphere of 1969, promoters Kornfeld and Lang knew it was important to pitch Woodstock in a way that would appeal to their peer's sense of independence.

Lang wanted to call the festival an "Aquarian Exposition," capitalizing on the zodiacal reference from the musical "Hair". He had an ornate poster designed, featuring the water-bearer.

By early April, the promoters were carefully cultivating the Woodstock image in the underground press, in publications like the Village Voice and Rolling Stone magazine. Ads began to run in The New York Times and The Times Herald-Record in May. For Kornfeld, Woodstock wasn't a matter of building stages, signing acts or even selling tickets. For him, the festival was always a state of mind, a happening that would exemplify the generation. The event's publicity shrewdly appropriated the counterculture's symbols and catch phrases. "The cool PR image was intentional," he said.

The group settled on the concrete slogan of "Three Days of Peace and Music" and downplayed the highly conceptual theme of Aquarius. The promoters figured "peace" would link the anti-war sentiment to the rock concert. They also wanted to avoid any violence and figured that a slogan with "peace" in it would help keep order.

The Woodstock dove is really a catbird; originally, it perched on a flute. "I was staying on Shelter Island off Long Island, and I was drawing catbirds all the time," said artist Arnold Skolnick. "As soon as Ira Arnold (a copywriter on the project) called with the copy-approved 'Three Days of Peace and Music,' I just took the razor blade and cut that catbird out of the sketchpad I was using. "First, it sat on a flute. I was listening to jazz at the time, and I guess that's why. But anyway, it sat on a flute for a day, and I finally ended up putting it on a guitar."

Melanie Safka had a song on the radio called "Beautiful People." An extremely hip DJ named Roscoe on WNEW-FM played it. One day, Melanie ran into a curly-haired music-business guy named Michael Lang, who was talking about a festival he was producing. When Melanie asked if she could play there, Lang's answer was a very laid-back, "Sure." "I thought it would be very low key," recalled Melanie.

Woodstock Ventures was trying to book the biggest rock'n'roll bands in America, but the rockers were reluctant to sign with an untested outfit that might be unable to deliver. "To get the contracts, we had to have the credibility, and to get the credibility, we had to have the contracts," Rosenman said. Ventures solved the problem by promising paychecks unheard of in 1969. The big breakthrough came with the signing of the top psychedelic band of the day, The Jefferson Airplane, for the incredible sum of $12,000. The Airplane usually took gigs for $5,000 to $6,000. Creedence Clearwater Revival signed for $11,500. The Who then came in for $12,500. The rest of the acts started to fall in line. In all, Ventures spent $180,000 on talent. "I made a decision that we needed three major acts, and I told them I didn't care what it cost," Lang said. "If they had been asking $5,000, I'd say, 'Pay 'em $10,000.' So we paid the deposits, signed the contracts, and that was it: instant credibility."

In the spring of 1969, John Sebastian's career was on hold. From 1965 to 1967, Sebastian's band, the Lovin' Spoonful, had cranked out hit after hit - "Do You Believe in Magic," "You Didn't Have To Be So Nice," "Did You Ever Have To Make Up Your Mind," "(What a Day For a) Daydream" and "Summer In The City." But in 1967, after the Lovin' Spoonful appeared on "The Ed Sullivan Show", things began to go wrong. Two band members were busted for pot possession and left the group. Their replacements never quite fit in. In 1968, the group broke up, and Sebastian tried going solo. But his performing career wasn't taking off. So, in the spring of 1969, Sebastian headed west to do a little soul searching. He ended up at a California commune where the hippies made money by making brightly colored shirts and jackets by a process they called tie-dye.

The residents of Wallkill had heard of hippies, drugs and rock concerts, and after the Woodstock advertising hit The New York Times, The Times Herald-Record and the radio stations, local residents knew that a three-day rock show, maybe the biggest ever, was coming. Besides, Woodstock Venture's employees sure looked like hippies. In the minds of many people, long hair and shabby clothes were associated with left-wing politics and drug use. The new ideas about re-ordering society were threatening to many people. In Wallkill, those feelings were unleashed upon Mills and his family. Residents would stop Mills at church to complain. Ventures tried to head off some of the complaints by hiring Wes Pomeroy, a former top assistant at the Justice Department, to head the security detail. A minister, the Rev. Donald Ganoung, was put on the payroll to head up local relations.

Allan Markoff watched the two freaks walk into his store in late April or early May. They were Lang and his buddy, Stan Goldstein. Goldstein, 35, had been one of the organizers of the 1968 Miami Pop Festival. For Woodstock, he was coordinator of campgrounds. "They wanted me to design a sound system for 50,000 or so people," said Markoff, who owned the only stereo store in Middletown, the Audio Center on North Street. "They said there could even be 100,000, might even go to 150,000."

He thought Lang and Goldstein were nuts. "There had never been a concert with 50,000; that was unbelievable," Markoff said. "Now, 100,000, that was impossible. It's tantamount to doing a sound system for 30 million people today." Markoff, then 24, was the only local resident listed in the Audio Engineering Society Magazine. Lang and Goldstein had picked his name out of the magazine; suddenly, Markoff was responsible for gathering sound gear for the greatest show on earth. He remembers one characteristic of the sound system. At the amplifier's lowest setting, the Woodstock speakers would cause pain for anyone standing within 10 feet.

Markoff had doubts about the sanity of the venture until he saw the promoters' office in a barn on the Mills' land. "That's when I saw all these people on these phones, with a switchboard," Markoff said. "When I saw that, I said, 'Hey, this could really happen.'"

Rosenman and Roberts couldn't entice any of the big movie studios into filming their weekend upstate. So they got Michael Wadleigh. Before Woodstock, rock documentation meant obscurity and few profits. A year before Woodstock, Monterey Pop had fizzled at the box office, making movie execs skittish over the idea of funding another rock film. During the summer of Woodstock, Wadleigh, 27, was gaining a reputation as a solid cameraman and director of independent films. Two years earlier, he had dropped out of Columbia University of Physicians and Surgeons, where he was studying to be a neurologist. Since then, he'd spent his time filming on the urban streets, the main battlefield for the cultural skirmishes of the 1960s. He'd filmed Martin Luther King Jr. He'd filmed Bobby Kennedy and George McGovern talking to middle Americans on the campaign trail in '68.

Wadleigh was experimenting with using rock'n'roll in his films as an adjunct to the day's social and political themes. He was also working with multiple images to make documentaries more entertaining than those featuring a bunch of talking heads. And then the Woodstock boys came to his door. Their idea was irresistible. The money was not. Wadleigh went for it anyway.

Goldstein went alone to his first town board meeting in Wallkill. "This was before we knew we had problems," he said. "It was probably in June. We had a full house. No more than 150 people. There were some accusations. Someone made some references to the Chicago convention. That it was young people, and this is the way the youth reacted, and that's what we could expect in our community. (Wallkill Supervisor Jack) Schlosser said that Mayor Daley knew how to handle that. Then I lost my temper. I said there was no need for the violence and that (the

police) reaction caused the violence. I said that Daley ran one of the most corrupt political machines in history."

Schlosser, who attended the Chicago convention, didn't recall such a specific exchange about Daley. He did remember the convention, however. "I saw these people throw golf clubs with nails in them," he said of the Chicago protesters. "I saw them throw excretion. The police, while I was there at least, showed remarkable restraint."

As the town meetings and the weeks wore on, the confrontation between Ventures and the residents of Wallkill got worse. Woodstock's landlord, Howard Mills, was getting anonymous phone calls. The police were called, but the culprits never were identified, much less caught. "They threatened to blow up his house," Goldstein said. "There were red faces and tempers flaring. People driven by fear to very strange things. They raise their voices and say stupid things they would never ordinarily say." To this day, Howard Mills will not discuss how his neighbors turned against him in 1969. "I know that it is a part of history, but I don't want to bother about it," Mills said.

Woodstock Ventures billed the concert as a "weekend in the country" - temporary commune. The ads ran in the newspapers, both establishment and underground, and on radio stations in Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York, Boston, Texas and Washington, D.C. A concert ticket also bought a campsite. But even a commune requires some kind of organization. In late June, Goldstein called in the Hog Farm.

The Hog Farm started out as a communal pig farm in California; its members eventually bought land next to a Hopi Indian reservation in New Mexico. Its leader was a skinny, toothless hippie whose real name was Hugh Romney. He was a one-time beatnick comic who had changed his name to Wavy Gravy and held the wiseguy title of "Minister of Talk". "We brought in the Hog Farm to be our crowd interface," Goldstein explained. "We needed a specific group to be the exemplars for all to follow. We believed that the idea of sleeping outdoors under the stars would be very attractive to many people, but we knew damn well that the kind of people who were coming had never slept under the stars in their lives. We had to create a circumstance where they were cared for."

The Wallkill Zoning Board of Appeals officially banned Woodstock on July 15, 1969. To the applause of residents, board members said that the organizer's plans were incomplete. They also said outdoor toilets, such as those to be used at the concert, were illegal in Wallkill. Two weeks earlier, the town board had passed a law requiring a permit for any gathering of more than 5,000 people. "The law they passed excluded one thing and one thing only - Woodstock," said Al Romm, then-editor of The Times Herald-Record, which editorialized against the Wallkill law. Wallkill Supervisor Jack Schlosser denied that this was the intent.

The Wallkill board may have done Woodstock Ventures a favor. Publicity about what had happened reaped a bonanza of interest. Besides, if Woodstock had been staged in Wallkill, Lang said, the vibes would either have squelched the show or turned it into a riot. "I didn't want cops in gas masks showing up, and that was the atmosphere there," Lang said. "With all the tensions around it, it wouldn't have worked." Another Woodstock Ventures member, Lee Blumer, remembered the threats made in town. "They said they were going to shoot the first hippie that walked into town," said Blumer.

Kodak wanted cash, but the movie crew got no money upfront for film. So Wadleigh pulled $50,000 out of savings, both from his personal account and an account for his independent film business. During July, Wadleigh was out in Wyoming filming a movie about mountain climbing. When promoters lost the Wallkill site, Wadleigh cringed. "I had this feeling of absolute

terror that it wasn't going to come off," Wadleigh said. "That feeling that someone could pull the plug out on us didn't go away until the music started."

Elliot Tiber read about Woodstock getting tossed out of Wallkill. Tiber's White Lake resort, the El Monaco, had 80 rooms, nearly all of them empty, and keeping it going was draining his savings. But for all of Tiber's troubles, he had one thing that was very valuable to Woodstock Ventures. He had a Bethel town permit to run a music festival. "I think it cost $12 or $8 or something like that," Tiber said."It was very vague. It just said I had permission to run an arts and music festival. That's it." The permit was for the White Lake Music and Arts Festival, a very, very small event that Tiber had dreamed up to increase business at the hotel. "We had a chamber music quartet, and I think we charged something like two bucks a day," he said. "There were maybe 150 people up there."

Tiber called Ventures, not even knowing who to ask for. Lang got the message and went out to White Lake the next day, which probably was July 18, to look at the El Monaco. Tiber's festival site was 15 swampy acres behind the resort. "Michael looked at that and said, 'This isn't big enough,'" Tiber recalled. "I said, 'Why don't we go see my friend Max Yasgur? He's been selling me milk and cheese for years. he's got a big farm out there in Bethel.'" While Lang waited, Tiber telephoned Yasgur about renting the field for $50 a day for a festival that might bring 5,000 people. "Max said to me, 'What's this, Elliot? Another one of your festivals that doesn't work out?'" Tieber said.

Yasgur met Lang in the alfalfa field. This time, Lang liked the lay of the land. "It was magic," Lang said. "It was perfect. The sloping bowl, a little rise for the stage. A lake in the background. The deal was sealed right there in the field. Max and I were walking on the rise above the bowl. When we started to talk business, he was figuring on how much he was going to lose in this crop and how much it was going to cost him to reseed the field. He was a sharp guy, ol' Max, and he was figuring everything up with a pencil and paper. He ws wetting the tip of his pencil with his tongue. I remember shaking his hand, and that's the first time I noticed that he had only three fingers on his right hand. But his grip was like iron. He's cleared that land himself."

Yasgur was known across Sullivan County as a strong-willed man of his word. He'd gone to New York University and studied real estate law, but moved back to his family's dairy farm in the '40s. A few years later, Yasgur sold the family farm in Maplewood and moved to Bethel to expand. Throughout the '50s and '60s, Yasgur slowly built a dairy herd. By the time the pipe-smoking Yasgur was approached by Woodstock Ventures, he was the biggest milk producer in Sullivan County, and the Yasgur farm had delivery routes, a massive refrigeration complex and a pasteurization plant. The 600 acres that Ventures sought were only part of the Yasgur property, which extended along both sides of Route 17B in Bethel.

Within days after meeting Yasgur, Lang brought the rest of the Ventures crew up in eight limousines; by then, Yasgur was wise to Woodstock, and the price had gone up considerably. Woodstock Ventures kept all the negotiations secret, lest it repeat what had happened in Wallkill. At some point during the talks, Tiber and Lang went to dinner at the Lighthouse Restaurant, and Italian place just down Route 17B from El Monaco in White Lake. That's where the news leaked out. "While we were paying the check, the radio was on in the bar. The radio station out there, WVOS, announced that the festival was going to White Lake," Tiber said. "The waiters or the waitresses must have called the radio station. We were just in shock. The bar was now empty. Michael just had a blank look. We all went into shock." On July 20, 1969, the world was talking about the first man to walk on the moon. But conversation in Bethel centered on this "Woodstock hippie festival." "I was used to fights, but I wasn't ready for this one," Tiber said.

The Woodstock partners have since admitted that they were engaged in creative deception. They told Bethel officials that they were expecting 50,000 people, tops. All along they knew that Woodstock would draw far, far more. "I was pretty manipulative," Lang said. "The figure at Wallkill was 50,000, and we just stuck with it. I was planning on a quarter-million people, but we didn't want to scare anyone."

Ken Kesey's farm in Oregon was overrun with hippie acolytes. Kesey lived in Pleasant Hill, which became home base for his Merry Pranksters, the creators of the original Acid Tests in San Francisco. Kesey had bought the farm with the earnings from his two bestsellers, "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" (1962) and "Sometimes a Great Notion" (1964). The fashion of the day was to share and share alike. But the horde was starting to bother even a founder of the counterculture.

As the Apollo 11 astronauts were strolling the Sea of Tranquility on July 20, the Pranksters were hearing from Wavy Gravy, whom they knew from the Acid Tests. The Hog Farmers said they were getting $1,700 to gather as many people together as possible and get them to Bethel. "Kesey was glad to get rid of everybody," said Ken Babbs, then 33 and the leader of the Pranksters' Woodstock squad. Babbs packed 40 hippies into five school buses. One was "The Bus" - the one later made famous by author Tom Wolfe in "The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test." The Bus had a custom, psychedelic paint job and a Plexiglas bubble on top, and it was packed with sound gear. Its destination sign read: "Further." "While Neil Armstrong was taking a giant leap for mankind, we were starting to take a giant leap for Woodstock," Babbs said.

Max Yasgur had two concerns. "He thought a grave injustice had been done in Wallkill. And he wanted to make sure that he got the $75,000 before some other dairy farmer did," Rosenman said. "They were in no particular order. I'm not sure which was more important to him. Having said that, I'll say this about Max: He never hit us up for another dime after we paid him. I remember that every time we went over there, Max would hand you one of those little cartons of chocolate milk. Every time. We ended up with all these cartons of milk around the office."

Contracts for the use of land surrounding Yasgur's parcel ended up costing Ventures another $25,000. "We could have bought the land for what we rented it for," Lang said. Meanwhile, hand-lettered signs were being put up in the town of Bethel. They read: "Buy No Milk. Stop Max's Hippy Music Festival."

Lang had set a $15,000 ceiling for any act. But the hottest act in the country - guitarist Jimi Hendrix - wanted more. Hendrix had gotten a one-time fee of $150,000 for a concert earlier that summer in California. His manager was demanding that much to play Woodstock. But by July, Lang had some leverage too. He didn't need Hendrix to make the biggest concert of the year. If Hendrix wanted to come, he'd be welcome. "We paid Jimi Hendrix $32,000. He was the headliner, and that's what he wanted," Rosenman said. Then Ventures lied about the terms. "We told everyone that was because he was playing two sets at $16,000 each. We had to do that, or the Airplane would want more than $12,000." Lang set the bill so that folk acts like Joan Baez would play on Friday, the opening day. Rock'n'roll was saved for Saturday and Sunday. But Hendrix's one-and-only set was always to be the finale. His contract said no act could follow him.

Motel owner Tiber's new job was to be the local liaison for Woodstock Ventures in Bethel. He was paid $5,000 for a couple of month's work. Tiber was earning his money too. "The town meetings never drew more than flies before," Tiber said. "But then they were standing-room-only, maybe 300 people. Maybe it was that Michael was barefooted. He came off the helicopter with no shoes. I'd never experienced anything like that before, but that was the way he was. That was fine with me, but I think they didn't like it."

Bethel residents had read about the worries in Wallkill: drugs, traffic, sewage and water. Public fury mounted once more. A prominent Bethel resident approached Lang. He said he could grease the wheels of power and make sure Lang got the approvals he needed. All the fixer wanted was $10,000. Woodstock Ventures got the cash and put it in a paper bag. Lang won't name the man who solicited the bribe. But ultimately Woodstock Ventures would not pay off. "We were very concerned with karma," Lang said. "We thought that if we did pay someone off, that would be wrong and we would change the way things came out." The suggestion of a payoff galvanized Yasgur's support, Lang said. "At that point, he really became an ally, not just a spectator."

But there may have been a payoff, anyway. Rosenman wrote in a 1974 book that he issued a $2,500 check to a man who was demanding $10,000 to arrange local backing. Years later, Rosenman said some of the events in the book were hyped for dramatic tension. "And I honestly can't remember whether I wrote the check or not," Rosenman said.

At least one of Woodstock's opponents also was approached to fix the deal. George Neuhaus was one of the old-style, old boy politicians in Bethel, in and out of the town supervisor's post for years. He thought Woodstock was being jammed down the throats of local people who didn't want it. That July, Neuhaus was approached by a man who wanted him to be a guide through the local political maze. Neuhaus wanted none of it. Like Lang, Neuhaus wouldn't identify the man, but both indicate it was the same individual. "It wasn't, per se, money, but he wanted to know if I could get the thing off the ground," Neuhaus recalled. "I was sitting on my porch. I threw him the hell off my property. I wouldn't have anything to do with it."

Bob Dylan was the only one of Lang's rock'n'roll heroes who hadn't signed a contract. The promoters had borrowed some of Dylan's mystique by naming their concert after his adopted home town, which was only 70 miles from Bethel. Dylan's backup group, The Band, was already signed. Lang figured that Dylan's appearance was a natural. So he made the pilgrimage to Dylan's Ulster County hideaway. "I went to see Bob Dylan about three weeks before the festival," Lang said. "I went with Bob Dacey, a friend of Dylan's, and we met in his house for a couple of hours. I told him what we were doing and told him, 'We'd love to have you there.' But he didn't come. I don't know why."

In late July, Woodstock Ventures obtained permit approvals from Bethel Town Attorney Frederick W.V. Schadt and building inspector Donald Clark. But, under orders from the town board, Clark never issued them. The board ordered Clark to post stop-work orders; the promoters tore the signs down with Clark's tacit approval. He felt he was being made the fall guy for the town. Schadt said that Woodstock's momentum was accelerating like a runaway train. "At that time, it had progressed so far, any kind of order to stop it would have just resulted in chaos," he said. "Here you have thousands of people descending on the community. How in the world do you stop them?"

Ken Van Loan, the president of the Bethel Business Association, wasn't worried. He'd decided this festival could be a great boost for the depressed economy of the Catskills. "We talked to the county about promoting this thing," said Can Loan, who owned Ken's Garage in Kauneonga lake. "We told 'em it would be the biggest thing that ever came to the county."

As July became August, Vassmer's General Store in Kauneonga Lake was doing a great business in kegs of nails and cold cuts. The buyers were longhaired construction guys who were carving Yasgur's pasture into an amphitheater. "They told me, 'Mr. Vassmer, you ain't seen nothing yet,' and by golly, they were right," said Art Vassmer, the owner.

Abe Wagner knew that little Bethel, with a population of 3,900 souls, wasn't set to handle the coming flood of humanity. Two weeks before the festival, Wagner, 61, heard that Woodstock

Ventures had already sold 180,000 tickets. Wagner, who owned a plumbing company and lived in Kauneonga lake, was one of approximately 800 Bethel residents who signed a petition to stop the festival. "The people of Bethel were afraid of the influx of people on our small roads, afraid of the element of people who read the advertisements in the magazines that said, 'Come to Woodstock and do whatever you want to do because nobody will bother you,'" Wagner said.

By August, Elliot Tiber was getting anonymous phone calls. "They'd say that it'll never happen, that we will break your legs," Tiber said. "There was terrible name-calling. It was anti-Semitic and anti-hippies. It was dirty and filthy.

A week before the festival, Yasgur's farm didn't look much like a concert site. "It was like they were building a house, except there was a helicopter pad," Vassmer said. Vassmer had heard the nervous talk among his regular customers, especially when they heard the radio ads. "'I don't know about this,' they'd say," Vassmer recalled. "They'd say, 'Boy, when this thing comes, we're gonna be sorry.'" That same week, a group of outraged residents filed a lawsuit. It was settled within a few days; the promoters promised to add more portable toilets. "There was a lot of intrigue," Lang said. "I don't remember it all."

Those 800 petitioners weren't too happy with Bethel Supervisor Daniel J. Amatucci. "He didn't inform us about all the people until a week before the festival," Wagner remembered. "He turned around and threw it in the wastebasket without even looking at it." Wagner protester. Amatucci read it. Then he told Wagner it was too late.

Michael Lang gunned a shiny BSA motorcycle across a field of grass. He wore a leather vest on his shirtless back, and a fringed purse hung at his hip. A lit cigarette hung out of his mouth as he popped down the kickstand. It was early August 1969, and Lang commanded an army of workers throwing together the rock concert. A filmmaker came by to ask Lang some questions, freezing Lang, his motorcycle and his attitude forever in a movie moment that captures the careless bravado of youth. "Where are you gonna go from here?" the interviewer asked. "Are you gonna do another?" "If it works," Lang answered.

Ventures decided to try to win over the residents in Bethel. It sent out the Earthlight Theater to entertain local groups. It booked a rock band called Quill to do free performances. But Earthlight, an 18-member troupe, didn't do Shakespeare or Rodgers and Hammerstein. They did a musical comedy called "Sex. Y'all Come." They also stripped naked. Frequently.

On August 7, Ventures staged a pre-festival festival on a stage that was still under construction. Quill opened the show, and Bethel residents sat on the grass, expecting theater. Instead, the Earthlight Theater stripped and screamed obscenities at the shocked crowd. "They went from being suspicious to being convinced," Rosenman said.

Wavy Gravy rounded up 85 Hog Farmers and 15 Hopis. He donned a Smokey-the-Bear suit and armed himself with a bottle of seltzer and a rubber shovel. Then he and the barefooted, long haired Hog Farmers flew into John F. Kennedy International Airport. "We're the hippie police," Gravy announced as he and his entourage stepped off the plane on Monday, Aug. 11.

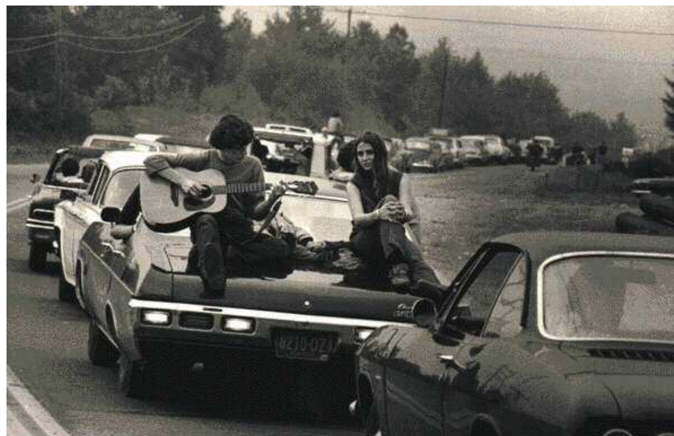
The opposition plotted a last-minute strategy to stop the show: a human barricade across Route 17B on the day before the concert. Tiber heard about the plan on Monday. "So, I go on national radio and said that they were trying to stop the show," he said. "I didn't sleep well. About two o'clock in the morning, I wake up and I hear horns and guitars. This is on Tuesday morning. I look out, and there are five lanes of headlights all the way back. They'd started coming already."

Kornfeld made Warner Brothers an offer it couldn't refuse. It was Wednesday, two days before showtime. Ventures had to make a movie deal... now. All Kornfeld wanted was $100,000

to pay for film. The concert would take care of the acting, the lighting, the dialogue and the plot. "Michael Wadleigh was up there (at the site) waiting with (Martin) Scorsese," Kornfeld said. "All they needed was money for film. The contract was handwritten and signed by myself and Ted Ashley (of Warner Brothers). I told them, 'Hey, guys, there are going to be hundreds of thousands of people out there. It's a crap shoot: spend $100,000 and you might make millions. If it turns out to be a riot, then you'll have one of the best documentaries ever made.'"

Wadleigh rounded up a crew of about 100 from the New York Film scene, including Scorsese. Wadleigh couldn't pay them until much later, but he could get them inside the event of the summer. The crew signed on a double-or-nothing basis. If the film made it, they'd get twice regular pay. If the film bombed, they'd lose. The crew got to Woodstock a few days before, driving up in Volkswagen Beetles and beat-up cars. Wadleigh's plot ran like this: Woodstock would be a modern-day Canterbury Tale, a pilgrimage back to the land. He wanted the film to be as much about the hippies who trekked to Woodstock as about the music on stage. He wanted the stories of the young people, their feelings about the Viet Nam War, about the times. The stories of the townspeople. These would make the film, not just the music.

Eight miles away, Timer Herald-Record harness racing John Szefc was working on a feature story at the Monticello Raceway. Then he caught a glimpse of the traffic out on Route 17B. It was 11am, more than 24 hours before the concert, and traffic was already backed up all the way down Route 17B to Route 17 - a distance of 10 miles. "That's when I knew this was going to be big. Really significant," he said. Szefc's story that night was about the effect of the concert on the racetrack. Some bettors fought the traffic on Route 17B and managed to get to the windows. But the handle was down $60,000 from a typical weekend night in August.



By the afternoon of Thursday, August 14, Woodstock was an idyllic commune of 25,000 people. The Hog Farmers had built kitchens and shelters with two-by-fours and tarps. Their kids were swinging on a set of monkey bars built of lumber and tree limbs, jumping into a pile of hay at the bottom. Wavy Gravy recruited "responsible-looking" people and made them security guards. He handed out armbands and the secret password, which was "I forget." Down the slope, stands were ready to sell counterculture souvenirs: hand-woven belts, drug paraphernalia and headbands. Christmas tree lights were strung in the trees. Sawdust was strewn along the paths. Over the hill, carpenters were still banging nails into the main stage. The Pranksters and the Hog Farmers had built heir own alternative stage.

Prankster leader Babbs acted as emcee, opening the stage to anyone who wanted to jam. The sound system was a space amplifier borrowed from the Grateful Dead. "Over the hill and into

the woods we went," Babbs said. "We had the free school for the kids, the Free Kitchen and so, the Free Stage.

The Festival. Day One.

The sticky-sweet smell of burning marijuana wafted into the open windows of the house in Bethel late Thursday night. The chirp and buzz of the insects suddenly gave way to the shuffle of sandaled feet. "It sounded like a parade," said the man who lived there. The young Bethel couple lived a quarter-mile from Yasgur's field. The wife, 22, was pregnant with the couple's second child, and the husband, 27, a salesman, had an important business meeting in Albany on Friday morning. But the couple wasn't budging from Bethel. When they awoke on the first of three days of peace and music, they looked out front. "Nothin' but cars and people. Saw a trooper. Ten kids were on the hood of his car," the husband said. They looked out back. "People were camping all over the yard," he added.

Producer Lang woke up Friday morning to find that something was missing.... the ticket booths. Others had known for days, but Lang said that Friday morning was his first inkling that Woodstock would never collect a single dollar at the gate. "Tickets were being handled over in (Roberts') office," Lang said. "I just assumed that they were handling the booths, but they were never put in place." Van Loan, the cigar-smoking owner of Ken's Garage, had been hired two days before the festival to tow about two dozen ticket booths into position. "All we ever got to move was two or three," Van Loan recalled. "Each one we moved took longer and longer. There were too many people and cars and abandoned (vacant) tents blocking the way."

Abbie Hoffman was the head of the Yippies - the Youth International Party, the irreverent left-wing organization founded by Hoffman, Jerry Rubin, Paul Krassner and Woodstock's Ed Sanders. Hoffman convinced the festival's producers to donate $10,000 to the Yippies - mainly by threatening to disrupt the proceedings. The political pranksters wanted the money to fund various community projects, including New York City storefronts they rented to shelter runaways and defense funds they established for the "politically oppressed."

Along with the Hog Farmers and other left-leaning groups, the Yippies set up "Movement City," their festival-within-a-festival, about a quarter-mile from the stage. Days before the festival, Hoffman and his lieutenant, Krassner, mimeographed thousands of flyers urging festival-goers not to pay. Of course, that issue became moot as soon as the fence went down. Krassner would later say that all attempts to politicize the three days of peace and love had evaporated. Krassner also recalled bringing a brand new white-fringed leather jacket to Woodstock. It was stolen from the Movement City tent.

Three school buses rolled up to Yasgur's farm late Friday morning and parked near Ventures headquarters, by the playground and the Freak-Out Tent on West Shore Road. Inside were more than 100 New York City police officers hand-picked by concert management for their street smarts and relaxed attitudes. In the days before the concert, the city police department had

told its members that it would not sanction Woodstock work. The cops had been promised $50 a day. But when the officers arrived in Bethel, a more stringent warning awaited them. "The message was something to the effect of, 'If you participate in this, you may be subject to departmental censure,'" Feldman said. "So they stretched their legs, got back in the bus and went back to New York City."

Many stayed to work under assumed names. But they demanded that Woodstock Ventures increase their pay to $90 a day. Ventures paid it. "We had eight to nine guys on the payroll as Mickey Mouse and names like this," said Arthur Schubert, a waiter at the Concord Hotel and one of the directors of the security force.

Melanie Safka was supposed to sing, so she and her mother got in her mom's 1968 burgundy Pontiac Bonneville and headed upstate. When they turned onto Route 17, they noticed lots of traffic. When Melanie called the festival's producers, they said, yes, the traffic was headed for Bethel, which was getting crowded, so she'd better get to a hotel where they would take her by helicopter to the festival site. At that hotel, the name and location of which Melanie doesn't remember, she saw a slew of TV cameras focusing on Janis Joplin and her bottle of Southern Comfort. "And me?" says Melanie. "I was just a fleckling."

State police investigator Fred W. Cannock, 34, was supposed to direct traffic at the intersection of Route 55 and Route 17B in White Lake. But parked cars didn't need much direction. "I just stood there and watched the fiasco," Cannock said. "Route 17B was jammed for roughly 9 miles, all the way back to Monticello and beyond."

Woodstock organizers blamed state police for the monstrous traffic jam. The troopers had refused to enact the festival's traffic plan. "I know the way cops think, and I think they figured that if they had done that, they would acquire responsibility for whatever might happen," Goldstein said. "Of course, they were not necessarily in favor of these kinds of events, and they wanted it to turn to (chaos). They wanted it to be a disaster."

Woodstock organizers had meant for cars to pull off the highway and be directed by the NYPD cops to parking in fields off Route 17B. On Tuesday, Goldstein had pleaded for the state police to help, at least by starting the procedure. The state police brass added additional troopers to direct traffic. Local civil defense officials refused to plan for a disaster; their office was closed Friday afternoon as the traffic rolled in. So the traffic backed up for miles while the police looked on. "Suddenly, we were in a logistic nightmare," Goldstein said. That didn't mean that individual officers didn't have sympathy for the floundering festival-goers.

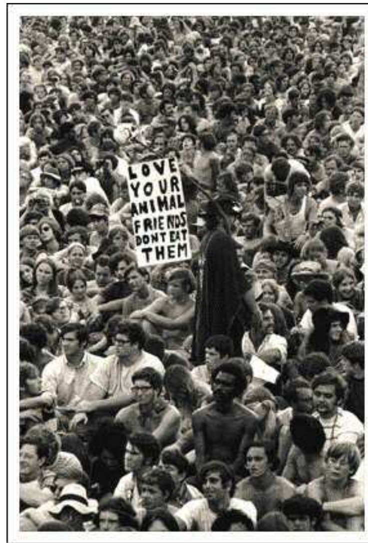
"I thought they were hippie scum - but you couldn't help but really feel sorry for the kids," Cannock said. "They got sucked into this carte blanche. Nobody said anything about reservations, tickets. They just came. You couldn't believe it. Advance sales paid, nobody else paid a nickel. They paid with pain, hunger and exposure, or whatever."

Wadleigh bought out rooms in a local motel, the Silver Spur, for the film crew and equipment. The crew naturally nicknamed the place "the Silver Sperm." Then the crowds came. They left cars in the middle of the road. The crew and their cameras were stuck. They ended up sleeping in the field, under the stage, wherever.

Woodstock's security force was briefed late that morning by none other than Babbs, the Prankster leader. Babbs was one of the more experienced acid trippers. "I guess they had me do it because I was in the Marines," Babbs said. "I told them that if someone was hassling someone else, then they should help the person who was in trouble. Keep an eye out for people who need help. Other than that, it was nobody else's business what they did. "They asked about drugs, and I

told them not to worry about it. I said, 'There are going to be so many drugs around, you're not going to be able to keep track of any of it.'"

At about noon, Babbs and Wavy Gravy watched as a dozen guys in orange jackets started walking up the rise. They carried change boxes and were nearing the fence border. "They said, 'We're the ticket-takers, and now we want everyone to walk out and come back in,'" Babbs said. "I said, 'Man, you gotta be kidding me. There are 200,000 people in there. So the head security guy says to me, 'There's no way we're going to be able to get these tickets. What do you want to do?' They had, like, a double-wide section of fence that was open for the gate. So Wavy and I said the only thing to do is take down the fence. So, we - Wavy and I - unrolled the fence about 100 feet, and the people all came pouring in."



Schubert said his security forces had no choice. "How can you to tell 200,000 to 400,000 people, 'Go home, it's over?" he said. "It would have been the riot of the century." But the crowd closer to the stage couldn't see the impromptu ceremony of taking down the gate. From there, it looked like the mob was taking over. "My most vivid memory was that there was this chain-link, Cyclone fence that went all the way around," said Bert Feldman, who was working security on the hill near the Hog Farm base. "I had the uncanny feeling that there were 500 million people there. Suddenly, the fence was no more. Trampled into the mud. It disappeared like magic." Lang said he never exactly decided Woodstock would become a free show. But he did decide to make the announcement. "It was kind of like stating the obvious," he said.

Complaints were coming in to Gov. Nelson Rockefeller in Albany. Rosenman and Roberts hinted that a declaration of a disaster area in Bethel might be welcomed, to ease the crowd's suffering and because it would limit the company's liability in lawsuits. But the other partners feared a disaster declaration could bring in the National Guard and the possibility of an armed confrontation. Extra cops, including 20 Rockland County deputies mounted on horseback, had already been brought in. But the governor did not consider Woodstock an act of God. He made no declaration. "We'll play it by ear," the governor's spokesman told United Press International.

Sullivan County residents heard that the kids up there in Bethel didn't have enough food. By Friday afternoon, members of the Monticello Jewish Community Center were making sandwiches with 200 loaves of bread, 40 pounds of cold cuts and two gallons of pickles.

Woodstock Ventures estimated that it needed donations of 750,000 sandwiches. Food was being airlifted in from as far away as Newburgh's Stewart Air Force Base.

Day One of Woodstock was supposed to be the day for the folkies. Joan Baez was the headliner, preceded by a bill that included Tim Hardin, Arlo Guthrie, Sweetwater, the Incredible String Band, Ravi Shankar, Bert Sommer and Melanie. One rock act, Sly and the Family Stone was added for a little taste of the rock'n'roll of the weekend. The scheduled starting time was 4pm. The performers were spread around in Holiday Inns or Howard Johnsons miles from the site. Because of the traffic jam, the promoters were frantically contracting for helicopters to shuttle in the performers and supplies. But the helicopters were late. A four-seater finally arrived after 4pm; it could handle only single acts. Lang had two choices: Hardin, who was drifting around backstage stoned, or Richie Havens, who looked ready. "It was, 'Who could get setup the quickest?'" Lang said. "And I went with Richie Havens." Three days of music started at 5:07pm Eastern Daylight Time on August 15, 1969.

Every time Richie Havens tried to quit playing, he had to keep on. The other acts hadn't arrived. Finally, after Havens had played for nearly three hours - improvising his last song "Freedom" - a large U.S. Army helicopter landed with musical reinforcements. An Army helicopter? "Yes," said Havens. "It was the only helicopter available. If it wasn't for the U.S. Army, Woodstock might not have happened." The U.S. Army saved the day for a crowd that was, for the most part, anti-war? "We were never anti-soldier," said Havens. "We were just against the war."

Cash in hand, Art Vassmer floated in his boat across White Lake to the Sullivan County National Bank. He was the only bank customer that day. Vassmer feared robbers would take all the money the store was raking in from the sale of beer, soda, and peanut butter and jelly. But Vassmer's worries were groundless. "The Hog Farmers kept the peace," he said. "They were dirty, but they were nice. A few were happy on drugs, but hell, that was nothing." Vassmer raised only one price in his whole store. Beer was $2 a six-pack instead of $1.95. "Got tired of making change," said Vassmer, who even cashed a couple dozen checks for some kids who ran out of money. Not one bounced.

While the helicopters whirled to Yasgur's farm, Melanie sat in the motel lobby talking to her mom. When it was her turn to fly, her mother wasn't allowed with her - even though Melanie argued, "But she's my mom." Mrs. Safka drove back to New Jersey. Melanie flew to Bethel.

Bert Feldman, the town historian, was suddenly Woodstock's censor. His job was to keep frontal nudity from appearing on national television. he stood between the swimming hole and the television cameras, reminding folks to cover up. Afternoon temperatures were in the mid-80s. "They had to have one or two garments on, depending on sex," Feldman said. "Lemme tell you, after five minutes, it was work. You never saw a fight in there. You could argue, of course, that it was because everyone was stoned."

Other acts still weren't ready. Stage organizers knew they had to kill time. The Woodstock Nation might get restless if the music stopped. Emcee Chip Monck grabbed Country Joe McDonald, strapped an acoustic guitar on him and thrust him on stage. McDonald's short set

included the unprintable and improvised "Fish Cheer" and "I-Feel-Like-I'm-Fixin'-To-Die Rag". After Country Joe, Monck spotted John Sebastian, the former lead singer and guitarist for the Lovin' Spoonful. Sebastian, clad in wild tie-dye, was tripping on some unidentified substance. He hadn't even been invited to perform at the festival. He recalls he was "too whacked to say no." Sebastian's stage rap was nearly a parody of hippie conversation, mostly because of his psychedelic state. But the crowd roared with approval. "Just love everybody around ya' and clean up a little garbage on your way out," Sebastian told the crowd.

Melanie Safka was such a nobody that she didn't even have a performer's pass. So when it was time for her to go on, she had to prove who she was by showing her driver's license and singing "Beautiful People." She was led backstage to her "dressing room," which was actually a tepee-sized tent. When she realized that she would be playing for a crowd about the size of Boston, she got so scared that she developed a nervous cough that "sounded like a chain saw." It was so loud that someone in the next tent sent her a cup of soothing tea. That neighbor was Joan Baez.

The film crew didn't have even close to enough film to shoot all the rock performances at Woodstock. So Wadleigh tried to make up for it by getting performers' song lists and the order in which they were going to sing them. Wadleigh wanted to film the anti-war songs, the songs that talked about the rifts in society and overlook the love songs. But musicians were getting stoned backstage. By the time they got on stage, they broke with song orders and played whatever came to them. Here's why the cameras never recorded the first two letters of the "Fish Cheer." Wadleigh was manning the onstage front and center camera. When Country Joe McDonald came out yelling "Gimme an F," revving the crowd with anti-Vietnam cheers, Wadleigh was loading his camera and fixing a minor jam. "I was just scrambling like crazy to get my camera in some kind of working order," Wadleigh said. "That's why you don't see him for the first two minutes or so in the film. You just hear him. I got him on camera eventually. Someone should give him an award for that song. That is one of the greatest war songs there is."

Havens flew back to Liberty on the chopper. Then he hopped into his car and drove back to Newark International Airport, where he caught a plane for another show in Michigan the next night. Havens says the car ride to New Jersey was almost as incredible as the helicopter trip to the festival. "I was the only person on the New York Thruway going south," Havens said.

Of all the acts on Friday night, Woodstock's producers were worried only about Sly and the Family Stone. The rocking soul band had a tendency to fire up small crowds, inviting people to rush the stage. With a couple hundred thousand people, Sly and his band could ignite a riot. So Kornfeld cleared the pit in front of the stage to give security a fighting chance. Then he and his wife, Linda, climbed down, all alone into the vast chasm between the musicians on stage and Woodstock's horde. "He was singing, 'I want to take you high-er!' and everyone lit up. All those lights in the crowd, thousands of them," Kornfeld said. "We were right between Sly and the crowd.

The sprinkles began around midnight as sitarist Ravi Shankar was playing. Bert Sommer's angelic voice won him a standing ovation. By the time Joan Baez finished "We Shall Overcome," a warm thunderstorm was pounding Yasgur's farm. In the space of about three hours, five inches of rain fell.

The ration ticket read "Food for Love." But 25 year old Georgie Sievers of Toronto, who had been visiting

family in Port Jervis, paid a price anyway. "We waited for an hour, and we got a cold hot dog on a hamburger bun," she recalled. Food for Love was the original food concession for those inside the festival. Campgrounds coordinator Goldstein had set up two food operations: Food for Love, for those who had tickets, and the Free Kitchen for those outside the festival fence. Food for Love was plagued by a lack of organization from the outset. The voucher system was cumbersome, and the young food workers started giving away hot dogs and hamburgers in the spirit of the event. In addition, the massive traffic jam had blocked deliveries.

A Food for Love truck was stuck in the traffic in front of Abe Wagner's house, about five miles northeast of the festival site. Then the truck was raided. "One of the kids got in, and then they started throwing the food out all over the road, the bread, the hot dogs," Wagner said. Later, when hungry customers overran the booths, Food for Love disintegrated. "It started to rain, and it got ugly," said Helen Graham, who at 41 was one of the senior employees of Food for Love. "It was 2am, and I yelled, 'Joan Baez is on. Joan Baez is on.' I wanted to get the teen-agers away from the stand. They just wanted to stare at me. Mrs. Graham found herself trapped on Yasgur's farm because her car was blocked in. She wanted out of the Woodstock Nation. "It wasn't my type of culture. It wasn't my type of upbringing. It wasn't my type of experience." she said. "I kind of blotted it out from my head. It was a frightening experience. I didn't see the love and the peace. I saw an overwhelming crowd, and I didn't understand what was going on."

The stream behind Gery Krewson's tent was rising. The music stopped, and the group bailed out at 3am to dig a trench. "The water was just running down in torrents," he said. With the turf torn away, the Woodstock site is red clay and rocks brought down by glaciers millions of years ago. Within seconds of the rain, the festival became a slippery quagmire punctuated by puddles. The rain slammed into Yasgur's farm, drenching the fans, including 19 people who jammed into Krewson's tent seeking shelter from the storm. "When I got there, things at least had some semblance of order," Krewson said. From the instant the storm blew in, he recalled, there was no order, no security, no sense of what was happening or who was in charge.

Melanie Safka faced complete terror: half a million people in a driving rainstorm. "It was the only out-of-body experience of my life," she said. "I just watched myself on stage singing the songs, but I wasn't there." And then, as the rain tumbled down, tens of thousands of fans lit candles in the darkness. Sixteen-year-old Gery Krewson, his brother and three friends camped 50 yards from the stage. They'd arrived Wednesday night from Tunkhannock, Pa., in a psychedelic van. But their campsite seemed to be receding in the distance. A sea of people was rolling into the gap. "The word kind of got out that something was going on in the Catskills," Krewson said.

The Festival. Day Two.

Mary Sanderson stepped aboard the helicopter at dawn Saturday. The chopper blades slapped the air, and the pavement of the Orange County Airport fell away. The copter soared toward Bethel in a battering hailstorm. Just before it arrived, sunshine shot through a hole in the clouds. To the 40 year old nurse from Middletown, it looked like a scene from a biblical epic. "When you are in a helicopter, the sun's rays come down on 500,000 people. It looks like the multitudes," Mrs. Sanderson said. "You just can't picture that. You don't realize how all the people looked in that sun." Mrs. Sanderson had been scheduled to drive to the festival to work Saturday's night shift. But the Woodstock organizers had called her late Friday. They said the festival had been swamped with emergency cases. Ventures would send a helicopter for her and any other nurse she could recruit.

When she arrived, Dr. William Abruzzi of Wappingers Falls, the festival's medical director, immediately put her in charge of the newly erected medical tent. Outside, one man was selling his own brand of medicine. "He was yelling, ‘Mescaline! One dollar! Mescaline! One dollar!' All day long," Nurse Sanderson said.

Promoters decided early on that it was crucial to crowd control for the music to be endless, especially after dark. The music was supposed to start at 7pm on Saturday and continue until midnight. But after the crowd swarmed the site on Friday, the promoters' strategy changed. They needed more music and deemed that acts should start later and play until dawn. Saturday's bill included loud, tough rock'n'roll: The Who, the Jefferson Airplane, Janis Joplin, Creedence Clearwater Revival, the Grateful Dead, Canned Heat, Mountain and Santana. The promoters worried that as the music got louder, the crowd could get wilder. But if they weren't entertained well, several hundred thousand bored fans could do some damage. Lang and the other organizers pleaded with Saturday's acts to play twice as long. Most were willing. It was the biggest audience in history; the attendance was estimated at 250,000 that morning.

The mud smelled like hashish, two inches deep. Sodden sleeping bags were churned up with cellophane, cigarette butts and discarded clothes. Standing rainwater was steaming skyward, blanketing thousands of sleeping kids with an eerie fog. Gery Krewson saw the tractor rumbling over the hill, plowing through a pile of soaked garbage and sleeping bags. The tractor was towing a tank trailer to haul away sewage from the portable toilets. But under that mass slept a 17-year-old from South Jersey named Raymond Mizak. His sleeping bag was over his head to ward off the rain. The tractor slowly ran over him. Krewson and five others raced up the hill and helped carry Mizak to an ambulance. By the time the helicopter arrived, Mizak was dead. "I don't think he ever felt anything. He was asleep," Krewson said. Richard Barley was walking up the hill seconds after the accident. "He had a blanket over him," Barley said. "A couple of girls were standing there crying."

Eileen Fuentes, a 17-year-old Forest Hills High School student, had been recruited to run an independence concession stand at the festival. She sold the accouterments of the counterculture - posters, roach clips and buttons. But Fuentes discovered Saturday that the real market was in raincoats. She ventured into the crowds, found a spot by the stage and sold the raincoats her boss

had packed, just in case. Within an hour, hundreds of coats had been snatched up at $5 a pop. "I went back to get more, but we didn't have any more," she said.

"SPI-DERS!" the guy was screaming. The Freak-Out Tent had its first patient. Nurse Sanderson wasn't sure what to do about psychic spider infestations. The Hog Farmers treated bad acid trips with physical stroking and soft words. She decided to do the same. "You learned in a gosh-darn fast way," she said. "You have to give them some touch with reality. You had to speak softly." Mrs. Sanderson wanted to work the festival to learn how to treat the new sicknesses associated with the drug culture. Woodstock Ventures had offered to help train medical personnel, and Ventures was offering big bucks - $50 a day - for nurses. But there weren't many takers. Local people in medicine were skittish about being associated with the controversial event, Mrs. Sanderson said.

The medics had brought a bottle of Thorazine, an anti-psychotic drug, to chemically counteract bad trips. But the tripsters reported that Thorazine would send a drug user crashing immediately, leading to long-term psychological problems. The consensus at the Hog Farm was that Thorazine was a very bad trip indeed. "We stuck the Thorazine under the table, and I think somebody stole it," Mrs. Sanderson said. She divided the circus tent into three wards to cover the incoming casualties. The most famous was the ward for those experiencing the imaginary symptoms of bad trips. A second, the largest, was for people with cut feet. Broken glass and pop-tops slashed hundreds. "Their feet were cut to ribbons," she said. "We sat them down, put their feet in a bowl of clean water and disinfectant." The third area was for people with a malady peculiar to Woodstock. "They had burned their eyes staring at the sun," Mrs. Sanderson said. "If they were tripping, they'd lie down on their backs and just stare. There were five or six or seven at a time. That was something."

The shiny piece of foil glistened next to the black rubber tire of the state police car. Leo O'Mara, 18, of Clintondale, figured there was hashish in the foil, snatched it up and continued walking past the cop as he followed the abandoned cars along Route 17, for what was probably 20 miles. O'Mara opened the foil and found 29 tabs of acid. "They were pinkish, kind of," O'Mara said. "So I took one and folded the rest up and kept walking." But O'Mara's evening was about to turn strange. "I get there and everyone's saying, ‘Look out for the purple acid! Look out for the purple acid!'" he said. "I go,'Hey, that stuff was kind of purple. Uh-oh.'"

Bethel Town Justice Stanley Liese ran a quiet court from his house. But in August 1969, Liese suddenly acquired 18 months' worth of work - 177 cases. The most common charge: possession of implements to administer narcotics. If the cases were not simply dismissed, the average find was $25. Liese remembered one 16-year-old who was charged with selling marijuana (for $6 an ounce) and possessing six pounds of the stuff with intent to sell. Irate customers followed the troopers into Liese's house when they brought the suspected marijuana dealer in. The customers demanded that the judge throw the book at the teen because the grass was awful. Liese ordered him locked up in the Sullivan County Jail and sent a sample of the grass to the police lab in Albany for analysis.

The Free Kitchen was created to feed the hundreds of people who would be outside the concert, just making the scene. Organizers felt responsible for a horde of unprepared people, so they planned to feed them. But by Saturday afternoon, the Hog Farm's Free Kitchen was cooking for thousands after the Food for Love operation turned into chaos. I bought truckloads of grain, barrels of soy sauce," Goldstein said. "I bought a lot of vegetables from all over. But after the roads shut down, Goldstein's problem became how to move the food to the people. The helicopters couldn't find a place to land. "The sandwiches were coming in a National Guard helicopter to the Hog Farm compound," Goldstein said. "We had 200 people join hands to form a circle for the helicopter.

A Woodstock acid trip wasn't always voluntary. "Outside (the tent), they were giving out electric Kool-Aid laced with whatever," Nurse Sanderson said. "They said, ‘Don't take the brown acid.' They put it in watermelon. Now, when kids take a tab of acid, they know what they're getting into. When you drink something that's cold because you're thirsty, that's different. A lot of the kids hurt with this stuff were just thirsty. They didn't have any choice." But while the kids were drinking and taking whatever was around, Lang was being careful. Stationed in the headquarters trailer backstage, Lang couldn't afford to hallucinate. He says he didn't even smoke pot that weekend. "I didn't drink anything that didn't come from a bottle I didn't wash or open myself," he said.

So far, so good for Leo O'Mara. The acid had kicked in, the sun was shining, and he had no bummer symptoms yet. But he was thirsty, yes thirsty. Four cans of cold beer were sweating next to the stump on which he was sitting. In keeping with the code of the counterculture, O'Mara didn't touch it for an hour, by his reckoning. He even looked at his watch. By the time he says he finally did flip one of the pop-tops, the sun would have baked those beers, but O'Mara swore they were still ice-cold. The facts of physics are clear. O'Mara was hallucinating either time or temperature. "I couldn't believe it," he marveled. "I'm serious, man. Really."

On Saturday evening, Lou Newman's ears pricked up when he heard the murmuring on the sidewalk outside his gift shop in Liberty. "The kids were going, ‘Walla-walla-walla.' I couldn't really hear what they were saying," Newman said. "Then I found out why. This guy comes in and says, "We're with the Jefferson Airplane, and this is Grace Slick.' I didn't know anything about a Jefferson Airplane." Marty Balin, Jorma Kaukonen and Slick were staying at the Holiday Inn down the road. All three signed Newman's guest book.

The show wasn't going on. Janis Joplin, The Who and the Grateful Dead refused to play Saturday night. Their managers wanted cash in advance. Woodstock Ventures feared the fans would riot if the stage was empty. The promoters pleaded with Charlie Prince, the manager of the White Lake branch of Sullivan County National Bank, to put up the money. Prince knew that Ventures President John Roberts had a trust fund of more than $1 million. Late Saturday night, Prince negotiated his way through the clogged back roads from Liberty to White Lake, where he opened up the bank. He discovered the night drop slot was overflowing with bags of cash. Prince called Joe Fersch, the bank's president, who told him to use his judgement. After Roberts gave Prince a personal check that night for "50 or 100 thousand dollars," Price wrote the cashier's checks. The performers were paid. The show went on. "I felt that if I didn't give him the money for the show to go on, well, what would a half-million kids do?" Prince said.

One festival-goer, who asked to be identified only as Andrew, had decided that Janis Joplin was in love with him. Andrew knew that he had a shot at instant on stage romance. "I knew that if I could just make passionate love to her, everything would just be all right and she would fall in love with me forever," Andrew recalled. "I got about three feet on stage, and about 40 policemen disagreed. They dragged me off. I wasn't the only one. That happened all the time." Daniel Sanabria, the fence installer, who stayed for the show, also remembered Joplin's set. He was 10 feet from the stage. "I think we were under the influence of certain mind-altering substances," Sanabria said. "We would tell the performers, ‘Down on stage.' She (Joplin) would sit down and let us see."

The ver was just back from ‘Nam. Now, possessed with paranoia, he cowered on a cot in the Freak-Out Tent. "He kept saying the same thing over and over again," Mrs. Sanderson said. "He was afraid of something. ‘Don't come near me,' he said. ‘Don't come near me.' They tried to talk him down, but that time we did use drugs. They gave him a shot of something, and an hour or so later, he was down. We asked him, we always asked, what he had taken. I'm not awfully sure that we got the right answers."

Phil Ciganer's buddy was Grateful Dead guitar guru Jerry Garcia, who used to pop into Ciganer's hippie boutique in Brooklyn. But, friendship aside, Ciganer had to be honest about the Grateful Dead's performance at Woodstock. The band members were standing in water, their electric guitars were shocking their fingers. "It was the worst show of theirs I'd ever seen," he said.

The Who had released their first rock opera, "Tommy," in June. Now, just after midnight, the English hard-rockers were performing the three-record set's theme song, "See Me, Feel Me." "Listening to you, I get the music," sang the fringe-shirted Roger Daltrey, "gazing at you, I get the heat..." Head Yippie Abbie Hoffman sat on the stage with Lang during The Who's set. Hoffman had been working the medical tent since the festival's opening act, gobbling down tabs of acid to stay awake. Lang and Hoffman had been looking for an imaginary guy with a knife under the stage. Lang decided it was time to calm Hoffman down. He had become increasingly obsessed with publicizing the case of John Sinclair, a Michigan teen-ager busted for possession of two marijuana cigarettes.

So he jumped up and grabbed the mike, spitting out a few words about Sinclair, who had gotten a 10-year jail sentence. Who lead guitarist Pete Townsend didn't recognize Hoffman and figured he was just another whacked-out festival-goer rushing the stage. Townsend bonked Hoffman on the head with his guitar. Hoffman wandered away. "Abbie was being Abbie," Kornfeld said. "He was very out of his head at Woodstock. He didn't have contact with reality."

The Festival. Day Three.

At sunup Sunday, Grace Slick's voice wafted out of the festival bowl to a pasture above: "One pill makes you larger, and one pill makes you small..." "Some (jerk) was out there making eggs over a campfire, going, ‘Hey man, it's the Airplane! Hey, man, it's the Airplane!'" recalled Jerome O'Connell, the hippie from Rome, NY.

Judge Liese heard a commotion out on the lawn. Hippies were camped all over the grounds of the Waldheim Hotel bungalow colony in Smallwood, which the judge owned. But Liese couldn't explain this banging. At 5:30am, the judge got up to investigate in the grayish morning light. "I saw a longhaired man wandering around all the bungalows, trying to open the doors," he said. "I asked the fellow what he was looking for. "He said, ‘A doctor.' "I told him Dr. (Stuart) Dombeck was three-quarters of a mile away, but it would be impossible to get there because of the roads. He kept raising his voice louder and louder. I finally told him to leave. "But I guess I made a mistake, standing too close behind him. The next thing I knew, I woke up. He'd punched me in the mouth and knocked me out. I was down maybe 20 or 30 minutes." The blow also knocked out most of Liese's teeth. "The newspaper headline read, ‘Hippie slugs judge,'" Liese said.

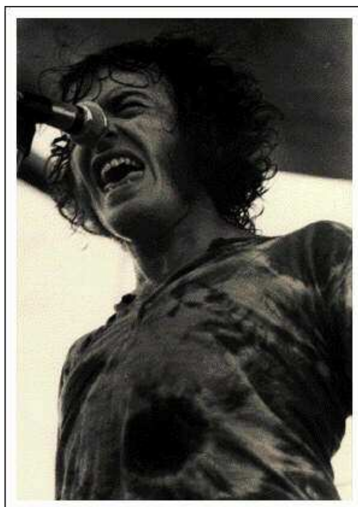
Abe Wagner wasn't fond of freaks. Years later, he recalled the hungry kids, the lost kids, the kids with nowhere to sleep, nowhere to relieve themselves. The kids using and selling drugs. There were "rabble-rousers," as Wagner called them, but he emphasized that they were a small

minority. "I felt sorry for the kids lying by the roadside," Wagner said. "Hungry. Dirty. I remember a Belgian couple; she was crying. They had lost their kids. What could I do?" Wagner said he and his neighbors fed them. "Most of us here had two or three weeks of food on hand. We put a plank across our driveway and put the food on it and fed the kids. And we took cans of soup and set up a soup kitchen for the kids in an old building on Lake Shore Road." But there was also a handful of nasties among Wagner's neighbors. Wagner remembered one Bethel resident who charged $10 to tow a car out of a muddy ditch and onto the road. When one kid didn't have the money, the neighbor towed the car right back into the mud.

Wavy Gravy called it "Breakfast in Bed for 400,000." The recipe: Rolled oats or bulgur wheat (often both). Cook until mush. Add peanuts for taste. Cook until the texture of goulash. For a side dish, stir-fry any vegetables that can be scraped together. Scoop the mixtures onto paper plates. "These people were feeding literally hundreds of thousands of people with nothing," Krewson said. "They were taking what they could get and feeding people with it." Gravy told the audience that it was no miracle. "We're all feeding each other, man," he said.

The Hog Farm had become the Greater Hog Farm. Gravy was now leading thousands of volunteers, sort of. Many newly recruited Hog Farmers had red polyester rags, each stenciled with a winged pig, tied around their arms. "It got hard to tell the Hog Farm really responsible people from the casual hang-around Hog Farm people," Goldstein said. "Suddenly, the only credential was the Hog Farm. There were so many people doing so many things that the Hog Farm brassard (arm band) became an all-areas pass. A vegetable chopper wanted to participate, and three hours later, he'd be running a crew. Gravy's idea was simply that eventually, everyone in the whole crowd would have a brassard.

By noon, the sun was beating down on Bethel. Heatstroke became the biggest worry, even some fans were showing signs of pneumonia from being drenched for two days. The promoters considered turning the fire hosts on to mist the crowd, but didn't. It started to rain again in the afternoon. Sunday's lineup again was packed with rockers: The Band, Joe Cocker, Crosby, Stills & Nash, Ten Years After, Johnny Winter and Jimi Hendrix. Iron Butterfly, which pioneered heavy metal rock'n'roll, was also scheduled to play. The group arrived in New York from a seven-week, nationwide tour and called for a helicopter to bring it to the festival. But Lang and the other organizers worried that Iron Butterfly's brand of hippie/heavy-metal music might be dangerous under the circumstances. Emcee John Morris dispatched a nasty telegram to the group at the airport. It was designed to provoke the members into deciding not to play. But Lee Dorman, Iron Butterfly's bassist, remembers it differently. Woodstock organizers, he said, were supposed to send a helicopter and didn't.



"Two or three times, we checked out of our hotel and went to the heliport on 33rd Street," Dorman said. "It never came. I guess it had more important things to do, like feed people." The band went home to California and, at first, members didn't mind missing the festival. "When we... heard how big it was, we thought, 'Damn, we missed it,'" Dorman said. "It would have been great to play 'In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida' or even to just say 'Hi.'"

Ben Leon ran the boat rental business on Filippini's Pond, popularly known as "Leon's Lake." The 90-year old kept watch on the boats from the porch of a shanty perched on the hillside above the largest of Woodstock's skinny-dipping spots. On Woodstock weekend, Leon wasn't renting boats, but he was still watching. "He sat on the veranda, the old fool, and you could hear him 50 feel away: 'Heee-heee-heee. Haw-haww-haww,'" Feldman said. "He had a gigantic pair of binoculars. Must have been Navy submarine spotters or something. The funny thing was that 10 days after the festival, he dropped dead. I talked to the undertaker, and he said he never could wipe the smile off the guy's face. That's the way to go, I guess."

He was 17. She was 15. Sometime during the weekend, they came to banker Charlie Prince with a problem. Their parents didn't know where they were. They had another problem. The boy had taken his father's week-old 1969 Oldsmobile out for a drive. Somehow, they'd ended up at Woodstock. They had one more problem. They couldn't find the car.

Attendance estimates kept rising. By Sunday, the state police figure was 450,000, and others rounded it off to an even half-million. But Record editor Al Romm, who coordinated coverage from a trailer behind the stage, believed the estimates were all wrong. Citing aerial photos, Romm swore that Woodstock drew maybe 150,000 people. "There were 100,000, 150,000 there," Romm said. "It was to everyone's advantage - the police, the promoters and the reporters - to say there were more. It was to nobody's advantage to say there were less. The biggest concert before it had 20,000 people. (Woodstock) was still a big deal; there were just not as many people."

Bert Feldman, Bethel's historian, also maintained that the attendance figures were wrong. But he thought the figures were low. "There were 700,000 people there," he said. "The attendance estimate is based on aerial photos, and there were thousands of people under trees."

The motorcycle roared up to the El Monaco Hotel on Sunday afternoon. Behind the handlebars was a bearded hippie. On the back was a woman screaming that she was having a baby. Resort owner Elliott Tiber raced in. He said he was the only one on the lot who wasn't stoned, and he relied on his instincts to help deliver the baby. Then he watched as Army medica flew mother and child away in a helicopter. "She must have been stoned," Tiber said. "Either that, or Janis Joplin was quite a draw. The mother 'had olive skin and big black eyes. Her English was kind of broken. A French accent, I think.'"

Ralph Corwin pulled out a pack of cigarettes, lit one and started trucking down Hurd Road. The 26-year-old biker from Winterton met up Sunday afternoon with a young couple. The girl wore an Army fatigue shirt and a pair of black jeans. The guy begged a smoke; Corwin flipped him three or four. The couple walked away. Corwin looked over his shoulder. The girl's black jeans were missing on the back side. "Only the strip down the center," Corwin said. "No undies, and her cheeks were hanging out."

A short, violent thunderstorm struck around 5pm, triggering an early exodus from the grounds. Leo O'Mara noticed a guy with a red beard, wearing a vast muddy poncho and a huge

smile. O'Mara sat in the mud and wondered why this guy was so thrilled in such miserable weather. "Then I noticed that there were three other sets of legs under that poncho," O'Mara said.

Jerome O'Connel started walking back to the car at sundown. The rains had continued throughout much of the day, and O'Connel felt whipped by the weather. He wasn't the only one who really wanted to leave. "I remember that there was a whole line of cars on both sides of the road," O'Connell said. "There wasn't enough space in the middle for a car. But someone had driven down the middle anyway. There was a 3-inch scrape on both sides all the way down. Must have been 50 cars scratched."

All weekend, hippies had camped out on the Heller Dairy farm at the intersection of Route 17B and Happy Avenue. The kids didn't ask permission before pitching camp. And they left broken bottles and bent cans behind. But the last straw was Sunday night. "The last day, we had a car outside, with a hose next to it that we used for washing the car," said Blanche Heller. "We woke up and found that they had cut the hose and drained all the gas out of the tank. Now, if only they had asked...."

In Jeffersonville, the local congregation was upset about a kid who'd climbed into the basement of the church. He'd done no damage, left no mess, but the locals were still bothered by the intrusion. "They did find this young man in there, who had heated himself a can of beans, ate it, and left money on the table for the gas he used." said Adelaide Schadt, wife of the Bethel town attorney.

While other stars flitted in and out of the show aboard helicopters, headliner Hendrix was roaming the crowd on foot. O'Mara remembered Hendrix stopping to talk with many of the girls. Others remember the star's turn in the Freak-Out Tent that day. "We didn't know who he was," Nurse Sanderson said. "Just a black man lying on the stretcher. Then everybody started saying, ‘Hey, isn't that Jimi Hendrix?' There was a big stir about it." Hendrix lay on the stretcher for about 30 minutes before roadies hauled him out.

Investigator Cannock met Raymond Mizak's father Sunday night in a funeral home on East Broadway in Monticello. The senior Mizak was accompanied by the youth's uncle, a lieutenant in the New Jersey State Police. "It (the tractor) ran over his chest," Cannock said. "His head was twice the normal size. Really grotesque." The father told Cannock he had refused to give the boy permission to go to the concert. Cannock said the father blamed himself, said he should have locked his son up.

Two of the most vehement festival opponents showed up at the site independently sometime Saturday or Sunday. Wallkill Supervisor Jack Schlosser and former Bethel Supervisor George Neuhaus toured the grounds and came to identical conclusions. "It became obvious to me nobody knew what the hell they were doing. Nobody," Schlosser said.

Cannock got to the morgue at Horton Memorial Hospital in Middletown later Sunday night. A man in his mid-20s, who had been at the festival, had died of a heroin overdose. Cannock can't remember the man's name, and it was never disclosed. But for the second time that day, Cannock was assigned to get a body identified. Cannock tracked down a friend of the dead man's and met him at the morgue. "The kid had been autopsied already," Cannock said. Inexplicably,

the body was not stitched up after the chest had been split open for the autopsy, according to Cannock. "The friend pulled down the sheet to far and saw it all," he said. "The kid passed right out."

Outside Yasgur's farm, Monticello Hospital nurses and doctors had set up a clinic in a school that was closed for the summer. Monticello Hospital's head of nursing, Gladys Berens, helped deliver three babies there, only miles from the festival grounds. She was there when a Marine on leave was brought in sometime Sunday, unconscious from an overdose. The Marine - an 18 year-old from Long Island - died in the hospital, one of three concert fatalities. "This young Marine had been through the war without a scratch, and he ends up dying in Horton Memorial Hospital in Middletown, NY. How sad," Berens, now 71 recalled.

Artie Kornfeld figured the capsule he was taking was speed, Dexedrine, something to keep him alert for the rest of the festival. His wife, Linda, took one too. Then he began hallucinating that the National Guard (which was not there) was shooting into the crowd. The colors were all melting together. "I was dosed. It was my first psychedelic, and it happened at Woodstock," Kornfeld said. "I never would have chosen that place deliberately, never to do it at Woodstock." Kornfeld learned later that the capsule was powdered psilocybin mushroom, a powerful hallucinogen. "I decided that we needed help. It was 12 hours before Hendrix," Kornfeld said. "I was Thorazined out of it. That's why I missed Hendrix."

The Holiday Inn in Monticello was one of the headquarters for Woodstock performers. It was also the quarters for the state police. Cannock wasn't impressed at being in the company of the rich and famous. He doesn't even remember their names. "We were rubbing elbows. I wasn't thrilled to have them there," the investigator said. "The two dead bodies were fixed in my brain."

John Pinnacaia didn't even feel it at first, just a twinge of pain on the instep of his foot late Sunday night. Then this girl started screaming, and there was all this blood. "It must have been some kind of bottle," he said. "I couldn't even see it. My foot was in the mud." Pinnacaia had been listening to guitarist Johnny Winter while fetching peanut butter sandwiches for himself, his girlfriend and his sister. But the 18-year-old from Brooklyn took one step and became a Woodstock casualty. "This guy picked me up, threw me over his shoulder and ran me to the hospital (tent). Must have saved my life," he said. A helicopter flew him to Monticello Hospital. "They'd given me a shot of anesthetic, but it hadn't started working. They had to start stitching. Then this big fat nurse sat on me so I couldn't move, and they started stitching. That's all I remember of that. One other thing: They called home to ask permission to operate," Pinnacaia said. "Mom freaked out."

The Festival. Monday.

It was about 9am, time for Hendrix, the headliner. He had launched into the national anthem, a moment that would go down in the annals of rock'n'roll. "I remember trying to fall asleep during the ‘Star-Spangled Banner'," said Ciganer, Jerry Garcia's buddy. "I just wished he would stop." The party was over.

The partners had to face a different kind of music. Woodstock Ventures had obtained letters of credit, backed by Roberts' trust fund, from a bank on Wall Street. Now, Ventures was at least $1.3 million in debt. Kornfeld was still muddy when he walked into the banker's office. "He had a tank with a piranha in it, and he was feeding him meat," Kornfeld recalled. "The attitude already was a battleground." Ventures was in trouble because Woodstock had been a damn-the-expense money pit for six weeks. Kornfeld's promotional expenses were more than $150,000, 70

percent over budget. Lang's production expenses had soared to $2 million, more than 300 percent over budget.

Ventures had paid crews overtime to do six months of work in six weeks' time. Three days of running a private air fleet of helicopters had also helped to bust the budget. "It was like living a dream," Lang recalled. "My idea was just to get it done, whatever it took. We had a vision, and it all came true." When it was all over, the Wall Street bankers demanded an accounting. The promoters had sold about $1.1million in tickets, but Ventures had written maybe $600,000 in bad checks and had other debts. As of August 19, 1969, the high-water mark of the counterculture had cost at least 2.4 million hard, capitalist dollars. Thousands of dollars more in fines, fees, claims and lawsuits hadn't even come in yet. To top it off, there was a criminal investigation. The attorney general's office and the Sullivan County district attorney were starting to dig.

Norman Karp, who had lost his virginity at Woodstock, also lost his five-speed bike. But somewhere among the tons of garbage steaming on the site, Normal found a new 10-speed. He pedaled back to Woodridge. His mother gave him some tearful hugs and grounded him for a month.

About those two kids who brought their woes to Charlie Prince: The banker helped them solve their problem. They found the week-old ‘69 Olds. It was parked eight miles away. In front of Neuhaus' home. Two state troopers were sitting on it.

Leo O'Mara walked the 20 miles back to his car. Andrew never found the friends who brought him, but made some new ones and rode home with them. Gery Krewson had left Sunday afternoon in the Volkswagen bus he'd come in.

Norman Karp came back and helped two Ventures employees repair a broken golf cart the day after the festival. As payment, they gave him a stack of unused Woodstock tickets. "They said, ‘These might be valuable someday,'" Normal recalled.

Little Michael Kennedy from Smallwood was three years old. On Tuesday, his dad took him down to Yasgur's farm. "All I can remember is all the garbage," Kennedy said. "It was the first time I ever saw a longhair. I asked my dad, ‘What are they?' He said. ‘That's someone who doesn't cut their hair and cleans up garbage.'" Ventures spent $100,000 to clean the decimated festival site. Goldstein dug a huge hole and bulldozed tons of shoes, bottles, papers, clothes, tents and plastic sheets into the ground. He set the pile afire. The vast, smoky smolder that burned for days brought Ventures a charge of illegal burning from Bethel officials.

On Tuesday, Prince's phone rang at Sullivan County National Bank. It was bank president Joe Fersh, who told Prince that Woodstock Ventures' account was $250,000 short. Robert's check had bounced, and the bank checks Prince had written Saturday night to the performers weren't covered. Fersch wanted to know: "What are you going to do about it?" So Prince called Roberts. "(Roberts) said, ‘I know the pickle you're in, Charlie. I'll be there Thursday morning.'" Prince recalled.

By Wednesday, the lab had analyzed the green, leafy substance submitted as evidence in Judge Liese's court. The irate pot smokers were right. They were buying bogus reefer. "It turned out to be a mixture of timothy grass and birdseed," said the judge. "He must have paid $6 for the six pounds of it." Liese ordered the ersatz marijuana salesman set free. "A guy selling birdseed for $6 an ounce. What are you gonna do?" said Liese with a chuckle. Also on Wednesday, a Woodstock mother came back to thank acting-midwife Tieber. Tieber jotted her name down, stuck the matchbook into his pants and, from there, it went into history. "I have no idea what pants I was wearing," he said.

Thursday morning, Roberts arrived alone at the White Lake branch of the Sullivan County National Bank. He pledged $1 million in stock to the bank to cover the $250,000 note. "I was off the hook," Prince said. Roberts, Lang, Kornfeld and Rosenman had made personal guarantees to pay the bills. But only Roberts' family - and his own trust fund - had enough assets to pay off Woodstock's debt. While Lang stayed with the cleanup crews, the other three partners squirmed under the fiscal glare. Roberts' father and brother told the Wall Street bankers that they never had run out on debts and they weren't going to start now. The Roberts family paid off the debt.

Bob Dylan had been scheduled to leave for Europe on August 15 aboard the Queen Elizabeth. But Dylan's son was hospitalized that day, and the rock legend stayed home. Dylan left the country in late August to play at the Isle of Wight Festival off the coast of Britain. Michael Lang was in the crowd.

Gary Krewson had another Woodstock moment back home in Tunkhannock, Pa., about 90 miles away. Krewson was sitting on the steps of the town's only hotel when he saw three psychedelic school buses tooling over the hill to the town's only traffic light. The lead bus, driven by Wavy Gravy, blew an engine. Krewson fetched Tunkhannock's only mechanic, who let the Pranksters and Hog Farmers use his garage. The bus crew pulled the blown engine and popped in a spare within 45 minutes. Gravy and company were on their way to another festival in Texas.

The Times Herald-Record submitted its stories for the 1969 Pulitzer Prize competition. Editor Al Romm recalls: "A friend, years later, who was on the judging panel, said, ‘You'll never know how close you came to winning.' Our coverage took a different tack from most of the publications. Nobody had as many people at the scene as we did, about six. We had passing coverage of the music. Really could have done better with that. We were just enveloped with the human indignities. The sickness. The miscarriages.

Six weeks after the festival, Rosenman and Roberts bought out Lang and Kornfeld for $31,240 each. Lang, Kornfeld, Rosenman and Roberts - the four young men who had produced and promoted Woodstock - were separated for more than 20 years by Woodstock's fallout. Rosenman and Roberts stayed best friends. But they charged for years that Lang and Kornfeld, but especially Lang, grabbed all the attention immediately after the event. For instance, Rosenman and Roberts weren't in the movie at all. Kornfeld was seen a couple of times, but Lang was featured prominently, riding his motorcycle and being interviewed. "We were so busy that I think the credit was directed toward Michael (Lang)," Rosenman said in 1989. "Years later, people would ask, ‘Were you involved in that thing Mike Lang did?' You have to be in this business a long time to know how valuable it is to be famous. I think Michael and Artie knew that. We didn't have any idea.

Lang said in 1989 that he, more than anyone is probably responsible for the ill will. "John and Joel were from a different world. They were outsiders, and they didn't understand," Lang said. "I didn't have time to acclimate them. I'm not the most communicative person in the world. I was kind of a wise guy." Kornfeld, upon reflection, figures it's not really important who did what. "With all the attention grabbing that's gone on over the years, my reality is that there are a lot of more important things," Kornfeld said. "Look, no one person produced Woodstock; the generation produced Woodstock. And look at it emanate now."

Woodstock had 5,162 medical cases, according to a state Health Department report released October 4, 1969. The report listed 797 documented instances of drug abuse. No births were recorded in the festival medical tent, but Dr. Abruzzi told the Health Department there were eight miscarriages. The report lists two deaths by drug overdose and the death of Raymond Mizak in the tractor accident. In late fall, a Sullivan County grand jury declared that there wasn't enough evidence to indict anyone for anything. The driver of the tractor was never identified and was not

charged. Another investigation by the state attorney general's office ended in early 1970 with Woodstock Ventures having to make refunds on 12,000 to 18,000 tickets. The tickets were sold to people who were not able to attend because the roads were closed.

John Pinnavaia was considered 1-A by his draft board when he walked onto Yasgur's farm. After he stepped on the bottle and it slashed the tendon in his right foot, he was classified 1-Y for a temporary disability. After four months on crutches, Pinnavaia got married, putting him even lower on the draft list. Pinnavaia stayed out of the Army but still bears a road map of scars on his foot. He calls it his "Woodstock wound." "I can't walk over broken glass even with shoes on. I just cringe at the sound," says Pinnavaia.

The owner of the only stereo store in Middletown became a hippie of sorts. "I went from one of my to one of them," Allan Markoff said. Markoff always regretted he didn't stay at Woodstock, but he explains it this way: "There was no place to hang out. I'm not a close-to-the-earth individual. I'm a Ritz Carlton type of individual, and there were no luxury places to stay. I can't live in the rain and the mud. Markoff, now 54, would also go full tilt into the rock'n'roll business, supplying equipment for a Rolling Stones tour in the early ‘70s. He rigged a massive sound system in former Beatle George Harrison's hotel room at the Plaza in New York City. Harrison was promptly evicted from the hotel.

Two years after Woodstock, fence installer Daniel Sanabria discovered that he was sort of a star. "Woodstock: The Movie" was out. He was in it. "Being hams, we'd jump in front of the camera at any opportunity," Sanabria said. "It was the greatest time of our life. We bonded as children; we bonded as men."

The Festival. Wrap Up.

After Woodstock, Wavy Gravy wanted to keep the energy going. He returned to the Hog Farm commune, where he discovered "every hippie in the world had moved to our house." Gravy got a few thousand dollars from Warner Brothers to finance a proposed movie, "Medicine Ball Caravan." The idea was to round up some Merry Pranksters and Hog Farmers, travel across the country in a bus and film the trip. The movie was never released. Somehow, the group ended up in England. Throughout the early and mid ‘70s, they traveled to 13 countries, including Turkey, India and Nepal, distributing free food and medical supplies along the way.

Krassner and his fellow Yippies tried to build on Woodstock. They helped put on a "Pow Wow Symposium" at Hog Farm headquarters in New Mexico. But in December came Woodstock's bad twin, Altamont, where the Hell's Angels worked security - and some stomped members of the audience. In 1970, the trial of the Chicago Seven began, and the Yippies focused their energy and money on freeing the defendants. Krassner and Ken Kesey decided to collaborate on "The Whole Earth Catalogue Supplement," the successor to the post-hippie bible, "The Whole Earth Catalogue." In the early 70's, the entire radical community began to dissolve as its members went their separate ways. Krassner returned to New York, where he continued to perform and publish a newsletter. In 1974, Krassner moved to Venice, California, to a house by the ocean a block from actor Dennis Hopper's house.

Max Yasgur toured Israel about two years after the concert and had the opportunity to meet Israel's first prime minister, David Ben-Gurion. Ben-Gurion went down the receiving line, speaking to each guest. "Max said to Ben-Gurion, ‘I'm Max Yasgur of Bethel,' and Ben-Gurion shakes his hand and says, ‘Oh yeah, that's where Woodstock was, wasn't it?" said Liberty's Lou Newman, a friend of Yasgur's until the dairy farmer's death of a heart attach in 1973.

Yasgur's farm was subdivided and sold by his widow, Miriam. Most of that land is still pasture, fodder for the cattle herd of Bud Russel, who owns the old Yasgur farmhouse in Bethel.

As Woodstock began to fade into legend in the early ‘70s, the Town of Wallkill was tagged as the hometown of the uptight, much to the consternation of Wallkill Supervisor Schlosser. Wallkill was only trying to protect itself from a horde it was not prepared to handle, he said. Besides, added Schlosser, who retired from politics in 1984, the promoters lied to the town, and that's never mentioned in Woodstock lore. "That is what bugs me about this whole thing," Schlosser said in 1989. "They have been allowed to perpetuate that myth for 20 years.."

Woodstock's medical director, Dr. William "Rock Doc" Abruzzi, went on to specialize in the medicine of drug abuse. Drugs brought Abruzzi prominence, but they also provided the means for his downfall. He was charged in 1974 with anesthetizing female patients and molesting them while they were unconscious. Two years later, minutes before he was to go to trial, he pleaded guilty to sexual abuse. Abruzzi's saga didn't end there. The state's highest court ruled that a police officer violated Abruzzi's rights when he watched the doctor abuse his patients through an examination window. Abruzzi never served his prison sentence, but he did lose his license to practice medicine in New York. He has since dropped out of sight and can not be located. To this day, Abruzzi has his supporters, including Nurse Sanderson. "He was framed," said the nurse, who retired in 1980 and left Middletown.

For the next decade, Woodstock was virtually a cliche for all that was goofy about the ‘60s. By 1980, the world had moved on. Rosenman and Roberts were still in venture capital, but instead of funding concerts, they were dismantling conglomerates and handling mergers. "The transactions that we were involved in would have been vetoed if they'd known about Woodstock," Rosenman said. "It wasn't exactly broadcast in our resumes.

Kornfeld was the one who was able to use his Woodstock credentials. He remained in the music business, promoting rock acts and albums. He worked with Bruce Springsteen and Tracy Chapman. Lang too, stayed in music. His title as Woodstock's producer gave him a certain cachet with superstars of the business. Lang signed a Long Island singer named Billy Joel to his first record contract. He was Joe Cocker's manager. But even Lang downplayed Woodstock. "I didn't talk about it for years," he said.

Country Joe figures his fate was sealed right after he shouted: "Gimme an F. After the movie came out, that's all I was known for," McDonald said. "Its pretty hard to top the ‘Fish Cheer.' I don't know if I can do that.' The Fish Cheer was McDonald's improvised call-and-response that began with ‘Gimme and F' and concluded with "What's that spell? (Expletive!)" McDonald's musical career went from Woodstock into a slide. By the ‘80s, Country Joe said he'd had it with the music business. "I won't make another record again unless it seems commercially viable," he said in 1989. "I just don't have the burning desire to make a record that nobody wants to hear. You spend a year to do it, and it doesn't sell more than 1,000 copies. That's not cost-effective. Music is something that needs to be heard." McDonald said the problem was he was still writing "sociopolitical and anti-war" songs. "Today, politics and war isn't good box office," he added. When McDonald tours, it's for a handful of fans at tiny folk clubs. He might even turn up at the occasional ‘60s revival show, but only if the price is right. "I don't like doing these

nostalgia things," he said, "but when people offer me the right amount of money, I'll do it. I wouldn't even write a story about myself. I wouldn't waste my time." By 1991, the year he recorded an acoustic album, "Superstitious Blues," Country Joe had changed his tune. In 1994, he appeared in a Pepsi commercial featuring a Woodstock reunion for yuppies.

In August 1981, Normal Karp heard that someone was selling a bunch of unused Woodstock tickets for $9,000. He went home, tore his house apart and found 31 tickets. Then, he bought several safes for $14,000 from a family friend, Al Kross, who had leased them to Woodstock Ventures. Kross had never opened the safes. Inside, Karp found 150,000 unused tickets, plus the original of Jimi Hendrix's signed contract and assorted Woodstock T-shirts, hats and jackets. That year, Norman Karp placed ads in national magazines and sold 30,000 tickets at $29,95 each, plus $2 for postage and handling. He claims to have netted nearly $1 million from the sales.

A guy named Louis Nicky from Brooklyn bought about 40 acres from the widow Yasgur at the intersection of Hurd Road and West Shore Drive in Bethel. A couple of tons of concrete - the footings for the main stage at Woodstock - were tumbled off in the brush in the northeast corner. Nicky didn't really worry too much about the history he'd bought. He just wanted to run a few horses, but a bout with cancer caused him to abandon the plan. Twice, the town put up a sign identifying Nicky's land as the site of the concert. Twice, the sign was stolen.

For years, no one celebrated Woodstock's anniversary, and Augusts came and went without notice. People who wanted to stop by Yasgur's farm and reminisce weren't always sure they were at the right place.

In the late ‘70s, a ragtag bunch started celebrating every August with a three-day party. Around 1978, a welder named Wayne Saward came out for the party. "And it was, like, super-quiet," he recalled. "There'd be 30 people there, at most. And that was in the middle of the night. Then in 1984, Saward started, pretty much alone, to build the world's only monument to the event. It's a 5 1/2 ton marker made of cast iron and concrete; landowner Louis Nicky paid $650 for concrete and casting the iron. Once the marker went up, the site became a kind of counterculture shrine. Visitors started showing up randomly, staying for a few minutes, then leaving.

Beginning in 1985, this writer became one of that ragtag group, celebrating the Woodstock festival with a small group that eventually became a close-knit family. Many of us had attended the original festival and excitedly shared the stories of the event with the group at each gathering. Others of us were simply intrigued by the power of the festival and came to find answers for our lives. As for myself, I was about to turn 5 years old in August 1969, and could not have attended the festival, as my parents lived in North Carolina and did not particularly subscribe to the counterculture lifestyle. My mother was, however, from New York state and had family ties to the Hudson area. She also operated a music store in NC that gave me my first taste of what longhairs were like. The store also gave me a good dose of what music was saying in the late ‘60s and early ‘70s, and connected me to the politico of the Vietnam war. As time wore on, I had all but forgotten about that time of my life. Then I began working as a DJ for an oldies radio station. They were looking for someone to produce a specialty show as a weekend special. I became that person, delving into my own memories to recall the sounds of the ‘60s and ‘70s. The year was 1983, and ‘60s rock'n'roll shows were something of a rarity. The show became an instant success with my audience, and served to remind me that I really missed the music of my childhood. After moving to the Charlotte area in 1984, I decided to find out more about Woodstock. Having learned where the festival was held, I wound up visiting what I thought was the original site in November ‘84. It was snowing so fiercely that I missed the original site and drove on to what I thought was the correct place. Later I learned that I had been walking around

the Reinshagen's farm in the snow... I'm sure with the everyone in the main farmhouse thinking I was just another nut case.

Later is when I was fortunate enough to meet and become friends with Wayne Saward, his brother Whitey, Tom and Maryann Bradley, Rick Marceau (and later his wife, Heather), Kevin Bond, Tom "The Commander" Connelly, Bill Lubinsky (of Woodstock Festival fame), Marcia Weiss (Bill's spouse), Chris Maget, Bob Meringher, and a host of others that make up that very rag tag group mentioned in the Times Herald-Record. Wayne was right when he said that in the beginning it was very quiet. You could be on the field during the original festival dates and see people drive to the monument to reflect. Usually people only stayed a few moments to take pictures. Others chose to stay a little longer and talk with the people there. But at night, the field had a magic all its own. I can remember many times only our group of 10 or so would be there, playing the Woodstock soundtrack and gazing up at the clear midnight sky. It was so dark there that, on a clear night, you could see the milky way and all the surrounding stars. A true experience.

For me, learning about Woodstock has been a good experience. Coming to understand the various aspects of the concert... and actually experiencing the people that made it happen, has changed my life. The very fact that people refuse to let the spirit of Woodstock die exemplifies the kindness of the human spirit. It shows that people still care, are willing to help total strangers in need, and that we can give love when it is needed most. In these turbulent times of the 1990s and beyond, it is wholly satisfying to know that something that happened more than 25 years ago can still give hope to the future. I, for one, am determined to share the love, compassion and peace Woodstock has taught me.

And the magic continues...