



Lead singer Alex Norman of Illscarlett



The legendary Snoop Dogg performing at the 1,000 Islands Music Festival on August 15, 2009



Police out handling crowd control

# THE YEAR SNOOP DOGG PLAYED THE TOWN... AND NOBODY CAME!

By Lorraine Payette

Step back in time, if you will, to the ultimate rock concert of 2009!

CD sales are slumping throughout North America. With new technology, people are no longer buying complete albums. Instead, they download songs from the internet and trade them back and forth, never thinking about the loss to the industry. This must be corrected.

Promoters check the records of perhaps the best remembered and most successful concert of all time. A simple music festival in 1969 held on a 600-acre farm in Bethel, New York, it grew exponentially to bring in half a million attendees, and far more would claim to have been in that legendary crowd. That, they decide, is exactly what they need – the crowds, the excitement, the power

of live music. They need to create another Woodstock.

They begin scouting locations. The perfect outdoor venue is essential – a farm with plenty of open acreage, but close enough to a residential area to provide food and accommodations. They don't expect a group as large as Woodstock for this concert, but the local populace has to be willing to deal with expected crowds of 30-40,000 in a warm, friendly way. The acts also have to feel comfortable in this setting, never fearing for health or safety.

After careful searching, a decision is made to put the event at Glen Dingman's farm just outside of Gananoque. The setting is idyllic, with plenty of room for the two stages; all of the bands' facilities and equipment; and camping for 4,000 or so eager concert goers. Located close to Highway 401, it has easy



access from Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal, and northern New York. There is also an airport in nearby Kingston for those who may wish to fly in from further away. Numerous hotels, motels and other accommodations, as well as many different types of restaurants and attractions, are close to the site.

A concert isn't a concert without a great line-up, and the decision is made to go broad spectrum and try to bring in music fans aged 18-80. Many genres are considered in order to please as many people as possible, with both stages expected to be up and running for the entire three days of the event. Top acts are planned, plotted and checked before being booked.

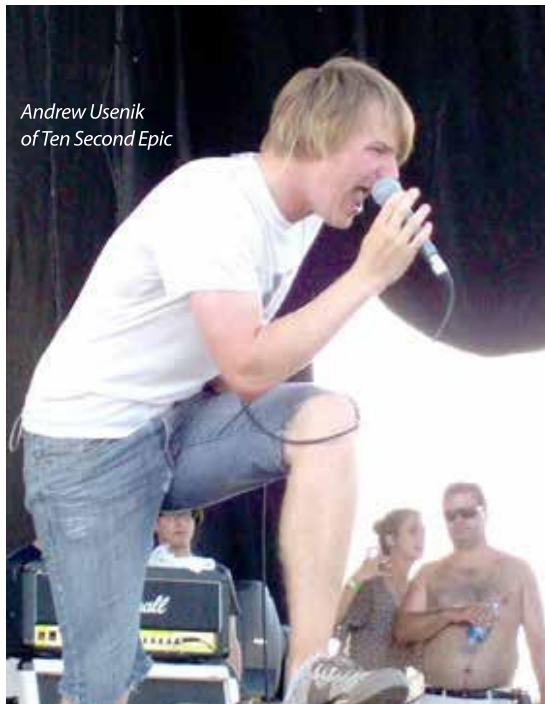
The final program includes all headliners of the popular music industry. On the roster are more than 30 acts, everyone from Mr. Lahey (John Dunsworth) and Randy (Patrick Roach) of The Trailer Park Boys to Illscarlett, Simple Plan to Akon, with the jewel in the crown being a performance by the one and only Snoop Dogg. Careful planning has slotted everyone as follows:

The idea is flawless. Tickets are set at a reasonable price to draw the biggest crowds

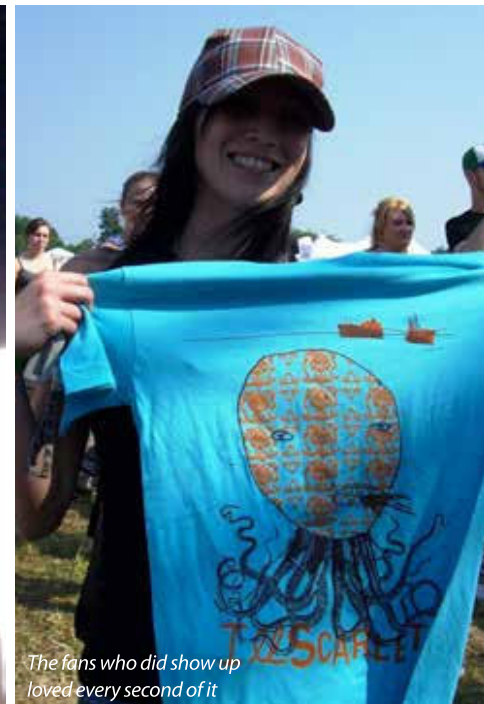
<b>August 13/2009</b>	<b>August 15/2009</b>
Emily Fennell	The Free Press
Graham Greer	Official Blues
Ianspotting	Brothers Revue
Mr. Lahey and Randy	Kardinal Offishall
The Irish	Illscarlett
Descendants	Hello Beautiful
<b>August 14/2009</b>	Amanda Rheame
The Warped 45'S	Akon
Arietta	Motion Picture
Faber Drive	Ending
Mr. Lahey and Randy	The Joys
NLX	Lights
Plain White T's	The Arkells
Simple Plan	Ten Second Epic
Stereos	Mr. Lahey and Randy
The Latency	My Favourite
The New Cities	Tragedy
KO	Pilot Speed
Walk Off the Earth	Snoop Dogg
We Are the Take	

and not scare anyone away. Even subject to taxes and surcharges, who can say no to per person passes at \$29.99 for Thursday, \$49.99 for Friday, and Saturday (the top day for acts) at \$89.99. You can do the entire weekend for \$139.99, and buy on-site camping passes at \$20 per night or \$50 for the weekend for two people.

The ad campaign begins. Everyone who is anyone is buzzing about the upcoming event. The Twitter verse is alive and jumping;



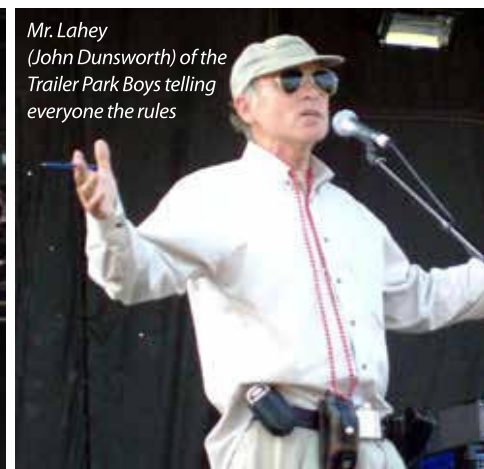
Andrew Usenik  
of Ten Second Epic



The fans who did show up  
loved every second of it



Kardinal Offishall



Mr. Lahey  
(John Dunsworth) of the  
Trailer Park Boys telling  
everyone the rules

every blog, newspaper, magazine, radio and television station can talk of nothing else. Billboards and flyers are up – this is going to be huge.

Advance sales are slow, but no one is overly worried. Things will improve as it picks up steam. After all, the weather is supposed to be perfect and walk-ups are known to make up 50% of sales at modern festivals.

Only it doesn't get better. Young diehard music fans from the local area find it difficult to reach the price of admission, although some have saved all summer to get here. The older generation doesn't think it will be comfortable staying around all the noise and push of crowds for just a few acts they might like. The in-betweens sit around with their noses in the air, saying they don't know enough about it so they'll wait until it "gets big" before they make a decision.

Larger centres have never heard of Gananoque, aren't familiar with its restaurants and accommodations, know

nothing of its music scene. Many decide not to risk the trip and stay home with the familiar instead.

What should be an amazing triumph becomes a disaster as people stay away in droves. Of the 30-40 thousand people expected to buy tickets, less than 4,000 show up. Promoters find themselves drowning in red ink, wondering how it could have all gone so terribly wrong.

Snoop Dogg closes the show as the final and highest billed act. At his request, people sing:

"The tide is high but I'm holding on, I'm gonna be your number one..."

Looking out over the small but appreciative crowd, he tells them, "We love you, Gananoque. It didn't happen like we wanted this time, but you can count on it – Snoop Dogg will be back..."

Snoop and the Thousand Islands Music Festival have never been seen in Gananoque again. [LH](#)