



## 2011 BoCo Music Festival Report

Hey folks,

Picture a beautiful sunny spring day with a delightful breeze. Families with children, young folks in love, and gray-haired couples are strolling about Washington's lovely waterfront. Birds are singing, artisans display their wares under multi-colored canopies, and joyous music fills the air. A band of scurvy yet friendly pirates are singing and practicing their swordsmanship. Over there an old piano is trying out a new look as artists decorate it with whimsical designs. You hear drums and look to see a young lady twirling hoops all around her in time to the drumbeats. Old friends meet and compare the fresh herb plants they have purchased. As twilight comes on, lights illuminate the energetic young musicians performing on a stage whose backdrop is the wide Pamlico where sailboats bob on gentle waves near Castle Island. Strangers become new friends under a huge gathering tent. You think – Wow! What a wonderful event! What a wonderful day! What a wonderful world! And to think someone cared enough to do this for this community, for me – for free. What a Gift!

Well, that's what the BoCO Music Festival had every intention of being. However, what it was, was well - a bit different. Due to an unplanned bout of severe weather it became a Chinese fire drill where its determined planners made every effort possible to make the planned events happen – come hell or high winds. Schedules were hastily re-arranged and the main festival venue was moved – twice, in order to try to salvage as much enjoyment as possible out of this day. Despite the approach of threatening weather, planners and volunteers exercised extreme creativity and determination to assure that "the show would go on".

As the impending storms moved too close for outdoor rationality, the Main Stage performances after 11 am were moved to the Civic Center along with the festival vendors. The sound system, banners, food providers - everything except the porta-johns, big tent and main stage were moved and operating again within three hours.

The BCTMA Stage remained active (literally it was dancing) until just past 2pm. Volunteers actually held on to the tent poles to anchor them down for the final three performances as the curtain walls flapped harder and harder. More folks held down the canopy covering the sound board until all the performers had an opportunity to play. Folks just saw what needed to be done and just flat out determined to help even if they had not been asked to. By 2:45 everything was packed up – the merchandise, the PA, Bobbie Jo, and the chairs - and the only remnant of the day's event at that location was an empty stage and a dancing tent. Time to relax at the Civic Center and enjoy the rest of the day.

Except that at about 3:30, the police called to report that the BCTMA tent had come loose and was blowing away. The tent vendor was called to deal with it, but before they arrived the police called back

to say that it was getting worse and posing a serious danger. So again our folks mobilized and volunteered to rattle the tent into submission and help take it apart and pack it up in a gale. Also the stage had to be disassembled and moved. So, after an hour, back to the Civic Center to enjoy the rest of BoCO!

Some of our favorite performers – Possum Creek, Rob Sharer, and L Shape Lot wanted to do something special for the BCTMA and felt bad about not being able to perform at the BCTMA stage, so they decided to come over to the Union Alley Coffeehouse to jam with the BCTMA folks. A small group had the opportunity to play with these excellent musicians and experience their kindness and generosity. They demonstrated the spirit of the BCTMA by sharing music within our community of music makers and including us in their FUN without any thought regarding who was the most skilled. As Eric Miller (of L Shape Lot) says, " You folks have a good thing going here". (Amen)

Well, this could be the end of the story – but wait – there's more!

Picture Vail Rumley running (literally) up to the UAC from the Civic Center – to say "We are having to evacuate the Civic Center – can we move the last three performances to the coffeehouse?" There could be only one possible answer – "Yeah!"

So twenty minutes later the UAC was cleared out, chairs were set up, the space was re-organized, and Onward Soldiers (along with about 60 other folks and a huge rolling beer case) came through the door. Randy Woolard took over the sound duties, the band was set up and the party was on – at Bob's! After Onward Soldiers, Nathan Drake kept the crowd entertained while the stage was reset for Carolina Still.

The drawing for the BCTMA Guitar Raffle was held after Carolina Still's performance. The guitar was won by Pam Lee from Clover, SC. Last year's winner, Sylvia Mish drew the winning ticket. Nathan played again as the stage was reset for Lonnie Walker. Lonnie Walker was very electric and very loud. The coffeehouse was a-rockin'.

So the BoCO Music Festival happened. It did not go according to plan (re-read that first paragraph in case you forgot) but it will definitely be a day to remember!

A huge thanks to everyone that helped make the festival happen – despite overwhelming odds. We all may have emerged a good bit "worse for wear and tear" but by golly it happened!

2011 - "BoCO LoCO"

2012 - ? (Read that first paragraph again folks) I can hardly wait!

Play Nice!

Rob

PS: Let us not forget those that actually were affected in disasterous ways by the weather system that we merely experienced as an inconvenience.