

MOOSESTOCK 2005 - HEAVY METAL PARKING LOT

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In tribute to the declining agricultural economy, the exodus of young people to southern Maine, and the slow death of the small business, Aroostook county has a common social thread with every other region of the United States: disgruntled youth. Thus, the onset of loud, angry, aggressive music appeals to most kids with basic cable and an iPod.

Enter: *Supporting the Cause* Internet Radio (www.supportingthecause.com), who cater to all Maine-based rock, metal, and hardcore bands. STC is the fruit of labor for Houlton residents James Boyce and Ben Ivey, who are trying their damndest to uphold the slogan: "For the Metal in Maine." It is a grassroots setup, proudly webcasting and critiquing rising metal bands around the state.

But the internet has no real physical presence. What Boyce and Ivey needed was a show... a showcase, to be precise. Saturday, September 24th saw the debut of just such a showcase: Moosestock 2005. Approximately 18 miles south of Houlton in the town of Oakfield, the local community center hosted its first heavy metal parking lot. Band vans spilled off the gravel driveway onto the grass, further spilling their passengers with black wardrobes and studded belts into small cliques. Teenage girls clustered in hooded sweatshirts, or clung to their pseudo-rockstar boyfriends. Desperate for a tip from a functioning band on tour, teenage boys praised bandmates as they hoisted amplifier after amplifier. Conspicuous paper bags hid the antithesis of a "chem free" event.

It was like a microcosmic Ozzfest had settled across the lawn from an Irving gas station.

Soundbender, Poys, Athaza, Big Coffin Hunters, Tomorrow's Tragedy, Disaster Complex, Nira May, and Red Cloud Revival were present to perform, all hailing from various points in Maine. There was no stage, but playing under the gymnasium basketball hoop did not dissuade any of the performers or the audience; there were gel lights, a professional sound system, and a smoke machine! What more do you need to rock? With an attendance of approximately 200 people, the Oakfield Community Center hosted what was probably the first-ever mosh pit within the town's 732 person population. From 2:00pm to past midnight, Moosestock was a heavy metal beehive in the hills of southern Aroostook.

While the financial obligations to host this event were daunting, Boyce was not phased. He plans to host more Moosestock events in October and December. Although the first Moosestock didn't have the exposure of the annual Phish migrations or the ill-fated "Spudstock" in 1995, it gave the local music fans a night to be proud of.