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ny,ny july, 1994

the woodstock thing, the one you've been hearing about, is in saugerties, ny, about 1 1/2 hours from yasgurs farm. how did that happen? FLASHBACK (uh, i mean, some history) 1969 the original promoters of woodstock tried to put on a festival in woodstock (saugerties), ny but the town fathers wouldn't let them do it. they packed up their bags and went searching for another sight and found one in bethel, ny at yasgurs farm off 17b. they caught the bethel town fathers a bit off guard to say the least. they also ended up with a commercial failure (the concert itself) since they were so overrun that it turned into a free concert. FLASHFORWARD, 1994. it came time for a 25th anniversary event and the bethel town fathers were understandably nervous. some of the same folks still around. one of the groups who applied for the permit was the original promoters of woodstock. the bethel town fathers cocked around for a while and the woodstock people said we own the name woodstock and we can have woodstock in giants stadium if we have to but it would be nice to have it on yasgurs farm (now owned by a beast of a woman named june gellish (picture enclosed). don't get me wrong, i have nothing against private property, but she's no max yasgur. she's more like max yasgur in drag with a cellular phone. 2 years ago, she had the town fathers crank up their snow plows and block the access road to the property. woodstock nation (who? explained below) successfully challenged that in court. last year on the anniversary, she dumped chicken shit all around the perimeter of the property to prevent would be pilgrims from camping out). town fathers told the woodstock boys something to the effect that if you want to get a haircut and take a bath, we'll talk about it. but the woodstock boys had long since cut their hair (or blow dried it and lost it) and taken showers and scrape their faces every morning. they also had 25 long years to contemplate their mistakes. they plugged all the data into a computer and the computer spit out the same damn thing as it did 25 years earlier. fuck bethel, lets try woodstock. and they did and the town fathers welcomed them with open arms. why? the new town fathers were actually lost concert goers from 25 years earlier who were never able to get a ride back. so that's woodstock and that's why woodstock 25th is in woodstock and not in yasgurs farm, bethel. meanwhile back in bethel, a kindly white haired seventy something man named sid bernstein (picture enclosed), was the dark horse candidate to put on a festival in bethel. you see, the town fathers had a bit of a problem. they could do something about putting on a festival and make a little money or they could do nothing and have thousands of people potentially make a pilgrimage anyway and lose a lot of money. their politics went up against their wallets and guess which won? there was also another possible candidate who wanted to put on a festival, my personal favorite and severe underdog candidate, woodstock nation. these folks stuck a flag in the ground at yasgurs farm site a few years ago and declared it a sovereign and independent nation. i met a couple of these folks and although i thought they were on the right track, i gently advised them that they may have some fundamental legal problems with their lawsuit. it wasn't that they weren't keen on capitalism, they just didn't seem to understand it very well. sid bernstein developed a following and maneuvered his way through the local political processes over a period of about a year. the hurdles were seemingly never ending including the filing of an environmental impact study with 26 separate groups, town, county, state, regional agencies etc, etc, etc. sid "the man who brought the beatles to america" bernstein appeared to be in great shape for a man of his years (despite the fact that he had woood june gellish for 8 years) but ultimately, he couldn't provide the town fathers with what they wanted and they were all set to turn him down on the permit. no more than 2 hours before they were set to throw him out, a local family, rhlens, showed up at the meeting and shook hands with sid on a \$10 million agreement to underwrite bethel '94. the show is on. it is apparently a small one with no more than 50,000 people expected. the saugerties woodstock teenage pukatorium is hoping for 150,000 screaming rugrats. the only sane people over 25 who are going will be on the stage. it's really not for oldsters. lets face it, do you really want some teenager puking on your laura ashley picnic blanket (that would be radicchio)? for bethel '94 tickets are \$94.69 (i know, cute rots the intellect) at ticketmaster) for 2 days, august 13 and 14. there is local band and carnival type entertainment august 11 and 12 to encourage staggered arrival. my place is 10 miles away. you're invited to come and bring friends, family and children. it'll be dorm style accommodations or camping (bring your own bedding). regardless of whether anyone actually makes it to the festival, it'll be a good party. give me a call for directions. i think i'm heading up aug 11 evening and coming back to ny aug 15 morning.