



One of the more than 100 bands who kept the audience stomping for three days.



The author (right) enjoying the early morning Easter sunshine through his own inner haze.



The temperatures were high, and so were the spirits, all weekend in Union Grove.

Fiddle Your B



A two-fisted partier, who's decided to get down to business.

By Ed Perrone

Well, at least this year, I was prepared. Last year I didn't really know what to expect. A bluegrass festival in Union Grove, North Carolina, for christ sake in North Carolina mountains, redneck-territory, North Carolina. I expected a crew-cut, red-faced, 50-year-old men, belting out the old-time crap out of young, Yankee hippies who had their heads in the clouds. Boy, was I wrong.

But like I said, this year I knew better. The Annual Old-Time Fiddlers' Convention draws about 125,000 people (or more) every year, and it's been going on annually since 1924. And the crowd is far from what you'd expect. Down to it, there's really no kind of generalization you can make, except that: 1) they're big; and 2) they're young.

The Fiddlers' Convention draws a little bit of everything. Men, women who don't do anything harder than Jack and Jill, and men who hitch a couple hundred miles down and back to play.

The Convention is actually a competition. Bands from all over come from as far as Seattle, Washington, to enter. There are over 100,000 people, 100 bands, and a lot of drugs than anybody can possibly know what to do with. It becomes just a sidelight. The whole thing is just a sideshow. In the third largest city in North Carolina, they claim, for three days your brain's not fried by the time you leave--well, you've had y'selves a good time, now, did ya?

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