

After the Fall: In which our resident roots expert ponders the next season and beyond

Okee dokee folks... We are in the home stretch of summer, and it is unclear how the pandemic is going to affect fall schedules. I am seeing many cancellations already, so it's best to check directly with venues before you head to any show to make sure the show is happening and find out their vaccination policy. I am glad that places are mandating vaccines for attendance; this is a public health crisis that takes cooperation to get beyond. Outdoor shows will probably be the norm until the temperature gets too chilly. I'm looking forward to cooler weather and hopefully more live music, but who knows? We have global warming issues and a lingering pandemic. We need to worry beyond the fall, we need to worry about the next decade and beyond. Too much to ponder? Too heavy? Read on...

Farm Aid 2021 is coming up on September 25 in Hartford, Connecticut. The event is sold out, but you can still help to save family farms by donating to Farm Aid. *Cash over to www.farmaid.org*. Last year's concert was virtual, but, so far, this year's will be a live, in-person event. Unfortunately Neil Young has dropped out of the show due to COVID concerns, but the line-up still lists Wille Nelson, John Mellencamp, Dave Matthews, Sturgill Simpson, Margo Price, Nathaniel Ratecliff, Promise of the Real, and many others. I will be attending this year's installment of Farm Aid and will have photos and a review to publish. Look for it the first week of October!

The third annual River Bend East Songwriters Festival will take place on Saturday, September 11 from noon - 5pm on the grounds of historic Slater Mill, 67 Roosevelt Avenue in Pawtucket. Rhode Island Music Hall of Fame Member Mark Cutler and award-winning singer/songwriter Rachel Sumner will co-headline the event. Other songwriters include J. Michael Graham, Kala Farnham, Kevin Williams and Allison Rose. The National Park Service will provide free tours of the museum and family-friendly activities. *For more about the festival, compose on over to fb.com/rbesongwriters*.

The Bluegrass Throedown happens every Wednesday at the heavenly dive bar in PVD, Nick-a-Nees. If you are a fan of pickin' and a grinnin' then get there for 8:30 so you don't miss a note. Nick's is dog friendly, so if Fido likes tunes bring him/her along, but only if they like people! Coming up you can catch the sounds of Rock Hearts on September 8, Poor Monroe on the 15th, and The Splinters on the 29th. There is no cover, but they do pass the hat, so be generous! *For more, mow over to bluegrassthroedown.com*

The third season of the Levitt AMP Woonsocket Music Series continues on September 10 with the always busy Adam Ezra Group and wraps on the 17th with Sidy Maiga and Afrimanding (West African Drums) with Chachi Carvalho and the International Players (hip-hop). In addition to the free admission, attendees can purchase dinner or snacks from the food trucks, enjoy an adult beverage at an on-site bar provided by Ciro's Tavern, or just gaze at the sprawling view of River Island Art Park. *For more, side by each over to grant.levittamp.org/woonsocket*

If you read my interview with Jon Anderson of Yes last month, then you know how much of a Yes fan I am. I mentioned to Jon about how hard it is to cover Yes' music and that I had seen a tribute band that did a pretty good job of tackling this. Awaken is the band, and Anderson was very familiar with them. Reaching the virtuosity of Steve Howe, Chris Squire or even Rick Wakeman is daunting for any

musician. Awaken's set list runs through all the various incarnations of the band. The classic roster of Yes is no more, but the touring band is still worth catching when they are in the area. Rick Wakeman will be at the Narrows in Fall River on October 19, so that will be a rare opportunity to experience an intimate performance with this master keyboard player. If you want to hear Yes' hits and deep cuts sooner than later, then hit the District Center for the Arts in Taunton on September 10 when Awaken tackles the tunes. *For more, get "Close to the Edge" at districtartcenter.com.*

I just realized that I have now been writing for Motif for 17 years! Wow. Hopefully I have another 17 in me! That's it for now, thanks for reading. JohnFuzek.com