Subject: LSAF
Posted by Shane on Tue, 02 Dec 2008 07:31:46 GMT
View Forum Message <> Reply to Message

So is there going to be a get together this spring? I know Wayne was getting to where he just didn't have time to devote to setting it up. Just curious, as I'll have to be looking at putting in for time off before too long.

Subject: Re: LSAF
Posted by Wayne Parham on Tue, 02 Dec 2008 19:17:10 GMT
View Forum Message <> Reply to Message

I had some help working out the details this year. Paul Hileman was kind enough to do the legwork this year. Richard Gray and Henry Heier of the New Orleans audio club expressed interest in helping too. So early on, it looked like we might keep things going, first weekend of May, same as every year.However, two things came about that made me really lose interest. First was the hotel we used in the past wasn't up to snuff and finding other hotels was a lot of work. We were committed to doing it, Paul met with me in his home in Dallas and went to several to check them out. So we were willing to keep it up but then the second thing that sussed it for me was our friends over at Audiokarma decided to set their show on the same weekend as ours. Bad Karma. I had asked that they not do that, but they did it anyway. So after that, I decided to let it go. It's hard enough trying to find a venue that will work, nearly impossible if the dates keep changing.We can all meet someplace, I'm game, I'll show up. But I'm not going to spend a lot of time setting up a show that competes with other websites for the same group of exhibitors and attendees. It's not fair to the small companies that go to regional shows, it's not fair to those that would attend and it isn't fair to the people that work hard to set it up. I'm kinda miffed at AK, to tell the truth. There's 52 weekends in a year, so how hard is it to choose a different one than ours? They've started using Embassy Suites, just like we always did, so I'm sure their show will be good. But I just wish they hadn't barged in on our dates. Makes it hard for everyone.

Subject: Re: LSAF
Posted by Shane on Wed, 03 Dec 2008 19:55:38 GMT
View Forum Message <> Reply to Message

Sorry to hear that, Wayne. I was looking forward to coming to Dallas this spring. I know it's kind of a royal PITA when something like scheduling conflicts arise.

Subject: BUMMER!
Posted by Norris Wilson on Wed, 03 Dec 2008 22:45:26 GMT
View Forum Message <> Reply to Message

Maybe all of us who are not going to have a show in our region because of AK barging in on the dates and ruining it. Should send a great BIG jesture of thanks with our appendages.Is this a audio community with the same goal of sharing and relationships? Or, is this whole audio festival thing a competiton for dollars only? One certainly could wonder by the actions of AK.NW

Subject: Re: LSAF
Posted by Wayne Parham on Thu, 04 Dec 2008 17:28:03 GMT
View Forum Message <> Reply to Message

Me too. Maybe next year we'll do it again. Gives us time to pick a venue and perhaps choose a new date. The further in advance we pick it, the better our choices of finding a suitable hotel with enough available rooms. That's one thing that makes it nice to find a hotel that we like and used the same schedule every year, because that way we can book well in advance.

Subject: Re: BUMMER!
Posted by Wayne Parham on Thu, 04 Dec 2008 18:23:57 GMT
View Forum Message <> Reply to Message

Yeah, that's kind of how I felt too. I think what Audiokarma did was terribly selfish and irresponsible. It's not like they didn't know about the LSAF schedule in advance. In my opinion, that should have been a hard stop for them. I know I would never have scheduled LSAF on top of an existing audio show or similar event.This opens up a topic that has been on my mind for some time. What is the purpose of the regional shows and the agendas of the people that attend? To me, they have one purpose. They are a way for small niche companies and well organized hobbyists and DIY'ers to get together. They are a cross between a large audio club meeting and a small trade show. Their whole reason for being is to bring people together that otherwise have no organized gathering place.Big box stores put most common electronics in front of people. You can easily get a computer, TV or boom box at Best Buy. If you want a little higher end products, you can go to specialty shops. But you're still getting factory made stuff for the most part. If you want to audition one of the dozens, perhaps hundreds of craftsmen made products or kit offerings, you really have no place to go other than someone's house that already took the plunge and bought one.That's what make regional shows so nice. They're where you can find AudioKinesis, Audio Note, Bottlehead, or any number of other niche companies like that. Where else can you meet people like Bob Brines, Jef Larson or Jim Griffin? These are crafsmen and designers that have transitioned from DIY'ers to offering products that you'll never find in any store.When Dan Schmalle put together VSAC in Washington State and Mike Baker put together MAF in Ohio, to me, they were really on to something. These were much smaller than CES, tailored for small

niche companies and DIY'ers. In a way, they were extensions of audio clubs and were a perfect way for the hobbyists to get together with one another and with smaller companies that would never attend something like CES or NAMM. Out of those sprang RMAF and LSAF.RMAF grew quickly, becoming almost like a mini-CES. It was modeled after VSAC, I think, sort of the typical kind of trade show, where a promoter contracts to purchase several rooms, marks them up and resells them for a profit. That's fine, and the money generated by them can be used for advertising and other perks. But it does make attendance much more expensive for exhibitors.LSAF was more like the original MAF in that the cost to exhibitors was basically just the cost of the room. There was no additional fee. At MAF, there was a small fee, actually, but only like ten bucks, not thousands. At shows like MAF and LSAF, you don't have a budget for advertising but the cost is low enough that DIY'ers and transitional companies can attend. Advertising is basically word of mouth, with a website to announce dates and exhibitors. That's it.Personally, I don't care what type of show we have but I do think it is impoprtant to maintain one here in this part of the country. I, for one, would prefer it not cost $2K to get in, but I wouldn't mind $500. The rooms are $100/night or so, and so for a three night stay you're looking at a minimum of $300 anyway.I can't blame AK wholly, in that I was getting too busy to mess with LSAF much. I was to a point where I could maintain the website and visit with the hotell staff to make arrangements, but not much else. I don't have time to research the area for new places, nor do I have time to approach all of the prospective exhibitors. These are the things that take time, not hours a day but certainly hours a month. Somebody would have to have some time for that, in order to keep LSAF going.We have had some volunteers, Fred Thompson, Paul Hileman and many others. Lots have helped. But we were getting a little thin on time, and we really needed a push. This was true ever since the first year we moved to Dallas. It also didn't help that the first year in Dallas, we happened to get an Embassy Suites that was probably the worst in the nation, and since I wasn't living in Dallas to really monitor it, the place was unsuitable the first year we went there. Remember the damnable construction? That really took the wind out of our sails, I think.So this year, we knew we needed to move to a new location. I like Embassy Suites, always have, and we looked at some of the others in Dallas. Seemed promising at first. The New Orleans club was intersted in getting involved, and I had hoped they could rally support and get the word out.LSAF has always been a grass roots thing, after all, so whatever we want out of it, we each have to put into it. There is no promoter, keeps the costs down, but we all have to pull some weight or it doesn't get done.Paul Hileman stepped up to the plate, and did a lot of legwork this year, finding prospective hotels. We pretty much narrowed down to one in North Dallas, which is perfect since it is the most attractive part of the city. I thought we were probably going to settle there. I had spoken to them about the available weekends, tried hard to negotiate for the weekend we had always used. Consistency was important to me, something everyone could count on. That's why the AKfest thing was really the straw that broke the camel's back. It was just the last straw, at least for this year.Now, if we could put something together in the next six months, I'd be there for sure. The website is a keeper, I'll maintain it as long as I'm around. We can always post information about new event dates and get everyone together. Or we can put something together for next year, just skip this year. We can either choose different dates, perhaps make it the last weekend in May or whatever, and hopefully AK won't make the same mistake again. Maybe we can figure out a way to get across to them that overlapping schedules is bad for everyone, and they'll respect that, I dunno. Since we're so far south, maybe we should go earlier in the year, maybe March, because we're already warming up by then and Michigan isn't.

Subject: Re: BUMMER!
Posted by Shane on Fri, 05 Dec 2008 05:24:43 GMT
View Forum Message <> Reply to Message

End of May would be bad, Memorial Day weekend isn't it?I vote for sometime in June. Hasn't got totally hot out yet, kids are out of school :), and my summer busy season hasn't started yet!

Subject: Re: BUMMER!
Posted by Norris Wilson on Fri, 05 Dec 2008 06:41:07 GMT
View Forum Message <> Reply to Message

Seems like Fall is a time when audio fever tends to kick in for the Winter projects, indoor listening, and audio purchases.The bad thing about the Fall time frame, is Labor Day and so many other major audio festivals, like RMAF.There is a short time frame where early Fall would have potential dates. But, when you get in to late October, then Thanks Giving and the Winter holidays take over. Plus, the preceeding larger shows have eclipsed the smaller venues, and take some of the appeal away.I would think mid September before everyone else has their festivals wopuld be a better time over all..Or, possibly mid April for a Spring time frame?Just thinking out loud!Any other suggestions?NW

Subject: Re: BUMMER!
Posted by Wayne Parham on Fri, 05 Dec 2008 17:19:29 GMT
View Forum Message <> Reply to Message

I'm open to all suggestions. Perhaps you two might form a sort of steering committee, check some hotels and pick a place and time that would work.

Subject: Re: LSAF
Posted by Barry S on Fri, 05 Dec 2008 22:14:12 GMT
View Forum Message <> Reply to Message

Wayne, a show like LSAF is a lot of work but please understand that a lot of us really appreciate all the work everyone put into it. It is a great showcase for mom and pop companies that put their heart and soul into their products. Like you said, there isn't any other venue for these products to be heard.If you decide not to do another fest, well, bummer. It was a great ride while it lasted.You might skip a year, make some changes, build some momentum and try it again. Given the economy right now it might be a good year to lay low anyway. If LSAF was scheduled on a

different weekend (or month) than the AK fest you'd be fine. Like you said, you are far enough south that you'll have good weather earlier in the season. A different hotel location or city might be cool, too. The Lone Star fest was obviously a labor of love. I learned a lot about audio that would have never been picked up by reading magazines or hitting retail shops. LSAF was the first place I'd ever heard a 2A3 amp, open baffle speakers and Bob Brines great sounding single driver speakers, your Pi horns, Geddes and Duke's waveguides. The Great Plains horns and Audio Note stuff was also amazing. Skip's Squeezebox got me started on computer audio. The hardest part of the shows was NOT buying all the great sounding gear ... at least at the same time. There are still things on the wish list and a lot of that list is stuff from LSAF.

Subject: Re: LSAF
Posted by Wayne Parham on Sat, 06 Dec 2008 00:35:21 GMT
View Forum Message <> Reply to Message

We'll probably just reschedule, maybe do it later in the year or just wait until 2010.

It's the Christmas season, so I'm not really in a mood to belabor this. It's not a huge bummer, just a little thing, really. We all have much more important things to think about, things to celebrate hopefully and to be thankful for. Best to focus on those things.

I will say that this is a bump in the road that we can avoid, but we shouldn't have to. Audiokarma should have been more responsible in choosing the dates.

Last year, Audio Note complained about it because they're one of the companies that like to attend all of the shows. They could not be at two places at once, so sent Neli Davis (from an independent distributor called Audio Federation) to represent Audio Note. They asked that we all be responsive to their concerns and not choose overlapping dates for regional shows.

Then lo and behold, AK does it again and just says "sorry". That's uncool.

Subject: Re: BUMMER!
Posted by Shane on Thu, 11 Dec 2008 06:30:47 GMT
View Forum Message <> Reply to Message

Wayne, email me with the specifics of what would need to be done and I'll see if it's something I can swing.

Subject: Re: BUMMER!

Posted by Wayne Parham on Thu, 11 Dec 2008 07:28:01 GMT
View Forum Message <> Reply to Message

We'll do. Maybe after the first of the year, we can get together either by phone or in person. Kick some ideas around.

Subject: Re: LSAF
Posted by Robert Bond on Wed, 28 Jan 2009 20:44:21 GMT
View Forum Message <> Reply to Message

Oh, darn! Last year was my first year attending. I flew in from New Mexico and had the time of my life.I realize how much work this is - thank you to the organizers. I'm one of the many people who is more interested in the small-shop hand-built stuff, as opposed to the $100k status symbols dominating RMAF.If there is a steering committee, I'd be interested in helping out in whatever way.

Subject: Steering committee
Posted by Shane on Thu, 29 Jan 2009 19:04:09 GMT
View Forum Message <> Reply to Message

Robert--please hold on for a little while. I'm seeing what I can do to procure us a venue to stage it at presently and at a date to not conflict with several other shows. Then we could probably use your help for sure.But in the meantime there is nothing set at this point.