

SONSHINE 2006 RECAP

Greetings Sunshine Crew;

It is over.....Like so many of you I have spoken with will agree, the weeks after Sunshine are some of the most depressing of the year. For me there is a sense of deep despair that we have to wait 12 more months to do it all over again. Sunshine 2006 was a test of survival, beginning with the dangerously high winds and rain that caused us to semi-evacuate tent city to shelter in the High School, HM and Civic Center. So many of the crew stepped up and did whatever they could to move people and keep them from panicking. Thursday evening's bands were completely rained out as the sound tower even blew over! Friday and Saturday served up unmerciful temperatures in the high 90's, even cracking 100, with a heat index anywhere between 110 and 120. We drank so much water didn't we? The new center aisle extending from the stage to the sound tower seemed to provide welcome relief from last year's pounding crowds. We pulled only 25 TOTAL over the wall needing medical attention during Relient k and Tobymac compared to last years 250+. Overall it was a VERY good year!

As with every year, Sunshine is a collection of hundreds if not thousands of moments. Each moment has a story to tell and many of you have supplied me with some of these unforgettable moments, from the strange but true, shrug your shoulders dumbfounded to the downright nasty and disgusting. While some stories are completely true, others have been laced with a little of my own sick imagination. You have the unenviable task of determining what is true for yourselves.

With the violent storm Thursday night, most of the crew had all of their belongings soaked and/or blown away. Tents were destroyed. Many slept in cars that night. But you persevered. We had several crew that could not continue and chose to head home. Several people picked up the slack and filled in admirably. **Zene Smith** stuck it out for a full 3+ hours at Side Stairs while **Amberlie Haak** absolutely rocked by covering HM Backstage for close to 12 straight hours straight both Friday and Saturday! Outstanding!

As **Kelly Lowe** and **Curtis Beaumont** were driving past the high school statue, something jumped after them. She floored the golf cart, but "it" still pursued her making this ungodly barking noise. Before she knew it, it landed in the back of the golf cart. A camper was pretending to be a Velociraptor (the dinosaur from Jurassic Park). After barking over their shoulders he returned to his post to trap the next security person. Kelly was in tears from laughing so hard and Curtis said he had the worst breath ever.

Speaking of awful breath, poor **Christian Berg** was in the crowd for Toby Mac and had some guy who hadn't brushed his teeth (in a while) standing directly in front of him singing loudly. We always have talked about hazing the rookies, but I'm sure that's not what **Jon Ness** had in mind. Next year we may hand out those little breath strips to put on tongues of people with the stanky breath!

Should you ever have a death wish – simply bring your 3 yr old child into the pit at HM!
Charlie Bowen and **Lizzy Alexandr** almost killed such a fine example of a father.

Sarah Stewart, a wide-eyed rookie, approached her first shift in the cesspool we affectionately call HM with more than a little anxiety and fear. She had heard horror stories of the pits but we assured her she had nothing to worry about and all would be fine. She proudly took her place on the outside of her first mosh pit. As the pit heated up, a young scrawny stick of a boy took a nasty fall and Sarah dutifully helped him back to his feet. He then showed her his other arm where the elbow was obviously dislocated and the bone was protruding and pushing against his skin tightly. Feeling nauseous she quickly told the boy that **Lizzy** (standing nearby) could bring him to the EMT's for treatment. Not sure who ended up taking the kid to EMS. The hard lesson for all noobs: Beware all that dare to work the dreaded mosh pit. You never know what will happen....

Speaking of HM, **Megan Westenhaver** was hanging around HM with a bunch of the crew when some guy walks by wearing a DENIM MICRO MINI SKIRT! They all hoped and prayed the guy would at least have the decency to have underwear on. I have to say...not much fazes the gang at HM but the sight of this guy left the crew particularly silent.

Some bare foot guy came up to **Nathan Braman** and **Jessica Sievers** on Friday night at Side Gate and politely asked if they had any gasoline. He proceeded to say that he had stepped in some gum and needed gas to get the gum off. Now normally all gates have a supply of gasoline for just such emergencies, but sadly they had just run out. He then asked if there were any cops backstage. Nathan told him yes and sent him to the EMT's.

There seems to be no end to the creative thinking of the Sonshine Festival attendee. New to us this year: a campsite strung together 600+ feet of extension chord, plugged it in at the high school, and used it to power their big screen TV. Another group set up a 50' slip-n-slide and charged \$1 per person to use. No idea how much \$\$ they made.

Many us probably shared the same frustration **Nerissa Wilker** felt on Thursday as the rumors spread of heavy storms approaching. She considered getting a shirt that said, "DO I LOOK LIKE A WEATHERMAN?" One example of a conversation..."Umm... can you tell me if it's going to rain?". "Why yes it is going to rain." "Well how much and how hard?"with another smile on her face she replied "Not sure... I just know its going to rain." "Well Miss, don't they tell you anything and do you know anything?" "Yes they tell me things I need to tell you and this is what they tell me, that there is rain coming." We do love to answer all questions don't we?

Although I preferred to keep this story out of the recap (and thus keep its PG-13 rating), **Heather Ivance** insisted I tell you about her Saturday night adventure. If you're easily embarrassed skip to the next paragraph. Having a strange and overwhelming obsession with handcuffs, Heather begged **Nigel Masters** and **Andy Sopher** to cuff her to a golf cart in the pouring rain. Not sure why. Maybe some erotic fantasy. She chased them around until they reluctantly agreed to do as she wished. She was quite persistent. As about a dozen of the crew watched in utter disbelief in a passionate rage she even tore the seat off the golf cart she was cuffed to. Shocking. But completely true. Every shameful word. OK, I made some of this up, but who would think of doing such a thing to poor Heather?

Andrea White and **Janna Langer** spent most of Sonshine standing in their *little* security trailer distributing radios but so enjoyed the comforts of it they've decided to buy one for themselves and take up residence in a Wal-Mart parking lot.

A few things that happened at Sonshine 2006 that you MAY NOT have seen:

- ***Starr Marshall*** tripped and fell leaving the porta-potty and sprained her ankle.
- ***Megan Westenhaver*** and ***Charity Hall*** actually patrolling and not “on a break!”
- ***Suzanne Lueck*** not lying flat on her back in the EMT tent.
- ***Heather Ivance*** and her accomplices stole MY golf cart!
- ***Shawn Klein*** fell asleep in his golf cart one night.
- ***Japheth Aos*** collected \$100 for a tow from a camper hopelessly stuck in mud.
- ***Kelly Lowe*** hiding in ***Andy Sopher’s*** truck after a nasty bolt of lightning.
- ***Bryan “Fang” Wiltfang*** walking around WITHOUT a walk’n’taco in his hands!
- ***Randy Quiggle*** was asked if we had a metal detector someone could borrow.
- ***Ben Uden*** broke a pedal on his bike in the storm but never stopped riding.
- ***Nerissa Wilker*** enjoyed watching me wring my wet socks at Access 1 Thursday.
- ***Cynthia Lovold*** couldn’t save an \$800 beach ball of Tobymac’s from drowning.
- ***Louis Christensen*** judging a dance contest in school weight room during storm.

On Saturday night ***Ben Reutter’s*** campmates decided to pack up early and drive home. The HM stage was still going with the last band but the crowd was very tame (actually dead!) so the security was just chilling out back when Lucas (One of his campmates) came and said they were leaving. Upon hearing this ***Charlie Bowen*** decided to let Ben go on the condition that Lucas carry Ben on his back from the van to the building or about 40 yards. Ben is 6' 4" 325 lbs and Lucas is 5'4" 115 lbs soaking wet.....So naturally Lucas accepted the challenge without hesitation. His first try ended with them on the ground and ***Charlie*** and ***Lizzy*** laughing.....without hesitation Lucas sprang up, said he lost his footing, and demanded a 2nd chance. So at this point Ben’s praying that he doesn't kill his friend but before he finishes Luke is off like a thunderbolt. 30 yards pass and Luke is still going (***Lizzy*** was the land mark and of course he was backing up). At 50 his legs gave way to fatigue and they fell to the ground. Everyone was laughing as they pulled Luke to his feet. I even witnessed this amazing feat of strength (or stupidity).

The sweet Iowan ladies on the NE corner of Purple 1 were eager to feed every security person that was in the area. All was peaceful and many security enjoyed lots of good food until ***Ben Uden*** made it clear to ***Randy Quiggle*** that he was “on his turf”. Evidently Purple 1 was the section Ben and ***Suzanne Lueck*** (probably unconscious and at the EMT tent again) were assigned to Patrol. Tension mounted and several crew were ready to “throw down” in an all out turf war. Next year some of the Crowd crew has decided to distribute bandanas to the tenters (homies) in their sections (turf) in an attempt to show their colors. No names for the rival gangs have been decided upon yet.

Megan Westenhaver remarked how annoying it was for her and ***Nerissa Wilker*** to have gotten no less than three indecent (and unprintable) proposals from obviously drunk guys driving past the Access Point the two of them were working at Friday night. Go figure: Two pretty girls hanging out on a street corner around midnight leaning into passing cars and talking to strange men just “cruising” County Road 9. How could such a thing happen when everything looked so innocent? Next year, we may attempt to bolster the Sonshine fund by putting them in six inch heels and mini-skirts and having them work for the Willmar Police as undercover vice.

Heather Ivance, Damien Erps, and Chris McVey were so bored doing crowd control during the Tobymac show that at one point they told the people in front of them "Could you guys PLEASE mosh? We really need something to do here!" Where was Lizzy?

Lizzy Alexandr was busy arranging for a feast on the road outside the HM building the likes of which I've never seen. Food covered 3 tables and it looked like a spread from Old Country Buffet, only better tasting. Rumors abound as to how he was able to talk his way into so much food. One was that he threatened to date the daughter of a terrified camper. Another was that he wouldn't stop singing Michael W Smith songs until fed properly. Either way, we ate like kings!! So...if you heard of an "emergency" at HM before Tobymac went on at Main Stage – that was it! **Andy Sopher** ALONE ate 4 hot dogs, a hamburger, a chicken sandwich, and several walk 'n' tacos. At least that's all I saw since his hands moved with the quickness of a martial arts expert.

The camping crew stole one of the security golf carts before we even arrived on Wednesday. Sniff, sniff, sniff....is that payback I smell in the air?

On Friday, after House of Heroes, **Ben Uden and Suzanne Lueck** were chilling on their bikes by the Subway tent, just watching the crowd. It was hot, and they were quite bored. Suddenly, two gentlemen come up to them. One just stood there, while the other said to Ben: "Excuse me, I have a complaint." Ben politely said, "Yes Sir?" The guy went on to complain about how House of Heroes started off their set with "Fat Bottom Girls" by Queen. His main problem was that: "Fat bottom girls don't make the world go around; Jesus makes the world go around!" Ben just stared at the guy and said, "Um, well, we can't do anything about it, perhaps you should take it up with the Artists." Suzanne turned around and started coughing, so she wouldn't start laughing in the guys face. Just to set the record straight, the earth's ORBIT makes the world go around.

A tinge on the random side...**Stephanie Schroeder** kept carrying around that plastic owl of hers, whose name is Karl by the way, and making everyone pose for pictures with him...that was pretty amusing. Don't let her freak you out, she's actually quite normal!

Duncan Weiss, our Aussie crew member, was backstage talking with one of the parents of a member from Mainstay and was asked if he was the bass player for The Afters. I don't know about you, but I don't think the bass player would be wearing a security shirt.

Keith Voller was in the trench during Relient k and a young gentleman on one side of the center aisle asked if he could borrow a pen. Keith politely agreed and handed him a pen. The guy was trying to write on the back of his hand but wasn't doing too well since he was drenched in sweat. So Keith, curious what he needed to write so badly, gave him a Sharpie to use instead. The guy proceeds to look across the trench and starts writing. The object of his attention was a young lady trying to give him her phone number, but he had problems understanding her hand signals. Keith grabbed the Sharpie away from the young man, got out a piece of paper, and gave both to the young lady. She wrote down her info and handed it back to the young man across the trench, which he did. How romantic, sweet, and incredibly opportunistic! Don't know if the nickname will stick but here's to you, **Keith "Cupid" Voller**.

Another nickname acquired over Sonshine – **Ben Reutter** is now "GP". Ben made some odd reference about so many guys now wearing girls' pants at HM because they're supposedly more comfortable to wear and look very nice. Well...that didn't sit too well with **Charlie Bowen** and the rest of the tough guy HM security crew. They said Ben would have to do his shopping for "girl pants" at one of the clothing stores for plus size women like Lane Bryant or Fashion Bug because of his 6'4" 325 lb body. For the rest of Sonshine they unmercifully taunted and teased him about his fascination with "girl pants."

Heather Ivance was aptly nicknamed “DQ” by some of the SRT and just like the nickname suggests – it will KILL her not knowing what it stands for!

Kelly Lowe and **Nigel Masters** wanted me to share of their drunken' encounter with the dynamic trio. They were actually approaching the wrong campsite on Friday night and one of the guys took off which led to **Kate Harvey** and **Sandi Stark** getting into a foot chase and catching a very intoxicated individual. He ran into the weeds and Sandi told him to come out and he did. They took both of his arms and when he realized they weren't taking him back to his campsite he started going nuts and struggling to get away. Sandi started screaming for Terry. Kate wrestled with him one handed, talking in the mic with the other hand, but all she got out was "Help!" **Terry Post** and **Nigel** came, cuffed the kid, and he asked them to pull up his sagging pants. When they did he yelled "molestation!" The Willmar PD was called and arrived shortly. When the Officer asked his name, the kid said with all the intelligence he could muster, "I have the right to remain occifer silent!" Meanwhile, his drunken friend was throwing up (blue vomit) back in his tent. He was taken to EMS (Blood Alcohol - 0.198). On the way there he blew chunks all over poor **Terry Post**. Nasty!! At EMS, when the paramedic asked him if he had ever had an I.V., he replied "Yeah sure, why not!"

Then there's the infamous credit card story, an inside joke run amok. If you must know, it's all rather simple really. **Brian Thompson** was just enlightening several of the crew about one rather...shall we say, well endowed girl that is constantly right at the front of Main Stage all day every day at every Sonshine, and she wraps all the boys around her little finger and gets them to do things for her..."and she wears these low cut tops, like the first day, man it was like the Grand Canyon!" All of which got **Heather Ivance** and **Suzanne Lueck** rolling on the ground laughing. **Jason Doehling** then started in with "You almost want to ask her 'do you take credit cards?'" , which got them all laughing again. Everyone then kept pretending to swipe their cards and laughing hysterically the rest of the night, probably because of a combination of sleep deprivation, mild dehydration, and Brian's continued anecdotes of his adventures in dealing with this girl. So yeah...that's the credit story in a nutshell. I know more than a few of you will be checking next year to see if she's up front, but please, just try not to point...

Some extremely random awards: (Because only I voted)

- Most Quiet – **Emely Braman**. (We saw you in pictures!)
- Least Quiet – toss up...**Megan (Missouri)**, **Heather**, you decide!
- Biggest Flirt – **Sam Jerome** of course! **Zene Smith** runner up.
- Best Shade of Green – **Bryan Wiltfang**. Sorry, **Suzanne**.
- Best Hat – **Joel Hamm** (Blues Brothers)
- Worst Screen Tent Helpers – **Damien Erps**, **Aaron Bobier**, **Zene Smith**.
- Best Laugh – You're still the champ **Nerissa Wilker**! (Charlie's LH)
- Best Look-Alike Partners – **Beth Van Roekel** and **Meredith Carlson**.
- Biggest Smile – **Charity Hall** and **Cynthia Lovold**.

All day Saturday, I (**Jeff Quiggle**) had been waving around, to ALL crew I could find, a hurriedly made sign (thanks **Andrea White**) that said, “FIND SHADE/DRINK WATER”. **Fang** and **Sam Jerome** were riding around in a golf cart when I handed them the sign, saying that I had been flashing anyone that I saw. After I noticed the combination look of horror and disgust, I told them I was talking about flashing the **SIGN**, and to get their filthy minds out of the gutters.

That leaves the most coveted award of all. The Big Daddy. The award for **Rookie of the Year** is always tough to pick because each of the three crews works in different areas and some are less noticeable. I regret that sometimes the only time you get truly noticed is when you've screwed up. That didn't happen much at Sonshine 2006. For that reason I have chosen to select a rookie of the year from EACH of the 3 crews. The truth is that ALL the rookies did an outstanding job. Here are the winners:

From the **Backstage Crew** this person was a rock, steadily going about his shifts and was ready to jump in when needed elsewhere. He rose from the ranks of an Alternate, having not even made the original cut of the security crew. Congratulations to **Joe Falck**.

From the **Crowd Patrol Crew**, I chose to give the award to a team. Randy and I chose to partner them despite both being rookies, which made us both a little apprehensive. They both jumped in as if they'd been on crew for years, and showed great poise under stress. Even though half of this dynamic duo had some issues with the heat, she didn't quit and only pushed herself harder to get the job done. I hope you both stay with us for many more years. The co-winners of this award are **Suzanne Lueck** and **Ben Uden**. (**Charity Hall**, you never stood a chance partnered with you know who...and for that we're sorry.)

From the **SRT Crew**, there are a number of great rookie efforts but only one stood above the rest. Veteran crew raved of his ability to handle himself in even the roughest of crowds with the savvy of a veteran. Thank Charlie for this award. He said you did an outstanding job of controlling the pits. This award belongs to **Ben Reutter**.

Well that's it gang. Until next year, goodbye. Thank you so much for all the sacrifices you made to be at Sonshine 2006 and the monster effort you gave in the midst of the most unforgiving weather we've ever experienced. You survived. Props to all of you and we'll see you at Sonshine 2007!

I would be remiss in not paying tribute to **Eric Henrickson**, a member of last year's Backstage Crew that passed away in early April. His infectious personality, unending smile, and awesome attitude no matter what the circumstances were a blessing to us all. We miss you Eric. You would have enjoyed meeting and working with this year's crew. We know you were watching from Heaven.

Your friend and grateful Leader;

Jeff Quiggle