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## Controversial festival could come to Lincoln

by: Allyson Levine  
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Two women are planning a music festival that could come to Lincolnton, and while it appears nothing is set in stone as of now, it's already causing controversy.

Nancy Leedy and Joanie Beasley are the founders of Camp Lickalotta, which, according to their Web site, stands for "Lickalotta prejudice. Lickalotta pollutants. Lickalotta pessimism."

The camp, which the Web site describes as a "lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender campground for adults in western North Carolina," was supposed to be set up at the Golden Valley Campground in Casar.

According to Leedy and Beasley's Web site, they were recently evicted from the location.

Yet despite that setback, the couple plan to proceed with putting on a music festival that was to be held at the campsite.

And based on information previously found on their Web site, the festival, known as Bushstock '08 and slated for May 16-18, might be put on in Lincoln County.

A Google map featured on the site last Friday indicated the location as 1100 Salem Church Road in Lincolnton. The Web site has since been modified to indicate that a location for the music festival has not been finalized.

Repeated attempts to contact Leedy for an interview were unsuccessful, although she did send via email a copy of a letter written by Beasley.

Beasley's letter, in part, states that "Bushstock '08 will still be a reality. It will still happen ... To those who may want to protest us, or the music festival, at least find the kindness in yourselves to donate to the cancer causes which are our charity events."

With rumors about the event circulating, at least one area pastor has spoken out against the music festival being held in Lincoln County.

"I don't condone this lifestyle," said the Rev. Andy Royals of Salem Baptist Church, which is located on the same road as the proposed festival site.

"I don't think it's good for our community."

County Commissioner Alex Patton, who is seeking re-election, expressed a similar sentiment.

"I will do everything within my power as a county commissioner to keep this event from taking place," he said.

Patton says he doesn't want a gay and lesbian festival held in Lincoln County, and he believes the majority of county residents would agree.

According to Patton, his problem is with the visibility and promotion of "the lifestyle" he believes the festival would bring with it.

If Leedy and Beasley do decide to stage Bushstock '08 in Lincoln County, they will have to appear before the Lincoln County Planning Board, says Lincoln County Zoning Administrator Randy Hawkins.

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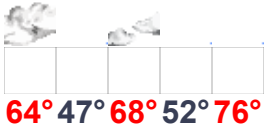
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“As a general matter, it looks like it would require a temporary use permit,” Hawkins said, explaining that the Salem Church Road location is zoned industrial.

Hawkins says a music festival is not one of the uses permitted in an area that is zoned industrial, although an ordinance says a permit may be issued.

Late Thursday afternoon, Hawkins says he was able to contact the property owner, who says he hasn’t given Leedy and Beasley permission to use the site.

According to Hawkins, the property owner has also said he will do whatever he can to stop the festival from happening here.

If the planning board were to issue a permit allowing the festival to go on, it seems Leedy and Beasley would still face obstacles in bringing Bushstock ’08 to Lincoln County.

Patton says he will do “anything within the limits of the law” to keep the festival from happening here, and he says he will get information about the festival to every pastor in Lincoln County if necessary.

If other ministers agree with Royals, Leedy and Beasley will be facing strong opposition.

“I just can’t condone that,” Royals said.