

Renaissance Festival brings old world to life

BY BRENDA DOMINICK
 STAFF WRITER

Jugglers juggling jumbo-sized pins, European folktales telling, old-world tunes playing, and peasants, the usual lynchman and gypsies hustling onlookers.

You hear a strong voice in front of the crowd, "We hope you enjoy the livactions," and throughout the village grounds the peasants shout "God save the Queen."

Every few steps runs into a very spirited crew of characters who whimsically cast off words to get your attention.

"Prey pardon, how do you fair on this fine day?" asks one of the Queen's hairdressers Lady Joan De Paul Mitchell, alter ego of Thani Burton, a Flint-area resident.

Angel, Lady Vixen's girl (aka Birmingham resident Michelle Abrams), says she likes to "Speak softly and carry a big malice," around the village.

And one can't replace the heart-thumping sounds of the Djembe and Ashiko drums played by Giving Tree Rhythms. This trio entertains visitors with a combination of Indian tribal, belly-dancing and Egyptian beats.

Down the street, a lively group of peasants and nobles, enthusiastically recruit people who are "Happy and (they) know it" to come get wet or throw a wet sponge at people.

Sir Walter Raleigh, known outside the Renaissance world as Rochester Hills commoner Jon Kolek, 29, is also known as the director of the festival's Smoker attraction.

For \$9.95, "Smoker" participants get two drinks (equal to seven pounds), two top shelf cigars, a food buffet, and an hour's worth of all sorts of entertainment.

"It's a remarkable bargain," she says.

LisaMarie Gabriele from Lake Orion, who portrays Trite of the wench duo Ample & Trite, does an improvisational

comedy show and picks audience members to play the characters.

"So, it's always a different show, even if it's the same script," Gabriele says.

It's not all fun and revelry for these dedicated fellows of fairs. All of the Renaissance characters have through a rigorous, five-week training. During this training, several sheets of Elizabethan vocabulary were studied and rehearsed.

"The language is not that different from our own language today," says Clio resident Joseph Cripps, who plays José Hose Ebere (another hairdresser for the Queen).

"It's just a matter of...they spoke higher, and they spoke more nasal. You've seen it in movies; the 'in-do' people, the aristocrats commonly speak a little higher than in our English."

PLEASE SEE RENAISSANCE, B5



PHOTOS BY TOM WOFFMEYER/ECCENTRIC

A member of the new pirate colony, Pryte Aivens (aka Michel Hele), tries lining up a shot at the royal caravan at the Renaissance Festival.

LIVE THE LEGEND

■ **Aug. 17-18**
 Italian Carnival-Italian-themed celebration includes such events as the masquerade ball, grape stomp and whining contest.

■ **Aug. 24-25**
 Highland Fling-Catch a glimpse of Northern Scotland during this weekend with the bagpipe blowout, Scottish dog exhibit and sheep toss contest (fake sheep, of course).

■ **Aug. 3-Sept. 2**
 Buccaneer Beer Fest-Pirate Olympics, walking the plank games, and press-a-wench competition. Beer tasting with themed foods accompany these fun and games.

■ **Sept. 7-8**
 Wine, Romance & Song-Grape stomp game, sugar cube castle building and a wooing contest. Renewal of vows include punch and cake.

■ **Sept. 14-15**
 Wonders of the World-Cultures from across the globe will be celebrated.

■ **Sept. 21-22**
 Shamrocks & Shenanigans-Patrons can participate in the signing for your supper contest, after the rainbow treasure hunt, Irish storytelling and potato shuffle.

■ **Sept. 28-29**
 Harvest Huzzah-Chocolate Festival, wine and cigar tasting, children's treasure hunt, and pumpkin bowling.



Peasants dance and be merry awaiting the arrival of their majesties the King and Queen at the Michigan Renaissance Festival in Holly.

Royals & peasants of the town

Birmingham

■ Michelle Abrams/Angel, Lady Vixen's girl

■ Jeffrey Ott/Beggar, Shoe Shiner

Southfield

■ Thaddeus McGaffey /Alphonso of Spain
 ■ Debra McGaffey/Isabella of Spain
 ■ Ryan Jones/Fop Court Troy
 ■ Kimberly Kyle/Gypsy

Canton

■ Kathryn Fedorko/Peasant Dancer
 ■ Bridget Carney/Queen's Maid
 ■ Verneita Blanz/French court
 ■ Jay Janisse/Merry Widow
 ■ Regina Stone/Milk Maid

Livonia

■ Briggett Serylo/Peasant Dancer
 ■ Doug McLaren/Althos
 ■ Sara Schoch/Gypsy
 ■ Jessica Balagna/Rag Picker

Waterford

■ Tracy Selak/Town Librarian

Novi

■ Stevi Kosloskey/Mother Nature

West Bloomfield

■ Jessica Watson/Peasant Dancer
Westland
 ■ Nick Supernols/Lord High Executioner

Farmington Hills

■ Kenneth Ott/Envy, Pirate Crew

Rochester Hills

■ Jon Kolek/Smoker Director, Sir Walter Raleigh

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WHAT'S BEHIND THE MASK?

What do Janet Jackson, Former President Gerald Ford, Ozzie Osbourne and David Copperfield all have in common?

They've all painted masks as part of The Mask Project 2 to benefit Hospice of Michigan!

Take a peek and see some of the masks now on exhibit at The Westin Hotel, Southfield August 3 - 18 and the Southfield Town Center Garden Atrium, 2000 Town Center, August 19 - 22. You may also visit www.hom.org for a chance at owning a celebrity's mask masterpiece!

Local celebrity masks include: Actor Tim Allen, U-M Football Coach Bo Schembechler, Weatherman Sonny Elliot, WDIV News Anchor Carmen Harlan, and Detroit Red Wings Karen Newman.

the mask project 2



Sonny Elliot



Mason
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Dick Purtan



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