

Fair

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Toledo and as far east as Canada.

"We try to provide something for everyone," said Coombs.

In an area where musical acts are drawn to so many venues, like The Palace, Pine Knob Music Theatre and the Fox Theatre, it's not an easy job. Coombs said music venues around the rest of the country "pale in comparison" to those in the metro area.

"It's frustrating and fun," he said. "I think we've got a good line-up."

John Hertel, general manager of the Michigan State Fair, which opens Tuesday, agreed.

"We are in a unique place in the United States," said Hertel. "Most State Fairs do not compete with Pine Knob, Joe Louis Arena, The Palace, Meadow Brook. We're particularly proud

of this year's line-up."

The line-up includes an eclectic collection of music, from rock to Motown to country. The Temptations, Billy Ray Cyrus, Def Leppard and 98 Degrees are just a few of the highlights for this year's live entertainment.

Hertel said an effort was made to keep the cost of these shows to a minimum. Like last year, Gold Circle seating is available. For \$10 added to the cost of admission, fair-goers can sit in the first 1,500 seats at The Band Shell during the concerts.

The only exception is the Labor Day concert. Tickets will be required to see Journey perform on Monday, Sept. 6. General admission tickets are \$10 plus the price of admission and Gold Circle seats are \$16 plus the cost of admission. While Hertel said fair organizers intend to keep

providing free concerts, they must cover the ever-increasing costs associated with those shows.

"I'm not sure where you'll be able to see Journey anywhere else for \$10," he said. "It's still an excellent value."

But music isn't the only draw for visitors to this summer's State Fair.

"The 1999 Michigan State Fair has matured in a new and different way," said Hertel. "We are as clean as Disney here. Secondly, we are the safest fair in America. No fair in America can compare in terms of safety."

Hertel spoke with confidence and pride about this year's event as he addressed members of the press during a conference Tuesday, Aug. 3 at the fairgrounds. Quiet and vacant, the grounds showed only a hint of the energy brewing in preparation for the State Fair.

"Everything here must be quality, from the livestock to the exhibits to all of the sponsors," said Hertel. "It's like going to

your grandfather's farm, Cedar Point and Pine Knob all in one day."

Each day, certain attractions are sure to capture the attention of visitors to the fairgrounds. The Stove, built in 1893 for the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, will surely be noticed. Reaching 26-feet high, 20-feet wide and 30-feet long, the stove serves as a reminder that Michigan was once the stove capital of the world.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Michigan and Michigan State University are bringing back the Miracle of Life Birthing Exhibit, giving visitors an up-close look as cows, ewes and sows give birth. This year's exhibit includes a demonstration of ultrasounds on sheep and sheep shearing.

DaimlerChrysler will offer free rides on the Drunk Driving simulator 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. More than 65 other rides can be found on the Wade Shows Midway, including Giant White

Entertainers will perform at The Band Shell, located at the southwest entrance to the Michigan State Fairgrounds.

Tickets: 1,500 Gold Circle seats will be available for each show through Ticketmaster for \$10 each plus admission to the fair. Contact Ticketmaster at (248) 645-6886 or purchase tickets online at www.ticketmaster.com. General admission to the fair does not guarantee free entry into The Band Shell.

The line-up:
7 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 24 Mark Farmer of Grand Funk Railroad
7 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 25 Def Leppard
7 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 26 Billy

Ray Cyrus
8 p.m. Friday, Aug. 27 Tyrese
7 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 28 38 Special
7 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 29 Temptations
7 p.m. Monday, Aug. 30 Kenny Chesney
7 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 31 Detroit Area Choirs
7 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 1 The Isley Brothers
7 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 2 Alabama
8 p.m. Friday, Sept. 3 Ginuwine
7 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 4 98 Degrees
7 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 5 Hank Williams Jr.
8 p.m. Monday, Sept. 6 Journey

Water Flume.

The Children's Theater will offer the story of "The Emperor's New Clothes," by Henry K. Martin Productions. The show will be performed twice daily on weekdays and three times daily on weekends in the Community

Arts Auditorium. Call (313) 369-8250 for more information. As always, the fair will feature daily parades at 4 p.m. and 6 p.m., livestock shows and races, cow milking demonstrations and horse shows for all visitors to see.

An Evening with Olivia Newton-John

September 1

ON SALE NOW!

September 2

ON SALE NOW!

pine knob

Merrymaker

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of portraying the life of a peasant were dashed. The hat atop her head, and the attendant who laced up her bodice from behind were clear signs that she was no ordinary witch.

In Renaissance times, Graves would have been the embodiment of a married woman who commanded respect from passersby.

Of course, a title was in order. Faster than an approaching

deadline, she was recognized as the Baroness Lady Anne from Hartland.

With her attendant, Lady Valkyrie (Valerie Schendel of Clarkston) at her side, Graves walked the grounds of Hollywood.

Her presence was duly noted. A young peasant boy (Brandon Villarejo of Commerce) greeted her with a bouquet of flowers. Noblemen bowed in respect. And

even the portly, lecherous King of Scotland noted her presence — several times.

"I was impressed at the authenticity and sense of history that everyone knew," said Graves.

Eleven years after Graves attended her first Renaissance

Festival, she finally got an insider's look at the community of actors that breathes life into Hollywood. "Even though I was scared, I took a risk," she said. "And that's a lesson in itself. After an hour, I knew that I wanted to do this today, next year and long after that."

Festival

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HOUSEHOLD PROBLEMS? Tune in Bob Allison's

How to Cook It
How to Do It
Where to Find It

HOUSEHOLD PROBLEMS? Tune in Bob Allison's

Worth. Last year, a strong man's competition was added to appeal to sports fans. This year a murder mystery and celebration of Irish culture were added. In the future, Taylor expects that the festival will be open during the week to draw students and kids at summer camps.

With the resurgence of interest in the works of William Shakespeare, Taylor believes more people are interested in the life and times of the Renaissance. They don't have to look far.

Beneath the costume and Elizabethan language, Shakespeare can be found at Hollywood. "Our goal is to be truly authentic," said Shakespeare, through his living facsimile, Tom Aston.

"Everything we do is intended to make the guests to Hollywood feel like winners." Aston, who coordinates the performing arts programs at Oakland University, began as a consultant to the festival in the late 1970s. He joined the cast in the early 1980s, long before the bard from Stratford enjoyed a resurgence on the silver screen.

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