

Head out to the Country Fair for fun

By Rebecca Newell
Oregon Daily Emerald

"It's about the human high, the real human experience. And it's human experience with an art form," owner of Chez Ray's restaurant in downtown Eugene Ray Sewell said, describing the Oregon Country Fair, which celebrates its 31st anniversary this year.

Themed "The Fair of the Dragon," the event kicks off this year on July 7 in Veneta, 13 miles west of Eugene. Boasting over 300 booths with homemade arts, crafts and incredible food, as well as acoustic entertainment, main stage and vaudeville acts, the three-day affair is an experience that is relived anew each year.

Many of the previous vendors are returning, and new additions include Eugene's Ring of Fire restaurant. Along with the returning features is the Friday Night Feast, which has been a Country Fair tradition since 1972. A mixture of food, fun and entertainment, the event is organized by Sewell, a registered French chef. Sewell, who toured with the Grateful Dead as a chef, is no stranger to the combination of good food and good music.



The Oregon Country Fair means wild costumes, such as the ones above and the perennial favorite, Silver Man (below).

"We try to nourish with equal portions of spirit and humor," said Sewell, who said he expects to serve more than 500 people at the feast. "It's my job to nourish the people that come out here. We want to provide the public with this experience."

This year's theme for the Friday Night Feast is based on a mystical legend of a king, and only by sufficient sacrifice of food and chanting will the great king "appear." Tickets for the event are \$12, and

can be purchased at Chez Ray's, 44 W. 10th Ave.

Gates for the rest of the fair open each day at 11 a.m. and close each night at 7 p.m.

"We're really emphasizing vaudeville this year," OCF administrative assistant Norma Sax said, referring to the on-stage entertainment, which is a major part of the Country Fair. Performances are continual during the fair hours at five locations, the Main Stage, Shady Grove, Blue Moon, Vaudeville and Hoarse Chorale stages.

Performances include the Sugar Beets, a psychedelic bluegrass band based in Eugene, playing the Main Stage on Friday at 5:30 p.m. Saturday, Deep Banana Blackout, a high-energy funk jam band based out of Hartford, Conn., will be playing on the Main Stage at 3 p.m.

Mare Wakefield, another Eugene performer, will be showcasing her acoustic folk-rock sound Friday at 6 p.m. on the Shady Grove stage.

"It's a pretty magical place," she said, referring to her performance in 1998 at Shady Grove. The Fair is "a good place to perform, because people are very supportive and appreciative of the music."

"Music is my passion. The hard part is making a living," she said.

Wakefield will also be performing at the Friday Night Feast, and at 4 p.m. on Saturday with her band at the Blue Moon Stage.

A full schedule of the performers can be found at the OCF's Web site, www.oregoncountry-fair.com. And in the tradition of

previous fairs, there will be improvisational performances along the many paths winding through the fair area. No radios or electronic instruments are allowed on-site, as all music is live and natural.

Keeping with the theme, a new addition of the fair will be a 100-foot diameter earthen labyrinth, based on a medieval design inlaid in the floor of the Chartes Cathedral. The labyrinth is designed as an area of meditation.

Another important, but less well-known facet

of the fair is the Jill Heiman Vision fund. Started in 1996 by the Fair Elders, the fund recognizes the efforts of Jill Heiman, the fair's first attorney, who has been instrumental in protecting the rights of the fair and its location.

Donations collected during the event are matched by the Fair up to a total of \$10,000 and are awarded to deserving applicants. This year's chosen category was "environmental protection and recovery," and was awarded to three non-profit organizations.

Recipients of the awards this year include the Northwest Trails Archive and Restoration Project of the League of Wilderness Defenders, and the Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides.

Donations are accepted at drop boxes throughout the Fair.

Once again, the Oregon Country Fair remains with tradition in providing an assortment of music, sights, people and experience.

"It's really tribal, you interact with all kinds of people," Wakefield said. "It's a different kind of reality."

Country Fair facts

Tickets are on sale at all Fastix outlets in Oregon and Washington (1-800-992-8499) with a \$1 service charge; Fred Meyer and the University Ticket Office. The price of tickets bought in advance is \$10 Friday, \$15 Saturday and \$10 Sunday. Tickets purchased on the days of the events will be \$12 Friday, \$17 Saturday and \$12 Sunday. Tickets are necessary to enter the fair site or to ride the free LTD bus from Eugene, and will not be available at the fair. Parking on-site is \$5, and there is no camping, except for the fair crew.



Emerald archive

Mental health advocates protest 'Me, Myself & Irene'

LOS ANGELES — A coalition of mental health advocacy groups sees nothing funny about Jim Carrey's new movie, "Me, Myself & Irene," and wants some changes in its advertising.

Carrey plays a Rhode Island police officer who has two personalities, one of them violent.

That appears to be a negative portrayal of the mentally ill, says the head of the National Mental

Health Association, which represents about 350 organizations nationwide.

The movie's distributor, Twentieth Century Fox, declined to comment.

Carrey's character is incorrectly identified as having schizophrenia instead of multiple personality disorder, said Michael Faenza, the coalition's president and CEO. Most sufferers are non-

violent and many can control their symptoms through medication, according to the association.

"Having a famous, gifted movie star make fun and portray schizophrenia in ways that are inaccurate, funny, and then spooky is a big step backward," Faenza said Friday.

The association wants Fox to remove the line "From Gentle to

Mental" and the word "schizo" from advertising before the movie's June 23 release. It also wants public service announcements telling moviegoers where they can get help for mental illness.

"I hope they find creative ways to give back to the community that helps people with mental illness, instead of making fun of them," Faenza said.

The Associated Press

WOW HALL

Community Center for the Performing Arts

8th & Lincoln

Thursday

AFI, Choke, Berzerk

Punk Rock
\$7 advance, \$7 door, 8:30 pm

Friday

Hanuman, Jack Straw

Acoustic Folk/Jazz/Bluegrass
\$7 door, 9:00 pm

Saturday

Dave Van Ronk, Walker T. Ryan

Acoustic Folk/Blues
\$11.50 advance, \$13 door, 7:30 pm

Sunday

A Taste of the Arts

with Mark Alan, Brothers of the Baladi, Ken Kesey, The Leftovers, Cris Williamson
Benefit Dinner
\$25 advance, \$25 door, 5:30 pm

Wednesday June 28

NoMeansNo, Removal, Shortround

Punk Rock
\$10 advance, \$10 door, 9:00 pm

Thursday June 29

The Toasters, Step Lively, The Lounge Derbies

Ska
\$7 advance, \$8 door, 9:00 pm

Friday June 30

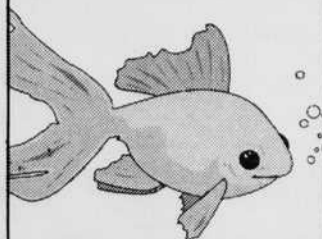
The Mad Caddies, Groovie Ghoulies, Grade, Double-O-Seven

Ska-Punk
\$7 door, 9:00 pm

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