



DENNIS WIANCKO

## RHYS THOMAS

The first fair that Rhys Thomas can recall being at was in 1970. "I asked my parents if they'd been to the 1969 fair and they didn't remember, so they probably did [go]!" he jokes. Thomas has attended the fair every year from first grade, "since pretty much when it started." His parents ran The Hilltop Bakery, a popular booth for coffee and sweet treats that still exists. "You meet everybody when you're at a popular booth," Thomas says. "I grew up watching the Karamazovs and Avner and all the acts and eventually I became one." In 1987, Thomas became a professional juggler and was Artist in Residence at the Smithsonian in the '90s. His "Science Circus" show teaches physics using circus tricks.

For four years Thomas has helped run The Midnight Show, the late night Saturday show for booth people and the staff. "I've got this quirky rep of being a responsible hippie, so they put me in a position of responsibility," he says. "It's like, 'Oh no, I've been there long enough to become infrastructure!'"

Thomas' father is Fire Chief of Veneta, who coordinates with the fair's Fire Crew. "All levels of my family are involved with the fair," Thomas says. "My aunt used to have a booth. We have deep tendrils in this event."

His children, aged 12 and 9, often perform a juggling and magic act on the Daredevil stage. "A couple of years ago, they put me in a box and ran ten swords through it and I vanished," Thomas says. "To prove their love for me, they brought me back!" Catch Rhys Thomas' "daredevil comedy" show Jugglemania, at 4 pm Friday, July 13th, at Daredevil Palace.



## Are You On The Bus?

Take the FREE LTD shuttle bus from 2 Eugene locations. LTD Downtown Station at 10th & Willamette, or at Valley River Center's southwest parking lot next to the bike bridge. You must have a Fair admission ticket to ride the bus, so get your tix in advance at the Hult Center or at most Safeway stores. No tickets are sold at the Fair site.

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