



Freak shows continue to amaze

By Mark Hain and
William Rudolph
Staff Reviewers

"I am not an animal!"
--John Merrick, the "Elephant
Man."

The famous 19th century "freak of nature" may not have been at the 1989 Nebraska State Fair, but his 20th century equivalents are making appearances this week at the state fairgrounds.

It used to be that freak shows meant the Gorilla Woman, who metamorphosed from a lovely young thing to a fierce ape-cite in front of your very eyes. Or the Alligator Man. Or the 90-year-old tattooed woman. Or the infamous B.J. Reed ("Don't be shocked by what you see!"), victim of too much reefer.

But this year the focus has shifted. Instead of exploiting humans, the current freak show fall collection

emphasized our four- (and sometimes five-) legged friends.

It's an animal rights activist's worst nightmare.

The shows started off tamely enough, with the World's Smallest Horse. For only one coupon (55 cents), you too had the chance to mingle with Little Diamond -- "not a pony, but a horse!" Despite the fact that Little Diamond undoubtedly was



as cute as a wee small button, no one actually seemed to know his actual size. The sign proclaimed he was just 10 inches tall at birth. According to the tape running through the loud-speaker, our equine buddy was a

mere eight inches.

Around the next bend, the exhibitions took a darker turn. Instead of friendly little farm critters, scuttling through the sawdust was the world's largest rat. "The Rat -- Alive and Real! A sight you'll never forget! Most Unbelievable! Different! Strange! And BIG! Scare the entire family!" For two coupons, lucky fair-goers could have the opportunity to pal around with a four-foot long, 100-pound rodent who drank nearly four gallons of water a day. If the enormous airbrushed backdrop was to be believed, this rat was not only huge, but green, with bulging red eyes, yellow fangs dripping blood and a scabby, diseased tail the length of Burnett Hall. Interestingly enough, a small child collected the coupons at the entrance to the rat's lair, even though "The Rat, the Giant Rat" was kept in a steel cage for our

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Food highlights fair experience

By Debra Witt
Staff Reporter

The State Fair. For many, the words conjure up memories of showing livestock, riding the Ferris wheel and eating.

Foods like cotton candy, corn dogs and caramel apples are the highlight of the fair for many.

For two fair vendors, hearty fair-goer appetites are what keep them coming back each year.

Darold and Norma Lee Hahn of Tecumseh said they take their food stand to four state fairs each year because it "brings in money."

Daily profits for the Hahns range from \$50 to \$1,000, he said.

According to the Hahns, the money food vendors make is what gets them through 10 15-hour days.

Michelle Wissinger, who is with The Mighty Blue Grass Shows of Tampa, Fla., bases her stand's profits on luck, saying the stand makes "a lot, if we're lucky."

Although Wissinger's partner, Mike Shurtliff of Clarksburg, W.Va., said he is in the fair-concessions business to make money, they both agreed that "meeting all the people is nice, too; everybody's friendly."

Ruth and Bill Berglund of Albion, owners of Ru-Bi's Road Runner Food Stand, also said their profits keep them returning to county and state fairs each year. Ruth added that their profits are more pleasant because he and her husband "meet a lot of nice people."



Melissa McReynolds/Daily Nebraskan

Christopher Peavy, employee of Kim Laine Concessions for 11 years, adorns apples with caramel to make a fair-time favorite. The company, based in Springfield, Mo., covers 18 state fairs a year, from Florida to Nebraska.

Mixture of local, national bands to play in Lincoln

By Mick Dyer
Staff Reviewer

A variety of local and national bands will be playing in Lincoln this week. Make sure your homework is done early, so you don't have to miss some of these great performers.

Tonight through Saturday, Magic Slim and the Teardrops will play at the Zoo Bar, 136 N. 14th St. Magic Slim has made fairly regular appearances at the Zoo Bar over the years. And those who have had the opportunity to listen to him play the guitar probably will tell you he's one of the best. At any rate, the Zoo is nearly always filled when Magic Slim and the Teardrops are in town. That should say something.



But this week there is one more reason to see Magic Slim, besides hearing good Chicago blues. The band is recording tracks for a live album from the Zoo Bar this week. Don't miss the chance to be part of this piece of Lincoln music history. Who knows what will happen?

Tonight Brain Hammer and Leafy Green Things will play at Duffy's Tavern, 1412 O St. Brain Hammer has a long history of entertaining Lincoln audiences with its raw and irreverent rock 'n' roll with a humorous twist. But they're calling it quits after this show.

Leafy Green Things simply defies

musical description, except it can be a lot of fun if you're not uptight about innovative music played by guys covered with hair. Definitely not going straight to the top playing three-chord rock.

Thursday, Interstate 5, southeast Nebraska's premiere lip-sync band, will bring its show to Bash Riprocks, upper level of 238 N. 11th St.

Thursday afternoon, the Jail Breakers and Little Charlie and the Nightcats will play at Bluesfest '89 outside of the Nebraska Union. The event is sponsored by IBM and the University Program Council and is free to students.

The Jail Breakers, a hard-driving blues band from Omaha, with a keen interest in having fun, will open the festival at 3:30 p.m.

Little Charlie and the Nightcats will perform a houserockin' brand of "jump blues" beginning at 5:30 p.m.

Take it from blues guitarist Robert Cray: "The explosive guitar of Little Charlie and the cool harmonica and soulful singing of Rick Estrin is a hard combination to beat."

According to Charles "Little Charlie" Baty, lead guitarist for the Nightcats, the band's sound is a unique blend of blues, jazz, rockabilly and swing, "made for dancing." Baty said the band combines a sense of humor with serious musicianship, which enriches its musical style.

Baty said students could expect an exciting and dynamic show.

"We've got a good fan base in Lincoln and we're glad to be playing to a new audience with a new rec-

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