

Daily Nebraskan WEEKEND PREVIEW

For the weekend
of Aug. 26-27-28

Give it a shot

> **Chautauqua Tent** — This tent at the State Fair is sponsored by the Nebraska Humanities Council. It will feature Nebraska storyteller Roger Welsch and State Poet Bill Kloefkom, among others.

> **"Widow's Peak"** — an enjoyable murder mystery starring Mia Farrow and Natasha Richardson, showing at the Mary Riepma Ross Film Theater.

CRASH TEST DUMMIES



Quirky band set to play at State Fair

By Paula Lavigne
Senior Reporter

It was no "accident" that threw the Crash Test Dummies into musical stardom.

Almost overnight, "MMM MMM MMM MMM," the first single off the band's album "God Shuffled His Feet," went to the top of the charts, and the band was driven into the spotlight.

Part luck, part planning and part divine intervention may have propelled the Dummies over the top, but the real transformation came from within the five musicians from Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Buckle your seat belts, because the band is scheduled to perform in Lincoln tonight in front of a crowd of more than 2,500.

With his monstrously deep voice, lead singer and songwriter Brad Roberts is the mastermind behind all those quirky lyrics and philosophical ponderings that permeate "God."

His brother, Dan Roberts, supplies his bass guitar. The ethereal backup vocals heard on many tracks are courtesy of pianist Ellen Reid, who also designs the band's videos. Mandolinist Benjamin Darvill, who also plays a furious harmonica, and drummer Mitch Dorge round out the band.

Between touring with the Dummies and grasping on to their recent success, Dan Roberts does not lead a glamorous life of stardom and fame.

In fact, he spent his few days of vacation at his and Brad's Winnipeg home folding their laundry.

"We have separated things from our home life and band life," he said. "On a day-to-day basis, we don't talk about the band at breakfast. We talk about matters concerning the house



Courtesy of Arista Records

The Crash Test Dummies will play tonight at the Nebraska State Fair. The Dummies are, from left: Mitch Dorge, Benjamin Darvill, Dan Roberts, Ellen Reid and Brad Roberts (bottom).

and obligations that we share."

Although Dan and Brad look alike, they're not twins. Dan is 27, three years younger than Brad, 30.

"When I was 12, he was 16, so there was a big gap there," Dan said. "Through his teen years, I was a kid, and in my teen years, he was a university student."

They didn't spend much time together growing up, but Dan said they were able to get to

know each other as adults and get along well.

Before the Dummies, both brothers were in separate bands. Then Brad's band started to attract attention from record companies, and he wanted to solidify the lineup. Dan became suspicious of something when Brad began watching Dan's band more frequently.

"I noticed he started coming out and seeing my band — music he doesn't even like!" Dan said. "It turned out he was confident in my

playing, and when he was over for dinner one night, he asked, 'Why don't you just join my band? It could be fun.'"

Although Dan liked the job he had, three things pulled him to join his brother.

"I was excited about the songs he had, I was excited to play them, and I also knew full well, looking around the bar-band scene, that people

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State Fair mixes current events, agricultural roots

By Paula Lavigne
Senior Reporter

Cholesterol testing, information superhighways and rock 'n' roll were unheard of when people gathered in Brownville in 1859 for the first territorial fair in the United States.

These terms are common in 1994, as the Nebraska State Fair celebrates its 125th anniversary with the theme "Creating Your Own Memories."

The fair began Thursday and continues through Labor Day, Sept. 5.

In 1869, when Nebraska became a state, the official state fair was permanently designated to be held in Lincoln.

Back then, people came to ex-

change information, compete for business and listen to famous orators. Communication was not as easy as picking up a phone, and people needed an annual place to meet.

Things have changed, but some traditions still remain the same, such as livestock showing and agriculture exhibits.

Lydia Brasch, marketing director at the State Fair, said in those 125 years, the perception of the fair had been modified.

Brasch said the fair tried to keep up with current events and modern technology.

"We change our program with the demand of our patrons," she said. "We look at competing venues na-

tionally and meet annually with fairs across the world."

To do this, the fair management designed exhibits that focused on recent issues in the news, such as health care and the environment.

"Earthbound '94," an exhibit focusing on the environment, will be held in Agriculture Hall today from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. "Health Quest," a new feature this year, runs throughout the fair in the Festival Tent.

"Health Quest" offers information on recent health trends and concerns, Brasch said. The exhibit will offer free services such as cholesterol testing.

In an attempt to address the recent changes in farming technology,

Brasch said 4-H and Future Farmers of America had designed programs to inform urban farmers and families involved in agribusiness.

The Nebraska Home-Based Business Association in the Sower's Pavilion will feature innovations in communication technology and entrepreneurship and also will be a featured item of "modernizing" the fair, Brasch said.

"One of the things that changed at one point was this used to be a shopping place for tractors and big farm machinery," she said. "That's not so extensive anymore. We try to incorporate more venues."

However, the fair still has its agricultural roots.

"We still have the horse barns, the swine barns, the beer garden, the blue ribbons and the midway," she said.

But one thing that never will change, she said, is the "magic" of the State Fair.

"There's a real attraction here for friendships," she said. "A lot of people have a longtime tradition to come to the fair and meet other friends and families. They make memories."

To celebrate the fair's 125th anniversary, a number of events are planned.

"Grand Reception and Admiral's Ball," on the evening of Aug. 27, is

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