

Irreverent 'Weird Al' still kidding around for young fans

By JIM GOODWIN
Arts & Entertainment Editor

Tell "Weird Al" Yankovic that 9-year-old Jake Gardner is a typical fan of the singer's atypical style, and he'll agree.

Tell Jake Gardner the same thing and, for such a gross underestimation, he might call you a weirdo.

You see, while Gardner may fit the demographics of "Weird Al's" average fan, his admiration for the rock parodist goes well beyond statistics.

"I even love his accordion music," Gardner said. "When I was 6, I wanted to play an accordion because of 'Weird Al.'"

Rest assured, Gardner will be one of thousands of screaming fans in attendance Aug. 22 when "Weird Al" takes the stage at 7:30 p.m. in the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

"Weird Al" and his Bad Hair Band (guitarist Jim West, bassist Steve Jay, drummer/percussionist Jon "Bermuda" Schwartz and keyboardist Ruben Valtierra) are halfway through their "Bad Hair Day" tour.

Released in March 1996, the platinum album of the same name has spent more than 56 weeks on Billboard's Top 200 and sold more than 1.7 million units. The album's spoofs include "Amish Paradise," inspired by Coolio's "Gangsta's Paradise" and "Gump," about 1994's Academy Award-winning film.

Like Gardner, "Weird Al" is very much a kid at heart, the singer admitted during a telephone interview last week. He said the combination of being rock's biggest kid and his constituency of past and present juvenile admirers should prove quite successful.

"I have my most rabid fans in the preteen to teen crowd," "Weird Al" said. "I love 'em."

In fact, grooving on such "Weird Al" songs as "My Bologna," "Like a Surgeon," and "Amish Paradise" is a right of passage for many American youngsters, according to Gardner.

"Lots of my friends really like him," he said. "I even

think some of my older sisters do."

Oddly, while Gardner and his contemporaries were donning their first pairs of pants and spitting formula on unsuspecting siblings, "Weird Al" had already sold millions of records and made himself the vanguard of Michael Jackson pundits with "Eat It," his take on Jackson's "Beat It."

But the fans, like the tunes, just keep on coming.

While "In 3-D," the album that contained "Eat It," essentially made the artist a household name, it was, at the time, simply the latest highlight in a career that had already spanned five years and produced six recordings.

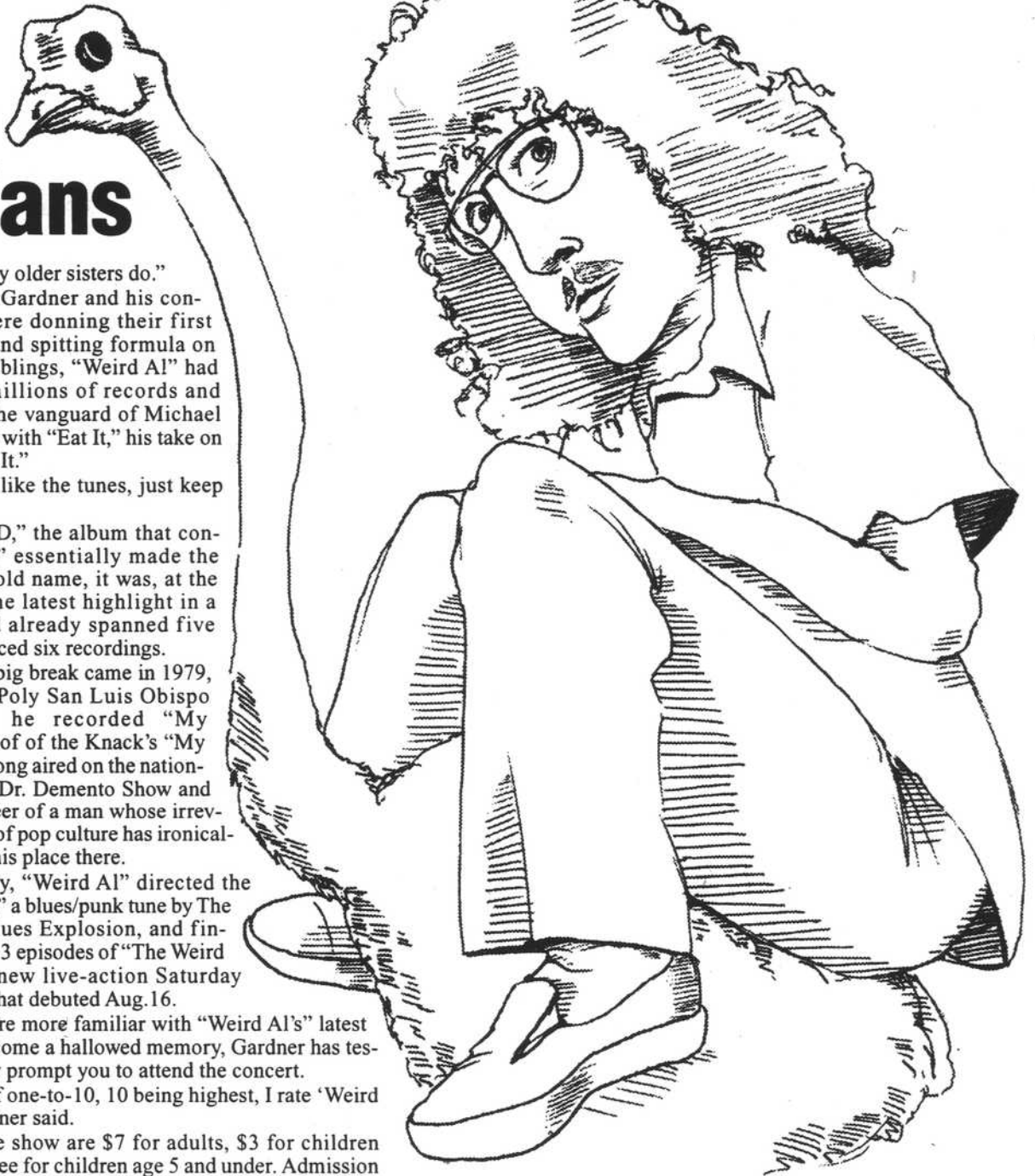
"Weird Al's" big break came in 1979, after, in a Cal Poly San Luis Obispo men's room, he recorded "My Bologna," a spoof of the Knack's "My Sharona." The song aired on the nationally syndicated Dr. Demento Show and sparked the career of a man whose irreverent treatment of pop culture has ironically assured him his place there.

More recently, "Weird Al" directed the video for "Wail," a blues/punk tune by The Jon Spencer Blues Explosion, and finished shooting 13 episodes of "The Weird Al Show," his new live-action Saturday morning show that debuted Aug. 16.

Whether you're more familiar with "Weird Al's" latest work or he's become a hallowed memory, Gardner has testimony that may prompt you to attend the concert.

"On a scale of one-to-10, 10 being highest, I rate 'Weird Al' 13 1/4," Gardner said.

Tickets to the show are \$7 for adults, \$3 for children ages 6-12 and free for children age 5 and under. Admission to the show includes all-day access to the fairgrounds.



AARON STECKELBERG/DN

Etcetera...

The following programs and places offer activities unique in Lincoln and, therefore, are deserving of their own category. Call 472-8146 to confirm the following dates and times.

University Program Council

August

24: Big Red Welcome, including a concert by Run-DMC and Christine Lam.

28: Supermarket Bingo, Nebraska Union (NU) Crib, 9 p.m.

September

4: The Dogpipes, a capella, NU Crib, 9 p.m.

11: Hypnotist, NU Crib, 9 p.m.

12: Prairie Stomp, East Campus.

18: Barry Drake, interactive lecture on music in the video age, Centennial Room, 8 p.m.

21: "Love and Other Catastrophes," international film, Ross Film Theatre, 3, 5, 7, 9 p.m.

Sept. 26-Oct 12: Love Makes a Family display, NU lounge.

October

2: Jack Ross the Nature Guy,

speaker on environmental issues, NU Crib, 9 p.m.

5: "Prisoner of the Mountains," international film, Ross Film Theatre, 3, 5, 7, 9 p.m.

6: Wilson Cruz, speaker, actor in "My So-Called Life," Centennial Room, 8 p.m.

9: Five Bright Chicks, storytellers, NU Crib, 9 p.m.

16: Bob Harris, speaker on U.S. government covert actions, NU Crib, 9 p.m.

19: "Irma Vemp," international film, Ross Film Theatre, 3, 5, 7, 9 p.m.

21: Craig Karges, mentalist, Nebraska East Union, Great Plains Room, 8 p.m.

29: Ray Davis, speaker on diversity issues, Centennial Room, 8 p.m.

30: Creative Dating, interactive workshop, NU Crib, 9 p.m.

November

2: "Margaret's Museum," international film, Ross Film Theatre, 3, 5, 7, 9 p.m.

6: Wicomicos, acoustic group, NU Crib, 9 p.m.

20: Roger Day, acoustical guitarist, NU Crib, 9 p.m.

22, 23: Powwow, Nebraska East

Union, Great Plains Room.

December

4: Blues Night, NU Crib, 9 p.m.

7: "Gabbeth Ross," international film, Ross Film Theatre, 3, 5, 7, 9 p.m.

Mueller Planetarium

213 Morrill Hall

Mueller Planetarium's astronomical shows are documentary features ranging from "star talks," discussions of the sky, to full-blown multimedia shows with the latest images and computer simulations from space research.

The planetarium's laser productions are sound and light entertainment shows. Laser artists create abstract and graphic images in laser light to interpret the music.

Folsom Children's Zoo

1222 S. 27th St.

Hyde Memorial Observatory

Holmes Park
3701 S. 70th St.

<http://www.unl.edu/DailyNeb/>

Relax at...
The Tubbery
• Private Hot Tub Rentals
• Wolff Tanning
818 P. Street
475-8989



WC'S

1228 P Street 477-4006

*Pool *Meet friends
*Darts *Study break
*Foosball

Wednesday: Penny Pitchers

Thursday: Long-Neck Domestic Beers \$1.50

Friday: FAC Specials 1:30-7:30p.m.

ELEGANT GLASS NAILS

FULL SET \$45.00
FILL IN \$22.50
MANICURE \$12.00
WAX DIP \$10.00

Please Call For an Appointment
With Beth Or Jennifer and Receive
\$10.00 Off First Full Set.

PRODUCTIONS
R IN HAIR
EVENING APPOINTMENTS AVAILABLE
208 N. 13th Street
477-9555 or 477-5221



This Thursday Aug. 21
Paul Phillips
Live at Main St. (9-cl)
Friday: Dance Night.

We buy, sell and trade used and out of print games.

Open gaming all day, everyday.



Collectibles Cards, Miniatures, Role Playing, and more.
Just minutes from campus. SW Corner of 27th & Randolph

2639 Randolph • 476-8602