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FEATURED

Weber County Fair promises to be 'Outrageous,' fun for all

By MARK SAAL Standard-Examiner 6 hrs ago



The Weber County Fair runs through Saturday, Aug. 10, at the Golden Spike Event Center in Ogden.

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BENJAMIN ZACK, Standard-Examiner

If You Go

WHAT: Weber County Fair

WHEN: 11 a.m.-11 p.m.
daily, through Saturday,
Aug. 10.

In the summer of 1989, the Ogden band Outrageous played the Weber County Fair, opening for rocker Johnny Rivers and 1960s surf legends Jan and Dean.

Now, 30 years later, the band is back to play the county fair again

WHERE: Golden Spike Event Center, 1000 N. 1200 West, Ogden

ADMISSION: \$6/adults, \$5/students and seniors, \$2/children, \$20/family pass. Four-day passes also available.
www.webercountyfair.org, 801-399-8798.

— this time opening for comedian Chad Prather, in a 7 p.m. show Friday, Aug. 9, at the fair's Outdoor Stadium.

Steve Kaufman, lead vocalist and bassist for the '60s cover band, describes the Outrageous sound as “sort of Chicago meets the Rolling Stones.”

Now 68, Kaufman says the core members of the group — who started out under various band names, including Still Rain — have been together since 1968. He was in the 8th grade at the time.

“We say we’re the oldest band in the world, next to the Rolling Stones,” Kaufman jokes.

The group mostly plays cover songs from the 1960s and early 1970s.

“We were playing this music back when it was first being played,” Kaufman said.

The Outrageous moniker came along in the 1980s, after Still Rain picked up another band member.

“In 1984 we added an additional keyboard player, and he’d always say everything was ‘outrageous,’” Kaufman recalls. “Our music was outrageous, we were outrageous.”

That new band member, unbeknownst to the rest of the band, had a large banner made that read “Outrageous” in the style of script used by the 1970s band Chicago. The band started putting it on the side of their van, and the name stuck.

“I kind of wish we could go back to Still Rain,” Kaufman says today, “but everybody knows us as Outrageous now.”

The first time the band played the fair, it was a four-piece outfit. Today, Outrageous is a 10-piece group, which also features Ron Nichols (drums, percussion/congas, harmonica), Stu Young

(keyboards, trombone, vocals), Scott Jensen (drums/congas, percussion), Mike Ballif (rhythm guitar, vocals), Ray Barrios (trumpet), Cy Schmidt (saxophone, flute), Rachelle Valdez (lead vocals), Randy Hughes (lead guitar), and Andrew Nichols (drums, percussion/congas).

Most of the band members are professionals — they have four attorneys, a senior vice president of an international insurance company, an owner of an insurance agency, and a nightclub owner in the group.

“We all have high-end day jobs,” Kaufman said. “We do this (music) because we don’t know how not to do it.”

At one point, back in 1973, Kaufman says they were offered a tour opening for Three Dog Night, but the band members were busy launching their lives — off to college and careers — and they turned it down.

“The timing was off, so we didn’t take the contract,” Kaufman says.

And although Kaufman admits he feels a bit of “What might have been” in telling that story, he doesn’t regret the decision to go to law school. He says people tell him, “You have the best of both worlds. You have a family life, and a great law practice, AND you still have the band.”

In those early years, the band was playing six nights a week, 50 weeks a year. They were a regular fixture opening for the big touring bands playing at places like Lagoon amusement park.

“It was full-time rock ’n’ roll, and full-time law for awhile,” he said. “That first year I became a lawyer, I made more money playing music. We’d tell people at our shows, ‘If you get a DUI or a divorce, come talk to Steve.’ That’s how I built my practice.”

Eventually, the members of Outrageous backed off on the touring

schedule. Today, they do maybe five or six shows a year — mostly private corporate events.

As a result, Friday's Outrageous show is a rare treat for longtime followers of the local band.

"The last public concert we did like this one coming up Friday at the fair? We headlined South Ogden a couple of years ago," Kaufman says.

The only drawback to the show, according to Kaufman, is that they have to keep their set to 45 minutes.

"It's hard, when you've got a repertoire of 500 songs, deciding which ones to pick," he said. "So we chose the ones we love, and know we'll play them well, and that most of the people in the audience will know."

Kaufman said they'll do covers of songs by The Rascals, Santana, The Doobie Brothers, Aretha Franklin and much more.

"I'm sad we only get 45 minutes," he said. "We're telling people, 'Be there right at 7.' Because if you sneeze, we're done."

Weber County fair details

The Weber County Fair, which opened Wednesday, Aug. 7, continues through Saturday, Aug. 10, at the Golden Spike Event Center, 1000 N. 1200 West, Ogden.

The theme for this year's fair is "Come Home." Fair director Ashton Wilson says the theme sets a certain tone for the 2019 Weber County Fair.

"We liked the traditional, nostalgic, Charlotte's Web feel of that theme," Wilson said. "We wanted a good mix of traditional things — like junior livestock and home arts — but also some new things."

Although the Weber County Fair discontinued carnival rides a few years ago, Wilson says they've tried to offset that loss with plenty of activities for children and adults. There's a bubble tower for kids, as well as a bunch more children's activities.

For families, there's a trick-riding group, the popular petting zoo that "everybody loves," a birds of prey show and much more.

Plus, loads and loads of fair food.

"We've got our deep-fried Oreos, funnel cakes — you name it," Wilson said.

Wilson said fair organizers are trying to combat the decline of the county fair in recent years.

"Fairs are kind of slowing down, and not just in Utah or this county, but across the nation," she said. "So we're trying to get millennials and kids involved, in addition to the older generation."

Three big events are planned at the fair with separate ticket purchases required. On Thursday evening, bullfighting is being added to the fair. On Friday evening, Horse Nations Indian Relay Council will present Indian relay races.

"It's a celebration of that culture that's really exciting," Wilson said.

And, of course, on Saturday evening the fair closes with the traditional demolition derby.

"That's our bread and butter; everybody loves that," Wilson said.

For more information on the Weber County Fair, visit www.webercountyfair.org.

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