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Site updated Friday, July 25, 2003 11:50 AM

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Music: Elvis alive at Fairgrounds

Put on your blue suede shoes and get ready to be all shook up: Elvismania is coming to Cloverdale.

by Erin McKay - emckay@langleyadvance.com

The King may be dead, but he still reigns. Elvis Presley lives on the hearts, minds, and musical souls of millions, and this August, fans of the phenomenon that is Elvis will descend on Cloverdale.

Elvismania, a weekend-long festival devoted to The King, will be held Aug. 2-4 at Fraser Downs Raceway on the Cloverdale Fairgrounds.

The event is expected to draw 60,000 people from Canada and the U. S.

"People love this man and his music," Rock and Roll Hall of Fame DJ Red Robinson told The Langley Advance News. "The music alone is so infectious."

Elvismania will feature three days of Elvis music, tribute bands, rock and roll reunions, and a chance for the public to speak to people who were close, personal friends of Presley's.

Randy "Elvis" Friskie will host the festival, which will see three stages set up to welcome performers Ronnie McDowell, Jerry Naylor, Spencer Davis, Mitch Ryder, Donnie Brooks, Dick and Dee Dee, The Tokens, and Tommy Roe.

Buddy Holly, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Roy Orbison tribute acts will be featured, and 25 Elvis tribute artists will compete to see who is King of the Northwest.

Fans can have their questions answered by a panel that will include Elvis's former tour manager and best friend Joe Esposito, musicians D. J. Fontana and Scotty Moore, Elvis International publisher Darwin Lamm, and Red Robinson, who is acting as master of ceremonies for Elvismania.

The festival will also feature vendors, classic cars, a casino, beer garden, concessions, retro fashion shows, a Sunday gospel show, and amusement rides.

An Elvis parade will make its way through Cloverdale on Saturday, Aug. 2, at 10 a.m.

Tickets for Elvismania are available at Ticketmaster and at the Cloverdale tourist information office, at 5748 - 176th St., which has been converted into Elvis Central for the event.

"There is a great number of fans of Elvis in the area, and we believe that this could be an annual classic," the Cloverdale District Chamber of Commerce's Bill Reid and Ben Wevers said in a statement about the festival.

The Chamber noted that people have been eager to buy tickets and help out with the event, and believes the festival will be a benefit to the community's economy.

Elvis could not be reached for comment.

Visit www.elvismania.ca or cal 604-51-ELVIS.

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Advance News 534-8641

Classified Ads: 534-9899

Circulation: 856-7733

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