

MINNESOTA STATE FAIR

NEWS RELEASE

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Hootie & the Blowfish and “Weird Al” Yankovic Announced for 2019 Grandstand Concert Series

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St. Paul, Minn. – Hootie & the Blowfish and “Weird Al” Yankovic are the first shows confirmed for the 2019 Grandstand Concert Series sponsored by Sleep Number. Show details are as follows:

Hootie & the Blowfish: Group Therapy Tour with special guest Barenaked Ladies

7:30 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 22

Tickets: \$90, \$76 & \$51 (all reserved seating)

On sale: 10 a.m. Friday, Dec. 7

“Weird Al” Yankovic Strings Attached Tour

7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 27

Tickets: \$31 (all reserved seating)

On sale: Noon Friday, Dec. 7

Photos: A gallery of high-resolution, downloadable Grandstand photos is available for media use at the following link:

<https://www.mnstatefair.org/get-involved/media/media-gallery-grandstand-artists/>

Tickets will be available through Etix at etix.com or by calling 800-514-3849. In addition, tickets may be purchased at the State Fairgrounds Ticket Office during a limited-time opening from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 7. For additional State Fair ticket information, call 651-288-4427.

About Hootie & the Blowfish: With the rich, bluesy vocals of Darius Rucker and gleeful harmonies of guitarist Mark Bryan, bassist Dean Felber and drummer Jim “Soni” Sonefeld, Hootie & the Blowfish has sold more than 25 million records worldwide to date after the group’s infectious melodies hit the airwaves in 1994 with hits such as “Hold My Hand,” “Let Her Cry” and “Only Wanna Be With You.” The quartet met at the University of South Carolina, where gigs at local bars built a major buzz with a blend of pop, folk, blues, soul and rock. Atlantic Records, impressed by their regional draw, signed them and released *Cracked Rear View* in 1994. An appearance on the “Late Show with David Letterman” sent sales skyrocketing, eventually landing at No. 1 on the *Billboard* chart. The band went on to win two Grammy® Awards, an MTV Video Music Award, a *Billboard* Music Award, and multiple People’s Choice Awards. *Cracked Rear View* remains the fifth most-certified studio album in music business history. The band remained a top draw nationwide and released five more albums for Atlantic. Hootie & the Blowfish took a break from full-time touring in 2007, reuniting annually for a variety of philanthropic events while also pursuing solo projects. 2019 will mark the band’s first full-time touring year in more than a decade as it embarks on the *Group Therapy Tour* in support of forthcoming new music.

About Barenaked Ladies: Formed in 1988 in Scarborough, Ontario, alt-rock group Barenaked Ladies debuted its first album *Gordon* in 1992, featuring the hits “If I Had \$1,000,000” and “Brian Wilson.” Known for high-energy live performances, the band – with an impressive cult following – showcases its free-style rapping and comedic banter throughout its show. Nominated for two Grammy® Awards, Barenaked Ladies has sold more than 15 million records and was inducted into the Canadian Music Hall of Fame in March 2018. The group’s most recent and 15th studio album, *Fake Nudes*, features the single “Lookin’ Up.”

About “Weird Al” Yankovic: Few would have guessed that “Weird Al” Yankovic – a shy, accordion-playing teenager who got his start sending in homemade tapes to the “Dr. Demento Radio Show” – would go on to become a pop culture icon and the biggest-selling comedy recording artist of all time, with classic song and music video parodies such as “Eat It,” “Like a Surgeon,” “Smells Like Nirvana,” “Amish Paradise” and “Word Crimes.” Now in his fourth decade as America’s foremost song parodist, he has been the recipient of numerous awards, including four Grammys® and a string of Gold and Platinum albums. Weird Al’s 14th studio album, the Grammy® award-winning *Mandatory Fun* (2014), became the first comedy album in history to debut at No. 1 on the *Billboard* Top 200 chart. In addition, the single “Word Crimes” debuted on the *Billboard* Top 40, making Al one of only four artists to have had Top 40 singles in each of the last four decades (the other three being Michael Jackson, Madonna and U2). Weird Al has remained active as a recording artist. March 2018 brought “The Hamilton Polka,” a frantic tour de force mash-up of 14 songs from the Broadway smash. In 2019, Weird Al will embark on his most extravagant tour ever, *Strings Attached*, where he and his band will be backed every night by a full orchestra.

Additional Grandstand artists will be announced periodically between now and next year's fair. State Fair fans and music enthusiasts are encouraged to sign up for the State Fair's e-news at mnstatefair.org to receive concert announcements before tickets go on sale.

The Nightly Fireworks Spectacular, sponsored by Mazda, follows all Grandstand shows, weather permitting.

About the Minnesota State Fair: The Minnesota State Fair is one of the largest and best-attended expositions in the world, attracting more than 2 million visitors annually. Showcasing Minnesota's finest agriculture, art and industry, the Great Minnesota Get-Together is always 12 Days of Fun Ending Labor Day. Visit mnstatefair.org for more information. The 2019 Minnesota State Fair runs Aug. 22 - Labor Day, Sept. 2.

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