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Tabfest attracting bigger acts

By Chris DeVille
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A former Grateful Dead collaborator and loads of regional acts will take the stage Friday and Saturday at Tabfest.

The festival is held at Mendon Speedway, southwest of Lima in west-central Ohio. The event started as an organized party but has turned into a nationally recognized music festival. The goal, however, has stayed the same: Raise money and collect pull-tabs from beverage cans to donate to the Ronald McDonald House Charities.

"Nobody is getting rich off this," festival representative Mike Switzer said. Tabfest has raised \$7,500 and 130 gallons of aluminum can tabs in past years.

Why pull tabs?

"The aluminum in a tab is a higher purity than in a can, so they're able to recycle these gallons of tabs we send them and make a good bit of money," Switzer said.

This year's show features the David Nelson Band. Nelson worked with the Grateful Dead's Jerry Garcia in a side project called New Riders of the Purple Sage. The band is traveling from San Francisco to headline Friday's show.

"We wanted to raise the total level," Switzer said. "In the past we've had very strong lineups with regional bands. David Nelson is certainly the biggest one we've had so far. In my view he's sort of like a living link to that 1960s San Francisco bay area sound, the Grateful Dead, Jefferson Airplane, Janis Joplin."

Other participants include Saturday's headliners the Recipe, the Shantee, Grasshopper Pie, the One-Eyed Show, Guest, Ray's Music Exchange, the Ordinary Way, Broken Glass, the Flex Crew, Four Ohms and the Slithy Tones.

Tickets cost \$20 in advance and \$30 at the show. Advance tickets can be purchased at www.tabfest.com. A daily schedule, directions to Mendon and festival news also can be found at the Web site.

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