

SHOWCASE

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Stafford goes with moments that bring him back to Valley

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When Jim Stafford last played the Antelope Valley Fair at the East Lawn stage, he had as his backdrop an excellent band — who could change musical directions at a moment's notice — and the Demolition Derby, going on at the grandstand next door.

With humor and professional savvy which drew appreciative cheers from his audience, Stafford worked the roar of crash-

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bound vehicles into his show with some frenetic dancing and musical accompaniment.

"I just go with the moment," said Stafford of experiences typical of the one at the AV Fair. "I don't know if it would merit pitching a fit, you know? It's just a fair; it's just me; it's just a show. So it's hard to get angry about something like that.

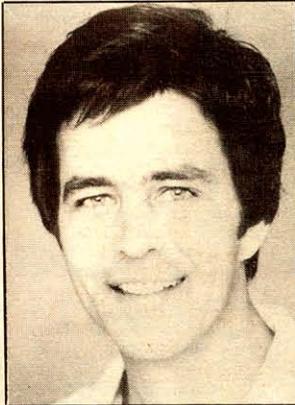
"Life's tough enough," he said in the phone interview from his Los Angeles area home. "I re-

serve walking off and steaming and being upset for bigger problems than that."

On Thursday, Stafford returns to the Antelope Valley Fair as a Redman Grandstand performer, opening up at 8 p.m. for the headlining Everly Brothers.

Throughout his career, Stafford has seemed to take the good times and the lean times in stride. Currently, he's enjoying some good times, having toured with the Smothers Brothers comedy act this summer. Of his stint as writing supervisor for the

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JIM STAFFORD

Stafford

From H2

now-canceled "Smothers Brothers Show," Stafford said, "I enjoyed that because that almost felt like a steady job." (The last show aired Wednesday.)

Apart from turning out a string of '70s pop hits such as

"Spiders and Snakes," "My Girl Bill" and "Your Bulldog Drinks Champagne," he also worked on Disney Studios's full-length animated feature film, "The Fox and the Hound."

Of that experience, he said, "It was the last movie that used the grand old crew — the old gang who did 'Fantasia' and 'Pinocchio' and all those things. There were about five or six of them left that did that and they had lots of stories about their history and their experiences. That was a great experience."

Stafford has also been a co-host for TV's "Those Amazing Animals," as well as doing innumerable talk shows, including 24 Johnny Carson shows. Of the talk shows, he said, "I really like to do that type of show because it feels live. I have moments that I'm really happy about: one time on a Mike Douglas show, I played 'Dueling Banjos' with Victor Borge."

However, of all the various types of show business in which Stafford has been involved, "I've always had a performer's heart," he said. "Most of my records came right out of my shows. I write songs from time to time and I'm putting some tracks together now on a new album, but I'm not in any real hurry about it."

In fact, Stafford doesn't miss recording at all. "I never really felt like I was a record act. It's tough to write commercial funny songs, so every now and then I'll get a little collection and I'll release it."