

# Elvis tribute artist returns to Big Rapids

By MARTIN SLAGTER  
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**BIG RAPIDS** — Those who have a burning love for Elvis tribute artists can attend a special event featuring Jake Slater at 6:30 p.m. on May 8 at The Gate in Big Rapids.

The show is in conjunction with Mother's Day because Elvis loved his mother deeply and it serves as a perfect treat for mothers to attend, event organizer Jennifer Thede said.

"I would always look around the state to see what might be happening that I could take my own mother to (for Mother's Day)," she said. "Now we can offer a great evening of entertainment right here in Big Rapids."

Thede and her husband, Scott, are the co-founders of the Michigan Elvis Presley Fan Club and have hosted several Elvis tribute artist events in Big Rapids over the last couple of years. Slater's performance will mark his return to Big Rapids after entertaining community members in January at The Gate in honor of Elvis' birthday.

"The fan club is very excited to have Jake back," Thede said. "He performed to a sold out crowd in January and we had a lot of people that wanted him to come back because they really enjoyed the show."



**THE KING IS BACK:** Jake Slater performs as an Elvis tribute artist in January at The Gate. (Pioneer file photo)

Thede said the show will feature sets from the 1950s through 1970s, and will cater to Elvis fans of all generations.

Slater, of Bellaire, has gained ground since joining the Elvis tribute artist circuit a year-and-a-half ago, taking first place for the "Early

Years" at the Saginaw King Fest in January of 2009.

Slater said he is looking forward to a return trip to Big Rapids because of the friendly reception he received in January.

"It was a great turnout, which I think helps me perform when the audience is

enjoying themselves," he said. "I look forward to coming back because I had a wonderful time. The hospitality was great."

"Keeping the memory alive" is Slater's mission as a tribute artist, preserving The King's stage presence and singing ability.

"To see the crowd actually enjoying themselves listening to, in my opinion, the greatest entertainer of all time, is great," he said. "If I can even come close to replicating the energy and charisma of Elvis is my goal."

Those traveling to the show can receive a discount on their hotel stay at Super 8 in Big Rapids, which is offer a special "Elvis Show Rate."

Doors at Monohan Hall at The Gate open at 6:30, while the show begins at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$15. Guests can dine at The Gate prior to the show and receive a 20 percent discount with their ticket. To purchase tickets, contact The Gate at (231) 796-3808 or through the Michigan Elvis Presley Fan Club at (231) 796-4467.

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