An inside look at Lafayette's assembly center under construction hints at things to come in local entertainment.

The Cajun Dome is becoming a new landmark for Lafayette in more ways than one.

For anyone flying over the city it's Lafayette's most noticeable feature. “You can see the dome from 35 miles away, before you can detect anything else about Lafayette,” a local pilot said.

Still one year away from completion, the dome is already much more than a curiosity for airline passengers and passengers motorists.

Booking has begun and the guest list includes an ice show, seven or eight conventions, USL basketball teams, and three trade shows.

No opening night act has been planned yet, said Frank Bradshaw, general manager for the Lafayette Municipal Auditorium. His office is handling early bookings for the new assembly center.

“We're looking at opening by July of '86,” he explained. “But until we have an exact date we're leaving the open.”

When complete the dome will include space for convention seating, exhibits, sports events like basketball and tennis, banquets, theatre and festival activities.

These additions to the city's social and business calendar may pick up where the World's Fair leaves off in terms of new faces and outside dollars.

John Gilbert, assistant manager of the Sheraton Acadiana said he looks forward to the completion of the Dome for many reasons.

"Once it's complete I think we'll see great benefits to Lafayette all the way round, and that can't hurt me," he said. "I think it will help the city and I predict it will certainly help my business. I say, let's get that thing built!"