

# BACK YARD

Volume III, Issue #51

September 15, 1998

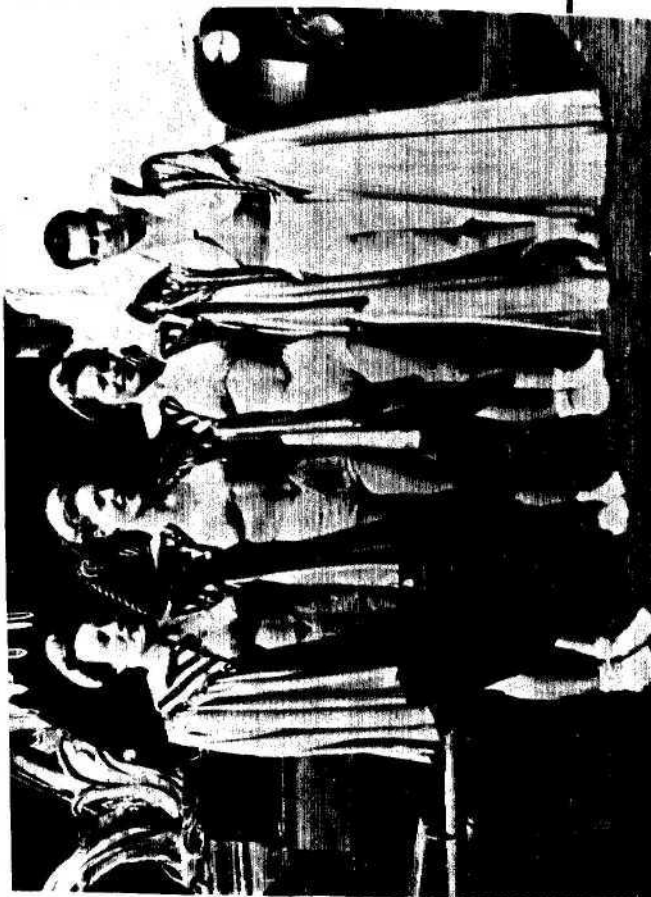
## LOOK OUT BELOW! HAROLD ALZANA STARS IN THE MOST DANGEROUS ACT UNDER THE BIG TOP. Indianapolis Times.

(From Illinois State Univ. Circus Archives)

At 8:30 almost any spring night-somewhere in the U.S.-a handsome brass band lets go with a tremendous blast & the greatest show on earth gets under way. To Harold Alzana, who has been walking the high wire at Ringling Bros. Circus since 1946, this moment is always the high point of the day.

Often, while he is standing in the wings, his ears filled with the blare of the band, the cry of the peanut men & the caterwauling of the customers, he reflects upon the chance decision that turned him from a Welsh coal miner into the most daring aerialist alive.

"I walked out of the pits one day," he recalled on a recent evening, "and suddenly I decided to get a job with a carnival. Since then I've broken both legs twice, cracked my spine & splintered 4 ribs and my collarbone. But I'd still rather be here than in the mines with all my bones intact." This adventurous attitude is typical of circus folk. It is shared by Pinito Del Oro, who swings on a high trapeze without using her hands; Leon De Rosseau, who does a backward somersault from a 40-foot platform to the ground; Unus, who stands on 1 finger atop a pole, and Alzana's own family, wife Minnie & sisters Hilda & Elsie. Minnie says, "When you're on the wire you don't think about falling. You just think about staying up there." Harold regards Minnie as the most gifted performer in his act. He himself is so highly regarded by other members of the circus troupe that they often cluster about the wings to watch him perform. He joined the big show 4 years ago after changing his name from Davis to Alzana while doing an umbrella act on the high wire in Wales. "All the best wire men had Italian names, so I picked one out for myself," Harold said. When he arrived



with his wife, his son, his 2 sisters & his father at the circus winter quarters in 1946, Harold disturbed veteran circus men by disregarding even the most rudimentary rules of safety. Although his act is performed at a height of 50 feet, Harold has consistently refused to use a net. Despite this lack of protection, he & his family are as free from inhibitions on the high wire

(Continued on Page 5)



HOLLIS-MEGEE SPARKS 1928



ROGERS BROS 1950



MILLS  
BROS.  
CIRCUS

MILLS BROS. 1965



My dear Friends;

I wish I had more to tell you but there is just not that much going on in the summer.

Sergio Chiesa came to visit from Italy, I last saw him in 1948 so it really was a big surprise to me. He is Vanda Joanides brother. They came over in 1947 and we all became close friends. They had a very great 4 people juggling act, really outstanding. Anyway it was great to see him after all these years. He still is married to one of the Attayde girls and had a daughter with her. Angelina did not care to much for Europe or Italy, so after the baby was born she went back home to Mexico and Circus Attayde, Sergio stayed on performing with his brother Venicio until Venicio retired and now Sergio also retired for a few years. The years have not hurt him. He still is a very handsome man. Now he went back home to Italy but said that he now will come back more often visiting sister Wanda here in Sarasota. His brother Venicio will be coming to visit this winter again, which he is doing for the last few years. It is really great to see people you had not seen in years.

Boy this is my day to write about old timers. Legay, her son called me, his name is Howard and I did never meet him, but he called me and tried to find out about his brother Steven Wallenda, well their I could not help him, as no one from the Family has heard from in a few years. If one of you knows his wear about, drop me a line.

Also got a letter from Elaine Hester, she is doing well and moved to Klamath Falls, OR. She loves it their very much, She had to stay in a trailer park for two month while they were hunting for a new home. Now they have finally a beautiful home and 3/4 of an acre land. They are still busy unpacking. It is beautiful and peace full thier. Just 10 minutes to the shopping area, so it is like city and country living. Every one thier is so very friendly. I am glad they found their dream place. Oh she sends her love to all her old friends.

Carin Cristiani is slowly recovering from her automobile accident.

In my next letter I will let all of you know who are the new elects for the Ring of Fame. They were elected by all the ones who are already in the Ring of Fame. I think you all out thier would aproof.

Believe it or not Jeannie Sleeter Singleton found Bella Attardy, now I hope she will let her know what is going

on and have her get in touch with us here.

La Norma informed me that Guy Gossom, Oh I think I misspelled his name, was visiting her the other day.

Oh yes, please let me know if someone out their knows were Sharky disappeared to ??? Also Francis Jones from Syracuse. Her married name was Frank and last I saw her she had 4 girls, also she was a ballet teacher in Syracuse. These are the ones I was closest to. Please hunt for more. The Nerveless Nocks had a very big success in the Orient so they are held over for an other month. The people are going just crazy over their show.

Now I like to put a letter from Ricky Wallenda in, as many people ask me how he was doing. So I feel the best way is to put the whole letter in. Here it goes.

I wanted to let you know how things went now that it is over. The show went well and we had a little truck trouble. I had to replace a water pump and Rietta had a flat. Rietta's flat happened on the night that we had the longest overnighiter. That night we jumped over 300 miles but we still got in early enough to get some sleep. We opened in Clinton, Iowa but the Shriners had the fairgrounds booked and it is in Dewitt, Iowa about 20 miles away. No problem because most of us knew. Iouri Kreis misunderstood the route I sent him and he went to Clinton, Nebraska and found no circus there. When he checked his route he realized his mistake and had to trek back almost 700 miles.

The only bad thing that happened was that my flying act (España) blew after the first few days. He said he had not been paid so he blew. First of all my contract with him was for 14 days work and technically I only needed to pay him at the end of the contract. Since there were 3 Saturdays during the dates I decided to pay on Saturdays besides the last day was also a Saturday. On the first Saturday I paid him more than one third what he was to get. On Tuesday he came and said he needed more money for something. I told him "payday." On Wednesday he came & told me he wanted his money or he was going to quit. I again told him "payday" so he quit. He also tried to jump me from behind twice and his wife stopped him. He told me that Paolo Rodriguez told him I was not going to pay. Well everyone got their money and the Wallenda Circus owes no one any money as far back as the 1947 season everyone has always been paid. Good bye Ricardo España. Mike Redpath came & finished the dates as soon as he could make it and until he could make it I got Valentino to give us another aerial act. It still looked bad to the Shriners.

(Continued on Page 4)

**THE FOX CONTINUED.....**

the new "The Fox & Going 3 shows a day. It is going to be the pro, folks like the Turn of the Century idea. The owner of the park said on local radio about me, "This guy has made a great job on the pole." because the show is a hit. She is doing a good job on the pole. If Rietta would be her alone she would be even better. She is even doing a routine on top now. Soon she will be standing up along the hoedstend. I am doing the announcing like a clown and now I even have a bottle with label that I call it Wallenda's Wonder Tonic. The people like it & I am having fun with it. I am so convincing that the keep asking me if she could use some of the tonic.

This is for the Old Time Shows from years ago. I am sorry, but I am just one person and I just had to put all of the rest of the shows together. I do need lots of help, mainly that everyone of you informs the others, you all have still a lots of people you correspond with so please help to let them all know what we will be doing and I know, it will be lots of fun getting together after all these years. I also would very much appreciate help with setting up. So please, please, HELP.

**S O S**

**SEND ALL YOUR ANSWERS TO THE FOX  
2708 DESOTO RD  
SARASOTA, FL 34234**



Lots of Love,  
Your Fox



Believe me, we will have lots of fun. Oh yes, I forgot one thing. You all have to bring a present along, but it can not cost more than a dollar. You can get it at the Dollar Store. Remember this and it has to be a fun thing, good for man of womam. Please do not let me down. I am trying so very hard to get us all back together.

Always Your Friend,

Until The Lord Takes Me

**THE GREAT CIRCUS REUNIONS**

**BY JENNY WALLEDA**

now I am coming to my main event. A few years ago I did the Reunion Christmas Party. So I will do it again in 1998.

**FRIDAY DECEMBER 11TH**

Starting Time: 6:00 and 7:00 Sit Down Dinner  
With Cost \$15.00 Per Person

do need your reservation and the money up front, as it will be a great dinner. Please write the checks out to the name of the show so I can know exactly for which Reunion it is for.

\*\*\*\*\*  
Bill Coleman reports: There is a nice article on Alan Slifka, founding chairman of the Big Apple Circus in the Sept. 7th issue of Forbes Magazine, titled, "Life Is Like A Circus." "Alan Slifka prowls for philanthropic activities as relentlessly as he prowls for investment opportunities." Alan says, "The circus unites people, makes them laugh, no matter who they are. New York needed that."  
\*\*\*\*\*

**BACK YARD**

is published twice monthly-(15th & 30th) by Cherie Valentine, 1522 Clinton Blvd., Bloomington, IL 61701. Ph. 309-828-0737 (no collect calls, please) E-mail: cdvalen@ilstu.edu

Subscription rates are \$25.00 per year, for 24 issues, within the USA. Advertising rates, payable in advance, with your copy, are: Full page \$30; Half page \$15; Quarter Page \$10; 1/8 page \$5. \*\*The column, "The Fox," is written by Jenny Wallenda. Other material is written by Cherie Valentine, unless otherwise identified as to author. Reprints from other published material are identified as to source. Comments by writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the publisher. Back Yard is a pro-circus, pro-animal publication, which supports the use of animals which are legally held and properly cared for, in the American circus.

\*\*\*\*\*

## LOOK OUT BELOW.....

as a group of tree toads on a big yard maple. Although surrounded by space, they skip rope, run back & forth on the wire with umbrellas, ride bicycles, do cartwheels & do handstands with nothing below them to break their fall but the floor. When the act originated, Harold's 65-year old father, an old carnival man, was given the assignment of catching the members of the family should they topple from the wire, Alzana, Sr., left the act in 1947 & now the show goes on minus this protection.

The elder Alzana's retirement was brought about by an incident which almost eliminated the act for all time. During a performance, Alzana & his sister Hilda fell 40 feet when a roustabout let a rope fall against his balancing pole. *His father caught them both* and cracked a vertebra in his back while doing it. Harold said, "He was in the hospital for 6 months & when he got out he wanted to get back into the act. But we wouldn't let him. Bad for his heart, we figured."

In his fall Alzana broke 3 ribs & Hilda broke her spine. She stayed out of the act during the 1948 season but Harold was back working in the spring, practicing a new bicycle trick which is still regarded by circus officials as being too dangerous to perform in public.

"That Alzana," says Art Concello, general mgr. of the circus, "isn't the safest insurance risk in the world." This year Harold's act is more dangerous than ever. He does things never before attempted on the high wire, but still he isn't satisfied. For so fierce is the competition among circus daredevils that each year Alzana is forced to out-sensationalize such spectacular personalities as Ugo Bogino, who jumps over 5 elephants while turning somersaults in mid-air; the Flying Concellos, and the Geraldos, a rival aerial troupe which has returned to the circus after a bad spill a year ago.

The object of these hair-raising acts apparently is to reduce members of the audience to babbling hysteria. Yet, Alzana, whose performance is probably the most dangerous on the entire program, sometimes wishes that circus customers wouldn't scream so much.

"When they screech, I always start laughing. And that worries me because when I laugh, I lose my balance. Someday I'm gonna laugh myself right out of this act."

\*\*\*\*\*

## FELD ENTERTAINMENT DONATES \$10,000 TO TIGER RESCUE EFFORT\*\*

On August 6th, legendary animal trainer **Gunther Gebel Williams** & his gifted animal trainer son,

**Mark Oliver Gebel**, presented a \$10,000 check from Feld Entertainment to the Texas Exotic Feline Foundation, a non-profit sanctuary which houses 65 large cats, including lions, tigers, cougars, bobcats, jaguars & leopards. The funds will be used towards the building of living facilities for 4 Bengal tigers, abandoned by a bankrupt Spanish circus. Completion of the facilities is estimated to be within 60 to 75 days.

\*\*\*\*\*

**August 19: Ringing Trapeze Star Soars To New Guinness World Record:** Before an audience of fellow performers & a TV crew from the new Fox program "Guinness Primetime," **Serguei Tur**, of The Flying Tur, established a new World Record on July 31, when he vaulted from a trapeze swing into the hands of his catcher, 43 ft. away. The amazing feat by the star of the 128th Edition of The Greatest Show On Earth qualifies him as the holder of the World Record for "The Longest Indoor Trapeze Jump." The entry will appear in the 1999 edition of the famous reference book. Seguei made the spectacular jump between performances of the circus at the Arrowhead Pond, Anaheim, CA. Tur, a Russian national trapeze champion, required a few minutes to let the impact of the moment sink in, but is reveling in his new status as a World Record holder.

\*\*\*\*\*

## RINGLING'S PACHYDERM PICASSO!!!

As part of the Great Milwaukee Parade, Ringling presented a special edition of the interactive Three Ring Adventure pre-show event. Included was a presentation designed to help educate people about the endangered status of Asian elephants. That was where **King Tusk** took brush in hand-er, trunk!-and created mammoth masterworks! During the adventure, visitors' names were collected & entered into a drawing, with King Tusk's unique pachyderm painting presented to the winner! Tusk travels the country with his human companions, **Lynn & David Polke**, as the premiere ambassador for the Asian elephant.

\*\*\*\*\*

## FORMER CFA PRESIDENT DIES- J. ALLEN DUFFIELD, 86

Joseph Allen Duffield died Tuesday, August 18 after a long illness. He was buried August 22 in Camp Hill, PA. Allen served as president of the Circus Fans Assn. of America from 1974-75 and was their secretary-treasurer for 12 years. His CFA number was 3169. He was born Oct. 30, 1911. He is survived by his wife, Jeanne and a daughter Ann. He was preceded in death by his first wife, Louise.

When Allen was elected president of the CFA, the following was in the July-August, 1974 issue of White Tops: "In the final business meeting of the convention, the members unanimously elected J. Allen Duffield of Camp Hill, PA as president for a one year term, succeeding Mel Olsen." In the "Meet J. Allen Duffield, President" section of the same issue, this is what Murray Powers has to say.

"J. Allen Duffield saw his first circus, Howe's Great London Shows, at St. Mary's, PA, when he was 10. He asked for a job, his sweater was put in a truck, & he worked all day, finally winding up in the rain at night aboard a horse with the rider's raincoat covering him. In the meantime, his family & all the neighbors were looking for him. Yes, he got his sweater back-and his mother gave it away a few days later.

Duff-as Louise, his wife, calls him-has been in the CFA for 18 years. He was Pennsylvania state chairman in 1966, founded the Robt. Dover Tent that year, has had a close personal relationship with the Tent's namesake. In 1967, he was chairman of the national convention in Harrisburg, was elected a director in 1968-69 and in 1970 became eastern vice-president. He was chairman of the executive committee for the past 5 years, has been master of ceremonies at conventions for 4 of the last 7 years. The format of the Harrisburg convention has been used by every convention since.

Allen married Louise McConnell in 1935. They have 1 daughter, Mrs. Lawrence Vannon, & 2 grand-children. Allen is a pharmaceutical salesman for Hensel & Sons Div. of the Drug House of Philadelphia & he lives in Camp Hill. During 1972-73, he left the drug business to become director of the Circus Hall of Fame in Sarasota, but returned a few months later to his post with Hensel. Allen has the knack of listening & being of service & conveying enthusiasm for this strange business that all of us love. Duff often steps in & books circuses for his area. But signing up the sponsors isn't enough for him.

He makes himself available to the sponsors at all times & a month before the show date he goes back to show them movies & slides of the circus they're sponsoring. When he left the Springfield Convention, what did he do? Go to Peru, Ind. to see circus things & then to Baraboo. This is his dedication." (Reprinted with permission of The White Tops, official publication of the CFA).

\*\*\*\*\*

### NEW YORK STATE FAIR DAMAGED BY STORM

Two people were killed & hundreds more sought cover when a violent storm crashed thru the Fair about 1:20 am on Sept. 7th. A section of the Dairy Products Building roof, the size of a handball court-with rafters attached-flew an estimated 90 yards, flattening a concession stand & killing a worker sleeping inside. Also killed, was Beryl Stone, 61, of Central Square. A tree limb, about 5 ft. in diameter fell on his camper parked not far from the grandstand. He had brought his horses to the fair. There were also circus acts performing at the Fair. Serge Coronas/Munoz Thrill show with the Globe; Peters Shark Show; Rix Big Bear Show & act and the Commerford's Petting Zoo. Damage is unknown at this time about these acts and animals. Mike Cecere reported that he could see the Globe down in an overhead shot from a helicopter on the TV. The Great Slide, a fair ride, fell apart in huge flakes of plastic. The Dinosaur Bar-B-Q's dining area was crushed as if a namesake had stepped right on it. A clock froze in time to mark the moment - 1:20.

\*\*\*\*\*

### FELD ENTERTAINMENT SETTLES ANIMAL WELFARE ACT CASE WITH USDA

Aug. 28th: The USDA and Feld Entertainment, doing business as Ringling Bros. Circus, have agreed to a consent decision & order regarding violations of the Animal Welfare Act. "Ringling Bros. showed an interest in improving the health not only of their animals, but the entire captive elephant population as a whole. We build on this interest & crafted a win-win agreement for animals protected under the law," said Michael Dunn, asst. sec'y for Marketing & Regulatory Programs of the USDA. Ringling will donate \$10,000 to a non-profit elephant sanctuary and \$10,000 to an outside organization for research relating to gastrointestinal or infectious diseases of elephants. The circus also agreed to enhance its training programs for animal handlers.

\*\*\*\*\*

Harvey Winckles reports: UniverSoul Circus is playing near Chene Park, off Jefferson Ave., Detroit until the 27th.

\*\*\*\*BACK YARD GOSSIP\*\*\*\*

\*For those of you wondering how Carin Cristiani is doing since her auto accident in Canada, she writes that she is home and recovering from a fractured hip and pelvis. She is now able to use a walker but can not put any weight on her left side for 3 months. She also has found a wonderful place for her elephants to spend their retirement. The park has built them a beautiful place. They have a wonderful pond that they go in daily that is fresh filled with water constantly & have fresh water supply 24 hours a day. They also have a beautiful shaded area & they even built a small mountain so they can climb up & look around the park. They get fresh fruit & vegetables twice a day & a constant supply of hay. There are even play toys for them in their field. Her helper of many years is staying with them & the park has given him a nice place beside the elephant barn, complete with a little garden! The elephants still belong to Carin & her son, Brian, and if they ever become unhappy with the situation, they can take them home. It sounds to me like they have found an elephant heaven!! Get well soon, Carin! (Cherie)

\*Harry Gordon reports from Maine: Vidbel's Olde Tyme Circus completed a 7 date tour Aug. 20-26. CFA members gave the show its usual high marks & observed happy audiences at all stops, which were: Cape Elizabeth, Ellsworth, Machias, Woodland, Houlton, Chester & Gorham. Roberts Bros. was welcomed to Maine on July 31, in Camden. CFA Tent #30 members served coffee cake & iced tea & lemonade as soon as the top was in the air. Cast & crew were treated under the canopy at the Camden Snow Bowl ski lodge which provides a covered deck with picnic tables & a panoramic view of the lot & Hosmer Pond. The Tarzan Zerbini produced Circus Maximus played without animals in New Brunswick, Canada this year. The host Luxor Shrine buckled under pressure from animal activists & left the animals behind in Quebec during the cross-Canada tour. Picketers the previous season prompted the decision. The Moncton Times said, "the organizers noted a 10-15% drop in attendance this year." The paper continued by revealing that 8 of 10 people in an informal poll missed the animals. The potentate said "It's basically a trial run to see what kind of situation the public would like."

\*\*\*\*\*  
**\*\*PRESENTING IN CENTER RING\*\***  
**CIRCUS BOOKS FROM AROUND**  
**THE WORLD-BROUGHT TO YOU**  
**BY JOHN BANTOCK**



- \*\*Wild Cats of the World by D. Alderton. \$30.
- \*\*Tiger Tiger by C. Baumann. Autogrphd. \$27.
- \*\*My Wild Life by J. Chipperfield \$10.
- \*\*Temple Tiger by J. Corbett \$10.  
(DJ chipped. Inside VG)
- \*\*Wild Animal Man by D. Dhotre \$15.  
(No DJ)
- \*\*Jungle Acrobats of the Russian Circus \$22.  
by B. Eder (VG/VG)
- \*\*Wild Animals & Their Secrets \$25.  
by J. Frey (No DJ)
- \*\*Of Tigers & Men by R. Ives \$6.  
(Trade PB)
- \*\*Chipperfield's Circus by D. Jamieson \$40.
- \*\*How The Tiger Lost Its Stripes \$24.  
by C. Meacham
- \*\*Spell Of The Tiger by S. Montgomery \$6.  
(Trade PB)

\*\*\*\*\*  
**\*\*The Great Zacchins by P. Ringling-Buck \$13.**  
**(Special with this ad. Price includes**  
**Shipping and Handling)\*\***  
 \*\*\*\*\*

Please Add \$3/Book For Shipping & Handling  
**JOHN BANTOCK**  
 2531 E. Milmar Dr., Sarasota, FL 34237  
 Phone/FAX: 941-365-7052



\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*

**127th EDITION RINGLING RED UNIT:**

Indianapolis, IN-Market Sq. Arena-Sept. 16-20  
Grand Rapids, MI-Van Andel Arena-Sept. 23-27  
Buffalo, NY-Marine Midland Arena-Sept. 30-Oct. 4  
Detroit, MI-Joe Lewis Arena-Oct. 7-11  
Boston, MA-FléetCenter-Oct. 14-25  
Pittsburgh, PA-Civic Arena-Oct. 28-Nov. 1  
St. Louis, MO-Kiel Center-Nov. 4-8  
Chicago, IL-United Center-Nov. 17-29

**128TH EDITION RINGLING BLUE UNIT:**

Seattle, WA-Key Arena-Sept. 17-20  
Spokane, WA-Arena-Sept. 22-23  
Portland, OR-Rose Garden-Sept. 25-27  
Salt Lake City, UT-Delta Center-Sept. 30-Oct. 4  
Denver, CO-Denver Coliseum-Oct. 7-18  
Cleveland, OH-Gund Arena-Oct. 23-Nov. 1  
Rosemont, IL-Rosemont Horizon-Nov. 4-15

\*\*\*\*\*

**HERTZBERG CIRCUS MUSEUM-SAN ANTONIO:**

Pat Kroll, Lot 8 Mgr. of CMB, sends along this information from Barbara Celitans, Program Mgr. at the Museum: "We are still in renovation stages. However, Chris Sorg has donated his model train layout. He is about ready to re-install the Hertzberg miniature circus.

A wonderful volunteer (a carpenter) is building the platforms & framework for the plexiglass. The circus will be in the center of the main reading room that runs alongside Market St. Visitors will be able to walk around it and look down on the layout."

\*\*\*\*\*

**WISC. DELLS STAR BARTLETT DIES**

Tommy Bartlett, a former Chicago broadcaster & the man who helped make Wisconsin Dells a major tourist attraction, died early Sunday, Sept. 6th. He was 84.

Tommy died of kidney failure at a nursing home in Madison, WI where he had been staying. Bartlett, who had suffered from diabetes, was hospitalized for several months earlier this year in Chicago for treatment of heart & kidney problems.

"He was a great man, but the last couple of months have been pretty hard," said Tom Diehl, president of Tommy Bartlett, Inc., which manages Tommy Bartlett's ski, sky & stage show & also his Robot World & Exploratory in Wisc. Dells. Diehl said Tommy remained chairman of the board until his death.

"Mr. Bartlett was a one in a million. He dedicated his

whole life to providing high-quality, clean family entertainment to the masses at the Dells," said Diehl.

Bartlett began a broadcasting career at the age of 13 in Milwaukee, working for WISN in 1927. Over his career, he worked for 10 radio stations. His thrill show, which now features water-ski, aerial & trapeze acts as well as comedians, jugglers & other performers, was founded by Tommy as a touring show in Chicago in 1948.

In 1953, Tommy gave it a permanent home in Wisc. Dells, a community about 160 miles northwest of Chicago known for its beautiful rock formations, cliffs & forests along the Wisconsin River. "The rest is history," said Diehl."

\*\*\*\*\*

**BIG APPLE CIRCUS TO LAUNCH WEBSITE**

**LOOK FOR IT AT THE END OF SEPT.!!!!**

Charlie Simon, Marketing Services Mgr. with the Big Apple Circus reports that if all goes well, the circus will have their own web site at [www.bigapplecircus.org](http://www.bigapplecircus.org) by the end of September. He was also kind enough to send along their new route for the coming season. All dates & locations are subject to change.

Washington, DC-Lake Fairfax Park, Reston, VA  
September 24 thru October 12

New York City-Damrosch Park, Lincoln Center  
October 22 thru January 10

Atlanta, Georgia-(No location listed)

February 18 thru March 7

Branchburg, NJ-Presented by Somerset Hills  
YMCA \* March 13 thru March 28

Boston, MA-in partnership with the Children's  
Museum \* April 3 thru May 9

Brookville, NY-Long Island Univ., C.W. Post  
Campus. Presented by Tilles Ctr. \* May 14-23

Queens, NY-Cunningham Park

May 27 thru June 6

Chicago, IL- Arlington International  
June 12 thru June 27

Charlestown, RI-Ninigret Park. Presented by the  
Chamber of Commerce.

July 5 thru July 11

Hanover, NH-Fullington Farm. Presented by  
Hopkins Ctr. at Dartmouth College.

July 14 thru July 18

## SIEGFRIED & ROY SEND RARE WHITE LION TO CINCINNATI ZOO \*\* AUGUST 12\*

It may have been an exciting trip for Prosperity, but it was a sentimental journey for Roy Horn. The member of the famed illusionist team Siegfried & Roy, fought back tears as he prepared to board a private jet with a 120-pound rare white lion for a trip to Cincinnati & her new home.

"I'm heartbroken," Roy said, choking with emotion, as the private jet from Mirage Resorts prepared for takeoff. "She will always be a part of Las Vegas." Born prematurely on Christmas Day, the 2-pound, 13-oz. cub was given little chance of surviving. Roy fed the tiny creature with an eye-dropper until she was finally able to eat on her own. The young lioness would spend the next 7 months at Roy's side, sleeping in his bed, traipsing behind him at Siegfried & Roy's \$10 million desert compound, or appearing as the new feline star at the pair's Mirage stage show.

At 7 months, Prosperity is much younger than any of the other 56 white lions & tigers the entertainers are raising there. So Roy made what he termed one of the toughest decisions of his life-to take her to the Cincinnati Zoo, where he is chairman of a program that has bred more than 200 white tigers now in zoos around the world.

At Cincinnati she will join 2 white lion males-Sunshine, who is 10 weeks older, and Future, who is 7 weeks older. Siegfried & Roy presented Future & Sunshine to the Zoo in February.

"For once, as a girl, she'll have the best of all worlds, she'll have 2 guys and she can have her pick," Roy said, obviously trying to make light of what was an emotional moment for him. Prosperity was the first white lion born in Las Vegas.

She will be ready to breed about the turn of the century, creating a new bloodline the entertainers refer to as "The Pride of the New Millennium." "She did the show with us last night, we got up this morning & had breakfast together & she romped around the compound. Now is the time to prepare for her quest. If you love something, you have to let it go to make sure it grows," Roy said wistfully.

## "ELEPHANTS"

If you like elephants or have a curious wonder about them, here's a new Book and Journal, by Applewhite Publishing, written over a period of 24 years by Bucky Steele of his over 55 years of involvement with them.

Combining humor and history with honesty, he has compiled almost every trainer and elephant since 1796, their lives and sometimes tragic deaths. Answers every question he and other trainers have been asked on training, breeding, medications, and even executing. Its called **"Everything You Wanted To Know About An Elephant, But Were Afraid To Ask."**

This 8 1/2 by 11 inch, 394 page volume includes some 80 pages of color and black and white photographs, some of which have never before been printed. It contains countless stories about the combination of man and animal that has become the backbone of two industries: Zoo and Circus. A frank and true inside look at what it is like to be an elephant man, his ethics and responsibilities.

**\$40.00**

Includes shipping, handling and postage in the USA

Make check or money order  
Payable to:

**ELEPHANTS  
PO BOX 47**

**Jefferson, TX 75657**  
Allow 6-8 weeks for delivery

## VALENTINE VAULTS-FROM 1954 -THE GOLDEN YEARS OF THE BILLBOARD

\*\*\*\*\*  
Orrin Davenport will have 14 stands this part of the new season. Those making the first 2 stands include: George Keller; Zoppe-Zavatta Family, riders; Coronas, high wire; Jack Joyce's camels; Helen Haag's chimps; Tiebor's seals; Sensational Ortons, high act; and Ernie Burch, Paul Jerome, Joe Lewis, Dick Lewis, Sherman Brothers, Otto Griebing, Irving Romig, clowns. Harry Thomas will be back as equestrian director. Music will be directed by Izzy Cervone. The Detroit line-up will include the above and Antalek's perch; Welde's bears; Clyde Beatty's wild animals; Dorita Konyot, menage; Marvel Trio; Jimmy Troy; Joe Lemke's chimps; Ulaine Malloy; Sonny Moore's dogs; Jo Anne Day; Flóra Zacchini's cannon; Artony's flying act; Helen Siegrist and Felix Adler will join the clowns.

\*Ringling Bros. has dropped 3 staffers as part of a re-organization program which started when Art Concello & the show parted company recently. Dropped from the payroll were Wallace Love, auditor; Phil Hall, tax box and Tuffy Genders, front-door supt.

\*Lucio Cristiani, co-owner of King Bros.-Cristiani Circus announced that he had definitely decided to go on the road with a show this season. "I have been thinking plans over during the holidays & the members of the Cristiani family and I definitely will have a show on the road during this coming season. Until we have final action on this partnership I am unable to make any exact plans. If Floyd King buys part then we will have all the equipment we need. The Cristianis personally own 9 of the 12 elephants on the King-Cristiani show."

Steve Fannin will be supt. of the elephants & Hugo Zacchini will have the cannon act.

\*One of Terrell Jacobs lions, Caesar, escaped from a shifting cage & was at liberty for an hour at the winter quarters of the Al. G. Kelly-Miller Bros. Circus in Hugo, OK. It was re-located under a truck & placed again in a cage. About 50 men had been searching a nearby wooded area for the cat. Jacobs' baby elephant was worked by Fred Logan on the "Big Top" TV show.

\*Acts from the Beers-Barnes Circus made a date at Bartow, FL that included Charles Beers, seal & chimp acts; Lois Barnes, elephant act; and Tex Lawton. David Hoover has added a lion to his trio. Mr. & Mrs. Roger Barnes have announced the marriage of their daughter,

Lois to David Hoover. She works wire & elephant acts on the show & her husband has the lion act. He formerly was with the Gainesville Community Circus.

\*Soldier Longsdorf & Gus Bell had problems in fitting all aerial rigging into the Medinah Temple..Mayme Ward's efforts produced new outfits for the introduction to La Norma's act..Mayme is the foil for the finale of Norbert Kreisch's act..Carla Wallenda was stricken with measles & confined to a hotel..Poodles Hanneford tripped over a rope while taking a bow & broke his arm. Mrs. Hanneford recently fell & broke a shoulder..Marga Nichols returned to the show after her fall, but Rose Murphy took her place in the production numbers pending her recovery..Joe & Lydia Bogino gave a birthday party for Carla Wallenda with Joan Wallenstein, Jenny Zoppe, Benito Securo, Georgia Voise, Clem Parker, Jim Olson & Jean Mendez attending..From Polack: Harry Dann reports that there was a laugh riot when Rudy Docky's nose putty became attached to the opposite end of his anatomy..Herta Klausser was bitten by a bear during her act..Jimmy Olson, of the Voise flying act & Joanne Wolford, of the Wallenda act were married..Aginio Bogino & Carla Wallenda were married. A double wedding party was held at Salt Lake City..Nellie Dutton is wintering at Tampa with the Morales family. The Morales will be with Doc Capell's Edgar Buck Circus this season..From Ringling-Mary Jane Miller reports: Mrs. Trevor Bale joined with her infant daughter.. Charley Bell joined after an operation in Sarasota..The Freemans celebrated their 32nd Anniversary..Jimmy Armstrong is back yard bugler..The "Dagnet" clown bit is scoring. Albert White has the biggest hat in spec & Felix Adler has the biggest costume..The Flying Marilees, Lee Stath, catcher; Mary Atterbury, leaper, & Roger Merril, leaper, are to appear on "You Asked For It" TV program..From Hugo, OK: Burglars broke into the home of Kelly Miller & removed the 508 silver dollars which decorated his "silver dollar bar." Most of the coins were dated 1921 & the "head" sides had been highly polished. Several weeks ago the home was damaged by a fire..Bill Ballantine, Ringling designer & press-back is interviewed in the June issue of a bulletin put out in behalf of Holiday magazine..The Valentino Sisters & Cherie, managed by George Valentine, played the Dayton Grotto show. They recently visited the Hagen Bros. Circus at Pontiac, IL..From King Bros.: Harry Thomas never misses the cookhouse on pork chop day.

### BOBBY HAKES ANSWERS ????

**Question:** What is the acrobatic term for a vertical spin while you're in a tuck?

**Answer:** On the trapeze, it is called a somersault. A couple of flyers catch the quad; that is 4 somersaults to a catcher & can do 5 somersaults to the net. A lay-out is doing a somersault without going into a tuck. Many flyers do a double lay-out to the catcher. Whenever you go to the net, you have to keep your eyes open so you know where you are landing in case you bounce out of the net. The triple & quad are so dangerous that in Spanish they call it sautl-mortal (my spelling is probably wrong, but it means turn of death.) Many circus people have died doing triple somersaults in tumbling on the ground over the years, & off leap boards over 5 elephants, etc.

A few people have been killed in the nets by hitting the ridge ropes; those are the ropes that shape the net & by bouncing out of the net, which happens all the time with big tricks because of the height you need to turn over. That is why the prop crew stands on both sides of the net during the act, in case of a wrong bounce. If you land on your neck, with your head tucked in, you can break it. That is why you must keep your eyes open so you can open up or turn to your back.

Most flyers have had broken arms, legs, wrists & other parts at least once. When Tony Steele was doing the triple, he & the catcher caught by their elbows so that there is not as much pull on the shoulders. Almost every flyer doing the Triple or Quad have pulled their shoulders. **Tito Gaona** is one of the few that have been lucky & not had many injuries. One time he missed the triple, then flew over the apron & landed in the seats. It was lucky the seats were full & the people cushioned the fall.

That was on the **Clyde Beatty Circus** many years ago. Tito now has a flying school at the old winterquarters of the Ringling show in Venice, FL. His brother, **Ricky**, has a school in L.A. They both go up & show their students how it is done.

In the air, you have more time to recover, but you pull a lot of shoulders out of place & land in the

aprons a lot. A forward somersault is not that hard. On the back swing you go like you would for a shot over the bar. Quite a few flyers can do a double forward over the bar. You need to use a high raise & pump a high swing to get the height to turn over, but with that height you can throw a double pirouette back to the bar. A three and a half is easier than a triple because you do not have to break out of the tuck & there is more legs to catch than just the wrist. Any trick is easier to over-spin than to stop at a given spot. Just a few words from an old catcher. **ALL THE BEST, BOBBY.**

\*\*\*\*\*

**Harvey Esto Reports:** The Circus Fans Assn. of America's Web site is at the following address: [www.circusweb.com/CFA/](http://www.circusweb.com/CFA/) We are going to have news of our Convention & there will be articles & photos of performers, clowns, etc. & information about CFA members. We can change & add to it at least 3-4 times per year. We have an active CFA Chat Room on AOL for circus fans, circus model builders & anyone interested in becoming members and it is family oriented. We are going to get the Chat Room started for AOL members & non-AOL members next. Our CFA-CMB Chat Room is at 9 pm Eastern time or 6 pm Pacific time on Saturdays & Sundays. At AOL, go to create your own chat & type cfa and then click enter or e-mail: [acmack235@aol.com](mailto:acmack235@aol.com) for instructions.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Helen Billetti Warburton reports:** Gary Syers, of Seattle, WA is working in Alaska on a tugboat. He is out to sea 2 months & back for 1 month. Gary is a new subscriber of Back Yard & his wife forwards each issue to him! Welcome Aboard Gary. Helen has sent along some pages from 1930 on "Chatter From Around The White Tops." I will be printing some of the News from around the country in the next issue of **Back Yard**. The Spring Special has an ad: "2 Yearly Subscriptions to White Tops-\$1, To Any Two Addresses. 5 Addresses for \$2. Regular Price is \$1.00 per year-12 Issues!! Now, there is something I'd like to see come back!! **\*\*Cherie\*\***

## TO KISS A CLOWN-DEDICATED TO DANNY CHAPMAN\*Part II BY SARAH KATE CHAPMAN

Danny Chapman could not justify going to war, fighting & killing, but he went & hated it. He thought he profited nothing from killing Germans & he grieved each time his buddies lay wounded & dying next to him in a foxhole. This was a gentle man who wanted to be an archaeologist & study ancient civilizations, not a veteran of war. He accepted the war by denying it & tucked it away along with his rags to riches parents & his lack of a formal education.

Even his brother became a source of agitation as they both adapted to life after the war as workers in their father's dye house. Danny felt he was doing all the labor while his brother did office work, so he left his father's company to rebuild his circus career. The competition of paternal attention between the siblings was never resolved.

When Danny married at age 35 to his first 19-year-old wife, he didn't have the skills necessary for a balanced relationship. He couldn't see his positive side for fear of facing the negative emotions he harbored against life. His marriage was a facade of reality loosely held together out of obligation. As he retreated inward, his behavior became more belligerent & antagonistic & he quarreled with his closest friends, saying that life should be treating him better. He, of course, was not making any attempt to improve his thoughts or behaviors.

And the world was changing. He rejected the cultural revolution of the sixties & decried popular music, clothing & new social changes in the U.S. He valued family traditions, but contributed little towards them. He scorned drug use & protest marches against the Vietnam War. He wasn't coping with the younger generation & failed as a father with his teenage daughters.

A second marriage & family was a major decision & for many years, it prospered mainly because he was the dominant partner in a child-child union. When I grew up, he turned on me too, feeling I had betrayed him. He spent his life doing & being everything except himself. It can be said that Danny Chapman had to be a clown in order to escape reality. For him, the establishment was what was wrong. If his wife divorced him, it was the judge that made the settlement at fault, not a lack of affection for his spouse. If he was swindled out of property by his mother-in-law, it was her rotten character that robbed him, not his inability to choose right companions. If he felt cheated

with his salary from a circus, it was the government immigration laws at fault, not his decision to work for the fixed amount. It was easier to hide from reality than accept it. Survival was an instinct to Danny, but he had a way of twisting fact into fiction. He couldn't fool everyone though. His teenage friends in Philadelphia knew the family & lived similar lives, but had enough life skills to be content with themselves, their families & their jobs.

Clowning was a natural way for him to deal with the hurts. He spent more time in his make-up than out of it. As a clown in front of an audience, he could be the cute, whimsical person he truly wished to be. He fiddled with feathers, straws, brooms, puppets, dogs, musical instruments & magic props solely to amaze the young, the old. Perhaps he wanted to be the person being entertained & be transported temporarily away from reality while being visually fixed upon a clown. He seldom watched others perform & criticized almost everyone attempting to imitate a clown. He had strong feelings about clowning.

One routine that was often done involved the handing of a flower to a lady in the audience. He always had a few paper-wrapped soda straws in his front, left jacket pocket. Along with this, was a plastic rose with a long stem. Before he approached a lady, he would tear the paper end of the straw open & insert the flower stem. Then, he would gingerly prance up to a lady with the look of an admirer & offer her the flower held in his hand at the end of an outstretched arm. She usually blushed & glanced from side to side to see if anyone was watching & then genuinely reached for the flower. Once she placed her hand on the straw stem, he removed the flower & the lady was left with a soda straw, much to her amazement, confusion & delight. He backed off, leaving her to herself while he picked out the next lady. Once, I asked him how he picked the women & he said he always looked for a middle-aged motherly type-someone who could use a little attention. This was an empathetic perception on his behalf.

The model of reality that Danny portrayed most often was of human kindness, always being sympathetic to the needs of others. We often give a gift away because it is something that we would like to have. Maybe his early life was void of tender, loving care & he shrugged this off by playing the happy-go-lucky hobo, with not a care in the world.

(TO BE CONTINUED)



## RUMBLINGS FROM THE CRUMMY BY BRIAN NUNN

\*There is always the question of quality of life, opposed to quantity. There has been situations that the value of the animal as a breeder, require, because of extreme danger, to be placed in a no-contact facility. I've seen a number of these places. There is huge money & talent involved in these indevores. And always a system involved to be able to treat these wonderful creatures medically.

\*Cotton candy is used as spider webs in the movies; always has. They also use sugar to make glass. (So the stunt people don't get hurt when they smash thru it.

\*A story about 1950s-60s: I saw one of those detective stories on TV about how some dog trainer used gunpowder to make the dogs mean. I got angry: When I was a kid, I worked on horse ranches & at the time there were a lot of trained dog packs. These were responsible people with these hounds, and some independents; some of which weren't so good. Anyway, all you had to do was show a rag of some kind (with a scent) to the lead dog & hold the rest of the pack till the lead dog located the trail of the specified animal.

You let the rest of the pack go. When they tree'd the critter, you took your customer in to do the deed, or you went to get you own food. The dogs never attacked the animal; big cat, bear, whatever. They surrounded or tree'd it until the owner showed up. During the off season, the owners would sprinkle a little gunpowder on the dog's food. It's got sodium nitrate in it which is salt peter, which is what the government put in the food in prison so people wouldn't be aggressive and fight.

This was a better way to hunt back then because the hunted animal got away or was killed, i.e., there weren't any wounded critters running around the woods. These dogs listened to voice or whistle and did what they were told. I know I had a few of these dogs myself.

You could tell when the dogs picked up the scent. Their bark (voice) would change. The guys called it

singing. \*I was bill postering for Dory's show, early 80s, in a little mountain town called Lake Isabella, California. There was nothin' to hang paper on. I found a big ice box out by where the lot was gonna be. I called the number and the guy says, "Sure, go ahead." He said he'd be right down. I put all the big posters I had on it. You could see it a mile away. The guy gets there and he's a teenager and says he want's a job on the show. I'm thinking, gosh, darn it, I'm gonna have to take all this paper down when some big guy pulls up in a truck and wants to know what is going on.

I know I've had it now. He runs the kid off. Then he starts talking to me. He says, "If you can get my son a job on that show and get him out of town, you can leave that paper up." I said, "Sure, he's as good as hired." I called Charlie on the show and he said he would do what he could. I don't know what happened but the paper stayed up till show day. They did good business there, I heard.

\*There is nothing sweeter than a brand new baby animal. It is a great pay off. While I'm at it, people that have absolutely no control over their pet dogs drive me crazy. They're usually the ones that complain about animals in entertainment. Those pets with no discipline are dangerous. They run away, cause accidents, bite kids and are generally a pain to endure.

\*\*\*\*\*

### HAVE YOU EVER SEEN AN ELEPHANT PAINT? VISIT THE JACKSON, MS ZOO !!

Marrie, the zoos talented painting elephant, is approximately 30 years old & weighs in at 6600 pounds, and has been painting since 1994. She has an arthritic hip & leg which restricts her physical movements, so her keepers came up with this idea in hopes it would be good therapy. It worked! The painting times add enrichment to her day. Come to the zoo any weekend & weather permitting, Miss Marrie will put on a show twice a day. Marrie Originals Price List: On Canvas-pre-painted, size 20x24-\$100; size 11x14-\$25; Short Sleeve T-Shirts with Marrie's logo-\$15; Long Sleeve T-Shirts-\$20. These are available in the gift shop or call the Zoo at 601-352-2585. Or e-mail them at [zoofriend@teclink.net](mailto:zoofriend@teclink.net). All profits are used for Zoo Keeper Education & elephant enrichment.

Cole  
Bros.  
Circus  
1946



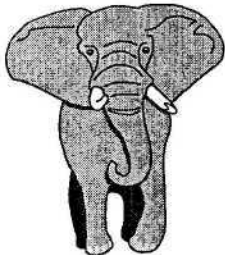
ILONKA + EGY KAROLY



VICKI AND UNUS



Back Yard  
1522 Clinton Blvd.  
Bloomington, IL 61701



**FIRST CLASS MAIL!**