

BACK YARD

Volume III, Issue #48

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CATCHERS and LEAPERS

BY BILL BALLANTINE

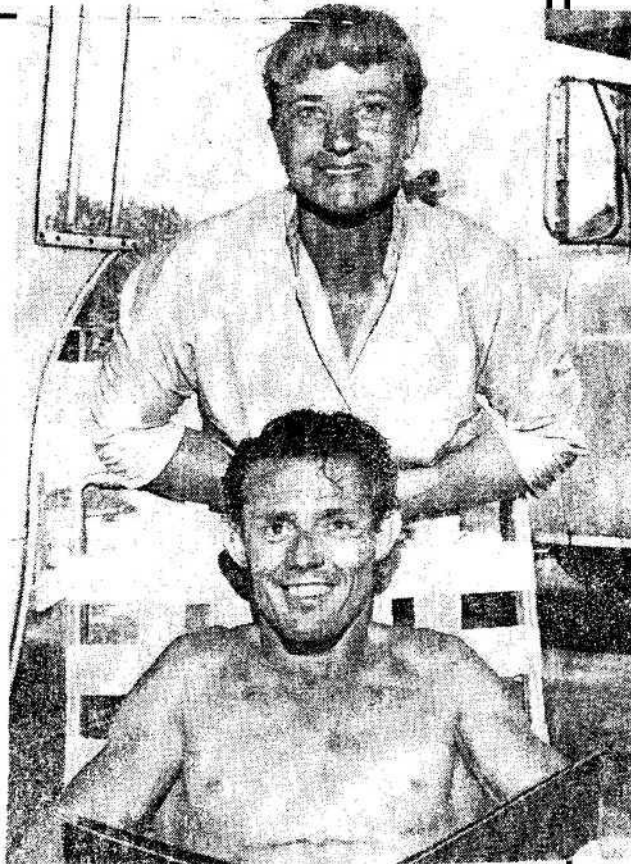
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Fay Alexander's back-up swing goes so high you think it's going to rip him right through the Big Top's canvas roof. It's the first thing you notice about his flying, the thing that sets him apart from the other leapers. "That boy," one old-timer told me, "he is lofty."

Besides all this, Fay is the only flier I've ever met who doesn't ever want to do anything but fly. The others enjoy their work very much, but it's still work, and, like Willie Krause, they are forever plotting to escape the risky profession & laying down nest eggs against the day when they can break out to open a fishing camp, run a jewelry store or own a trailer park in Florida.

Fay alone expects the fly bar to earn him a living. It will be a good living, but he won't get rich at the job. Flying has never been a highly paid occupation, nor even the best-paid circus act. The traditional presentation of fliers as a group spectacle keeps them anonymous & several economic pegs below the featured stars. But Fay wouldn't be happy doing anything else.

Not that he isn't aware of greener pastures. One day in Dallas, I overheard him telling Willie, "Was a guy around today, said he owned a girl show on a carny, dropped off here 3 years ago, leased a hotel an' run a hookshop with the girls. In 2 years he had his home paid for an' a bran'-new Lincoln Continental, an' then he got knocked down. But since then he's been legit, runnin' the hotel like a hotel, & still doin' a'right. A'course, he had to make-it dirty, but jus' think, 3 years & he got it made. He says this here is the country to make it in out here." Though this sort of get-rich-quick intrigues him, Fay doesn't really give a damn about it. It's not flying. Such devotion is in the tradition of the trapeze great ones. They were hardy old birds, ready to give their all to the



swinging bar. Fliers are tough, or they wouldn't be fliers very long. On a big show like Ringling Bros. they put in well over 400 performances a season in all kinds of weather-no 2 days exactly alike. Chilly ones & scorchers, hot as the devil's breath. Jinx days, when nothing goes right, when every trick offers a golden opportunity to end up-or down-with a broken neck. Windy days that shimmy the rigging, & miserable rain-soaked ones that play hell with muscles.

(Continued on Page 4)

BACK YARD

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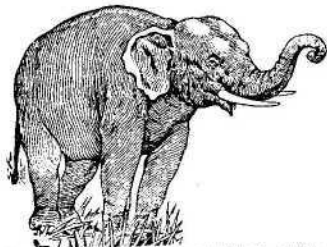
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CLYDE BEATTY

BOBBY HAKES ANSWERS QUESTIONS ?????

Question: Do circus tent knots require anything not commonly found in sailing or cowboy work?

Answer: We use several knots on a circus. On the stakes we use a half hitch or a rolling hitch as we add an extra loop of rope so that you can take off the top hitch & still hold the tension on the line to the tent & as the tent crew pulls the guy line, you can take up the slack. Then throw the top hitch back on & the line is tight. All knots on any big tip are the same so that anybody can tighten or loosen them in case of trouble. With a rolling hitch they never get so tight that you can't turn them loose if you have to. Sometimes you get someone who is left handed & you spend a lot of time teaching them to tie right handed. On rigging, you use the bowline because no matter how tight you pull it you can always untie it when you give it slack. Other knots become so tight you need a spike to untie them & up in the air you need one that can be handled easily. We also use a knot called a spanish bowline. I will try to explain. Say you have a rope or cable that is 100 feet long, but you only need 50 feet. You double the rope where you need the knot & tie a bowline at that spot & let the rest of the rope hang loose. That is easier than pulling the end all the way through the knot.

Question: Are all the lines hauled directly to their proper tension or do you use swigging, as one does on hoisting sails to tighten up?

Answer: On the shows that I was raised on everybody could do just about everything. I have been canvas boss on a lot of different shows. On a circus, we use bulls, horses, trucks & good old man power to tighten lines. On some shows they are now using winches. What I call a half-hitch, to a boy scout, would be a clove hitch & as I said, we put an extra wrap on the load side so that we can tighten or loosen. So, we call that a rolling hitch. We have quarter poles on 110 size big tops or larger. We have 2 sets & the hippodrome track runs between them. Because the public is near them, I tie a diamond shape knot so that they can not pull the end & untie them. I will try to describe the knot; you make one half of a half hitch, then go around the pole in the opposite direction, & put the running rope under the standing rope & tighten. Then, go around the other way & put the running rope under the standing rope & pull tight. Do this about 5 times & it looks like diamonds when you are done. In the American circus, shotgun-set up, the wind can make the quarter poles jump in the air a lot, so being tied is very important and when bad weather comes, we sometimes put stakes at

each pole & use the rope on the bottom of the pole, that bulls use to raise them, to tie each pole to a stake.

Question: What is a Spanish web?

Answer: A rope with a loop on it which you climb & do various tricks on while someone below spins it. In the circus, it is just called a web & the girls who work on them are called ballet broads. I can remember years ago productions numbers with over 40 webs working with 6 trap & ring acts as an aerial number. When my wife joined the Ringling Circus in 1967, she had to learn to do web. She was hired as a stiltwalker, but all the girls had to do web & all the men had to be web-sitters.

Question: Are the best seats at the circus in the back, where you can see all 3 rings at once?

Answer: When pro's go to watch a circus, they get seats the higher the better & they are the best seats in the house to watch any show. The highest seats are the best because you can get an over-all view of the show. People who sit in the front row seats want to be seen by the audience & are usually trying to 3 sheet.

Question: Re: Human Cannonball-Huge mattress: is it more forgiving than a net?

Answer: The air pillow is easier to handle, but can't cover all the area. That is how Elvin Bale got stoved up. He missed the pillow in Japan on the Ringling show. His dummy was left out in the rain & was too heavy to judge the distance so when he was shot, he over-shot the pillow. He has had the cannon act on the Beatty show for quite a few years now & they have gone back to the net this year after too many close calls with the pillow.

Peter Bendall Reports From Hamburg: For each quarter pole there are 2 ropes dropping down from each leather "pad" on the top, bored with 2 holes at the same spacing as the 2 ropes. To pull up the pole, the ends are threaded through the holes & then held while the pole is pushed up on them, lining itself properly in place. To tighten the ropes (& lose the ends) the 2 ropes are held together & a half hitch taken around the pole. The ends are wound back around the standing part in a neat roll & finished off by doubling the last few inches of the running parts & tucking them between the pole & the standing part. The spiked side poles, around the walling, use a single rope tied off the same way at a reachable height! Absolutely essential to be always the same in case of wind on a dark night so that they can be undone by just pulling the tail out and unrolling.

Visits to Circus Pages & Sterling-Reid in next issue.

CATCHERS AND LEAPERS.....

"People who think flyin' is easy," laments the flier, "don't know who many nights we lay in bed & can't turn over even." Drawn together by risk & rigor, fliers get along famously together, but they speak a different language & mix little with other performers. Teeterboarders are about the only ones who get the nod of recognition. Their triple-somersault catapults seem to qualify them as honorable aerialists. Old-time elephants leapers, whose springboard jumps over the backs of a line of elephants frequently included double somersaults, also rate well.

Sitting out on the tracks one hot July night just outside Mankato, Minn., I asked Dell Graham what one thing fliers are most leery of. Broken neck, I thought. His answer surprised me. "Worst thing can happen is findin' a pair of old shoes in the dressing room," he said, taking a long draw on his can of beer. "That means somethin' real bad-awful is waitin' for you-like maybe even death." (Only other superstitions he could think of were: never wear yellow on Fridays, & a new jock or pumps will make you blow a trick.) Next to derelict shoes, Dell added, a flier fears most a pulled shoulder. A really serious one can also retire a flier permanently from the business. The next big menace is the net. It's not the perfect safeguard it pretends to be. "Used to be you could depend on how you hit if you was to get hurt or not," said Dell, "but not this bastard we got now. It'll throw you any time it feels like it. I don't know if it's them cables it's stretched on or not, but it sure gives you one hell of a spring-just like a trampoline sometimes. [A small tight net for bouncing acts.-B.B.] An' it's made out of nylon rope, instead of hard-twist cotton, too. First time this year I hit, it felt like gettin' smacked with a wet towel. But, at that, I guess it ain't so bad as them ones in the old days. They was made by fishermen & had *knots* at the joints." Fay, who was sitting with us, stooped over & turned down the portable radio he was listening to. "Next time you get a chance to, look at Eddie's back." The fellow he spoke of, a center-ring leaper, was sitting just down the track with his shirt off, & I could see the angry crisscross of welts & cuts made by the net ropes. "Eddie, he's been all over the net, in both aprons, even back on the ridge rope. That's the worst place to hit, between the main net & the apron. There's a steel cable inside it, & it gives you a *hell* of a whip. Eddie hit it once sittin' down & it threw him right into a perfect double," Fay said. Fay clicked his radio completely off.

"I been bounced out 3 times a'ready this season. Got hung up once on the apron edge, & once I slipped off just a-walkin' too close to the edge. Willie, he broke a finger tryin' to stay in, & the girls are always havin' busted fingernails from grabbin' at the net to save themselves. Kay's been out once & Sleeter twice."

I knew something of the net's treachery, for I had been watching the act the second time when Jeannie Sleeter, Fay's leaping partner, was flipped out on her hip. Once you see a fall like that, you never forget it. At the end of the act Jeannie did her usual comedown drop, kicking up her right leg for balance as she always does. But the net gave her a fluky bounce & I knew she was going out.

A prop hand tried to throw himself under Jeannie to break her fall, but not soon enough. She grabbed wildly for the net edge, missed by inches & slammed onto the ground on her right hip. There was a sharp sucked-in scream from the audience, very different from the outgoing shriek, the mere titillation of terror that goes with an ordinary thrill. Then an awful dead silence. Even the band stopped during this terrible instant, & the audience turned into a job of temporary stiffs.

The shock spell of a circus accident lasts for only an instant-but what an instant! If the luckless performer is your friend it seems that every heart is standing still & yours may never start again. Then the band leader's cornet stabs out, swinging his windjammers into something lively; the ringmaster whistles the next act on; determined clowns bound out to be funny. And everybody exhales. The other fliers, instead of doing their usual finish drop to the net, scrabble quickly down their rope ladders & nobody stops to take bows. Jeannie didn't cry when she fell, but as Guinea Mike, the prop boss, carried her out the performer's entrance to the back yard, past where I stood, there was a real twist of pain on her face. Someone spread a horse blanket beside the doctor's wagon & Mike gently laid her on it. A grizzled prop hand shyly offered his lumber jacket to cover her, & one of the risley-act kids came up with a dusty practice carpet. Mike sent one of the girls into Jeannie's dressing room for her street clothes, saying in an awkward try to break the tension, "Hell, she can't come nakid outa the hospital." And I remember that Fay leaned down & gave Jeannie's blonde bob a rough brotherly rump. Waiting for the ambulance, the fliers didn't say much, but I knew each one was wondering who would get it next, for fliers strongly believe that Big Top mishaps come in threes.

Jeannie stayed behind that night there in Beaumont, Texas, & to let the show leave town without her was harder to take than the fall. She rejoined a week later & flew again good as ever. It takes a lot to knock out even a girl flier.

The scariest fall Fay ever had was one right into the audience. He was doing a legs trick, two-and-a-half to the hocks-his favorite, because it's easy on the arms. Jimmy, the catcher, had a good grip on Fay's hocks & was in his back swing over the apron when Fay slipped out & sailed away, face down, headed for the very top of the apron. He twisted onto his back for the fall, but he had overshot the net & , as he skidded across its top edge, his heels snagged just enough to flip him neatly over, & he plunged headlong into the grandstand. Several rows of audience exploded & left him an empty patch to land in. "I don't know how in hell they got out from under so quick," Fay told me, "but a damn good thing they did. Them seats where I landed was all smashed to hell & gone. The seat man, when I came back from the hospital, he come by & give me a long splinter he picked up from beside my chest. Sharp it was-like a dagger. It coulda went right through me."

Fay's biggest thrill in flying so far came from a fall, only everyone knew how this one was going to turn out. Fay made it deliberately, while doubling for Cornel Wilde during the filming of the recent De Mille circus movie, *The Greatest Show on Earth*. The script called for the Great Sebastian (Wilde) to miss a trick while flying without a net & to plunge in a crippling 40-foot fall straight to the ground. De Mille, stickler for realism, couldn't see using a dummy. So the circus, not wishing to knock off its most promising aerialist, solved the problem. At winter quarters in Florida a pit the width of the net was dug 7 feet deep through the center ring, the net stretched over it & camouflaged with earth & shavings.

On the morning of the take, Art Concello, the circus big-boss, himself an expert leaper, went up to make the preliminary test-didn't bother to change, just slid off his coat. He swung out, did a somersault, dropped, sank into the net-& came up sopping wet. The pit had filled in during the night with 4 feet of water. "Pull the net!" spluttered Concello, blowing out soggy shavings, & went right back up again. This time he dropped flat without the somersault, & the tightened net stayed above water.

Let Fay tell the rest. "I could just see the ring when I looked down-no net. It looked damn real. First time I did

it, the cameras they couldn't follow me. It went so fast, & they didn't know what I was gonna do. They never *seen* anything like that. The guys on the ground they got it okay but not the ones on the platform, so I had to do it a second time. De Mille, he give me a medal for it-one of them half-dollars with Sir Walter Raleigh on one side & Virginia Dare. There was only 20,000 minted, & De Mille he bought them all but a few-3 or 4 thousand maybe. He gives them out for special things, if you do something *really* good. His chief prop man has 8 in 20 years, Betty Hutton got 2 for learnin' to fly, & Gloria Grahame got one for puttin' that elephant foot in her face." Even De Mille's crustiest critics agree that Fay's free fall is a heart-tripping thing. The best way to land in the net, the boys told me, is flat on your back & shoulders, chin pressed onto the collarbone, arms tucked close to the body. A flier can usually twist himself into this position as he falls. Plummeting fliers can also survey the uprushing ground & change direction in mid-air. The worst place to hit the net is on the front of the skull. Your feet whip over your head & snap goes your neck for all time. Dell told me about once when he hit on his noggin. "It was out at Spokane one matinee," he said, pronouncing the work circus-style, like 'knee.' "I been missin' my doubles all through the Northwest, an' I *knew* I was gonna land on my head, but there wasn't a damn thing I could do about it. I heard a godawful crack, an' I thought, 'You stupid bastard, after all these years you got to go & break your damn neck.' It felt just like it snapped off clear down to my keister. Then I turned it a little, an' I knew I'd be a'right."

"Besides the net," Fay said then, "there's lots of other things can screw you up. The wrappin' slips on your bar, you can slam into the ketcher. You ketch a trick short, you get an awful whip." "Then, too," added Dell, "the net's on the same stake as the pedestal board, so if someone hits the net hard enough to pull the stake a little, the board can edge forward, & there's danger of crashin' it with your spine or your back on the back-up swing. Babs, she's always a-scared of that."

Several fliers, on their finish come-down, dive headfirst at the net, pulling in their chins at the very last instant to flop over on their backs. This is a hair-raiser for fliers as well as audience. Bones Brown, a 6-foot comedy leaper, does this best of all because he can stretch out so long & skinny. He reports, "When you're sharp & feelin' *good*, you can really brush your hair on that net."

(To Be Continued)

THE LAST STRAW By Mike Cecere

Well, many regular readers of Back Yard read my article on the increasing scarce supply of square hay bales last year. Some took heed & prepared to adapt & some shrugged their shoulders & said, "Oh, we'll always be able to buy hay from some dumb farmer."

Well, to those geniuses: The joke's on you! With 1998's wild weather pattern of floods, drought & storms on Biblical scale, baled hay is in shorter supply than ever. Even here in the Northeast, which has had a great hay harvesting season so far, there is a frighteningly sparse harvest. I live in an area where a 5 minute drive can usually get you high quality 70+ pound square bales for about a dollar a bale, if they know ya.

But, more & more, either they are round baling the hay because help is short or just giving up altogether. Lots of farmers are getting old. Tired of the struggle & little new blood coming into it. Sort of like the circus business. Something to think about!

THE WRONG WAY!

In the seemingly endless battle with the animal rights-pro-vegan hate groups, there are a lot of ideas over which way to go. There are some really effective programs like that of Ken "Turtle" Benson & other animals trainers whose folksy, grass-roots efforts on scene at their locations have educated thousands. There are others who think we should dump money into lobbyists in Washington, a sure-money pit as that route is a self-perpetuating eyesore on our form of government.

Still others want to join with other animal use industries like fur-farms, puppy mills-those who kidnap family pets for laboratory research, canned hunting farms & the large, exotic pet trade. I would point out the exotic pet or "Alternative Livestock" industry by & large is a responsible group except for a very few who persist in selling dangerous big cats & apes to inexperienced owners. The point is, we, in the circus, have always lived by the credo, "The Animals Come First." And to join with anyone who doesn't go by the same rules is not someone I'd want to be in business with. Time to wake up!!

RIGHTIST RETORT, BY DON WIXOM, THE ELEPHANT COMPANY

It is impossible for me to imagine a single one of us in the animal-related entertainment field that has not had encounters with bothersome & persistent animal rights activists. In the last 3 years, working as I do with the

Elephant Company, owned by David & Carmen Tesch, we have had our fair share of rightist activity. Outside the occasional circus date, we often do elephant ride promotions at numerous "curbside" locations. Without a doubt, our greatest attacks & most organized protests have occurred in the Chicago area, South suburbs. Our repeat engagements have built both a legion of staunch supporters & has drawn out animal rightists like roaches in a dark, crumb filled kitchen. However, I prefer roaches to rightist as they are not nearly as sneaky or unpleasant as a PETA-brained animal rightist.

The following are a few of the anti-animal rightist questions our supporters pose to protesters. They often short circuit their brainwash & the rightist pack up & leave. Probably off to collect an unemployment check, attend a pottery class or snap-on the internet to absorb more propaganda.

*Can you explain the mission, goals & objectives (all of them) of the organization you are protesting for?

*Have you been trained in zoology, biology or any of the natural sciences?

*Have you observed animals in their natural habitat (Africa, Asia, etc.)?

*Do you have copies of your organizations charter & by-laws, the last annual report & it's 501-C-3 IRS return?

*Have you ever worked with animals-wild or domestic? If yes, when & where? Do you own a pet?

*Do you eat meat?

*Are those shoes, belt or that handbag made of leather?

*What would happen to all the animals if all zoos, circuses, etc. were closed?

*What percentage of the money your organization collects goes to purchase & preserve habitat for animals in the wild?

*Have your celebrity spokes-person ever earned a penny from a movie or TV project with a trained animal in it? (Alec Baldwin collected plenty for his work in "The Edge" with co-star, Bart, the bear.)

These are but a few of the questions to ask. Better yet, run off a brochure. The public seems to place more validity in any printed word. That's how the animal rightist spread their word. Finally, I urge all circus fans, circus professionals & producers to take the threat of animal rightist seriously! They have money, & the attention of the media. Each of their small wins will lead to bigger & bigger ones. Their wins are our losses!

"When a circus becomes big & recognized, it reaches the point that the owner thought it to be when it was first started."

NOTES TO THE EDITOR

Al House reports that on a recent trip to Germany, 2 German circus fans helped them find Circus Rolandos, a family circus, in the southern city of Gera. The 15 performers, all doing multiple acts, included in-laws of 2 generations. The performance was excellent, with a good variety of animals: dogs, ponies, horses, monkeys, camels & bears. All were housed cleanly & looked well kept.

We next saw Circus Belly, owned & run by the Kroehler family, a man & wife & 5 talented children. They had a big spread of animals, including 2 cages, one of bears, one of monkeys; a chimp; many horses that included a 6 liberty act; many camels with babies as well as dogs & goats. All were well kept & equipment was in fine condition. The performance lasted 2 hours, was well paced & well received. The 3rd circus we visited was Circus Kaiser. Not a good report on this one. Most of the performers, Czechs, had left because they weren't being paid. They had about 40 horses of many breeds & colors, many ponies, 4 camels & a cage of monkeys & bears. Stock was lot grazed to save money, the cages weren't well maintained. We didn't stay for the show. The next show, Zircus Charles Knie, was a different story. Here was a show with class & a flair. The performance was top notch, with a big cage act, good lighting, a fine magician/announcer, polished eastern bloc performers & Knie's excellent liberty horse act. The show, now in its 3rd year of Knie's ownership, has much equipment from the former East German circus, Circus Aeros. Knie is continually upgrading the equipment.

He started with newly painted show fronts & is slowly working his way around the rest of the equipment. In evidence was a new sleeper wagon for Moroccan workers, made from a metal shipping container to replace an old wooden round roof show wagon. *Frank Robie reports that after he left the CFA Convention & the Kelly-Miller Circus lot he had more fun on the way home! He caught Roberts Bros. in Millhall, PA. In Schneckville, there was the county fair & saw Tom Shay & the David Blanchfield Ring #86, filling a tent with 10 tables of circus models. He then stopped at a very old amusement park in Knoebels Grove-no gate fee & no parking fee-with rides galore. Coming to the Convention, he found Walker Bros. Circus! He got home in time for the 13th Annual Meadowlands Fair. Ward Hall & his old time side show was on the backside of the lot with an expanded human oddities show. A bearded lady, a sword swallower, a block-head, a really remarkable young disjointed lad, Little Pete, fire eater, Howard Huge,

(715 lb.) fat man. On the grounds were numerous pit shows; littlest horse, littlest human (female), snake-headed girl illusion, largest rodent, exotic cats & more. There was Commerford Petting Zoo from Goshen, CT. They had an elephant, Beulah, about 4 years old, weighing 10,000 lbs. that was very unusual for its soft, foam like hide-all over. It looked like crushed velvet. (Frank & Jack Belles were leaving to go to Peru & stop at 4-5 more county fairs & amusement parks along the way. Please write about those experiences, Frank.) *Gary Payne, from Waterbury, CT. reports that the 14th Annual Kid's BackYard Circus, a project of CFA Barnum Top No. 12 will take place on Aug. 15. A "very-not-for-profit" project. It has its own 40x60 cable reinforced vinyl big top. The show is a combination of parody, backyard, amateur & make believe. We have our own 20' ring curb, aerial rigging & props. Our youngsters range in age from 2 to 82, as many as 40 performing. Anyone can get into the act, or the audience, if they RSVP me in advance. Only costume & imagination is required. Most acts rehearse a 3-5 minute routine & provide their own recorded music. Our show usually runs 2 hours with intermission.

In the past, we have featured spectacles such as the "Wedding of Tom Thumb", "Chinese New Year", "Gargantua Alive", "The Living Mermaid", & others. Our signature act is Master Missile, featuring a 10 year old "Cannonball" shot from a 10' cannon barrel the length of the tent. Information about attending, performing, or volunteering can be obtained by calling Gary Payne, 42 Peach St., Waterbury, CT. 06708-Ph. 203-754-8234.

*Circus Model Builders Nat'l Gathering-Aug. 6-9 in San Bernardino, CA. (Have fun guys & report on the events!) *Aug. 13-16: Set up next to the large historic railroad engines of the Railroad Museum of PA at Strasburg, David Blanchfield Ring No. 86 in charge. *Aug. 28-30: Lot 3 Gathering at Wabash, IN. Sponsor is The Great Wallace Ring No. 31.

*While "surfing the Net", I found Roadside America home page.(www.roadsideamerica.com) Check out Florida-and Gibsonton. Rustie (Judy Tomaini) Rock reported this account to the web page: "Giant's Camp, Showtown USA: My parents, Al the 8' 4 1/2" Giant & Jeanie, the 2' 6" "Half girl!"-built this camp out of the swamp back in the early 40s. Our restaurant is known all over the country for its bad waitresses & good food. My Dad, "The Giant" died in 1962; my mother, who is almost 82, was just featured on TLC 2-hour special "Side Show".

127th EDITION RINGLING RED UNIT:

Dallas, TX-Reunion Arena-July 29-Aug. 9
Fort Worth, TX-Tarrant Cty Coliseum-Aug. 12-16
Colorado Springs, CO-World Arena-Aug. 20-23
Wichita, KS-Kansas Coliseum-Aug. 28-30
Moline, IL-The Mark of Quad Cities-Sept. 4-6
Kansas City, MO-Kemper Arena-Sept. 9-13
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-FleetCenter-Oct. 14-25
Pittsburgh, PA-Civic Arena-Oct. 28-Nov. 1

128TH EDITION RINGLING BLUE UNIT:

Anaheim, CA-Arrowhead Pond-July 28 to Aug. 4
Inglewood, CA-Great Western Forum-Aug. 6-9
San Diego, CA-Sports Arena-Aug. 12-16
Oakland, CA-The Arena-August 19-23
San Jose, CA-San Jose Arena-August 26-30
San Francisco, CA-Cow Palace-Sept. 3-7
Sacramento, CA-ARCO Arena-Sept. 10-13
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
Cleveland, OH-Gund Arena-Oct. 24-Nov. 1

VIDBEL'S OLDE TYME CIRCUS:

Orleans, MA-Aug. 3-5; Mattapoisett, MA-Aug. 6-7; Rockport, MA-Aug. 8-9

CIRCUS SMIRKUS: St. Albans, Vt-Aug. 3-4; Groveton, NH-Aug. 6; N. Conway, NH-Aug. 8; Manchester, NH-Aug. 10-11; Barton, VT-Aug. 13-14; Berlin, Vt-Aug. 15-16; Greensboro, VT-Aug. 18

WENATCHEE YOUTH CIRCUS: Maupin, OR-Aug. 4-5; Ridgefield, WA-Aug. 7-16; Lake Wenatchee, Wa-Aug. 23-27; Metaline Falls, WA-Sept. 5-6.

HERTZBERG CIRCUS MUSEUM-SAN ANTONIO
"The American Gothics & the Sideshow Attraction." Dr. Robt. O'Connor, Director, will give a lecture & slide show on the preoccupation with human curiosities & the macabre of the circus sideshow until the 1940s. The lives of famous Siamese twins, midgets, tattooed ladies &

dwarfs will be discussed, as well as attitudes among circus administrators & the public about the ethics of exhibiting "freaks". Aug. 4-7 PM. Fee charged.

SIEGFRIED & ROY-Those of you with a computer, please check out this great home page, www.sarmoti.com On May 4, Gildah, Siegfried & Roy's elephant celebrated her 50th birthday. And what a celebration! From the What's New in Our World/Press Release section, there are 5 pictures of her party. There is a huge cake for her, a large table with fruits & vegetables, a picture of her with a lot of children with balloons, another of Gildah standing by a palm tree, eating watermelons, & a great picture of her & Roy playing with a huge beach ball in her beautiful wading pool. This was truly a birthday party fit for a well-cared for elephant! Check it out.

TOLEDO ZOO HAS NEW BABY GIRAFFE

Gracie, the 15 foot giraffe, gave birth to a baby boy on June 23, after a 15 month pregnancy. The father is George. The baby weighs about 120 pounds & is just over 6' tall. If you visit, please look for Bantu, the baby boy gorilla, born in Oct., 1997 to Shani. It is her first baby. Shani was born at the zoo in Jan., 1987. The zoo is on-line at www.toledozoo.org

SENECA PARK ZOO-ROCHESTER, NEW YORK

Two young male giraffes, Dillon, 4 & Dusty, 3, are visiting for the summer. They came from a wildlife park in Ohio. A female will cost a zoo \$15,000. Males are worth about \$5000. The Buffalo Zoo has 6 giraffes & they munch on alfalfa & greens from area grocery stores. At the Toronto Zoo, the giraffes love some foods not found in Africa; beets, apples, carrots & turnips. They "will stick their tongues out a mile" for a Spanish onion. In captivity, a giraffe lives about 30 years, 5 years more than in the wild. At Seneca Park, Dusty & Dillon will live in a 10,000 sq. ft. pen, complete with a barn 20 ft. high.

MOSCOW ZOO ELEPHANT HAS CHAMPAGNE PARTY

-Elbrus, 3 yrs. old, Moscow's favorite zoo elephant, packed his trunk & hit the bars, July 8th, toasting with champagne & abandon. According to Tass news agency, he "got a bit tight" after being given fruitcake & a bucket of champagne. The 800 pound birthday boy waved his trunk & spread cake all over his head. He was born at the zoo 3 years ago to 2 Laotian elephants that were adopted by the zoo when Cuba refused to accept them as a gift from Laos.

RINGLING'S OPEN LETTER TO MONTEL WILLIAMS-HE DOESN'T DEFEND CIRCUS

On July 9, Ringling On-Line posted the following: The following letter was sent to Montel Williams in response to a segment of his show, aired July 6. "The segment was one-sided & inflammatory & this letter addresses the inaccuracies in his letter." Those of you with computers can see the entire letter on Ringling's home page, www.ringling.com-This is 4 pages long & I will print some of the highlights. "We found the misrepresentation of the facts surrounding the care & training of performing animals so appalling that I am writing you to set the record straight. Both you & your guests engaged in the type of misrepresentation that besmirches the reputation of journalists & leads to the increased lack of trust by the viewing public. Examples of misrepresentation fall into 2 major categories: your general approach to the story & your blatant disregard for facts."

"If you have specific allegations about specific organizations, make them. A broad attack on an entire industry using tactics designed to scare audiences is irresponsible. Your tone of voice when you read 1 paragraph of a 2-page statement from Ringling was derisive & mocking. What is the connection between canned hunts & circus performances? And why did you juxtapose the reading of our statement with activity? Your statement to the audience that banning elephants from circuses will somehow preserve the species for the future is absolutely a disservice to both the elephant species & the general public. Asian elephants face a dim future in the wild since population growth & human industry threaten the reduced natural habitat they have left. One place Asian elephants face a true hope of survival is in the circus. Ringling Bros. is working to preserve & protect the species through our *Center for Elephant Conservation*. Kim Basinger is an actress by profession, not an animal expert. She has said publicly that she has never set foot in or behind the scenes at a circus, yet she attacks an industry about which she has no first-hand knowledge. She stated that it is unnatural for elephants to raise their trunks. This is absolutely untrue. In the wild, elephants raise their trunks to throw water & dirt on their backs & to reach for branches. When you showed the video of a canned hunt, you indicated that the feline in the cage was a tiger. The audience actually saw a black panther. Your failure to get the fact right in defense of your own position leads me to question the veracity of your statements on other issues.

Montel, whatever happened to the concept of innocent until proven guilty? In closing, I would invite you & a video crew to attend a performance of Ringling Bros. You will see how we live with & care for the animals, & I can guarantee you will see healthy, well-adjusted & contented animals. In my opinion, you owe your thoughtful viewers a more balanced show. Signed, Catherine Ort-Mabry, Director, Corporate Communications."

RINGLING ELEPHANTS ENJOY FRESNO LUNCH

On July 10, the executive chef & staff of the Holiday Inn served bread & vegetables at a brunch for the Ringling Asian elephants. The Ringling home page shows the elephants happily eating the feast set before them. Check out this great picture from their News & Reviews Page.

*****NOTES TO THE EDITOR*****

*Bill Botkin reports that he & his wife saw the next to last performance of the great amateur circus in Peru, IN. on July 18th. 256 children of all ages of the Peru area participated in the show with the largest paid attendance (1973 people) since the 25th anniversary performance in 1983. Tim Holst, talent director for Ringling was also there. In the evening, while attending a banquet at the Circus Hall of Fame on the old Circus winter quarters, the great Annie Oakley was installed in the Hall of Fame. In attendance also was our close friend, Bess Edwards, Annie's grand-niece of Greenville, OH. Annie Oakley & husband, Frank Butler, spent 4 seasons on Sells Bros. Circus, 1882-1885. Then the couple went on the Buffalo Bill Cody's Wild West Show for 17 years. Annie (her real name was Phobe Ann Mosey) died in Nov. 1926 in her home town of Greenville, OH at the young age of 66. A real showman, very deserving of the International Circus Hall of Fame tribute. *Bob Kitchen of Fall River reports: Carson & Barnes invaded New England & for many of the Fans, this was their first look at this show. As ever, the Fans were warmly welcomed. A very large group of Fans posed with Geary Byrd for photos at the Taunton stand. The show did good business in a very small town of Rochester, MA. *Ken "Turtle" Benson sent a copy of the grocery-store tabloid that had the article about the German zoo keeper being suffocated by elephant poop! He has it framed & hanging on the fence by the elephant ride! The next day, I received a photo of Turtle's framed article, hanging on the orange fence taken by Don Sandman! (Great "Turtle" logo on your envelope, drawn by the great cartoonist, Ray Dirgo!)

VALENTINE VAULTS-FROM 1945 -THE GOLDEN YEARS OF THE BILLBOARD

St. Louis Police Circus: Miss Bernice (Mrs. Johanna Earlin), was injured when she was thrown from her neck harness during the slide-for-life & pitched 20 feet to the floor. The trip rope that breaks her speed stuck & her harness hit it while she was traveling at a high speed, swinging her loose..The Flying Valentinos, who have been playing indoor dates for Bob Morton, have been signed to play the Chicago Stadium & Detroit Olympia for Barnes-Carruthers..Joe & Kolomen Antalek, performers with Polack Bros., passed their citizenship exam, while playing the Cincinnati Shrine date. Another brother, Frank, is serving with the armed forces in France..Anna Antalek suffered broken bones in both feet when she fell 33 feet from a trapeze to the floor at the Dayton Polack Circus. A rope broke, letting her fall & injuries might have been worse had an attendant not broken her fall...From Ringling Bros-Dick Miller reports: Emmett Kelly doing his *Breakfast at Sardi's* gag during intermission is a riot..Paul Jerome walks around the arena dressed as a duck hunter, carrying some 15-20 packs of cigarettes & holding a sign, "The End of a Perfect Day." He takes his life in his hands as the packs are full of the real thing..All the ballet girls are donating used clothing to the rummage sale gag which now looks like Macy's basement..Jackie LeClaire putting his heart & soul into the ballet number..Bob Kellogg is now assisting Johnny Tripp in the Mairzy Doats laundry gag..New girls asking for the showers & the old girls showing them how to take a bucket bath..The heated rummy games continue in the band top, with Merle Evans always in the lucky seat..Tex Copeland has reported back to his camp, as did Clayton Behee..From Cole Bros.-Freddie Freeman reports: Gee Gee Engesser is riding the 16-horse hitch; Milt Herriott is horse trainer..Eileen Harold is a grandmother-her cat has a new family of 4..Otto Griebing, after taking Harold Voise's reducing exercises & body beautiful vitamins, finally collapsed & was out of the show for 2 days. He lost 20 lbs. the hard way. The duck collapsed too..Kurt Oranto got a split ear when he got in the way of a bible back & had to have stitches..Con Colleano has all his fishing tackle ready & promises the show plenty to eat just as soon as he gets to the right spot..Arden Larey visited mom Eileen..Here are a few real performers this writer would like to troupe with just once more!

Alfredo Codona, who bowed out the hard way; Lillian Leitzel, who met a tragic death; Eddie Ward; Jim Dutton; Enrico Diaz; Dick Ford; Slats Beeson; Clary Bruce; Victoria Codona; Hoot Gibson; Art & Tony Concello; Ken Maynard; Buck Jones; Mable Stark; The Nelson Family, when it was all together; May Wirth; Ernest, Percy & Chas. Clarke of the famous Clarkonians; The Ernestos; Tom Mix; Ed & Ira Millette; the Loretta Twins & Poodles Hanneford, when he used to stop the Sells-Floto show any time he wanted..Visitor from the naval air station was Bill Woodcock, Jr., son of Babe & Bill Woodcock. Bill, Sr. is asst. to Arky Scott..From Bailey Bros.-Dolly Jacobs reports: No one can say we haven't had our share of rain & red mud the last week. Modoc, Empress & Judy are about the only ones who have enjoyed it. Their mud baths have given them a pinkish look that has caused many a customer to shake his head & take another look..Another eye-blinker is John Pringle, driving down the highway with his pet donkey who sits right beside his master with his head sticking out of the window..Billie Burke reports: Dolly's mother brought the twins to spend the summer. In the tournament, Judy rides a pony, led by her brother, Punch..Bee Kyle's popcorn stand gives the other concessionaires quite a bit of competition..From Russell Bros.-Dick Lewis reports: Highlight of July 4th was the cookhouse party staged by Steward John Staley. An impromptu party followed in the big top. Papa Cristiani did a round-off flip-flop back somersault to the amazement of the budding acrobats..Winners in the races were Jeannie Sleeter, Mogodar Cristiani & Moline Cristiani. In Wenatchee, Emil Pallenberg's bear Fu bolted out of the big top. When Fu took off, some of the self-styled animal training experts were on hand & here's what happened: Orrin Davenport forgot his rheumatism & leaped 10 ft. to the bandstand; Rex Rossi set a new record by jumping to the top of the ladies' dressing room; Big Bob Reynolds outran the bear & Ann Reynolds did a Clyde Beatty with a kitchen chair to keep Fu out of the wardrobe wagon. Emil ended the excitement by capturing his pet..June, Ortans & Corcita Cristiani create a picture no artist could paint in spec. Astride their huge bareback horses, the girls are lovely. Divisos, with their complicated rigging & Olveras, head perch, are tops..Lucio Cristiani replaces Orrin Davenport for awhile-the only criticism is Lucio doesn't own a whistle!!! (A later issue said Lucio got a whistle.)

**FROM THE GRAND RAPIDS HERALD:
"STEP RIGHT UP-A COOKBOOK FOR ALL
TASTE BUDS"-BY BOBBIE HARVILLE**

In her self-published, "A Circus Girl's Cookbook-3rd Edition-Balanced Recipes," Sarah Chapman includes basic recipes along with others fit for the fanciest of dinner parties. At age 12, Sarah joined the Sarasota High School Sailor Circus. 7 years later, she married Danny Chapman, clown with Ringling Bros. Her specialty act was the balancing trapeze. She & her husband spent 6 years on Ringling. Sarah pays tribute to her husband, Danny, who died in 1983, by including some of his favorite recipes in the book. Her first cookbook came out in 1989, followed by another in 1995. The new book is a combination of both books, with new recipes, photos & anecdotes. She describes the book's style as part recipes, part chatting because it contains stories about her days on the trapeze & many down-to-earth recipes.

During her 33 years of traveling, Sarah's meals were a favorite for many guests. With this book, she shares how & what a circus girl cooks. There are over 200 recipes."

Back Yard is happy to be able to bring you in future issues recipes from Sarah's new book. I have her first book & loved it. This is a must for every circus book collection. And especially for those of you that collect recipe books, as I do. At \$10. a copy (which includes postage) you can't beat the price for a special gift to a circus fan! To order your copy, please send \$10. to:

Sarah Chapman, 922 S.W. Sixth Ave., Grand Rapids, MN 55744. That is Minnesota, folks. I immediately thought Michigan! The cover is a beautiful yellow & red, spiral-bound and has a picture of Sarah doing her head balance trapeze act. There are 137 pages of great recipes & a whole lot of circus memories contained within the book.

And the photos are great. I will be picking recipes for you from both the first book & the new one. If you have any preferences, please let me know.

I'm sure many of you remember Danny Chapman and perhaps you have his book in your collection. Sarah wrote a paper in college called, "To Kiss A Clown." I will have the privilege of printing that for you in coming issues, as Sarah has offered to let me do so. I hope you will like it.

So, from Sarah's new cookbook:

"One of the things Danny used to tell all oncoming clowns, showgirls, & aspiring acts was to keep a diary in case they wanted to write a book one day about their

circus adventure. He never told me to keep a diary, nor did it occur to me to write down some of the events during the 12 times we traveled coast to coast & border to border in this huge country. Danny Chapman died of a heart attack in 1983. I think he would like the idea of this cookbook. For many years, I think he enjoyed my cooking. Danny was an aerialist turned clown & had written a circus novel. Angels must of given me wings during all the years I worked high in the air, because I never fell off my trapeze.

15 years traveling with circuses, taught me more than just my trapeze act. I learned to cook! I learned from reading cookbooks that I took to the dressing room with me. People visited the "backyard" of the circus lot & I asked them about foods from their area.

ITALIAN MEAT BALLS

1 lb. ground chuck	1/4 c. parsley
1 egg	1 garlic clove, pressed
1 c. bread crumbs	1 med. onion, fine chopped
1 tsp. Italian spices	1/2 c. milk
1/4 tsp. pepper	1/2 c. Parmesan cheese

Mix all ingredients & shape into balls from 3/4-1 1/2". Saute until brown in olive oil. Add to sauce last 15 min. of cooking.

SPAGHETTI SAUCE

1 med. onion, chopped	2 bay leaves
2 garlic cloves, pressed	1/4 c. fresh parsley, chop
2 (14 1/2 oz.)cans tomatoes	1 tsp. Italian spices
2 (6 oz.) cans tomato paste	1/4 tsp. pepper
1 c. water	2 tsp. paprika
1 tsp. sugar	2 Tbsp. Olive oil

Saute onions & garlic in oil until golden. Add remaining ingredients. Simmer, covered, for 2 hrs. Add browned meat balls & 1/4 cup wine during last 15 min.

In Oklahoma City one year, I was walking in the back yard when I smelled an aroma coming from Roland & Marsha's trailer. I couldn't resist asking for the recipe for both the sauce & meat balls. Katy & Emmanuel Zacchini were always friendly to me. One day, Katy & I were chatting & I mentioned that I finally had a recipe for sauce. She asked me where I got it from & I told her. She laughed & said, "I gave that recipe to Marsha!" Real Italian spaghetti dinners are served with salad, vino & garlic bread. Thank you, Katy Zacchini, for giving your recipe (in a roundabout way) to this simple, American girl. Once you have mastered this wonderful sauce, you can go on to other Italian favorites." (More recipes & fond memories in the next issue of Back Yard. These "chattings" are great!!)

CLYDE BEATTY'S DAUGHTER, JOYCE FERGUSON, SPEAKS TO CFA FANS...

Harriett had a daughter by a previous marriage, named Elvina. And after Harriett died, Elvina took out an act of lions & she billed herself as Clyde Beatty's daughter. He did take her to court on that. She ended up taking the name of her mother, Harriett Beatty. She traveled for a while, but I have not heard anything about her for years. I don't know whether anyone else has or not.

I know that most people, & we've got articles over here, pointing to the table, about when Nero, the big lion, attacked Dad there in Peru. He always told us, "I think that Nero was trying to save me from a cat that was in the cage. But, he ended up with this great big bite on his hip & he was put into the hospital there at Peru. He just kept getting worse. Terrible infection. A matter of fact, they thought that he was going to die. So, Dr. Steven Maloof (may be spelled wrong. Edit.), his doctor, went out to the winter quarters & they scraped the teeth of Nero & the tongue & they got all these specimens & I believe that they sent them to Europe, & they made up serum that they sent back & they started giving it to Dad & he started getting better.

The funny thing about it was that Rick, my son-in-law's grandmother, was his nurse.

As she told me, "He was a charming young man." But she said that after he started getting better, 'I had to take his clothes & hide them. I had to watch him all the time because he wanted to go back to work.' And she said, He charmed some of those people, but he didn't pull it over my eyes." Another story that has been printed many ways-I know that you have read it a lot-but I know this one to be true; we were out visiting with Dad, & of course, you know that he had always put the robe on & walked by all the cages & the lions & tigers & talked to them afterwards & that kinda' settled himself down. He had just come back to the trailer, & you'd hear that knock. You'd know what it meant. I believe that it was Red Hartman that was knocking at the door & he said, "Clyde, there is a tiger loose under the bleachers." And Dad said, "OK, we'll go & handle it." And so, Bud & I came out of the trailer, and, as usual, I was expecting another daughter, & we got in the car & locked the doors. So Dad & a couple of the guys kept going on & pretty soon he came back & he said, "Got that thing all taken care of." He looked at Bud & he said, "You know, I thought I was talking to you, & telling you what we were going to do and how we were kinda' keeping the

excitement down & everything." He said, "I turned around & you weren't there! Dad said that as a fire chief I thought that was your job-that you were supposed to save lives & protect lives. Bud said, "Yes, against fires & accidents, but not wild animals!" They kinda' teased Bud about that for quite a while afterwards. Dad always wanted us to come & travel with him on the circus.

He said, "I know that if Bud would sell tickets, I wouldn't get cheated." But we weren't the kind, you know, that traveled around that much, so we ended up in Peru & Dad visited us (talk about expecting!) about every 2 years. And there I was, every 2 years! So, the last time he went up to the hospital to see Candy & he said, "Either I'm going to have to change my route, or you're going to have to quit drinking this Peru water!"

Dad later married Jane Able, who was a nightclub performer, & I'll tell you that she is not too much older than I am. That's not saying much right now, but I thought that she looked just like Lana Turner. She was just the opposite of Harriett. She was very friendly. She came to our house; she met with my mother. Dad & her had a handsome boy. Blonde, curly hair that didn't care a thing about the circus-animals or anything. As a matter of fact, he quit college, I think it was his senior year, & opened up a surfboard manufacturing business & traveled all over with that kind of business.

My dad was a person that really liked to give gifts. He was always sending something. I know that for my 18th birthday, I got this beautiful garnet & diamond ring & watch. For graduation, he sent me this diamond cocktail ring. Afterwards, Jane & he would send things to the girls. Gold charm bracelets, & pearl necklaces & he was really very good with doing things like that & remembering things. We also had a lot of fun when we went out. I can remember that silver trailer, which I thought was fantastic! But then, when we went to the railroad car, (you will see a lot of pictures up here that we took) when he had his railroad car-that was really living! I went back one time & stayed with some friends in the regular card & I thought, "Oh gosh, you are kinda' squeezed in, you know, with 3 layers of bunks." So the next night, I went back into the railroad car.

I can remember a silver automobile that he had. And Red Hartman & Bud & I (I don't remember whether Jane went or not), went to the grocery store. This car had lion mane on the floor & zebra seats & don't you know that we had a fender bender when we were coming back. All this milk and juice and everything went all over the car.

It was kind of a mess, but it had to be cleaned up because it was shown in the circus. They drove it in every day for the circus!

I remember taking Sandra & walking up & down, talking to the lions & tigers & Dad telling her, "You don't do this unless I'm with you." Then one of the girls took her back & put the hook, you know, she was going to do the hair hang. Dad said, "No, you'll hurt her, she'll be hurt. You can't do that." He was kind of a possessive person, too, & a bossy person with me. We'd get to ride in the spec; ride the elephants & the horses & I'd have a real good time. And the one time, it happened right here in Cleveland. My mother called & said, "You've got to send the girls home. Graduation is next week." And I said, "OK." So, all of us girls sat around & debated whether we wanted to go back home for graduation or stay with the circus & have fun. But, Dad got us some gifts & sent us on home so we were there for graduation.

Usually my friends were surprised when you would walk out on the lot & they would say, "Where's your dad?" And I'd say, "That little guy standing right over there!" They expected this huge man, that was going to train wild animals & tigers, to be a really big person. But, he was only 5' 6! Very muscular. He had to be to handle a chair, a whip, a gun & everything else, while he was performing with these animals. He always said that the effective training is based on patience & firmness. He trained animals, he did not train them. he said that he wouldn't put his head in a lion's mouth-their breath was so bad that it would knock you down! He would take a lot of time with the new animals, training them with signals. Like they would come into the chute & he would teach them the signals & the directions of which way to go; how many pedestals to go up & really took a lot of time perfecting this act. He said that he preferred wild jungle animals because they were better performers; were more alert; were more intelligent & more savage, of course. He said the whip cracked to express commands; the gun with the blanks simply made noise. The chair provides protection because it can be used to confuse & halt a charging animal. I don't think that he ever thought of anything else but being a wild animal trainer. I think that he perfected one of the greatest & most exciting acts that there ever was. I think that Gunther Gebel had done a fantastic job with all kinds of animals. I was telling people that Indiana is famous for circus, but it is also famous for the 500 mile race. I said that people go to see the 500 mile race to see if there is going to be an accident.

I think that they used to go & watch Dad a lot & sit on the end of their chair waiting to see if that lion or tiger was going to chew him up, because he really had a quick & exciting act. He did have his own circus & he had about 600 people that he hired; & about 150 animals to take care of. Like barbershop, the diesel-electric shop, post office & it was valued, probably over 1 million. 700,000 dollars. But, then after he got really working with the circus, & found out that the daily expenses were between 8-10,000 dollars, he sold the circus. There were fellows by the names of McCloskey, Keeran & Jerry Collins. And Jerry used to be the fellow that owned the dog tracks in Florida, & was really an exciting guy. I met him quite a few times.

In Peru, we had this gentleman that owned a shoe store & he & his family lived upstairs. He called us after his daughter grew up & didn't have to have protection, and told Bud, "You want to come over to this place. I have got one of Clyde's cages. I have to put on the roof so that my daughter can go out there & play, & not have to worry about it. So, if you want to, you can come & get it. Bud said, "Well, OK." And this was the old steel type. So, Bud was on the fire department & he got a bunch of the firemen ready & they went over & tried to work with it & they got most of it torn down, except the last piece. The chain broke & we thought they were all going to be laying flat on the ground! But, we do have that cage down & it is out at the Circus Hall of Fame now. I did get to Ventura. Jane called me & said that Dad was not doing well at all & he had become ill with the cancer of the esophagus & it was spreading a lot. She said, "Just come out for a visit." I said, OK. I got there & he was very thin, but very determined. Every morning we'd get up & have a big breakfast & we'd sit around & talk & he was always planning for the route that he was going to go on next year. And he worried that he wanted to get back with the cats because someone else was handling them now & you know, that's not him. He wanted to get back. It was a sad time, but it was really a good time for us because Dad & Jane & Clydie & I really enjoyed being together. It was just a week later when I got back, that she called & said that he had passed away. I guess you never think of your parents dying. It really took me a long time to realize that both my mom & dad were gone, & how much they meant to me & how they meant to each other. They never stopped being very friendly, very close people.

(To Be Continued)

RUMBLINGS FROM THE CRUMMY

By Brian Nunn

*A story for professionals. Say, for instance, you've been hired to put foot manners on a rank or spoiled horse in order to stand quiet for a horse-shoer. And so the owner insists on distracting & treating the animal with goodies at any given time. Is this conducive to a positive, solid, dependable result? The difference between professionals & goofs has been obvious to all except the goofs. But there you have it. How are you going to keep customers if you make them mad. One time while trimming a poor, old mare, the owner is drifting in & out, saying, "I can't keep weight on her no matter what I do." I'd had a look around. The sorry, old horse had 1/4 acre (bare), a slimy trough, the stall hadn't been cleaned since Joseph cleaned it for Mary. I waited till the job was done & straightened out my back, & said, "Have you heard about the new miracle drug the vets have come up with?" "Hey," says he, "really?" And I say, "Yeah, it's called FOOD!" He ran me off the place & his check bounced. Go figure.

*Leaving Florida one time, with 4 elephants & 3 horses, we got hung up at the agricultural station. The coggins test had been done on the horses. There was pictures & descriptions on the paper work. There was a problem with the inspector. He was never clear on what the problem was, but wouldn't let us pass. We waited most of the day in the heat-couldn't unload or water. Later that day, when the shift change happened, the new guy says, "What are you doing here?" We tell him & he says, "Let me see the papers," and to open the door for him so he can see the horses. He says, "I hope you don't mind but I'm not climbing over the elephants to see the horses." He got himself a box so he could see better. Looked at the horses, then at the paper work. He says, "Yep, they're horses all right. One white one, 2 brown ones. You can go ahead." Some people remain people when they're given a badge & some people become very strange.

*Going thru the scale in Mississippi, heading east. We go into the scale-house & this kid says you've got 41,000 pounds on the back axle. He's all excited. Benny waits a couple of seconds & says that's the total weight. The kid says, "No, you're overweight." Benny talks him into driving over the scales again. So after that, the kid was real embarrassed, but Benny's not amused. We paid the permit money with a can full of pennies and nickels.

*It was a few years ago, but I remember the day when lawyers & doctors were allowed to advertise over TV

or anywhere for that matter. I remember thinking, Oh, oh! We're in for it now. I think I was right for feeling dread. Ambulance chasers wear silk suits & spend \$\$\$ on advertising. They used to be the sleazy, hiding in the shadows type.

*Remembering to try & keep getting into trouble. No matter what, an experienced, known elephant man is essential for good management. I'm not pitching for a job cause I'm out of it. It's my strong opinion "you got elephants, you need an elephant man." Some actor can work the act; most elephant men I know wouldn't have a problem with this. But, the elephants need an elephant man. And I'd want power to hire a hand to boot.

The first time I heard this idea was from Bill Johnston, 15 years ago. Bill didn't care who looked good, he just wanted the animals properly cared for.

7/21-USDA DISMISSES ANIMAL WELFARE CASE AGAINST RINGLING BROS. CIRCUS

Vienna, VA: Ringling Bros. announced today that the USDA's case brought after the death of Kenny, a 3-year-old Asian elephant, has been dismissed. The USDA also affirmed that Ringling Bros. has never been found in violation of the Animal Welfare Act, the law under which the USDA first made its allegations. The USDA stated that their original charge did not state that Ringling was responsible for Kenny's death, despite contradictory & inaccurate media reports. The USDA's statement upholding Ringling's record in animal care reinforces the company's consistent position that it is dedicated to meeting or exceeding federal care standards for all its animals. Through active, hands-on interaction & research projects, Ringling continuously strives to enhance its body of knowledge about the care standards & veterinary treatment for its animals. Furthermore, Ringling freely shares the knowledge it acquires with the scientific, veterinary & conservation communities. The company asserts that efforts like these will play a significant role in the preservation of endangered species, especially the Asian elephant. "We are pleased that we came to an understanding with the USDA in this case. Ringling is proud of its positive, on-going relationship with the Dept. & this agreement brings closure to Kenny's unfortunate death in a fair & equitable manner," said Stuart Snyder, Feld Entertainment President & Chief Operating Officer. Kenny's death was caused by an unknown viral or bacterial infection & was unavoidable.



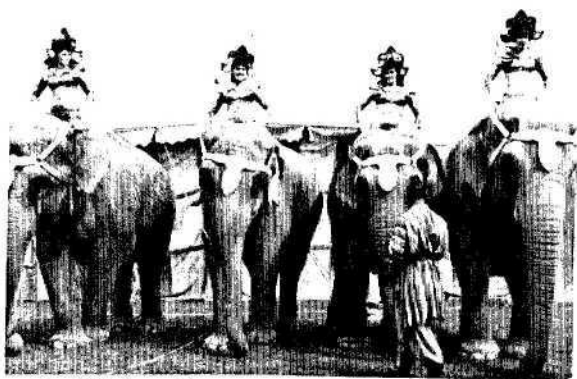
GAONAS



Dell + BABS GRAHAM Dorothy + China DUBBIN
(FROM Dorothy DUBBIN Collection)



ELBA-RITA - MIKE



MILLS BROS. 1963

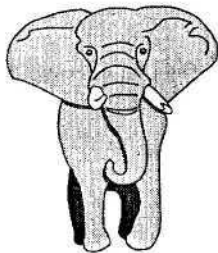


The DUBSKY'S



Betty Escalante, Tosca Later, Gertrude Gourdeau, Celia Lee,
Fleurette Gourdeau, Phyllis Johnson, Marie Yarbroug, — Al G. Barnes-Sells Floto Circus
Vivian Nelson, Mary O'Neill
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