



6th Year

January 3, 1977

Number 1

## Chimps Die in Fire

Officials believe that faulty wiring caused the fire that gutted Col. Jerry Lipko's camper and claimed the lives of his six performing chimps. The fire occurred at Frankport, Ill., on Dec. 10th, while Jerry was in a barbershop.

"I was in a barbershop in Frankport and the barber went to the window because he said he thought he heard a noise coming from my truck, which was parked just outside the door," Lipko said. "Everything seemed to be all right so he finished my hair. When I went outside I immediately saw smoke pouring out of a ventilation louver and I ran to the door of the truck.

"When I opened the door the truck was filled with thick black smoke and I couldn't see inside. But I went in, anyway, and opened a window, hoping to get some of the smoke

out. When I did that, though, the fire just got worse. So I opened the cages and took out Sammy and Skippy first."

Firefighters were unsuccessful in their attempts to revive the chimps. Skippy at 16 was the oldest and Sammy was scheduled to appear in an upcoming movie.

Lipko estimates his loss at \$50,000 with the chimps, wardrobe, props and truck.

"It has left me in a bad spot," says Jerry, "but I have some other chimps and as a result will be able to fulfill all my coming 1977 contracts."

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## Dates Set

The 1977 Texas Circuit dates were announced last week along with reports that some top name acts were being contacted for the annual Shrine tour.

The dates and chairman for the series includes:

Hella Temple - Sept. 12-18 (Morris Bentley);

Alzafar Temple - Sept. 20-25 (Col. M. V.

Johnston); Ben Hur Temple - Sept. 27-Oct. 2

(Alfred Tramp); Arabia Temple - Oct. 6-16

(Jim McMahan) and Moslah Temple - Oct. 27-

Nov. 5 (Carl Ellis).

## Put to Sleep

Julie, an Indian elephant who spent 26 of her 30 years in the Central Park Zoo, in New York City, was put to death on Dec. 15th. She died after an injection of pentobarbital sodium and her body was buried in a landfill in Brooklyn.

The elephant was suffering from chronic leg lesions and a fungus infection of the throat, both of which caused her pain. For the past 11 years she has had personality problems and has injured several people. Her last attack was against keeper Harry Wooster, who had to be

## New Plans

Plans to expand Circus World park at Haines, Fla., were recently announced by Mattel, Inc. The \$19 million park, which opened last spring after a \$3 million renovation, will be doubled in size, according to the current plans.

The expansion will include the addition of a major adventure attraction, a theme children's playground, a petting zoo, a large animal menagerie, an expanded participation circus, circus historical displays and new rest room facilities. The children's playground will border on a lake that is yet to be built.

Circus World is owned by Mattel, Inc., who in its report to stockholders on July 31st, noted the park was operating at a loss and cautioned that further losses could be anticipated. Originally the park was expected to rival the Walt Disney World, but the recession and declining tourism caused those hopes to be scrapped.

dragged out of the corral and suffered leg and back injuries.

She just became too dangerous, said one zoo official. The decision to put her to sleep was made after a consultation with several vets, and some local and national zoo experts.

## MANY THANKS

TO ALL THOSE WHO HELPED IN MY MOMENT OF NEED, DURING THE TRAGEDY. ESPECIALY BILL BRICKLE AND JOHN MEYERS. MY KIDS ARE GONE TO HEAVEN BUT WILL NEVER BE FORGOTTEN.

..... Col. Jerry Lipko

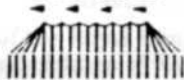
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IN LOVING MEMORY OF  
ELIZABETH HANNEFORD CLARKE

who left us December 8, 1975

\*

Ernestine Clarke Baer  
and family

Parley - Kim - Dale - Anthony  
and Anthony, Jr.

\*

And with fond recollections of  
the Original Hanneford Family  
NANA - POODLES - GEORGE, SR.  
AND KAY FRANCIS



# BILLY BARTON....

**HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL !!!**

**FAMOUS HUNT** has been negotiating with **CAPT. KANGAROO** to be their TV Star Attraction for the '77 season. Years back, famed Kid-hero **UNCLE DON** toured with the Hunt's Circus to the mutual success of both.

**HARRY** and **DAVID RAWLS** new rep-tenter is named **The Great American Chautauqua** and is using an impressive four-page herald. The new show will carry a band, approximately 15 persons (including circus acts who will perform at intermission), all played under a candy-striped big top, a 60 with three 30's. Towns are already booked for a Spring opening. A rep-show, in this day and age, is a nostalgia-piece, and consequently a very brave venture. We wish them luck!

**JOHN** and **HERTA CUNEO** have been laying over at the Great Western Show Grounds in L.A., so reports **JIM SWAFFORD** who spied their units from a freeway....Well known animal trainer **BOB LEONARD** is spending the winter in Mission (Tex) along with his family....**HERBIE WEBER** decided against playing dates in Mexico, went down just to relax. It's rumored **Herbie** may work on Rudy Bros....Ditto **MILONGA CLINE** with her liberty horses....Boss canvasman **ERIC JAEGER** is toughening up his muscles by cutting timber until the new tent season gets underway.

**WILLY STOREY** replaced his burned up station wagon with a GM double cab pickup; daughter **TINA** has a new truck and camper and S&G mechanic **BOB FOGG** purchased an Avion....**JOHN MONROE**, King-Cole side show mgr., bought property in DeLand - a town that is turning into a little Sarasota with so many show people moving in and settling down.

**FLORINE** and **PHIL OLER** open at the Atlanta Sports Show Jan. 8, after which they'll play the Columbus and Dayton Sports shows, plus circus spots for **HUBL HUBLER**....Jan. 8 sees the launching of **CIRCUS VARGAS** 1977 edition, also in Atlanta; and, on this date, **ANITA KEPPO** and **TOM DESMINI** tie the knot in Florida.

**CHARLES CORONAS** is taking out the Coronas' second unit, the Coronas Thrill Show and 3 Ring Circus which begins its tour at West Orange (NJ) in April.....**STEVIE CORONAS** baby is due in Feb. and **SERGE** sez: "It'll be a boy!" (No comment **Stevie!**)....Once the baby is center ringed **Stevie** shapes up and ships out on her new Rocket Ship aerial rigging....The **FRED CANESTRELLI** Family have put together their new

Russian Swing act.....**ELOISE BERCHTOLD** played the Salt Lake City date for **Page-Cavanaugh** in Dec.... 92 yr. old **TED WILSON** is operating a Midget Horse Show for **D. R. MILLER** in the Texas Valley....**BONNIE & CLYDE** are now appearing at the **Witches Brew** in Naples (Fla.).

**NEIL FRANZEN** bought a llama from **BOBBY GIBBS** who, incidentally, lives only a short distance from **HOWARD SUESZ**. Neil also acquired a male baby elephant and two chimps and has been staying at **MELVIN SILVERLAKE**'s place in Donna (Tex)....**ROSA GIBBS** who suffered dreadful health problems all through '76 topped the year by undergoing 4-hour surgery in Houston for removal of a tumor from her intestines. Fortunately, the tumor was benign....**BOBBY** returns to Baraboo for the summer, his 3rd season. He told me he is still searching for his midget pony, stolen during the Fort Worth Shrine date.

**TOMMY HANNEFORD** bought the bird act from **BETTY WOODS** when she and Billy "retired" following the New Orleans Shrine date in Nov. The act will be part of this year's program along with an elaborate African Jungle Opening that focuses on **TAJANA**'s tiger act....**Tajana** finally knows what it is like to be a "real mother" (if you discount the mothering she's given Tommy all these years!). Every morning at 6 am she's up to get little **NELLIE** off to school!

When the Clyde Beatty Circus played Sarasota in Dec., **COUNT NICHOLAS** asked the show folks in the audience to rise. An estimated 300 persons stood. **DAVE MERRIFIELD** who called me prior to attending the show and said he would call back, never did. Maybe he got caught in the crush!

**FRAZIER MOHAWK** of **PUCK'S CANADIAN CIRCUS** called to say that their show had just finished a "dream Sequence" in the new **RICHARD BURTON** film "Equus." "We figured it out," he said, "that the rate of pay amounted to \$110,000 per hour. We were only in it 4 seconds."

The **ELKINS SISTERS** were on the **MIKE DOUGLAS** Show on Dec. 7 and the new black poodle, costumed to match the girls, is a scene-stealer. But, so is **KURT**, who came on in the "do segment" with high kicks and a split, all for the edification of Co-host **KEVIN DOBSON** (of Kojak). Honestly.....now, Kurt, I thought I was the only one who did things like that!!

See you down the road, luvs.

## On the road

The 1977 season for RBBB's Red Unit got underway last month when the show opened at Venice, Fla., on Dec. 30th. Show officials report the circus will be on the road for some 49 weeks, with a tentative closing date set for early in December.

New this year will be the debut of Gunther Gebel-Williams' 15 leopard act. He will also be presenting his other wild animal acts and the elephant number.

Other features will include three rings of dogs (Stevensons, Antalek, Farfan) and three rings of chimps (Stevensons, Lenz, Antalek).

## PEOPLE

EMANUEL ZACCHINI set a record when he was shot from a cannon on the RBBB Circus in 1940. He traveled a distance of 175 feet, with a muzzle velocity estimated at 54 m.p.h.

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## CORRECTION

Reader Jack Niblett, of England, writes to correct a couple of recent errors in Circus Report.

1 - Mary and Bailey Fossett (brother and sister) are the owners of the Sir Robert Fossett's Circus. They are proud of the fact that the show, for some 200 years, has been owned and operated by the Fossett Family.

2 - Reports that Dick Chipperfield was attacked by lions was in error. He was actually attacked by leopards. He was badly bitten and scratched, but was expected to be back performing for the annual Christmas Circus.

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**Help!**

A number of animals at the Point Defiance Zoo (Tacoma, Wash.) may be evicted, unless \$6 million can be raised for renovation. The facilities have been described as inadequate and because of federal regulations the zoo may be forced to sell off most of its large animals.

Many animals have already been shipped off to other zoos. Now a polar bear, two black bears, two Bengal tigers, an Asian leopard, eight monkeys, four gibbons and an Asian elephant are facing eviction. The rest of the zoo, including an aquarium, would be retained.

The \$6 million estimated cost has been placed before the local citizens as a bond issue and is to go for renovation and improvements. Other means of obtaining operating capital have also been proposed, including an admission fee.

Norman R. Winnick, director of the zoo, says no one knows for sure how long the zoo has been in existence. Records show that animals have been housed at the site since the 1890's. Many of the buildings, he added, were built in 1905 and they have deteriorated badly.

## Here's to a Big Circus Season



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**Boeing Party**

Employees, their families and friends were treated to a special Christmas Circus Party in Seattle (Wash.) by the Boeing Co. on Dec. 19th. In all more than 80,000 people attended the two performances, surpassing the record attendance achieved at Seattle's Kingdome by the Billy Graham Crusade.

The program featured lions, tigers, elephants, members of the Wenatchee Youth Circus, University of Washington gymnasts, the Shorecrest High School Band, the Ingraham Vocal Ensemble and a surprise visit by Danny Kaye.

**TALENT WANTED**

The Wisconsin Bureau provides programs for schools. Talent needed for 1978 - 1979 School Year.

Write: WISCONSIN BUREAU  
Tilleda, Wisc. - 54978

Phone: (715) 787-3300

## Keeps Busy

At the present time some five adult, female elephants are undergoing training at the Rex Williams quarters near Myakka City, Fla. Six more elephants are due to arrive at the quarters before the winter is over.

Rex has had a busy year, training first a pair of Indian elephants for the Jacksonville Zoo (in March) and then a pair of Africans (in October) for a Safari Complex at the same zoo.

During the summer Rex had his own acts at the Catskill Game Farm (N.Y.) and operated an elephant ride. In his off-time he broke some young African elephants.

At the Florida quarters, in addition to the Africans are seven Indian elephants, including three young females being broke for an act which will be shown at the Bronx Zoo (N.Y.) as well as at other dates.

A fair date at Fort Lauderdale (Fla) was recently completed by Rex, who worked his elephant ride. The ride will also be operated at a variety

*happy New Year*

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40 foot Low Boy semi - 10' x 20'  
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## WANTED

WANT CONTRACTING AGENTS. Holiday Hippodrome is expanding again. Can place 3 qualified booking agents for year round work. Must be capable of setting phones.

For interview call:  
Bill Garden or Lee Donoghue  
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## PEOPLE

HOLVECK & CO. (illusionists) will tour with the JAMES M. COLE Circus which starts the middle of the month.

CLAUDE TONOLLI, concessionaire, recently provided free pop corn and cotton candy for school children in Van Nuys and Reseda (Ca.).

PATCHES & CHECKERS (Steve Baker and Gary Ray) worked a special Wisconsin TV spot on Christmas Eve.

MARK WILSON, magician, was featured on the Merv Griffin TV Show on Dec. 22nd.

JIM DANDY, bicyclist/juggler/balancer, was featured on the BING CROSBY show in San Francisco last month, as was TEMPLE, the Magician.

## FOR SALE

### OLD TIME CIRCUS POSTERS

Authentic reproductions of original Circus lithographs dating from 1894 to 1925.

Descriptive folder to hold same is included with each order.

4 Posters and Folder  
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I am always interested in purchasing photos of pre-1950's circuses.

## Keeping Active

Yvette's Mini Circus, operated by Fay Snyder, played a five day engagement at the Park Plaza Mall (San Pedro, Calif.) over the Thanksgiving Day week, then moved to the Music Center in Los Angeles for a December date, followed by an engagement at the Hollywood Bowl.

Fay had three horses in the opera "Carmen" presented at Los Angeles by the New York Opera Co. At the Hollywood Bowl her dog act closed the show "because none of the stars wanted to follow a dog act."

## Show Acts

A Christmas program for local kiddies, sponsored by a Sacramento (Calif.) newspaper, radio station and TV station offered some top name acts last month.

Appearing in the show were: Lance Link's Chimps; Frenchie, the Clown; The Alcey's, balancing act; The Dilly Dallys, comedy and Scott Plummer, the "Prince of the Banjo."

Mike and Sally LaTorres  
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CONTACT: MIKE LaTORRES

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Also, A-1 Animal Supt

## Santa's Show

Wisconsin papers, radio and TV outlets were enthusiastic about "Santa's Christmas Circus" which played three dates in the state. A considerable amount of publicity was generated because it is believed this was the first circus to come out of Green Bay.

The show was produced and directed by Steve Baker and Gary Ray and was sponsored by local businessmen and professional people. Show tickets sold for \$1.00 for children and \$2.00 for adults, with underprivileged children and senior citizens admitted free.

The 90 minute program featured: Bi-centennial Spec; Checkers & Patches, clowns; Mr. & Mrs. Santa Claus; Congo, Almost Human Gorilla; The Amazing Dan Summers, magic; The Patches Burger; The DeMounllins, cradle.

After intermission came: The LeRoys, puppeteers; The World of Fantasy, illusions; Santa's Workshop, production number; Checkers & Patches, circus dogs; Jay Truckey, ventriloquist; Las Marinas, Spanish Folk Songs and the Finale with 20 big head characters.

The cast included: Mike Morgan, organist; Dennis Sherman, drums; Checkers & Patches; Mary Truckey, gorilla girl; Rose Baker, Noel, the Fairy of the North; Jack and Marge De Moulin, Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus; Dan Summers and Jill, magic/illusions; Joshua Silver, gorilla/announcer/head elf.

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## Crosby SHOW

Bing Crosby and his family presented their 9th annual Christmas program at the Laguna Honda Home in San Francisco (Calif.) on Dec. 22. In addition to Crosby, his wife, Kathryn, and sons Nathaniel and Harry were on hand for the program.

The show also featured magicians, dancers, singers, a clown and a balancing act. The show finale included Crosby's oldie - the song "White Christmas."

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to

**CIRCUS VARGAS**

and thanks to

**CLIFFORD E. VARGAS**

for 4 great seasons

... Wally Ross

IN MEMORIAM  
CHESTER SHERMAN

who left this world November 4, 1976

*A Tribute to Chester and all his fellow clowns who have glorified  
the profession he loved so well.*

*An heretofore unpublished poem  
by Chester Sherman*

ON BEING A CLOWN

*Clown! No one but a clown knows what  
That word really means.  
He plays the part of sacrifice  
Through Life's fast changing scenes.  
He makes laughter out of sorrow  
In this world of care and strife  
And gains it by giving up  
The dearest things in life.  
Even a clown must serve his country  
As off to war he goes  
Leaving behind his mask of white  
And ending where - God, only, knows.  
A clown give his best - his all  
He bravely plays his part -  
Yet all he earns in life's returns  
Is often a broken heart.  
But it makes no difference,  
As you and I both know,  
When he hears his Master's voice cry out  
"On With The Show!"  
He leaves his cares behind  
And his voice loudly sings  
For he knows that happiness awaits him  
Within that sawdust ring.*

In memory of Chester's greatness:

Arthur Barrett and Parley Baer

**WANTED**

Information and material wanted on Tom Mix — from his friends, fans, foes and fellow workers.

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**"MERRY CHRISTMAS"**

An amusing incident took place while Jim Silverlake was working with Santa's Space Sleigh at Auburn, Ind., last month.

The crew wears military uniforms, trimmed in gold and quite flashy. Jim was standing on the sidewalk, a cup of coffee in his hand, waiting for the Sleigh to return from its tour. An elderly woman approached and asked "What's this?" Jim smiled back and said "its Santa's Space Sleigh for the kids."

The woman looked around, turned to Jim and smiled. Then she dropped a quarter into his cup of coffee, said "Merry Christmas" and walked away.

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**PEOPLE**

JACK CASSIDY, actor, died in an apartment fire in Los Angeles (Calif.) on Dec. 12th. At one time he was connected romantically with the daughter of Irvin Feld.

TOM UPTON reports he heard from retired band leader HENRY KYES who is still going strong. Henry trouped with Buffalo Bill, RB BB, Beatty, Robinson, Russell, Cole, Hagenbeck, Voise, Sanger, Howes, Davenport, Bill Kay, Sparks and Polack. His address is: P. O. Box 2291, Sarasota, Fla. 33578.

**WANTED**

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ALSO WANT

Barnum & Bailey and Ringling Bros. programs prior to 1919.

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## Magic Tour

Magic-Illusionist Professor Stu Miller has formed an alliance with Mearl Johnson Associates and will play a 20 week route this season. Mearl Johnson was formerly connected with the Diamond S Rodeo in a joint operation with Ralph Schaupaccer. That association has since been disbanded and most of the equipment was sold to Hoxie Tucker.

The new magic show will travel along the same route previously played by the rodeo. Twelve people will be with the show, plus a three piece band which will be put together by Chuck Schlarbaum. The program will feature large illusions (levitation, sawing-a-girl-in-half, girl to leopard), and is to be lavishly costumed by Sara Miller who has designed special creations for each illusion.

Stu Miller told CR: "We have a very big show with major productions and for those persons and acts who do not have trailers, we furnish a sleeper. We also carry our own organ and leopard, which we obtained as a cub several years ago from Robert Baudy."

The show will move on five pieces of rolling equipment and will carry their own concession department.

..... Billy Barton

### Miscellaneous

A rare white giraffee was recently photographed in Western Kenya. Game photographer Reinhard Kunkel, says he knows of only three or four such sightings in the last century.

## AVAILABLE

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## Holiday Show

Acts appearing in the Golden Canadian Promotions presentation at the CNE Coliseum in Toronto, Canada, included: Los Comancheros, double trapeze; Clowns; Tramp-Champs, the trampoline; Doubleday & Co., gorilla parody.

The Dec. 12th show was produced by Dan Stapleton for the Dominion Stores. Music for the program was provided by Paul Ferris and his orchestra.

a very Happy New Year

YVETTE'S MINI CIRCUS

Fay Snyder

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**Season's**

**Greetings**

**To Everyone Connected**

**With The  
CIRCUS**



**HARRY THOMAS**

**and his  
TIGERS**



**NOTICE**

BILLY BARTON is back on the road for the  
the 1977 Season

ADDRESS ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO  
"CIRCUS REPORT"

Do NOT use his Private Address

**XMAS FEATURE**

Talent at last month's Show Folks Circus included: Welde's Bears; Hoxie's elephants; The Wallendas, high wire; Eric Adams, chimps; Nock's dogs; Zamperla's riding act; Liz Macias, foot juggler; Sailor Circus Aerial Ballet; Bridget Ballentine, trapeze; Alfredo Landon, producing clown; the Tabaks, perch; Fred Canestrelli Family; Al Dawley, ringmaster; Bill Pruyne band leader; Karl Wallenda, producer; William Kay, director and Joe Bauer, assistant director.

A full, little professional circus was presented for residents and patients of the East Manor Medical Care Center in Sarasota last month, produced by Jack Leontini, who is a patient. Leontini was a well-known circus producer until a stroke forced him into retirement.

The show consisted of the Royal Hungarian Dubskys and the grand-children of Karl Wallenda. It was a one hour show, with ten acts.

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**In Memoriam**

RAFFAELE (Bobo) ZOPPE, born Aug. 6, 1908 in Italy and buried Nov. 25, 1976, at Lakeland Memorial Gardens, Lakeland, Fla. Survivors include: brothers, Oglie and Johnny Zoppe, Sr., and a sister, Aurelia Hall.

**MORE WOES**

In its latest bulletin, the NCATB reports there are possible plans underway to place the African Lion and Mountain Lion (Puma) on the Endangered Species list. The purpose of this move would be to control the importation of animal parts, such as teeth and claws.

It has also been rumored that some humane groups are pressing for introduction of bills that would put an end to the animal business as we know it. The bills include:

- 1 - Phasing out all zoos and replacing them with designated survival centers.
- 2 - The prohibition of trained wild animals for any public display.
- 3 - A "new" Zoo Control Bill which would exclude any animal professional from a position on the proposed board to control zoos.