



5th Year

November 8, 1976

Number 45

Circus Miracle

Some 5,000 spectators watched in horror as high wire walker Gene Mendez fell during a performance of the Alzafar Shrine Circus at San Antonio (Texas) on Oct. 23rd. The performer reportedly slipped on the wire, made a grab for a side wire and then fell. He struck a guy wire on the way down which broke his fall and caused him to land on his shoulder.

Rushed to the local Baptist Hospital he was later listed as being in satisfactory condition. He suffered only a broken left arm

Mendez was booked for the entire run of Texas Shrine shows which concludes at Fort Worth.

After the series of Shrine circuses he was scheduled to fly to England where he would appear in a special Command performance for the Queen.

CIRCUS ACTS

The program presented by Hubler's International Circus at Elria, Ohio, on Oct. 16-17 included:

Overture with "Boom Boom" Browning, band leader; Johnnie Laddie's unsupported ladders; Clowns; Harriett Beatty's lions; Dondi, the baby elephant; Princess Sonja, aerialist.

After intermission were: Susan's Royal Afghans; Clowns; The Aerial Apollos; Zoppe's Rhesus Monkey Revue; Finale.

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Xmas Party

The CFA's Joseph Andrew Rowe Tent will hold its annual Christmas Dinner and Party at the T&J Restaurant, 8526 Valley Blvd., Rosemead, Calif. on Dec. 5th at 5 p.m. Reservations are \$6.50 each and should be mailed to Glenn F. Harrison, 1225 N. Myers St., Burbank, Calif. 91506.

The program will feature music and entertainment, plus some excellent circus films, including the talking movie "Circus" with Emmett Kelly. There will also be an auction of circus items.

Fun Fest

Illinois CFA's held a Fun Fest at the Old Chicago Amusement Park on Oct. 23rd, hosted by entertainment director Brian Morrissey. A brief meeting was held and John C. Goodall, Jr., was elected Illinois State Chairman for the CFA.

After the meeting the group attended the circus performance, which featured: The Segreas, flying trapeze and rola bola; Enrique, and his tops; Aneta Vargas, slack wire juggling; Cleo (Tommy Oberleitner) the magic clown; Saul Shafton, announcer and Emil Hahn, the bandleader.

After the performance Emil Hahn showed the group a movie of Hagenbeck-Wallace Circus, taken in the early 1900's.

SAWDUST TRAIL

Oct. and Nov. found 3 major tent shows in the Mississippi and Louisiana area. Temperatures were the lowest in 30 years, but I'll bet it still beats working on a muddy lot.

La. Purchase Gardens & Zoo closed earlier in the year due to financial problems. Do Do, the Clown, who has worked there for several years says Media pressure forced the closing of the complex. Since the zoo closed in Sept packs of dogs have roamed the area killing \$26,000 in valuable animals. A "Shoot to Kill" order has resulted in the death of one German shepherd thus far.

A Clown and Magic Show has been booked into Louisiana for December. Called "Wonderful World of Children" the show features Coco, the clown and Vince Carmen, the magician. They play under sponsorship and are using phone promotions.

A unique ice show will debut on the Wests Coast in '77 - opening Mar. 7th in California. The show is designed to play small towns that do not have large civic arenas. Using a Hawaiian theme the show will employ some 35 people. (More details later).

Do Do, the Clown, has scheduled a number of dates for T.G.&Y. Family stores for this month. They are similar to the Woolworth store operation.

CFA youngster Earl Allen (80) and his wife Louise, were featured in recent Sunday supplements, showing his circus hobby room and activities.

.....M. L. DUPONT

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Five-Ton Fugitive

After a week of freedom in the Arkansas Ozarks, the Carson & Barnes elephant "Barbara" returned to the circus. "We just opened the back of the truck and she climbed right in," says circus man Jack Fulton.

The elephant darted off into the woods near Perryville on Oct. 20th when she was frightened by the backfire from a passing truck. At the time she was helping to right an overturned circus truck, about 40 miles from Little Rock.

A motorist saw her standing alongside the highway and notified authorities. The elephant darted back into the woods when the circus truck arrived, but as the truck stopped she came out and walked up to it.

Acts Named

Acts working at the Augusta (Ga.) Fair on Oct. 25-30 were: Miss Tina, trapeze; Mario Alberti, hand balancing; Les Thinis, trampoline; and the Dixie Echos, singers.

Appearing with the Royal Danish Circus at the Walnut Mall in Petersburg, Va. (Nov. 4-6) were: Diana, web; Dan & Baxen, clowns; Almiros, jugglers; Miss Tina, trapeze; Rosita & Alberto, plate spinning; Bongo, gorilla parody and Les Thinis, trampoline.

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PEOPLE

DON PHILIPS & Co. (unicycle and juggling), PHIL CHANDLER, ringmaster and wife LINDA (trapeze) and DON SINK, clown, will join RAY MacMAHON and BILL BLIESEN-ER for their Royal American Circus tour on the East Coast this month.

MAYBURN A. MILLER, retired circus owner and elephant trainer has been hospitalized at: St. Lukes Hospital, Room 1520, at 6720 Bertner St., Houston, Texas 77030.

THE BARRY MILLER TROUPE will be on the Bozo TV Show from Chicago in January, then work spot dates, followed by a tour on the James M. Cole show, some mall dates, then join Famous Hunt for the summer.

ERNIE BURCH, clown, was hospitalized for a week in Texas following some cardiac symptoms. MARAN handled the balloon number by herself during that time.

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BILLY BARTON.....

SEVEN WEEKS REMAIN and 1976 will fade into history - but, like most years filled with disaster and upset, it won't fade from the memory that easily or quickly.

The year is not yet out and one new show is already announced for 1977. **ED MIGLEY's** Circus Odyssey, a top-notch, one ring, indoor show that World Premiere's in San Juan on Feb. 17th. The circus will play Ponce and Mayaguez before returning stateside. A total of 48 performances will be given during the 5 1/2 week run, with ample time for sight-seeing.

In addition to the Fire Insurance Headaches Connecticut inflicts on canvas shows, there is a 10% Amusement Tax and a 7% tax levied against concessions.....That Amusement Park in Caracas, scheduled to close due to a subway planned on its site, has been given a reprieve and will remain active throughout the winter. Eventually the park will be forced to re-locate.

KISS, the Rock Band that will NOT permit themselves to be photographed without makeup, added the talents of **UNIQUE McPEAK** to their very visual performance at the Anaheim Stadium Concert. McPeak walked a 550 ft. long cable at a height of 250 ft.

JIMMY CAVARETTA is now catching his illustrious sister **TERRY**, who lost her husband in a tragic plane crash. The act is back at Circus Circus. ...**SANDY DOBRITCH** is booking novelty acts on the **MERV GRIFFIN** show which tapes a full week once a month from Vegas.....**RONRITA's** Kangaroo Novelty (Boomer & Co.) is one of the acts set..... Despite those **SUPER CIRCUS** contretemps, one sponsor has asked Sandy to produce another circus for them in 1977. If he does, you can bet the famed **DOBRITCH** title will be revived.

Other News from Vegas: The **HASSANI TROUPE** are still at the Lido in the Stardust Hotel with a run-of-the-show contract.....**ROCIO THERON** is no longer at the Hacienda - **MAUREEN MITCHELL** of the Flying Medallions, is doing trapeze in that show.

Hoxie Bros. Ringmaster **PHIL CHANDLER** is preparing his Magic Show for Xmas dates. Others readying yuletide tours are **Rudy Jacobi**, **Bill** and **Allen Hill**, and **Big John Strong**.....The **EMMETT**

KELLY Circus (which had its share of problems this season) appears in Springfield (Mo) today, has other dates set in the East.....**BILLY RODGERS** has returned to "Gibtown" where he is busy packing orders for the "winter sewingfest".....**HERBIE WEBER** stopped off enroute to rejoin Page-Cavanaugh in California to play a one day stint for **GEORGE HUBLER** at Garden City, Kans.

JONESY, well-known (and well-liked) ex-prop boss who is now with the Cleveland Stagehands, accompanied the Cleveland Symphony on its tour along the West Coast.....That outstanding small band that toured with the G-M Circus this fall included: Leader **PERRY JOHNSON** (alto Sax and Clarinet), **Gary Larkey** (Tenor Sax and Flute), **Ned Appleby** (Trumpet), **Peter Plaisted** (Tuba) and **Conley Hall** (Drums).

Freeport, Long Island's **ONSTAGE CABARET** will feature a circus starting in early February and running for 15 weeks (Sat. and Sun. only). Owner **STEVE CARLSON** is raising the dance floor flush with the regular theatre stage to make it circular for the single ring. The Disco will continue to operate on Fri. and Sat. nights.....**GATTI-CHARLES** will open its 1977 season at El Paso in March.

FLASH !!! **Sells & Gray** will go out in 1977 as **Hagen Wallace-Sells & Gray Combined Circus**, while the King show will operate as the **King Bros. & Cole Circus**.

For those of us hitting 50 on the downhill slide, let the following give rise to new hope. **MAE WEST**, at 84, is filming "Sextette", co-starring with 6 leading men (all of whom are 50 years younger) and doing **SIX** hard, musical numbers. Prior to the contract signing (a cool half million, plus 20% of the film) **Lloyds of London** had the star examined by a panel of medicos who pronounced La West's health and body to be that of a 35 year old woman's! The secret? **NO** smoking **OR** drinking; **Organic** foods, plenty of rest and exercise **AND** "Positive Thinking". Perhaps our schedules don't permit time for some of the above, **BUT** each of us can (and should) indulge in **POSITIVE THINKING!**

See you down the road, luvv.

CLIFF VARGAS

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harry thomas

British Show

..... Donald C. Nieman

While on a tour of the British Isles this fall, I had the good fortune to see and visit the Sir Robert Fossett's Circus, on its opening day at Carlisle, England, on Sept. 21st.

The lot was one of the neatest and cleanest I have seen. The blue big top, with its yellow and blue striped sidewalls stood out in the gloom. The top had four center poles, arranged in a square, with one row of quarter poles and the side poles;

The entrance marquee, well-lighted with flags of all nations flying from the top name panel, was one of the most attractive ever seen. The left panel (semi) showed the bull act in a long mount, the right panel had the tiger act on it - both very colorful. The zoo was to the right of the entrance, and open from 2:30, except on the day of arrival.

The lead stock, horses and bulls were housed in a tent, caged animals in semis forming a circle along with the tent.

All equipment (over 40 show owned pieces) was in excellent condition, clean and sparkling in its blue and white paint, with circus style lettering in red, white and yellow. The elephant semi, in particular, was most attractive with bulls in a long mount painted on the sides of the trailer.

The performer's vehicles and trailers formed a neat, close circle around the entire backyard

- giving it the appearance of a model circus when viewed from a distance.

Unfortunately, I arrived on the lot after the 4 p.m. matinee had started, and the ticket office was closed. Upon entering the backdoor (CFA card in hand), I was met almost immediately by Bernie Bale, co-owner, also serving as announcer. I introduced myself and immediately was treated like visiting royalty and given the run of the show.

Later in the performance, Al Verlaine, co-owner-manager, came over and introduced himself, inviting me to tea in his trailer after the show. Al also worked the tiger act, and his wife, Bet, a mixed animal act (camel, llamas and mules).

A most enjoyable time was spent in Al's trailer with the owners and several performers in the show. We shared circus experiences in our respective countries, and I believe they asked me more questions about the circus in America than I could ask them about their own show.

I did learn that their show is the second largest in Great Britain. Their usual stand is five to seven days. This year they are celebrating their 200th birthday of the show and its going strong.

The show ran about two hours with a very short 'interval', about ten minutes, and no

(Continued on Page 12)

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76-77

(Part Two)

.....by BILLY BARTON

The biggest, grandest tent circus on the road next year will unquestionably be the new edition of Circus Vargas. The growth of this show since 1973 has been phenomenal. Circus Vargas, during the erratic and unpredictable season of 1976, had its top grossing tour thus far and vast amounts of money have been plowed back into the circus.

This is now the Era of Circus Vargas, like it or not (and many don't). Newcomer Cliff Vargas has accomplished the impossible by playing 90% of his route - the longest of all circuses whether in tents or buildings - stone cold, without sponsorship. What's more he has made money doing things his way and success like that simply cannot be argued with.

A major circus, in even the old days, reached its peak years and then fell into decline. Circus Vargas is in the flush of a 7 year cycle. The prediction is, that if its growth accelerates (and obviously it shall) and if it's "public fame" spreads (as obviously it has), the Circus Vargas title will, at the end of this period, become so entrenched in the public mind that it will be the first title since Clyde Beatty to be competitive with the Ringling Bros., Barnum & Bailey name. Ironically enough, this will be achieved, not in buildings where other shows including Circus Maximus have tried, only to fail, but under the Big Top - and that is the secret. The American public still prefers the circus under a tent. When Ringling went to buildings it kept its name in tact, but lost its charm.

The Hoxie owned Great American Circus, managed by Bill Hill, had a satisfactory year in its first season out. It is a small show, but good looking and was well-framed, with a low nut. G-A will repeat its 1976 route, retaining its present size and format. New equipment is due - an office truck, concession unit and others. The show, which closed Oct. 11th will reopen in March for a longer season.

Sponsors have been satisfied with the circus which established a splendid reputation on its maiden voyage. At the West Virginia State Fair, where the circus appeared for 3 days as a "special Free Attraction", the show was an unqualified hit. Ten shows were given in three days and thousands were turned away at each performance. A return to the fair is imminent in 1977 and although the fair wants the circus for its full 10 day run, a stand of such length seems doubtful.

Kongo, the Ringling leased Gorilla, which was an outstanding attention-grabber on this show, will be sent home. Hoxie Tucker bought a Gorilla and an Orangutan of his own to be featured on the G-A Circus in 1977.

Hoxie's Big Top (the big show) found its season down from 1975, but came off the road in the black. The two-pole, completely round top, is now looking the worse for wear. Rumors are that Hoxie will bring out the one poler for next season which is still in good condition. (Both were designed by John Hall). The prediction is, that Hoxie will decide to buy a new top instead. The one-poler does not provide the broad hippodrome track, or the lighting features for which Hoxie's Big Top Circus is famous. It seems a format too successful to risk changing.

Hoxie Tucker is the last of the really great old-time showmen. He is knowledgeable, knows his territory, when, how and where to set down his shows. All dates are sponsored with the same towns played annually. Excellent seasons are predicted for both Hoxie owned shows in 1977.

Look for Sells & Gray, managed by Wilson Storey, to get a new big top in 1977. The 1976 season was good overall, some weeks were downright spectacular. It had the best performance of any small show on tour and was an instant hit with sponsors. King and Sells & Gray usually exchange routes each season, but this may not be the case in 1977.

Major speculation centers around whether or not Ringling will field a tent in 1977. With each "aye" comes a contrasting "nay". For now, at any rate, three new rumors join the stockpile: (1) That a train is all set and ready to go, to carry the "white" unit into small buildings and small towns; (2) That a tent show is going out with Ringling backing, but no public acknowledgement in the event the show fails (which seems a sure way to make it fail); (3) That a tent unit is being mounted for fair dates only.

Three separate showmen told me on the O.T. during the 1976 season that Ringling was maneuvering to buy their shows, all of which only fueled the rumors. So, add these following items (1) People have been working on canvas and wardrobe not

English Show

The entire Gerry Cottle's Circus - "Britain's leading show" - embarked on Nov. 14th for the Sheik of Onan's 5 day birthday party. The show was selected for the event after the oil-rich Shah's representatives cruised the entire European market, according to Charlie Izzat, show executive.

Cottle is the 31 year old circus wizard who, with a partner, launched a new circus six years ago which, for the past two years, he has owned entirely. It has been featured on several BBC television series and has also been seen on U.S. screens.

Meanwhile, Unit No. 1, is playing the London area and Unit No. 2 is playing dates in the Jersey Islands, after it split off Oct. 8th.

The show moves on some 70 pieces of show-owned equipment, including several 50 foot trailers, one of which is Cottle's living quarters.

Unit 1, caught in Edgware, uses a four pole round top, heated, seating 2,000 around a single ring. A four piece band -- drums, organ, sax, trumpet -- cuts the show beautifully and the two hour performance, under theatrical lighting, was smooth and loaded with talent.

Feature act was the Herculeans, six men in comedy tumbling. Other outstanding acts included Capt. Sydney Howes and his lions (he's been training cats for 50 years), the flyers, liberty horses, four elephants and an exciting forward somersault on a tight wire.

.....Bob Keene

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The deadline for copy is Dec. 11th, so there isn't much time left. Send your greeting ad today!

Regular advertising costs will apply there are no added costs.

Miscellaneous

The 196 season for Int'l All-Star Circus will run into 39 weeks when the show closes in Florida on Dec. 19th. The show will reopen in that state on Jan. 15th.

Circo Padilla has been playing dates along the Texas/Mexico border. The show is operated by the Padilla-Castro brothers, who are cousins of the Padillas owners of the London Palace Circus in Mexico.

PEOPLE

THE SEGRERAS Flying Act will be touring with RBBB's Red Unit in 1977.

FRED F. MENKE (C. Sharp, the Clown) is attending Clown College and enjoying every minute of it.

RAYMOND DUKE is resting at home after an operation at Baylor University Hospital in Dallas, Texas. He expects to be working various Christmas shows in the Texas area.

MAGICIANS

Am preparing a book on magicians with one chapter devoted to those playing on circuses. A small photo of yourself (no 8x10's) and which circus, etc., would be appreciated.

Proper credit will be given you and free copy of the finished book.

Write: HENRY B' VALLEAU, 1600 No. 8th St., Boise, Idaho - 83702.

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76-77 (Continued)

meant for the Red or Blue units; (2) Various show owned titles have appeared on equipment (one theory is that the title must be used after a certain period to remain valid - a distinct possibility).

Meanwhile rumors that Irvin Feld would make an "important announcement" at various engagements along the west coast tour, did not come to pass. Still, the Ringling tent rumor persists and until such time as a statement issued one way or the other the rumors will continue to grow.

Dorey Miller is expected to remain within an established route in familiar territory in 1977. His invasion of the East was not what it should have been. The show lost money and sat for days in several Eastern cities while its route was revamped. When Carson & Barnes reached Levittown, Pa., in the early summer it was turned around and headed back west.

Dorey Miller takes a really large show, with a multitude of animals, into very small towns and is successful doing so. It's a fact that some shows, like

BRITISH SHOW (Continued)

itches. The acts, everyone a top and fast-moving one, were as follows:

Lucky & Charm; Junior Jumbos and Horse Specialty; Clowns; High School Presentation; The Three Tabaks (Hungarian); Anton & Manet (traps); Clowns; Les Brumbachs (Germany); George Biddall and the elephants; Bengal tigers; Nicole, aerial; Exotica (camel, llama, mules); Equine Extravaganza (liberty horses); Clowns; Los Alamos; Greywolf & Tacomis (fire eater); Duo Mariano (jugglers); Tonga & Partner (gorilla parody); The Six Dodi, teeterboard (Hungarian); The Queen.

Famous Hunt, do well only in specific territory. I am at a loss to explain why when other circuses can tour from coast-to-coast and do business. Carson & Barnes is a classic example. The 1977 prediction: By remaining within his established territory Dorey Miller should have a successful 1977 tour, in fact look for this show to do better than it has done in several seasons.

(Continued Next Week)

ATTENTION SARASOTA SHOW FOLKS

The International All-Star Circus, produced by Jim Nordmark and managed by Hines Rucker, will appear at Sarasota's beautiful Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall after a two year absence from Sarasota.

Show date is Monday, December 13th, at 8:30 p.m., and of course, all show folk are welcome as guests of the management.

However, house rules at the Performing Arts Hall require that everyone must have a numbered ticket. So, if you wish to attend as a welcome guest, please feel free to call or write into our office and we will happily provide courtesy tickets. This will assure you of a seat and hopefully avoid offending any of our fellow Sarasota show folks.

Please contact the International All-Star Circus, Circus Plaza Building, 1770 Wood Street (Highway 41 at Osprey Avenue), Sarasota, Florida 33577. The Phone is: (813) 366-1434.

UNUSUAL CIRCUS OFFER!

Found, in a building formerly presumed to be a show printing plant -- many old style wood-carved cuts for posters, etc. These make unusual collector's items and are something that only a few can boast of owning.

- 10 blocks - word 'Circus' sizes run $3\frac{1}{2} \times 5$ to $5\frac{1}{2} \times 12\frac{1}{2}$ Each \$3.00
- 3 color wood cut, $13\frac{1}{2} \times 21$ - word 'circus' plus girl on trapeze and clown head.
3 pieces, one for each color \$12.00
- 2 piece, word 'Circus' with zinc half-tone cut of tiger head. Size is $13\frac{1}{2} \times 13\frac{1}{2}$.
(One piece for each color) \$ 7.50
- 4 misc. wood cuts (13×13) Each \$ 4.00
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YEARS AGO

Beagle's Trained Animal Show of 1926 was owned and operated by Harry Beagle, out of Edwardsburg, Mich. The show played the mid west area, traveling on 5 trucks.

Featured on the show were: trained dogs; ponies; goats; monkeys; aerial and gymnast acts. Johnnie Frazer had the band, the Fish-

Gunnar Amandis

Helen Amandis

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Rumor

The rumor mill was running at full-speed last week with reports that a major circus had been placed on the sale block. Unconfirmed reports indicated that all show equipment and animals were available.

According to the rumors the price was set at \$350,000 and included 50 important and already booked engagements in the western part of the U. S.

er family were the acrobats and aerialists; Mrs. Beagle worked the dogs and four clowns were on the show.

Some dates were: May 1 Edwardsburg, Mich.; July 3-5 Bridgeman, Mich., and July 24 Grittenburg, Ind. The show toured Michigan, Indiana, Illinois and Iowa.

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ROUTES

BEATTY-COLE CIRCUS

Nov. 8 Daytona Beach, Fla.
 9 Cocoa
 10 Melbourne
 11 Ft. Pierce
 12 Vero Beach
 13-14 Deerfield Beach

CIRCUS VARGAS

Nov. 9-11 Bakersfield, Calif.
 12-15 Fresno

EMMETT KELLY, Jr. CIRCUS

Nov. 8 St. Louis, Mo.

LION'S ALL STAR CIRCUS

Nov 13-14 Matamoros, Pa.

RINGLING-BARNUM - Red

Nov 9-21 Cleveland, Ohio.

RINGLING-BARNUM - Blue

Nov 10-21 Nassau, L. I.

KING BROS' CIRCUS

Nov. 8 Glencoe, Ala.
 9 Oxford
 10 Sylacauga
 11 Wetumpka
 12 Greenville
 13 Andalusia
 14 Niceville, Fla.

ROYAL AMERICAN CIR

Nov. 8 Charlotte, N.C.
 10 Hendersonville
 11 Ashville
 12 Statesville

ROYAL DANISH CIRCUS

Nov. 4-6 Petersburg, Va.

ROYAL HANNEFORD CIR

Nov. 13-14 Fort Dix, N.J.

SHRINE CIRCUS

to Nov. 13 Ft. Worth, Tex



The Circus Report is published each week by Don Marcks, 525 Oak St., El Cerrito, Cal.

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