

THE CIRCUS REPORT

AMERICA'S
FAVORITE CIRCUS WEEKLY
OUR 11th YEAR

Number 45

November 8, 1982



PAULETTE BRAUN

In the mail

from JON FRIDAY

The article on Page 14, of the No. 42 issue of Circus Report (Oct. 18) concerning the free "Mini-Circus" at the Tennessee State Fair, at Nashville, Sept. 17-26, by Almond Knight, is totally in error and I was there every show as Ringmaster/emcee.

Ken (Allen) Alan is a talented young illusionist and magician that frames several magic shows under the corporate banner of "Magic Palace Productions." There is no "Ken Allen Attractions" that we're aware of at this writing; so I'm curious as to where Almond Knight came up with that title.

The actual producer of the show he saw at Nashville is Col. Jerry Lipko (who also owns and presents the Lipko Chimpanzees) under his corporate banner of "World Wide Attractions, Inc.," Mr. Lipko produced a variety show at the 1981 Tennessee State Fair featuring illusionist Dorian Blake and several animal acts; produced the 1982 Tennessee State Fair Mini-Circus and just signed the Tennessee State Fair for 1983 as they were highly pleased with the 1982 show.

Mr. Ken Alan produced "A Magic Fantasia" production that is a show in itself I'll agree and part of his package was to furnish sound which was outstanding, scenery and back curtains which featured an elaborate archway with running lights.

The lighting was furnished by Eddie (Dunford) the Clown and myself. We'll probably rent some additional stage lighting including a follow-spot next Sept., if we play the Sports Arena again. Jerry Murphy would like to see us play in a big top nearer the Murphy Exposition attractions and the fair

board would like us in front of the grandstand in the afternoons; but I think it would conflict too much with the preparations for the nightly grandstand shows which this year featured name stars like Willie Nelson.

Capt. Dick, was Dick Kohriester, of course. We also provided a 30 minute show for the Murphy Exposition Jamboree into the wee small hours Sept. 24th. Ken Alan's uncle, Dick Mailler, handled the sound and coordinated lighting cues. Ken and two assistants at Nashville, Carlos Gomez and Madeline Marchante, both very professional and huge assets to him.

If you have "Amusement Business" dated Oct. 23, 1982, check Bruce Honick's story on Page 3 headlined "Ken Alan to Produce Kennywood Magic Program for Next Summer" for further details and then compare/check that with information you ran in Oct. 18th Circus Report.

Just received a letter from Jerry Lipko and he's upset with the article in CR.

Ken Alan is a good friend and a young man going places; but I don't think its fair to Lipko to give Ken credit for producing a show that he really was hired by Lipko, who held the contract and has resigned for 1983.

PEOPLE

THE FABULOUS DARNELLS & CO. recently worked dates for Tommy Hanneford and will be playing Xmas shows around the Chicago area. In January they will play in Flint for the Zerbini-Castle Show and then will tour with the Hamid-Morton Circus.

Show Dates

Beatty-Cole Circus

Nov 8-9 Melbourne, Fla.

10 Homestead

11-12 Homestead AFB

13-14 Deerfield Beach

Brickle Wonderland Circus

Nov 8 Camden, SC

9 Ware Shoals

10 Ridge Springs

11-12 Estill

13 Norway

Liebel Family Circus

Nov 8-13 Valdosta, Ga.

Ringling-Barnum - Blue

Nov 2-14 Chicago, Ill.

Ringling-Barnum - Red

Nov 9-21 Cleveland, Oh.

Texas Shrine Circus

Nov 4-13 Ft. Worth, Tex.

--- OTHER DATES ---

Garray & Tomio

Nov. 2-14 Los Ang., Cal.

9 Stockton

Scott's Medicine Show

Nov 8 Three Rivers, Mich

9 Warsaw, Ind.

10 Huntington

11 Bluffton

12 Elwood

13 Lebanon

14 Greencastle

--- MAGIC ---

Pf. Miller-Magic Time USA

Nov 14 Carthage, Mo.

Feliz Snipes

Nov 12-14 Birmingham,

Ala.

Progress?

This issue of Circus Report is late and the next issue or two that follows will also be a few days late.

I have just returned home after spending two weeks in the hospital.

Last month it became difficult to breathe and since the situation got worse instead of better I ended up being rushed to the hospital and then spent several days in intensive care, followed by complete bed rest and various other things.

The results of all this showed that I had a blood clot in my lungs and they tell me now that when I entered the hospital it was a life threatening situation.

My blood has been thinned down and I am making good progress. With careful checks and regular medication the doctors expect that I will be returning to normal activity real soon.

This has been a difficult year and I appreciate your continued support and interest and hope to see things clear up and improve as the year draws to a close.

.... Don Marcks

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— NO COLLECT CALLS —

In the mail

from *MARJORIE HACKETT*

A Glaring Misprint in the Oct. 25th issue where-in I state that Bill Kay produced the Morocco Shrine Circus, Jacksonville, and further down you put Bill Kourmpates put the show together.

No, No No! Bill Kay will be furious. Bill Kourmpates was only visiting and on Shrine business for the South East Legions of Honor. He was a high act.

Bill Kay has produced that show for many, many years and it is always a classy production. . . I'll probably hear from both of them before the day is through.

I keep carbons so it was not my error!

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Birthday Surprise

Roy, the dashing black-haired half of the astounding Siegfried & Roy, starring in The Frontier Hotel's unbeatable "Beyond Belief", was feted on his birthday - Oct. 3 - in nothing less than spectacular fashion.

Unbounced to Roy, during the curtain call of their third show on that Saturday evening, S & R's flamboyant manager, Bernie Yuman, was outside the showroom, readying the University of Nevada, at Las Vegas, 60 member marching band plus drill team, for their entrance into the SRO show room and up on stage to surprise Roy. And what a surprise!

Also on hand were "Beyond Belief" producers, Irvin Feld and Kenneth Feld, plus Roy's mother, Johanna, who presented her son with a bouquet of apricot roses. S & R's lovely assistant, on and off stage, Lynette Chappell, hosted an after-show cocktail party in their lavish dressing room suite, attended also by Frontier VP and General Manager, Phil Arce.

S & R's management team, Bernie Yuman and Paul Lowden, gifted Roy with one of the rarest birds in the world today, a gorgeous black-palmed cockatoo.

PEOPLE

SUSAN and PAUL (Sad Sam) TAMBOURY, of Petaluma, Calif., are the parents of a son - MICHAEL JAMES - born on Oct. 13, who weighed in at 6 lbs. 14½ ozs.

RUBY LANDRUS, midget clown, was recently moved to a rest home. She is now residing in the same home as her husband Jack and her sister. Her address is: Ruby Landrus, Posada Del Sol, 2250 North Craycroft, Tucson, Ariz. 85712.

JOE TROLLEY's Marionettes recently played the Cape Fear Fair in Fayetteville, NC. Also playing the date was the JOHN-SON FAMILY CIRCUS.

I Remember

by *BILL WOTSCH*

In Nov. 1949, two of us from the Cleveland Arena were sent to the Duquesne Gardens in Pittsburgh, Pa., to see the "Hippodrome Varieties of 1949." This show was due at our Cleveland Arena and we wanted to see what we needed to get ready for.

This was the show that had Gloria Nord and her roller skating revue. Also a large rolling globe number, the late Bobby Mays, juggling on skates as he whizzed around the floor.

They also had "Lottie Meyer and Her Disappearing Water Ballet," plus other acts.

Duquesne Gardens was an old building and we'd been there once before. It was originally constructed as a street car barn in 1890. It was strongly built and was turned into the Gardens in 1899.

That was the year professional hockey was introduced there. John Harris took over the building in 1932. He owned about seven theatres in Pittsburgh and later the Ice Capades.

In Aug. 1956, the Gardens were torn down and then the Ice Capades played at Forbes Field, home of the Pittsburgh Pirates, until the new Civic Arena was opened in downtown Pittsburgh in 1961.

Yes, going into the old Duquesne Gardens was an adventure. One year the building was painted blue outside. Inside you could see the strong wooden rafters in the ceiling.

One dressing room was underneath the building. It seemed as if you were walking in a medieval tunnel to get there. I remember a tent was set up outside the stage door

For Sale or Trade

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to store props, etc. Cold air came up from that door everytime it was opened.

I remember the girls would shiver as they climbed out of the water tank, and I told one of them, "when you come to our building it will be warmer."

These are a few memories I have of this place. I was born in Homestead, Pa., across the river from Pittsburgh. My father told us kids about this building - the car barn - and here I was, in 1949, inside the place.

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At the fair

Acts appearing at the Mid-South Fair in Memphis, Tenn., with the Olympic International Circus produced by Eddie Zacchini were:

Buckles and Barbara Woodcock and their elephants; Rietta, Playmate of the Planets, aerial; Kolmedys, cycle balancing; Dime & Connie Wilson, clown duo; Jack Cook's Comedy Car; The Flying Lar-Rays (4) and

the Great Wallendas (4), high wire. Gary Strong was the ringmaster and Keith Killinger handled the band.

PEOPLE

RICK LEGG and DON "Whizzer" BRIDWELL, recently visited with MacDonald and Mable Birch at their home "Birchwood" in Malta, Ohio, where Legg was negotiating to purchase some of the old Birch illusion show, for inclusion with his own show.



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1982

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PEOPLE

ROBERT and SANDY MOMYER (Roberto & Alexandra) completed their fourth annual appearance at the Winterthur Museum Country Fair in Delaware. Appearing with them was Barney the Clown. Their new magic, music and mirth show opened at the end of October and is now available for bookings. Between show dates they have been busy performing at sales meetings and trade shows.

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Do you remember?

by TED LaVELDA

HASKELLE BROS. CIRCUS - 1950

Hal Asling was owner and manager; Geo. Bowen was the agent.

Performers included: Freda LaVelda, four pony drill, two pony posing act and a wire walking dog; Ted LaVelda, hand balancing and clowning; Ann Nelson, single traps, ladder, rings and web; Rose Washington, rope spinning, performing dogs; Capt. Frank Dickerson, lion act and wrestling bear.

The side show featured magic, fire eating and caged animals.

In order to frame the show, Asling purchas-

ed equipment from Monroe Bros. Circus, AJ G. Kelly-Miller Bros., Hugo Bros., Barker Bros. and other sources.

The show opened in Inola, Okla. Most of the equipment was destroyed in a fire at Siloam Springs, Ark., in late 1950.

Asling decided against taking the show out again in 1951.

PEOPLE

ART "Doc" MILLER writes that the Nov. 15th issue of "Film Collector's World" has a feature story about a season with an old-time tent show playing through Penna. The magazine's address is: P. O. Box 248, Rapid City, Ill. 61278.

TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES:

There has been a lot of controversy about circus producer Ed Migley's production of Circus Odyssey in Mexico City this summer and we would like to publicly state our experience.

We were first impressed with our holding area - A Resort Campground at Brownsville, Texas, Beautiful! The ease at which we crossed the border (both ways), not to mention the well laid-out route there and back, the elegane show with thousands of dollars of lighting, the respect that he showed all the performers, and we could rave on and on.

But, most important, when the Peso went haywire and a multi-million dollar show packed it's bags and ran scared, Circus Odyssey ran the full engagement and producer Ed Migley continued to pay us in good ole U. S. Greenback Dollars!

We don't know how you did it Ed, but we're glad you did!

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Interesting facts

By CIRCUS JOE VALENCIANO

Here are some facts of interest:

Alex Jordan, has a museum of oddities in Madison, Wisc. Among some of the unique things in his museum, is the world's largest carousel. It is 40 ft. high and 80 ft. round, and has over 16,000 lights on it. It is the most beautiful thing I have ever seen.

Sebastian, The Human Target, is getting his first date lined-up for 1983. He will appear at the Washington, DC, Sports Show. The incredible Sebastian is the only man in the country today who catches the bullet in his teeth and without the aid of a box or any device in his mouth. He uses a set of false teeth made of special steel. The date is *sometime in January.*

Thanks to Mario Zacchini, I now have more large performer photos to add to my collection. One 8x10 glossy is of Mario and Emanuel Zacchini being shot from the original double shot cannon in front of the grandstand at the 1939 Florida State Fair, in Tampa.

On Oct. 1st, I saw the Nerveless Nocks when they were featured on TV's P. M. Magazine. It was an interesting segment as they spoke with the Nock family and show-

ed them at work on their sway poles, motorcycle and wire acts, etc. The segment was taped during the summer when the Nocks were with the Tommy Bartlett Water, Ski and Sky Show.

Date set

A performance by the Royal Lipizzan Stallion Show, Nov. 27th at Niagara Falls will highlight the opening events of that city's Festival of Lights holiday pageant. The festival includes a parade, fireworks, and the lighting of Christmas trees at the International Convention Center.

Good crowds

The Clyde Beatty-Cole Bros. Circus packed them in at Baton Rouge, Lafayette and Morgan City (La) despite some rain and heavy mud. New Orleans was also a big engagement, with 3 shows required on both Saturday and Sunday.

When Beatty-Cole played Lafayette they were just 19 miles away from the Carson & Barnes Circus, so there was a lot of visiting between the two shows.

Swan Bros.

by JACK FRANKLIN

You may have seen, from time-to-time a listing in the show dates column on page 4 of Circus Report, a show called The Swan Bros. Circus. Recently I had the pleasure of seeing their circus.

It was at the County Fair in Stockton, Ca. Their show was not hard to find - all I had to do was tune in on the familiar strains of some good, traditional circus music. The 40'x60' green and white striped tent, purchased from Lani Ironberg, stood out beautifully against the rather drab fairgrounds' buildings.

The warm-up had already begun. Andy Swan, also known as Zippy, was encouraging little children to step into the 13' ring and sing a song or tell a joke. As a reward they were given an animal made from a balloon by Zippy. Soon the five grandstands were full (about 160 seats) while many parents stood outside the open tent watching the joy on their children's faces.

The show started on time with Mike Swan, presented as "Hi-Tops," doing a fast act of juggling 7 brick-sized boxes. This was followed with Zippy juggling above Hi-Tops' head. Hi-Tops did a bit on the single trapeze which was announced to be 72' in the air. One of the children in the stands shouted,

BOOKS! BOOKS!

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2 dif. decks clown playing cards	7.50
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"it looks more like 72". He was right. Then Hi-Tops hung by his knees and held a swing a few inches above the ground on which his five-year-old daughter, Penny, did some plain and fancy aerial work. If she sticks with it, she'll be a big star some day.

A slant wire walk and a very good rola bola by Hi-Tops added to the excitement. Then they conned me into standing in between them while they passed six bowling pins on each side of me. Fortunately, they missed me.

At this point Toby arrived in the ring in a toy sports car pulled by Hi-Tops. He was wearing sunglasses and was introduced as arriving straight from Hollywood. Toby is a 12 year old terrier poodle who has been with the brothers since they started their own show. He jumped over hurdles with a little girl lying between them. Then Toby climbed a ladder about 10' high, which was well supported by four children and leaped into the arms of Hi-Tops. This was the grand finale to a fast-paced twenty-five minute show.

A pair of kettle drums, cymbals and Andy's clever line of patter assured the audi-

(Continued on Page 23)

SWAN BROS. (Continued)

ence there would never be a dull moment.

The Swan Bros. follow the country fairs throughout California and also do private parties, malls, etc. They are not newcomers to the circus. Since 1975, they have worked with DeWayne Bros., Big John Strong and Carden-Johnson.

They couldn't play one day stands because as their own roustabouts it takes them seven hours to set up the show and four hours to tear it down and pack it in the good truck they have bearing a license plate called "Juggles."

They normally give two shows per day during the week and three each on Saturday and Sunday. Considering the number of fairs in California, they are kept busy. The

enthusiasm shown by these two brothers makes this little circus one well worth seeing.

Nov. dates

Roberts Bros. Circus, under the big top, will make a return engagement at the 1982 Soroptimist Fall Carnival at the Martin County, Fla., Fairgrounds, Nov. 24-28. Mr. Robert Earl will produce the circus.

The third annual event is promoted by Creative Outlet, Largo, Fla., in conjunction with Deggeller Attractions, which will again provide the ride midway. This is Deggeller's final engagement of the 1982 season, the giant carnival will re-open Feb. 2, 1983, at the Florida State Fair.

Irving of Circus Fame

by *BOB STODDARD*

Once upon a time, in the days of the Zoppe-Zavatta rosinback riding act, there was a unicyclist named Mel Hall, who married a member of the above act (an aunt of Joe Zoppe) named Aurelia Zavatta.

It came to pass that they had a son, and they named him Irving.

Nine generations of circus performers on his mother's side and three generations of circus people on his father's side, lived in the blood that flowed in the boy's veins.

After two whole years as an average circus kid, his father started teaching him to ride the unicycle.

In his father's act, he came to a point where he was to mount a nine foot high unicycle without the aid of a ladder of any type.

During the build-up for this feat, he looked about for some kind of assistance. This was 2 yr. old Irving's big act. He would ride in on a unicycle with a two foot fold-

ing ladder which, naturally, was not enough aid, so the boy stood on his hands on his father's right arm, and stood on his head on the palm of his father's hand.

(Yes! His father mounted the unicycle without any help).

The popular newspaper feature of that decade, "Believe It or Not" by Robert Ripley featured the miniature unicyclist as "The Youngest Ever."

When sister Carmen became two years old, she too became part of the act, as did brother Jimmy in turn. Baby sister Jeannine best them all by starting when she was 18 month old.

In 1953 (or 1954), Gil Gray of the Gil Gray Circus featured an act called the "Cycling Whiz Kids", composed of the Hall children. For over 20 years the act was popular and successful until 1976, when the family's love of animals broke the act up into four different acts,

Sister Carmen now has Myimba's Baboons, Brother Jimmy has Castle's Bears (ever won-

(Continued on Page 26)

IRVING OF THE CIRCUS (Continued)

der how Jimmy Hall wound up with Castle's Bears? Simple. His middle name is Castle - after the famous tightwire artist and circus owner, Hubert Castle.)

Besides being an excellent clown, Irving is the only family member who still has a unicycle act.

Irving wasn't there, but the rest of the Whiz Kids found themselves together again for Gil Gray at the 1980 State Fair of Texas. The two baboon acts and the bear act.

For their second act, the three former Whiz Kids revived their old act and re-proved the old adage, "If you did it before you can do it again."

Mrs. Hall says that, "after a four year lay-off from the unicycles, the act came back quickly - but the muscles were sore for the first few days.

In Memoriam

MRS. ERNA RUDYNOFF (83) passed away on Oct. 13th, following a heart attack. She was born on Dec. 19, 1898 and is survived by her son, Rudy Rudynoff, Jr., a sister, a brother and two grandsons.

Born Erna Seiffart, she met and married Rudy Gebhardt in Zurich, Switzerland, when Rudy came to town as a bareback rider with Circus Carolly. Erna, a young ballet student with a Zurich opera company, joined her new bridegroom in a dance and comedy act in theatres. After billing themselves as Rudy and Erna Ernavitch, they changed their stage name to Rudynoff.

Following a riding debut with Circus Knie they left Europe for America. They joined Rudy's sister, Mary Bedini, with the John Robinson Circus in 1923. That was the beginning of a notable career involving bareback riding, comedy riding, high school horses, liberty horses and training for a variety of other performers and acts.

While Rudy toured every year with John Robinson, Sells Floto and Hagenbeck-Wallace, Erna spent several years off the road due to the loss of a leg in a riding accident. In 1935, she returned to the ring with a unique act combining a high school horse and a high school dog.

In 1937, the entire Rudynoff family appeared with Ringling-Barnum. Rudy trained the high school horses and performed with them, presented a liberty act featuring a blindfolded horse finding its place in the ring without sight, and trained and presented a spectacular tableau with over 60 animals in the center ring. Erna performed with the high school riders and was featured with her horse and dog act. Rudy, Jr., worked six liberty ponies. The Rudynoffs received rave reviews with RBBB until the family left during the 1938 strike.

After training a new liberty act in 1939, the family concentrated on high school performances and spent many years working Shrine circuses, independent dates and horse shows.

Rudy, Jr. fell in love with the top mounter in the Lang acrobatic act and Beverly joined the family and the act. The Rudynoff Ballerina Horses continued to perform

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until shortly before Rudy, Sr.'s death in 1967.

The Rudynoffs were honored as one of the outstanding equestrian families of the century when they were inducted into the Circus Hall of Fame in 1969. They were also honored with the establishment of the Rudy and Erna Rudynoff Tent 127 CFA and the Rudynoff Family Ring 60, CMB.

Erna maintained her active interest in the circus, and she was a frequent speaker at conventions and banquets. Her performance skills, beauty and courage will be long-remembered in the circus world.