



5th Year

January 12, 1976

Number 2

Death in New Orleans

Death came quick and fast to Jay Armor, son of the Flying Armor team of circus aerialists, during a poolroom brawl at New Orleans the night of Dec. 31st. His friend Don, popular juggler and son of Gus & Ursula, was seriously wounded in the fight.

The two boys had left Florida in late December to sell balloons at a football game in New Orleans. They had hopes of picking up some extra money and enjoying the holidays in the Mississippi River town.

On New Year's Eve they dropped into a local poolroom

to pass sometime away. Then almost without warning a wild brawl erupted, something akin to what one sees in Western films.

Several shots rang out and when the brawl quieted down both Jay and Don were found laying on the floor, victims of the strange holiday quarrel.

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An Editorial...

The CIRCUS REPORT is currently starting its 5th year of publication. Predictions that it would never last have, happily, withered on the vine. Not only has CR endured, it is fast becoming the major voice of show business.

The success of any journal is predicated upon need. The circus industry is currently a large and sprawling one, and a paper to report its every day events - objectively and impartially - is an answer to that need.

But, CR is also a paper for and of the people - the performer, the tentmaker, the guy who pounds the stakes, or the Fan who applauds the show. Without the interest and support of these people CR could not exist. We recognize our obligation and, by virtue of this recognition, hope to enlist your continued support and interest to help CR reach its full potential.

Any Chronicler of History must record the Bad with the Good. CR is not an ostrich with its head in the sand, nor is each issue a grassy-green "lot" under a sun-happy sky. When criticism is deserved it will be applied; and praise, when it is earned, will be sincerely given.

To those who cannot accept Truth, we can only hope a new maturity will be discovered. It would be less than honest to cover-up a wrong doing, or to gild the lily when it is a dandelion, or to turn the other cheek when an action is blatantly harmful.

Efforts to avoid mistakes are made. Accuracy, however, by its very source of information (the human factor) is not always guaranteed. When inaccuracies occur, and they WILL occur, CR will do its utmost to set the record straight; provided, of course, that such errors are indeed errors and not ploys by an unhappy reader to further cloud the issue.

THE CIRCUS REPORT is published each Monday by Don Marcks, 525 Oak St., El Cerrito, Ca. 94530.

SUBSCRIPTION RATE: \$12.00 for a year, \$6.00 for six months.

ADVERTISING RATES: Minimum ad is

BEV KELLEY, former circus press agent, is out ahead of the stage show "Hello Dolly" which features Pearl Bailey.

\$2.50; Quarter Page \$5.00; Half Page \$10.00; Full Page \$20.00

South of the Border Show

All those who visited "Circus Renato" at Tijuana, Mexico, early last month, report the show was "excellent." The circus is operated by Fuentes Gasca and is presented in a one ring format, under an almost new big top. Seating consists of regular blues, reserved chairs and box seats for a total of 3,000 seats. The show's trucks are all painted red and gold.

Featured in the program is a young, very capable, performer who looks and works much like Gunther-Gebel Williams. He presents an unusual lion act, with the animals being unleashed and uncaged. He also has some of the largest elephants of any show, and works with a llama liberty drill and a camel liberty act. His numbers are unusual and he is a real crowd pleaser.

The show's flying act is one of the best and the 10 circus clowns are described as actually being "funny." Several pretty girls, flashy wardrobe and a big spec all add up to a great program.

PEOPLE

The FLYING FERCOs recently concluded their engagement at Las Vegas (Nev.) and are now on tour in South America.

TONY, the Wonder Horse, has been awarded the AGVA "Animal of the Year" award as part of the annual Entertainment Awards.

F. A. "Babe" BOUDINOT, former RBBB General Agent, is now a member of the staff of the Blackstone Theatre at Chicago.

The Lions Circus

A series of six shows were played late last year by the Lions Club Circus in the Pennsylvania area. The show runs two hours, includes a 10 piece band, and is directed by David Polanky

The program included:-

Opening spec - 40 performers
 The Whirlwinds - ground tumbling
 French Chef - clown number
 David Haas - magic
 Jungle Safari - ladder revue
 Steve Mills - unicycle
 Gorgu, gorilla parody
 Clowns - The Boxing Match
 Spec - When Dreams Come True
 -- Intermission --
 The Clowns -
 Los Chicos - jugglers
 Flamora - fire eater
 David Haas - trunk escape
 Clown walkaround
 Bob Good - equilibrist
 Aerial Spartans - cradle act
 A Tramp act
 Gypsy Rose Ray - clown number
 Closing Bicentennial Spec

BILL OLIVER, veteran circus advertising car manager, is ill and nearly blind. He resides at the Elks Nat'l Home in Bedford, Virginia.

Xmas Party

Each year at holiday time the American Legion of Delphi, Ind., sponsors a party and show. The atlas lists Delphi as a town of 2,500 and just about all of them show up for the annual party. In fact the show got started late because it took time to get everyone seated.

The 1975 program featured the debut of Mrs. Davide Zoppe's (Susan Sheryll) Royal Afghan Champions - 5 beautiful dogs - and a really different dog act.

Johnny Zoppe, Sr. was the producing clown with Debbie Bollhoefer and Chris and Kevin Helt. Their gags were enjoyed by both young and old.

Johnny, Sonja, Davide and Susan also presented their Unsupported Ladders and Rhesus Monkey Revue acts before Santa Claus entered to take over the festivities.

..... Kaye Scheiman

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CIRCUS SENTINEL

. . . . by BILLY BARTON

IF YOU'RE WONDERING what happened to the Beautiful CAVARETTA FAMILY, stop, because I'm telling all! TERRY is flying still at CIRCUS CIRCUS in Vegas (and doing her triple). KANDY is married to Hollywood Producer JERRY SCHAFER who is now doing a stage show in San Francisco. PAPPA has an eatery on the Strip . the twins, MARLENE & MAUREEN are also leaping and Maureen is married to BARRY MITCHELL of the Flying Medallions...and, well, PLAYGIRL, as all of you know (!), has THOROUGHLY exposed JIMMY CAVARETTA in this month's issue and NOT just his whereabouts!

CORONAS have booked REX WILLIAMS, ZAMPERLAS, SATANI for their West Orange, N.J., date.. ..DAVE MERRIFIELD fills his idle time in Florida as lighting director for touring musicals while GUS BELL is stage manager for Broadway Bus and Truck Shows when they hit Dallas (Wonder if they use arrows?)...FAY & ROSIE to Milwaukee for Carden-Johnson.

DATELINE: NEW YORK: BARBARA AUTRY, LOTTIE BRUNN, among those club dating it here.LOTTIE goes to GATTI-CHARLES for the season later on. MLLE FIFI (the chimpact) left for Floridian tropics, and who can blame her!

DATELINE: MIAMI: Hoxie Quarters all hustle and bustle and muscle! Super paint jobs on all trucks. Llamas, camels, bears, lions added for both units and a Bicentennial Spec with flags, floats and fan-fare will highlight the Hoxie opus. Returning this season are GARY & ZOA HENRY, CHANDLERS, PRINCESS MAR-

GARET and The BARON.....DIAZ SISTERS come home after a year elsewhere, and JIM SILVERLAKE returns as Supt.

New this year: ALBERTO ZOPPE family, also CHARLES MOYER, who will have the band AND the side show on GREAT AMERICAN.

Hoxie, incidentally, did a commercial for the New England Oldsmobile Dealers Ass'n to coincide with their play dates in that area. He decided against the Diplomat Hotel date: not enough loot.

DATELINE: SARASOTA: When asked if he misses the business, retired bandleader HENRY KYES, the PAUL WHITEMAN of the White tops, replied: "You're DAMN right I do!"

MICHAEL CHERRICK taped the HOWARD COSELL show but due to that show's cancellation the tape alas, will not be seen....I am told the King show WILL go out, with DORY MILLER and HARRY RAWLS overseeing the adventure (now

(Continued on Page 14)

He's Doing Better

After closing with a Holiday Magic Show program at Stockton (Calif.) last month, Ronald Stinson (Pogo, the clown) was injured in an auto accident. According to Ronald the safety lights on a small country bridge were out and he rammed into the guardrail.

The car was totaled and it took rescue units some 20 minutes to cut him out of the front seat. Rushed to a nearby hospital he spent the holidays in the intensive care unit. Injuries included a badly cut face, broken ribs and a fractured breast bone

Ron returned to his home last week for a long recuperation period. All his clown props were destroyed and must be rebuilt before his '76 season can get underway.

Show Band

The band currently backing each performance of Circus Vargas is directed by Jim Gibson, trumpet player. Other members include:

Gerda Carlson - flute/piccolo
 Perry Johnson - sax/clarinet
 Jeanne Ann Gibson - clarinet/sax
 Bill Reichenbach - trumpet
 Charles Fardello - trumpet
 Dave Kotowski - trombone
 Rick Hage - trombone
 Darcy Mahan - trombone
 Jerry Ulrick - baritone
 Ed Firth - tuba
 Fred Figuera - drums

BENEFIT SHOW

Using the DeWayne Bros. big top, the Paul Eagles Circus Luncheon Club presented its annual circus for retarded children at Pomona (Calif.) on Dec. 20th. The program was arranged by Don Heaston, who also directed the band. Phil McDonald was the show's ringmaster.

The program featured:-

Jack Cox and clowns in warm-up*
 Glenn Duncan - sponge plunge
 Miss Susie - pony revue
 Great Y Circus - aerial cradle
 Bill Pattison - magic
 Jack Cox and Clown alley
 Charles Troupe - trampoline (*)
 Miss Margo - hand balancing
 Toni Madison - trained dogs
 Jack Cox - clowns
 Miss Becky and Miss Bonnie -
 single trapeze number (*)
 The Castoldis - juggling (*)
 Jack Cox - clowns
 Bill Pattison - escape artist
 Miss Becky and Miss Bonnie -
 aerial webs - (*)
 Capt. Gothard - elephant
 (*) - indicates Great Y Circus

NOT TRUE

A recent item stating that Gee Gee Engesser had remarried are untrue. The report was apparently circulated to trade papers as a joke, which we resent.

We sincerely regret any problems or confusion that may have resulted from that item.

ROUTES

- A Children's Circus
Jan. 15 Houston, Texas
- Circus Vargas
Jan. 15-19 Vallejo, Calif.
- Cole All Star TV Circus
Jan. 17 Halifax, Pa.
- Polack Bros. Circus
Jan. 17-25 Flint, Mich.
- Ringling-Barnum - Blue Unit
Jan. 12-14 St.Petersb'g, Fla
16-20 West Palm Beach
- Soviet Circus
Jan. 14-18 Cincinnati, Ohio
- John Strong Circus
Jan. 16-23 Redlands, Calif.
- OTHER ROUTES
- American Freedom Train
Jan. 15-18 San Diego, Calif.

In Memoriam

ALAN HOROBIN (46) who was known as "The Chimp Man", died in an auto accident at Redvale, New Zealand, in Aug. 1975. Until recently he had been a part owner and manager of the Orewa Marineland. Born in London, where his father was a zoo keeper, he spent his life with show animals and toured the world with circuses before settling down in New Zealand.

- Globetrotters - Int'l
Jan. 15-18 Honolulu, Hawaii
- Globetrotters - Nat'l
Jan. 15 Sacramento, Calif
17-18 Oakland
- Ice Capdes
Jan. 14-18 Edmonton, Alhta.
- Northwest Showman's Club
Jan. 17 Seattle, Wash.

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THE KELLY SHOW

The Emmett Kelly, Jr. Circus played El Paso (Texas) on Dec. 21st and offered a strong program of acts. The circus was presented at the local Civic Center and received good newspaper coverage and reviews.

The program included:-

Intro of Emmett Kelly, Jr.
 Charmaine's Pets
 Pirates of the Sky (Reynoso)
 Col. J. P. & Tank - clown bit
 The Bruski's - unicycle
 Ronritas - Sky Wheel
 -- Intermission --
 Frank Mogyorosi - lions
 The Paulo's - aerial cradle
 Princess Miamba - baboons
 The Bruski's - perch pole
 The Ashtons - risley
 Finale - all performers

Miscellaneous

The January 1976 issue of "Women Sports" magazine has a feature on RBBB women performers plus an article on Mabel Stark.

The Feb. 1967 issue of "True West" magazine has a feature on the Orton Circus and a story on Tom Mix.

Wallace & Rogers wound up their Lion Country Safari date on Jan. 4th.

The Beatty-Cole Circus is scheduled to open its 1976 tour

Holiday Program

Despite problems caused by the weather, the Yerkes Variety Show was presented to good audiences at Phoenix (Ariz.) on Dec. 13, when two shows were presented and Dec. 14th with one show.

It was cold and windy and had been wet, as a result the ground was a mess. Sawdust was brought in to give the ground some substance, the elephants missed the first show because they'd been caught in a snow storm and various alterations were necessary to keep the program running smoothly.

Included on the show were:

Parley Baer - ringmaster
 The Castoldis - jugglers
 The Cycledelic Cyclists
 Miss Beth - single trapeze
 The Flying Artons
 Circus elephants
 Aerial web display
 The Sunshine Co. - rock band
 The Brauns - whips/ropes/knives
 Clown numbers
 Magical act
 Comedy donkey
 Sponge dive
 Hollywood Movie Stuntmen

..... W. C. Wood

at Brunswick, Ga. on April 5th.

An old RBBB cage is being revamped at Hoxie Bros. quarters for their big '76 attraction - a gorilla.

MAN OR MONKEY-MAN?

..... by BILLY BARTON

The surfeit of almost-human ape acts will have to take a back seat to the current controversy making the rounds of the news media.

Michael Miller, a New York City lawyer, bought a creature from a circus act and it has been sent for identification to a medical laboratory somewhere in Philadelphia.

Miller refused to identify the seller. He said that he and an unnamed partner paid \$8000 for it and are spending an additional \$2000 to transport it and to test it.

It is 4½ ft. tall, 7 years old, is a baldheaded, monkey-like creature with black fur, pointed ears, a dome-like skull, pinkish brown skin, brown eyes, freckled face, eats fruits and vegetables and makes a "warbling sound". It walks upright, like a man, at all times.

When Miller first "met" the creature he admitted to being frightened and backed away. The creature advanced upright toward Miller, and when Miller sat down the creature sat down next to him and fixed him with a quizzical expression. "If you tell him what a cigaret is and then ask him if he wants one, he will indicate 'yes' with his head," reports Miller. "With a monkey you have to take a series of events to teach him what is right or wrong to do."

The creature will also open doors upon command, and gives evidence of an abundance of "hu-

man" traits. "The creature is NOT a monkey," Miller asserts.

Miller's creature caused an uproar in Portland, Ore., when the Oregon Journal quoted him as saying he owned a live "Bigfoot" the legendary pe-like inhabitant of the Pacific Northwest Mountains.

Miller claims the creature's footprints are about 18 in. long. In an interview, Peter Byrne, head of the Bigfoot Information Center, said:

"From the two photographs sent us we feel that the creature is real. There is no question of a hoax. But I feel it is not a Bigfoot. It looks more like a large chimpanzee."

Miller remarked: "If it is not a Bigfoot that just eliminates one possibility. It might be half-man, half-ape. It could be the missing link, a different type of primate than we have ever known..."

Or it could be the greatest piece of "leg-pulling" since the days of Phineas T. Barnum, the greatest publicity coup since

(Continued on Page 15)

CLYDE BEATTY-COLE BROS. CIRCUS

Although the 1975 season started off slow, the Beatty-Cole Circus wound up its tour on a high note with "excellent" dates in Florida and the South. One show official reported that small towns provided better business than the large ones.

Attendance at the show's opening stand in Long Island (Mar. 25-31) was down and it has been rumored that the date will be dropped. Bad weather contributed to the poor start this past year, causing some dates to be cancelled, while others were re-set for a later time. On at least one occasion King Bros. moved in to play a cancelled date.

The show followed either Hoxie Bros. or George-Matthews into several cities and still reported business was good. Many of the Beatty-Cole dates are sponsored by Shrine Clubs.

The circus traveled some 18,000 miles and played in 216 cities. They moved on 33 show trucks, and carried a 150x300 ft big top, with seating for 3500.

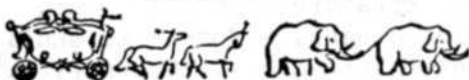
The two biggest problems of the year were obtaining gas and truck parts. It was difficult to find parts and suppliers were reluctant to sell us gas, said a showman.

In late April the show narrowly missed a blowdown. Strong winds started pulling the stakes but quick work by the big top crew, who held on and lowered the tent prevent any serious damage.

Probably the worst accident of the season occurred near Cross City (Fla.) on Nov. 4 when an elephant truck sideswiped a

ROUTES

Kramien's Magic-Capades
Jan. 17 Nogales, Ariz.



PEOPLE

ROBERT HARBIN, noted magician of England, will be honored at an Awards Dinner in Los Angeles (Calif.) on March 13th.

BOB BROWN, magician, uses two beautiful assistants - Linda and Brenda. He is currently on an around-the-world cruise ship.

bridge. The impact tore off the axle and gas tank, rolled the trailer and set fire to it. The six elephants and driver escaped serious injuries and the three large bulls were sent into the show quarters. Paul Pugh says that press reports an elephant was killed in the mishap were untrue.

Xmas at the Felt Forum

. . . . by JACQUELINE LICHTENBERG

Back in 1975, I reported on the performance of Circus Kirk, noting that half the performer's art is making the utterly simple look difficult while the other half is making the unbelievably difficult look simple.

It seemed to me that the student performers of Circus Kirk did not have the art of making the simple appear spectacular. In contrast, I feel the performers of the Soviet Circus from Moscow are masters of the art.

On Xmas day, 1975, in the Felt Forum (New York City), the Soviet Circus played to a full house, and I doubt if anyone went away disappointed. Except, possibly, myself. I had taken the family, shelling out \$26 for the best seats basically because their TV ad included a shot of a flying act. They did not have a flying act, and they played under such dim lighting that all photography was essentially impossible.

However, one should not judge a circus by wholly adult standards. I had my 6 yr. old and 8 yr. old with me, both jaded veterans of many circuses, and they declared unanimously that this was the best circus they had seen.

The troupe included only two clowns who used fairly standard gags, except for one or two

items toward the end of the show, but they kept my girls shrieking and bouncing constantly while I watched the rigging men hustle props - I've seen more efficient rigging men.

The acts themselves were all masterpieces of showmanship, with only one or two highlights in the art of making the truly difficult look simple. Overall, the entire production held, for me, a flavor I had not encountered in the American circuses.

The most outstanding example of this is perhaps a slight but definite difference in the way they used their female performers -- they weren't out there to "dress up the act", they were there to demonstrate skill and to entertain.

Perhaps the most interesting act of all in this regard was what was called a "magic act". There was no "magic" involved. The act consisted of a very attractive woman moving to some very exciting music as she opened a set of standard magician's props to reveal spring-up paper flowers. In the end, the single ring was turned into a veritable April garden. The

(Continued on Page 16)

Helps Santa

Most folks know Earl Tegge as owner and producer of the TNT & Royal Olympic Circus, out of Chicago. He oversees the program and announces the acts, as his son Tim, plays drums and is the show clown.

Along towards Christmas his work moves in a different direction, for Tegge books Santas into Chicago area stores. For many years he worked as Santa himself, so he is an expert on what the children expect.

To locate would-be Santas Tegge advertises in the papers, then personally interviews the hundreds of applicants who come seeking the 30 odd jobs. Personality, and a soft voice are important. Stuffing is out, Santa can't be too introverted, can't have too large a nose and women are out too. Stores frown on the idea of using a woman as a Santa.

The pay is \$2.50 per hour, and Santa's work at least an eight hour day. During the busy 20 day work period, a Santa may see and talk with as many as 1,500 kids.

An Ok Date

Business for the Kaye Cont. Circus at its Nov. 5-9 engagement in Kansas City was about the same as for 1974, according to already published reports. The circus played for the Ararat Shrine Temple, giving 10 performances in the Civic Auditorium.

LETTERS

Thanks for mailing all back issues of Circus Report after Canada's long mail strike. The large bundle was well received. Must say your service is tops and the reporting is great.

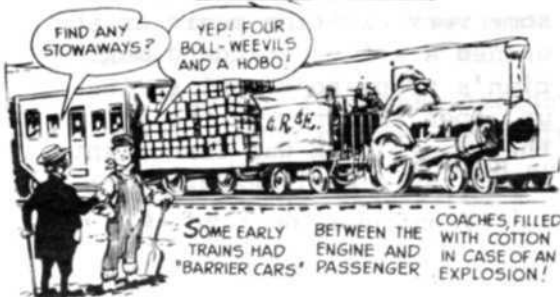
..... Cliff Crawford

Miscellaneous

Several elephants were recently returned to their home in Thailand after having been stranded in Hongkong since July. They were part of a circus promotion that went broke and the elephant herd was cared for by the Hongkong Zoo.

Ringling-Barnum has been offering their animal manure to Florida citizens, without charge for those who wanted it, for use in their gardens.

The annual Chamber of Commerce sponsored Circus Day Parade, at Venice, Fla., will be held on Jan. 31st.



SOME EARLY TRAINS HAD "BARRIER CARS" BETWEEN THE ENGINE AND PASSENGER COACHES, FILLED WITH COTTON IN CASE OF AN EXPLOSION!



PEOPLE

MEL and AURELIA HALL will have their various animal acts on the Hubert Castle Circus for the 1976 tour.

BILL BALLENTINE has authored a new book "Clowns Are People" which will be released by Doubleday in late 1976.

THE JOLLY JOVERS, acrobatic comedy act, is playing the Americana Hotel in Miami, Fla.

The AMANDIS Teeterboard troupe, will play for several Sports Show early this year.

THE FLYING RAMOS and JACKIE ALTHOFF's Bears worked the Menschen Tiere Sensationen at West Berlin on Dec. 11-31.

HAL HAVILAND has returned to Circus Vargas after making

some specialty dates in the mid-western area.

TOM UPTON reports he lost the films of Polack 1975 in the fire that destroyed a portion of his circus room.

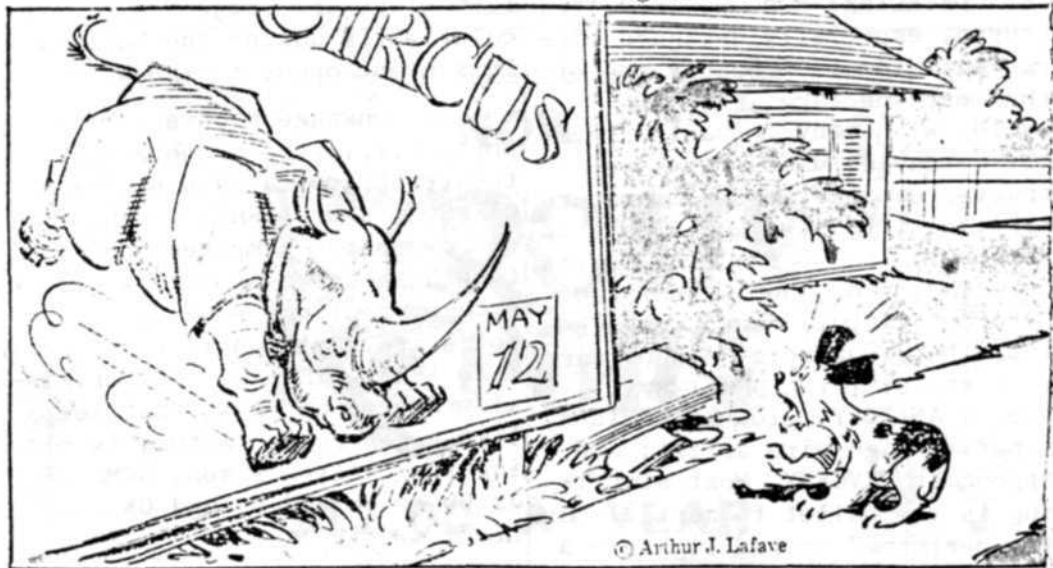
SID and MATT KELLNER were among the circus folks who attended the recent Las Vegas convention.

BEN BRAUNSTEIN, veteran circus pressman, is currently on the James E. Strates Show.

WALLY NAGHTIN reports he has finally given up smoking, and it's for all-time.

HARRY E. BECK, SR., is now readying his Beck's Circorama for a winter tour in the south.

ART STENSVAD is recovering from an extensive illness and is looking forward to the '76 season.



© Arthur J. Lafave

CIRCUS SENTINEL (Continued)

THIS is what I am told!)...JOE & CHESTER SHERMAN play Spring dates for TOMMY HANNEFORD...The Circus World's Psychic PLUME is still laying on the hands...Office manager BOB REED (Dobritch, Ringling World Fair Unit, Moscow Circus for Concello) is in private business in Los Angeles...RINGLING BLUE is off and running Can RINGLING RED be far behind? Only by a few weeks!

Some of Where They're At This Month: TINO WALLEDA, Rock Island Sport Show....SCOTT'S MULES, Salt Lake City Sports Show....PRINCE NAJVEZ - Mentor for HUBLER....FRANCIS BRUNN, Americana Puerto Rico....KOCKA-POLDIS, K.C. Sports Show...MICH-AEL CHERRICK - Globetrotters, Australia.

DATELINE: MOSCOW: The ultra modern, especially designed circus building is probably one of the most spectacular in the world, with many mechanical gimmicks: cables drop, ramps retract, reappear, and a miniature airplane lifts two aerialists to the roof. The 50 ft. ring lowers into the floor and is replaced by other circular surfaces. The intimate arena holds 3,500. Current stars: IRINA BUGRIMOVA, lions; ANATOLY, clown; LUDMILLA, Siberian high wire artist; and Strongman YEVGENY. Most startling is the ballet to martial music, performed in red lights - a ballet depicting the history of

Aids Charity

The Fire Fighters Local #642, of Fargo, N.D., reports they were able to turn over some \$1,600 to local charities and organizations last year. The funds, said president Jerry Splitt, came from a circus the group sponsored last Aug. 8th.

The organization gave \$500 to the Salvation Army, \$500 to the Heart Fund, \$250 to Bonarville, \$250 to the Doug Wendt Foundation for burn victims, and \$100 to multiple sclerosis.

In addition the local is setting aside \$400 to aid persons who have severe fire losses and who can use financial assistance.

the Soviet Revolution, the war, and finally, peace (?). Battle film clips are projected on circular walls during the ballet. This event opens the show.

The Onstage nightery in Freeport, L.I., is a rennovated theatre Disco managed by STEVE CARLSON, son of WHITEY CARLSON, who owned the Hempstead building (now a shopping center) where he brought a circus each spring. Yours truly played it when the late FRANK WIRTH was the original producer and now, what seems like a generation later, is playing for Carlson's son. SOME of us DO go on and on and ON..... don't we!

See you down the road, luvs.

Line Up

A three month fair route has been signed by the Stebbing Royal European Circus as a part of its 1976 tour. The circus will be playing fairs at: West Palm Beach, Fla., Richmond, Va., Monticello, N.Y., Shelby, N.C., New York City and Greenville, S.C.

Showmen's Corner

Acts appearing at Monaco's Annual Circus Festival (Dec. 26-30) included: Gene Mendez, high wire; The Flying Farfans; Pio Nock, high wire and Miss Isabello, single trapeze.

MAN OR MONKEY-MAN (Continued)

King Kong did his cinematic ballet atop the Empire State Building. Or it could be an "alien" from outer space or, just possibly, one of the most important discoveries of this century.

We will soon know. Miller intends to display his creature to the public by the time this article is published. Meanwhile, Mr. Primate-X is kept under observation and in seclusion somewhere between New York and Philadelphia where at least two circuses have their winter-quarters - if that has anything to do with it, and it might, who knows

Those are the facts. Draw your own conclusions. My observation is simply, that it won't be the first time a Monkey has made a monkey out of Man.

SHOW ACTS

Some of the acts reportedly booked to tour with the Hamid-Morton Circus this year are:

The Valentines - low wire act
 Zamperla Family - riding/cycles
 Bill Golden - wild animals
 The Klauser bears
 John Cuneo - elephants
 Reynoso Bros - Pirates of the
 Dime Wilson - clowns Air

Notice

"Front Gate Steve" wanted for the Henry's Bros. Circus opening with the Capell Shows this month

Contact: Ivan Henry, Box 1175, Coolidge, Arizona.



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SOVIET CIRCUS (Continued)

interesting thing was that the "magician" was a woman. Now, if she'd done some spectacular illusions, with a handsome male assistant....?

This act was also what I consider the prime example of the utterly simple made interesting by stagecraft. It was the greatest masterpiece of stagecraft demonstrated in this production because the performance itself required absolutely no skill, except perhaps in dance. And yet it was visually successful and got a good round of applause.

The six member wirewalking troupe again demonstrated a terrific mastery of stagecraft. Using four women, highly trained dancers and very comely to look upon, and two men, they presented a few minutes of the slickest work you can imagine. However, most of the act was taken up with routines any wirewalker does for warmup. The one big trick, a backward somersault with twist, was missed on the first try, caught the second time, and was indeed spectacular -- the difficult made simple. The troupe has in its repertoire a number of very interesting routines to rival the Wallendas at their best, but none of these were done in the low-ceilinged Felt Forum.

It was a disappointing display by a truly superior troupe.

Here again, the women are not just for pretty -- they are equilibrists in their own right.

A sidelight on what makes circus acts circus acts. Tamara Simonenko does an act which consists of little but schoolground hulahooping with four or five hoops simultaneously. She dresses the act with some nice acrobatics, but essentially she is a hulahoop artist -- and I do mean artist. I have often theorized that audiences appreciate performers who can do things members of the audience have tried and failed to do. What parent hasn't snuck out some dark night to experiment with a hulahoop? What kid hasn't envied the best hulahooper on the playground? Tamara's spectacular display of hulahoop mastery drew the loudest and longest round of applause. Is there a lesson in this for performers looking for a star act for themselves?

In this light, it is not surprising that the strong man also drew astonished and delighted applause when members of the audience tested his weights for authenticity, and he then proceeded to spin them on the end of a chain passed across the back of his neck and bring them to a perfect landing with all the style and grace of a trained ballet dancer. A man with such bulging muscles who moves like that -- truly, like a cat -- is a joy to watch anytime.

(Continued on next page)

SOVIET CIRCUS (Continued)

Lifting weights is one thing -- juggling them is something else!

The highpoint of the two hour show was, for me, the teeterboard team -- The Bjeljakov Acrobats and Bears -- and it was more of a philosophical than an artistic highpoint. Their use of two adult and two baby bears as if they were actually working members of the act, not animals being put through paces, was a startling and eye-opening innovation. I think "Bear-Lib" has arrived, in Russia anyway. The Bears turned somersaults on the ground in synchronization with the troupe -- without obvious direction -- helped carry in the boards and props, and did the flips and turns the other members of the troupe did.

But here, as with every other act during the two hour performance, the big, spectacular tricks were missing. The teeterboard troupe did nothing like a 5-man-high. No doubt the skills are there -- I have never seen more polished performers -- but the skills were not being demonstrated Xmas day in New York -- to a full house consisting of native Russians, Israeli's, Chinese and various slavik groups I could not identify.

It may have been in part the low clearance at the Felt Forum, it may have been just the slow beginning of a really spec-

Ouch!

An important error appears in that new book "Tom Mix Died for Your Sins." Author Ponicsan states that the Tom Mix Circus was the first tented show to tour on trucks.

Obviously, there were motorized shows long before Mix ever put his circus on the road.

tacular tour to come -- but at the prices I paid, I felt disappointed.

At half time, I spoke to one of the musicians -- an American who has played for Ringling's NY stand, and also played for the Soviet Circus 3 yrs. ago and 5 yrs. ago when they toured the U.S. He seemed to feel that the show itself was off from former years, but had no idea why that might be. He told me the music for the show was a mixture of traditional Russian folk tunes, modern Russian rock, and some pieces composed specifically for certain acts. It surely sounded different from the usual American circus scores.

It must be quite a chore to play for this circus as the only member of the band who travels with the show is the trumpet player, and I gathered he doesn't speak too much English.

FREDDIE LOGAN, circus elephant trainer, spent the winter months in DeLand, Fla.

Mattel Report

(The following report has been reproduced from Mattel's report to its stockholders, released at the end of 1975).

Ringling Bros.—Barnum & Bailey Combined Shows, Inc., acquired by Mattel in 1971, staged approximately 1,000 circus performances in fiscal 1975 in more than 80 cities across the United States and Canada, playing before audiences estimated to have totaled more than 6,000,000 persons.

The touring circus actually consists of two comparable units—the Red and the Blue—playing separate itineraries which are rotated between the two units each year. The Red Unit in 1975 introduced the "Spectacular Bicentennial Edition" whose colorful pageantry and thrilling acts are underscored by a patriotic theme. The Red Unit will extend its "Bicentennial Edition" to additional cities in 1976. The Blue Unit will open its 1976 season with a new theme celebrating "200 Years of the Circus in America."

A newer segment of the overall circus operation is the Ringling Bros.—Barnum & Bailey Combined Shows, Inc. Circus theme park, a family entertainment center located near Orlando, Florida.

The Circus theme park opened in February 1974 as a Preview Center for a variety of circus-related attractions. The Preview Center operated during 1974 and early 1975 as a limited attraction and at a financial loss.

In the summer of 1975 a revised operating concept was initiated in an effort to increase attendance and revenues. This three-month program proved successful. The Circus theme park was then closed in September 1975 in order that a permanent expansion incorporating the revised operating concept and

costing \$3,500,000 could begin in preparation for the 1976 tourist season.

With redesigned facilities and with significant additional entertainment values attendance is expected to increase substantially with resultant improved financial results.

The revised operating concept and the improved facilities at the Circus theme park were factors in a September 1975 decision by management of Mattel, Inc. to retain the operations and to reclassify the Ringling operations from discontinued to continuing operations.

The original concept of the Circus theme park was grandiose in scope. Plans first announced in 1972 were for a giant complex featuring a midway with rides and other attractions designed to appeal to tourist families drawn to the area not only by the Circus theme park but by similar theme amusement centers located nearby.

It subsequently became clear to Mattel management that development of the park according to that original concept required financial resources and debt structure beyond the capacity of the Company.

Consequently, notwithstanding the consistently profitable performance of the Ringling Bros.—Barnum & Bailey Combined Shows, Inc. traveling units, Mattel management in 1973 decided to try to sell the circus subsidiary and its related businesses, including the Circus theme park. It was that decision, at the end of fiscal 1974, which resulted in the classification of Ringling Bros.—Barnum & Bailey Combined Shows, Inc. as a discontinued operation, a status now reversed.

Extensive efforts were made to dispose of the Ringling operations on terms acceptable to management of Mattel. When this could not be achieved, management developed and tested the new concept outlined above.

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MATTEL REPORT (Continued)

Over the 106 years since its founding, Ringling Bros. has demonstrated its continuing ability to provide wholesome family entertainment by setting new records in attendance and gross revenues. For example, the Red Unit's nine-week engagement in New York City in 1975 registered the largest total attendance in the history of the Circus at Madison Square Garden. And in New Orleans, the Blue Unit played the first "spectacular" in

the new Superdome in September 1975 to 234,162 people in four days — the largest audience ever to see the Circus in a four-day period. The largest total number of viewers for "The Greatest Show on Earth" comes with the one hour NBC television highlights special viewed by an estimated 17 million households each February.

Ringling's performers in the Red and Blue Units and all other employees total approximately 700 personnel.