



7th Year

March 20, 1978

Number 12

## Sale Ok'd

The East Berlin (Pa.) Corporation operating as Circus Kirk has been authorized by the local courts to sell its operation and assets to a North Carolina amusement firm.

The action was taken after North American Operating Co., Inc., which operates the student staffed Circus Kirk, filed a petition for involuntary dissolution last January, and Attorney G. Henry Seaks, receiver, was directed at that time to sell the assets of the corporation at a public sale.

In a hearing on March 3rd, Circus Kirk's founder and president of North American Operating Co., Dr. Charles W. Boas, requested and was granted permission to sell the entire operation and all its assets to Royal Shows, Inc., of Dunn, N.C., for a sum of \$42,500.

According to Dr. Boas, who managed Circus Kirk since its inception in February 1968, the price offered by the North Caro-

lina firm is probably the best price North American Operating Co. could obtain for the sale. If assets were sold piecemeal were sold piecemeal in a public sale, he said, they would probably go for no more than \$12,000.

The petition for sale was approved by Judge Keith Quigley, of Dauphin County, who was specially presiding over the creditor's hearing.

(Continued on Page 15)

## SHOW FOLKS

The 42nd annual Hospitaler Circus at Lansing, Mich., was produced by the Harold Bros. Circus and presented in that city on Mar. 2-5.

The show's staff included: Harold R. Voise, manager/producer; George Voise, Supt.; Al Vernon, band leader; Charley Van Buskirk, announcer/ringmaster; Forrest L. Griffin, office manager and Irving (Ricky) Romig, producing clown.

Featured on the program were: Lilli-Ana and her leopards; The Carpers, aerial cradle; Clown Rocket Ship; the Adams dog revue; Scott's Unrideable Mule; The Cyclonians, unicycles; Erik Acadis, one finger stand; Clowns tug-o-war; Los Obandos, high wire.

In the second half were: Vivian's Football dogs; Clown Fire House; Erick's comedy chimps; The Carlos Duo, perch pole; The Smaha Family, Lipizzans; Clown walk-around; The Original Gutis, comedy and the Flying Carrolls.

..... Jon Friday

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## PEOPLE

CHAN BIAFE debuted his 25 ft. high unicycle during a Carden-Johnson Circus performance at Odessa, Texas. In addition to riding the high cycle he juggles hoops and clubs atop the cycle.

ETHEL HENRY recently returned from a trip into Mexico spent visiting relatives and friends and is looking great.

EDDIE BACKSTEIN, of Illinois, has rejoined BOBBY GIBBS for the 1978 season and plans to tour with him for the full year.

THE FLYING CAVARETTAS, featured at Circus Circus in Las Vegas consists of: TERRY (only woman to consistently perform the daring triple somersault), CANDY, MAUREEN and JIMMY (catcher).

KARL WALLEDA will make a "Skywalk" across Candlestick Park in San Francisco, Cal., on May 14th.

AL DAWLEY, circus ringmaster, will work a date at Kansas City and Canton, then jumps to Wilkes-Barre for the Hamid-Morton show.

## RUMOR

That a performing duo plans to be married in the center ring of the circus shortly after the 1978 season gets underway, with an elephant serving as the ring bearer.

That a new show is set to tour in 1979 and will reportedly include Prince Ranier's name in its title.

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# Show Dates

Hubert Castle Circus  
Mar. 22-25 Portland, Ore.

Circus of Fun - Dave Twomey  
Mar. 21-26 Torrence, Calif.

Circus Vargas  
Mar. 21-22 San Clemente, Calif.  
23-27 West Covina

Garden Bros. Circus  
Mar. 22-23 Allentown, Pa.  
24-27 Reading

Emmett Kelly, Jr. Circus  
Mar. 22-25 Hamilton, Ont.

Ringling-Barnum - Blue Unit  
Mar 22-June 4 New York, N.Y.

Ringling-Barnum - Red Unit  
Mar. 21-26 Knoxville, Tenn.

Royal Hanneford Circus  
Mar. 18-21 Birmingham, Ala.  
22-23 Montgomery

Royal Lichtenstein Circus  
Mar. 20 Madison, Iowa  
21 Vermillion

TNT & Royal Olympic Circus  
Mar. 21-25 Mesquite, Texas

Wonderful World of Circus  
to Mar. 29 Sarasota, Fla.

Vince Carmen's Razzle Dazzle  
Mar. 21 Meridian, Miss.  
22 Jackson  
24 Wadesboro, N.C.

Fantasy On Ice  
Mar. 22-25 Waterbury, Conn.

Fred, the Cockatoo  
to Mar. 26 Toronto, Ont.

Holiday On Ice - Int'l  
Mar. 22-25 Lubbock, Texas

Holiday On Ice - Nat'l  
Mar. 21-26 Miami Beach, Fla.

Ice Capades - Eastern Unit  
Mar 23-April 2 Kansas City, Mo.

Ice Capades - Western Unit  
Mar. 22-26 Halifax, N. S.

Ice Follies  
Mar. 21-26 Buffalo, N. Y.

Bob Jones Pet Zoo  
Mar. 20-April 9 Lake Grove, N.Y.  
21-April 1 Media, Pa.

Magictime USA - Prof. Miller  
Mar. 20 Plumborough, Pa.  
21 Salem, Ohio  
23 Lorain

Victor, the Rasslin' Bear  
Mar. 21-25 Morgantown, W,Va.

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## THE STARS

Acts featured on the annual Circus Aut Mori at Youngstown, Ohio, on March 14-19 were: the Kay Sittig Chamber Singers; Pat Anthony; the Vickinas, Prince Navjez, Pat Anthony, Happy Davis, the Elkins Sisters, the Klementis, Gene Mendez, Halls Baboons, the Holidays, Arturo Segura, the Los Argentinés, Al and Joyce Vidbel and the Rev. Austin Miles.

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# GRAN MAR



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**SANDY DOBRITCH** will produce the circus at Busch Gardens at Williamsburg (Va) from May 25 thru Oct. 1st. His activities there will in no way preclude production of his regular circus dates.

Sandy advises he is staging an entirely different style circus program, using sets and scenery; was, in fact, building same when I reached him by phone. The show will feature the ASHTON family, SYD MOORE's dog act, JOHNNY PEERS, clown and VALDEZ and Co. RAY HARTZELL will be musical director and Sandy will serve as his own ringmaster/announcer. Sandy and Michelle will close the office in Las Vegas (at least for the summer) and all activities will emanate from Virginia.

**REPORT FROM CIRCUS VARGAS:** When Wally NAGHTIN called me in late February he said, "we've seen about 3 days of sunshine since we left Florida! The weather has been UNBELIEVABLY BAD!" As if rough weather wasn't enough the big tent was backhanded by a series of disasters and accidents! Enroute to Harlingen (Tex) the office semi caught fire (starting from a flat tire which ignited the fuel tanks) and burned to the ground. "Howard Suez helped us out in the Valley," said Wally, "but I am going crazy trying to work out of my trailer with books, records and payroll."

Meanwhile BRIDGET BALLENTINE fell (from the back-balance drop into a half-angel) and broke her pelvis and one heel. A member of the SCHMIDT-ALBULET high wire team injured his arm, his partner continued solo for a time but has since left to break in a new partner for the act. Later in the season the act is scheduled to return. A boy in the JABCZYNSKI teeterboard act broke his leg, but is now back in the act.

After Bridget fell, JAN JOYNER came out of "retirement" and is doing her trapeze specialty in the program. But . . . on the bright side, business has remained steady, with the show making nut and payroll and keeping firmly in the black.

For Valentine's Day, WALLY NAGHTIN bought his wire Doris a new Chevy pickup and 34 ft. DeLuxe Silver Streak trailer. Wally sez it's not so that SUSAN and CEMON went in with him on the Gibsonton property, that Cemon and Susan bought their own acreage complete with mobile home. ALSO: those rumors making the rounds that the Vargas show is "up for sale" are TOTALLY WITHOUT FOUNDATION . . . and THAT, my friends, is straight from the horse's mouth.

**CORRECTION:** ROBIN KUBEA is flying with the PALACIOS not the ESPANAS as reported in an earlier column through a misprint.

**SNAPSHOTS:** DIETER TASSO taped 6 shows for CHUCK BARRIS I am told . . . the daughter of the late LES PARKER gave birth to twins on Feb. 16th. . . ANGELO and INGE BISBINI are building a home in Sarasota . . . So are HAPPY and KAREN DAVIS, very close to the KRISTENSENS, in Riverview . . . Karen wants everyone to know that even though Happy constructs those terrific rhinestone headdress holders, it is SHE who designs them! . . . An aerialist named DEWENK is doing an unusual contortion cloud-swing at the Dunes . . . LES YOXALL is playing Mall Dates with his pig act . . . AL and JOYCE VIDBEL had to dig out of their New York State winterquarters to start the season . . . JOSE BARREDA is staying home at Edmond, Okla., while his sons are touring with the HUBLER show . . . ETHEL JENNIER has broken a new dog (Sunny) for the 10 ft. high jump.

The PTA Mentor (Oh) Circus has to be one of the nicest circus engagements in the country. Chairman HUGH BROWN and committee fed everyone between the 1st and 2nd shows Sat. and Sun. (Full course dinner); hosted a grand party one night with buffet, bar and New Orleans jazz band - AND - served sandwiches and coffee to all during teardown. I wish to thank Hugh and the Mentor PTA for the Plaque Award presented to me during the party, it is deeply appreciated. Visitors at Mentor included: MAC MCGUFFIN, chairman of the Aut Mori Grotto Circus in Youngstown; David Chabira, Jimmy Douglass and Vern Woerner enroute from Grace and Chuck's Rochester Shrine date. Grace phoned to say the Rochester date broke all attendance records, that they've resigned the date for '79. This year also marked the first for a Sunday show which was a turnaway.

Ditto breaking records was the Hubler Grotto Circus at Elyria (Oh) Feb. 25-26. Two turnaways and two full houses. Luckily the weather held for all dates mentioned. Visiting in Elyria were HARRIETT BEATTY and EDDIE SAY. Also the BISBINIS enroute to Bill Kay's date in Albany.

**BOUQUETS:** To GAYLORD MAYNARD's very funny and very original "Comedy Drunken Horse" number. (How badly we need comedy acts nowadays!) and to CURT MEMMEL, (formerly with the Flying Dells and now a college student) who did a masterful job

(Continued on Page 14)

## PEOPLE

WALTER STIMAX and family were featured in the Feb. 24th issue of the Arkansas City (Kans) Traveler. The photos included Walt's circus room, Millie, Walter, Jr., and the chimp Miss Jane.

DAVID LINSELL, formerly with Magic Capades, is now touring with the Bugs Bunny Revue, serving as stage manager.

JOE SCHMITT, Jr. (Skippy) clown, is set to tour with Kelly Bros. Circus for the 1978 season, starting at Tulsa, Okla. on March 26th.

JULIAN HILTON who worked with VINCE CARMEN's magic show in Mexico has joined the Carmen Razzle Dazzle show now touring on the east coast.

LOU REGAN has reportedly resigned from the Carden-Johnson Circus where he worked animal acts for many years. His future plans are not known at this time.

MELVIN SILVERLAKE has left the World Wide Jungle Wonder Circus and returned to his home in Texas. His giant snake, a veteran of 5 years on the road has died and was recently replaced by a purchase in Florida.

KILLER WILLARD, boxing kangaroo; DUKE, duck calling dog; IRENE, TONGO & Co., comedy gorilla act; GENE MENDEZ, high wire and BILL BROWN, MC were featured on the stage show at the 30th annual Sports and RV Show at Dallas, Texas.

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JODY WATKINS, son of BUDDY WATKINS, and grandson of the late IRA and SYLVIA WATKINS, who had animal acts on many circuses, will join the Lin-Rich Animal Circus and Pet-em-Zoo following his graduation this year:

BARRY LAPPY, cyclist who toured with the Ringling-Barnum Circus in 1975-1976 will be touring this year with the State Circus in Romania.

JAMES M. COLE was presented with several awards on Feb. 20th when his show played at Penn Yan. The day was proclaimed "James M. Cole Day" in appreciation "for the hours of enjoyment he has given to the people of the Village of Penn Yan."

THE FEARLESS BAUERS, sway poles; JOE TROLLY, marionettes and Mr. and Mrs. Lonzon, monkeys, worked the Feb. 18-25 South Dade County Fair at Homestead, Fla.

JERRY LIPKO and his Chimps, plus VICK HYDE, one man band, were featured at an Air Stream Rally in Tampa, Fla. early this month.

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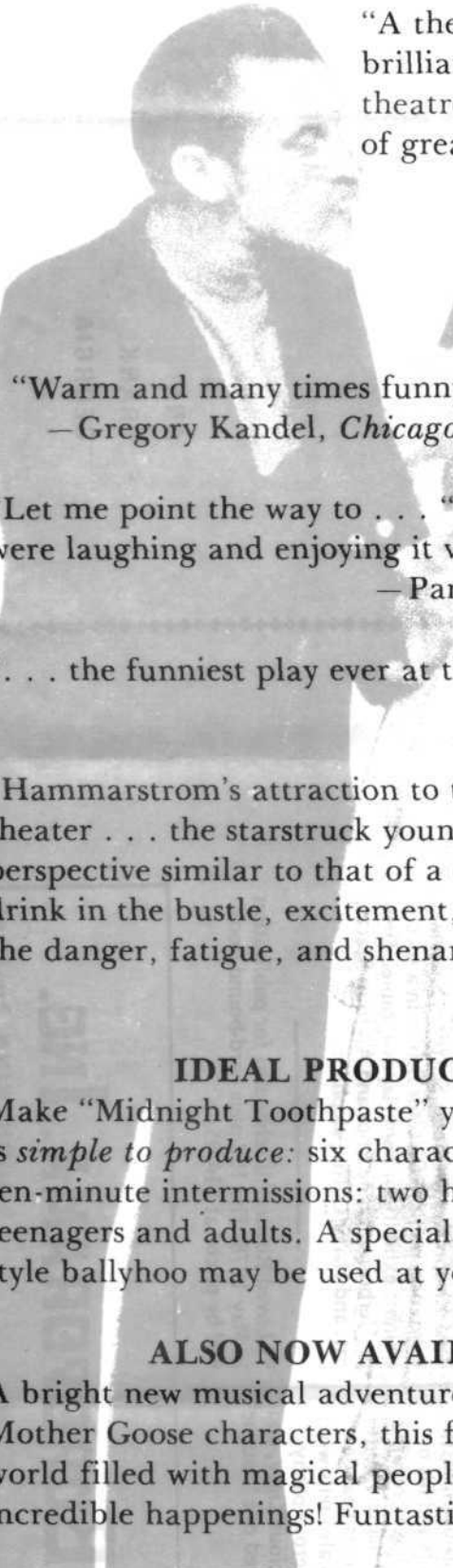
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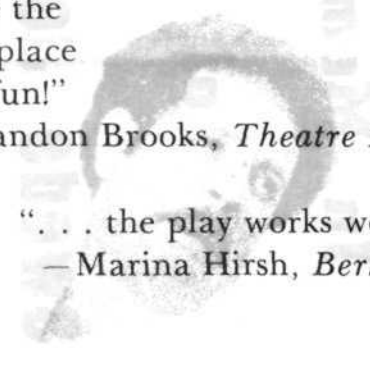
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—Brandon Brooks, *Theatre Notes West*



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—Marina Hirsh, *Berkeley Barb*

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—Gregory Kandel, *Chicago*

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—Pamela James, *College of Alameda Reporter*

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—Evelyn Woods, *Theatre Dynamics*

"Hammarstrom's attraction to the circus . . . has influenced his vision of theater . . . the starstruck young couple approach showbusiness from a perspective similar to that of a child high up in a circus tent. They drink in the bustle, excitement, and cosmetic glamour, and filter out the danger, fatigue, and shenanigans."

—Marti Keller, *Berkeley Gazette*

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### THEATRE BOOKING INFORMATION

The author has severed association with his New York representative, Bertha Klausner, International Literary Agency, and will presently represent himself. Producing queries should be directed to Mr. Hammarstrom at 1031B Central Avenue, Alameda, California 94501 (415) 865-1135.

## Book Due

There's good news for those who enjoy tales of the circus and its people for "Slim" Lewis' famous book "Elephant Tramp" is coming back again as "I Loved Rogues" in an updated and fully illustrated edition.

George 'Slim' Lewis ran away from home at 16 to join the circus to work with elephants - "the world's most lovable animal, and the most dangerous," he calls them - and became recognized as one of the greatest trainers of them all. Working with elephants in zoos and circuses for more than 20 years, Lewis found them to be friends, enemies and distinct personalities. Lewis' experiences were told in "Elephant Tramp", published in 1955 to both critical acclaim and wide readership acceptance (Ernest Hemingway called it "First rate!"); the Chicago Tribune said it "makes the blood run cold and the attention run hot".) The book was reprinted in Great Britain and France, before going out of print.

Superior Publishing Co., of Seattle, recently announced it was reprinting Lewis' book under the title "I Loved Rogues", in a larger format and with the addition of 210 rare photos of elephants, handlers, showmen and circus folk (the original book was not illustrated). For the new addition, Lewis and his original collaborator, Byron Fish, have prepared a new introduction and several chapters on the changes in the circus world since its near demise in the 1950's and 1960's. Lewis also tells what happened to some of his "ponderous pachyderm" pals, including the capricious Ziggy, and what happened when Slim trusted one "rogue" too many.

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## A CIRCUS

A special circus program, produced by Wally Ross, was presented for and by students of the Exotic Animal Training & Management Class of Southern California's Moorpark College.

The circus was presented under the John Strong big top, with ring curb and props provided by Paul V. Kaye.

The program, with ringmaster Mark Onspaugh, featured: Wendy Horspool with the pony Shadow; Jull Williams and Gail Cavin, pigeons; Diane Brisby, with the sea lion Schmoos; Pam Rogers, goats; Clown Alley; Marilyn Shapiro, Cathy Kisdler and Wendy Horspool, llamas; Tina Risdon and the horse Scirroco; Shauna Lawrence, ponies; Director Brisby in a special training exhibition; Tom Hayden, camel; Debby Herbruck, Jayne Enos and Alysoun Seacat, cats and Harry Coffin, elephant.

"I Loved Rogues" is scheduled for publication in May 1978. The 192 page hard-bound book will be priced at \$14.95.



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## MAGIC

The biggest news on the magic scene is the upcoming National Geographic Magazine's television special set for fall viewing on the 'Brain'. It will touch on several points of interest to those who like magic. Dick Berry of Clinton, Miss., is a consultant to determine whether or not particular feats are "gimmicked". Dick has already been to Detroit to view an exhibition of Komar the Hindu Fakir. He expects to go to Russia to observe the kinetic experiments of Kovari, a gal who can reportedly move objects by her mental powers of suggestion. This will be a very interesting special.

During Jan. and Feb. we had Magic Time USA wintered at Lawson's Circus compound in Sarasota, Fla. and had many show-biz visitors. A few were: artists representative Gunnar Amandis, magician Bob Bayliss, show producer, Jim Nordmark, showman Ward Hall, magician Ken Griffin and circus author/historian Joe Mc Kennon.

A spot of great interest to those interested in magic is Chico's Monkey Farm located in Richmond Hill just south of Savannah, Ga. It is owned and operated by Bob and Lucy Snowden. Bob has been interested in magic all his life,

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## CROWD PLEASER

The program presented at Topeka (Kans) on March 3-5 by the Hamid-Morton Circus featured:

Marcan and his lions; the Franconi Duo; Teddy and Therese; Congo; The Gasperrys; Beeswax, comedy mule; Amazing Alain, wire; Princess White Cloud, aerialist; Daredevil Rex and his comedy cannon; The Berans; Miss Peggy; the Moore dogs; T-N-T and the Carolinas; Clown sharpshooters; the Cristiani elephants and Les Blocks, high wire.

## Miscellaneous

The U. S. Dept. of Agriculture recently filed charges against the Boston City Hospital, in Boston, Mass., for failing to submit required reports on the use of laboratory animals.

"Good Days" magazine (Special Issue) for the Spring of 1978 has a two page article about the circus called "A Day At The Circus."

The Medrano Circus, closed in 1972, was reactivated on March 3rd with a special performance for UNICEF, with shows in Paris.



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## SAWDUST TRAIL

This reporter would like to apologize to several circus friends for unknowingly releasing news items that should have been held until a later date. In 7 years of writing this column this has happened only once before. I have never knowingly betrayed a confidence. I now ask all who send me news to state if it is for release or to be kept in secret.

DoDo the Clown has been engaged for the date at Shreveport (June 2-4). The Shrine show will be produced by Eddie Zacchini and producing clown will be John "YoHo" McKay. Several other Shrine dates are pending for DoDo.

Al Dawley, ringmaster for the Sam T. Polack circus at Pine Bluff, Ark., reports that the Sat. shows were well attended and that Shriners said attendance was double that of last year. Al's photo appeared in the Pine Bluff Commercial on Feb. 25th, on the front page.

The high wire act of the Obandos (Carol and Carlos) have an act that involves two members riding bicycles on a wire while supporting a third member, who rides upside down on his head on a pole between the cyclists. It's a real heart stopper and thriller.

Ray Winder informs this reporter that he will be back with Tommy Hanneford, on the advance this year. Ray will still book his winter stage shows, but says "I guess I'm just a circus nut, I can't stay away from them." Ray was in the State of Mississippi with one of his stage units.

John "Yo Ho" McKay will produce the clown

Regarding the gun law restrictions that were mentioned in a previous issue. There are several exemptions to the strict regulations. It will be wise to check on these whenever you are going through or playing dates in the State of Massachusetts.

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numbers on all of the Zacchini southern dates. He is also producing clown on the majority of Sam T. Polack dates. John is a dedicated clown and is a perfection performer and wants all of his numbers to be correct.

An African male elephant was born at the Knoxville, Tenn., Zoo on Mar. 2. The baby elephant was christened Little Diamond and his mother was Toto, an elephant on loan from New York's Bronx Zoo. Another African elephant, Sapphire, is expected to give birth to a new arrival in June. Meanwhile in California the runaway hippo Bubbles continues to defy capture by park and game officials.

..... M. L. DUPONT

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## ACTS SET

The second season for The Big Apple Circus is to get underway on June 7th, with the show's big top set up in Bryant Park, at 42nd Street in New York City.

This year's program will feature: Russian Acrobatic clowns Nina Krasavina and Gregory Fedin (performance directors), the Bruski Trio, Paul Binder and Michael Christensen (Sesame Street Jugglers), Michael Moschen (fire juggler), and the Back Street Flyers (6 teenagers from Harlem who do a special vaulting act), plus several other numbers.

## YEARS AGO

Barnett Bros. Circus of 1933 was on the road for 40 weeks, playing 240 towns in 17 states and covering a total of 14,000 miles. No shows were missed during the season and there were only three 2 day stands.

Personnel featured on the show included: Jean Woodward, Ray O'Day, Jimmy O'Donnell, John Knara, Charles LaBird, Grace Mc Kee, Iza LaBird, Miss Vortex, the Three Jordans, Flo McIntosh, T. J. Burns, Johnny Morrison, Connie Rogers, Vivian Nelson, John White, Vernon Correll, Dorothy Lewis, Anna White, Leroy Thompson, Mal Bates, Albert Powell, Ted Lewis, Buck Lee, Arizona Gordon, Shorty Hahn.

## A Close One

The Happytime Circus suffered a serious accident recently on the Pomona Freeway near Commerce, Calif. Fortunately the accident occurred late at night when the highway was relatively free of traffic.

Show owner Dave Twomey was driving a truck and pulling the big top trailer when both right rear wheels came off and rolled on down the highway ahead of the equipment. Shortly afterwards the trailer hitch broke and the trailer zoomed down the highway, finally coming to rest in the center divider. The truck then went into a spin and stopped as it faced into the oncoming traffic.

Highway traffic in both directions was tied up for about an hour while police and tow trucks worked to remove the damaged vehicles.

Says showman Dave Twomey, "Luckily no one was hurt and there were no other vehicles involved in the accident. But what a mess."

## Mailroom

Mail has been returned by the Post Office who says it can not be delivered as addressed for:

Kristen Meyer

Mike Straka

## AVAILABLE IN APRIL



Contact:

GARY GENI (Musician)  
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# Circus Acts

The program produced by the Hubert Castle Int'l Circus for the Zuhrah Shrine Circus at Minneapolis, Minn., Feb. 25-Mar. 5 featured:

Spec, Circus on Parade; The Ronritas, giant Pendulum of Fate; Tarzan Zerbini, wild animals; Clowns; Miss Roberta, slide for life; The Paula Sisters, The Davids, The Shermans, aerial numbers; Timothy, The Laddies and Daniel, balancers and jugglers; Karl's Poodles; Mlle. Jacqueline, single trapeze; Johnny Zoppe's Rhesus Monkeys; Clowns; Lee Marx, juggling; Martinez Trio and Randy & Sylvia, balancing; the Circus Elephants; Roman Schmitt's rhino and elephant; The Winn Troupe, aerial motorcycle; The Rock-Smith Flyers; Doug Ashton and Sally, comedy; The Golden Carlos Twins, contortion; Susan Sheryll's Afghans; the Marhal camels and llamas; Boomer & Co., boxing kangaroo; Aerial number with Patricia, Sylvia, Debbie, Sally, Robin, Medina, Rebecca, Chela and Blanca; The Hernandez Troupe, teeterboard; Clowns and the Friel-Smith Rocket 'S' Cannon.

## BILLY BARTON (Continued)

staging and creating the 8 girl aerial ballet for the Mentor date, using local gals. It was a good deal more professional and "together" than most I've seen of late.

**FLASH: FAMOUS HUNT** will produce a 6 day circus date at the Civic Center in Philadelphia May 12 thru 17th. And **GEORGE HUBLER** has re-activated the defunct Cleveland Grotto Circus to be played at the end of April for 2 days at a new location.

**BOOM BOOM BROWNING** (The best of the belly dancers), his band men, and **JOE SHERMAN** are still hot and heavy at the Knock-Rummy games between shows, and concessionaire **DON BULLITT** tells me he is now the Greatest Collector of IOU's in the Industry and NOT by design!

See you down the road, luvs.

The show staff consisted of: Col. Lucky Larabee, ringmaster; Robert C. Dunham, personnel director; Hector Martinez, electrician; Prof. Clement Toca, musical director; Pablo Martinez prop boss; Irma Dunham, wardrobe; Gene Randow, producing clown.

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**SALE OK'D (Continued)**

In its petition for involuntary dissolution to the court last January, North American Operating Co. indicated that Circus Kirk "is insolvent . . . and because of deterioration of equipment and facilities, it is no longer capable of accomplishing the objects of the corporation." Further use of the corporation and its assets, the petition continued, would result in waste and be adverse to the interest of the corporation, its stockholders and the creditors of the corporation."

Assets of the North American Operating Co. are listed as being approximately \$10,000, while debts are estimated to exceed some \$100,000.

Circus Kirk, since its inception in 1968, was a youth circus, entirely staffed by students be-



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**PEOPLE**

WALT STIMAX and Family will spend the '78 season with Hoxie Bros. Circus where in addition to clown numbers the family acts will also be presented.

CAPTAIN DYNAMITE (Patrick A. O'Brien) the veteran stuntman who works in a coffin surrounded by four sticks of dynamite that he detonates, will be working a string of baseball parks this summer. He already has signed dates with the Minnesota Twins (July 4) and the Arkansas Travelers (May 6).

tween the ages of 18 and 25 years. Although based in East Berlin (Pa.), the circus travelled every summer primarily through the eastern states along the Atlantic coast.

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