



6th Year

January 31, 1977

Number 5

# Dolphin Piracy Charged

The U.S. Government has been charged with "pirating" six dolphins and their Canadian owner says he is filing a \$3 million damage suit. John Holer, owner of Marineland at Niagara Falls (Ontario, Canada), says the dolphins were to have been his main attraction and because of the loss he may not be able to open his park this summer.

The animals were captured and trained in Mexico and were confiscated by U. S. authorities when an airplane was forced down at Beaumont, Texas, because of bad weather. The dolphins, said William Stephenson, regional director of National Marine Hatcheries in New Orleans, were confiscated because the pilot did not have a permit to transport them. They were released into the Gulf of Mexico at Beaumont because there was no space available at the local marine life facility. However, two other dolphins were allowed to go on into Canada.

Holer said he hired special crews and boats to capture and train the dolphins. "It cost us a tremendous amount of money," he said. "Now we'll have to apply to the Mexican

government for another permit, but it takes six months to train dolphins."

(Continued on Page 6)

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# PEOPLE

**REX HORTON** and his Wonder Bears worked a Dallas (Texas) Theatre date on Jan. 14-15 to advertise a wild life film.

**CHUCK BIRKOLM**, former RBBB Blue Unit clown, will be stage manager for the West Coast Dance Theatre tour which starts at Phoenix (Ariz.) on March 11th.

**TONY STEELE**, aerialist, has returned to the States after an extended engagement with the Olimpiada de Circo in Spain.

**ROY KABAT** has been confined to his home after spending more than a month in a hospital. You can write him at: Box 86, Jacksonville, Oregon 97530.

**SAUL SHAFTON** (Poodles Galore) was recently injured while setting up for a show. He was hospitalized with his arm and hand requiring major surgery. You can send cards and letters to him at: 616 Wicker Ave., Streamwood, Ill.

**BOBBY GIBBS** recently visited **D. R. MILLER**, **GEE GEE ENGESSER**, "Jelly" **DUKE**, **GLEN HENRY** and **JIMMY CONNORS**.

**SAM T. POLACK** will be producing the annual Police Circus at New Orleans, which is set for April 1-3.

## Flash!

The Wallace & Rogers Circus will not go back on the road. It's equipment and animals are going to be sold.

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# NEW NAME

The newly titled "Big Top Circus" (formerly Dailey Bros. Circus) opened its 1977 tour in the Houston (Texas) area on Jan. 10th. The show is currently playing the Texas Valley area and anticipates a long season.

The show has a green and white big top and all rolling equipment has been newly painted and is also green and white. The show is carrying 2 elephants, a camel, horse, ponies, chimp and a variety of other animals;

Show personnel includes: Gopher Davenport, owner; Mel Silverlake, announcer and manager; Bert Pettus, elephants and concessions; Eddie Klutz, horse act; the Null Family, musci, juggling, whips, etc; Gloria Null, web, ladder, production; The program runs about an hour and 15 minutes.

Recent visitors to the show included: Mike Gasca, Jimmy Kearnan, Bob and Juanita Leonard, Bobby Gibbs, James and Kathyleen Davis, Gary and Zoe Ann Henry and Sandy Fulbright.

## In Memoriam

**MARIE J. MEEHAN** (84) died at DeLand, Fla. on Jan. 11th, as a result of heart complications. She was the mother of Mari Jo Couls, who just 14 months ago retired as office manager from the King Bros. Circus. Burial was at the Holy Sepulchre Cemetery in Detroit, Mich.



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# ROUTES

## CIRCUS VARGAS

Jan. 27-31 Houston, Texas  
 Feb. 1-3 Victoria  
 4-7 Corpus Christi

## COLE ALL STAR TV CIRCUS

Jan. 31 Spring Mills, Pa.  
 Feb. 2 Emporium  
 3 Barnesboro  
 4 Brockway  
 5 Kane  
 6 Sherman, N. Y.

## MOSLEM SHRINE CIRCUS

Feb. 4-20 Detroit, Mich.

## POLACK BROS' CIRCUS

Feb. 2-6 Louisville, Ky.

## RINGLING-BARNUM (Blue Unit)

Jan. 31-Feb. 2 Venice, Fla.

## RINGLING-BARNUM (Red Unit)

Feb. 2-6 Jacksonville, Fla.

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This Way to the Big Show by Dexter  
 Fellows - 60 photos (Bit Rough)  
 \$15.00

Polly of the Circus by Margaret Mayo  
 1908 - Cover loose . . . . . \$ 5.00

The Rose in the Ring by G. B. McCutcheon  
 1910 - 2 circus pix . . . . . \$ 5.00

Sodom by the Sea (Coney Island) - 1943  
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 Side Show . . . . . \$3.00

Midway Magic by Bloes . . . . . \$3.00

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# Not True

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.... OTHER ROUTES ....

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KEN GRIFFIN (Magic)  
 Jan. 31 Hollis, Okla.  
 Feb. 2 Evansville  
 4 Salem, Ill.

INDEPENDENT CLUB EXTRAVAG.  
 Feb. 2-13 Gibsonton, Fla.

WIZARD OF OZ SHOW  
 Feb. 1-6 Oklahoma City, Okla.

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# BILLY BARTON....

**ACTS WORKING** above the Mason-Dixon line are finding this is the worst winter in years, walloped by heavy snows and sub-zero temperatures. **HOXIE TUCKER**, up north setting dates for his two circuses, found getting back to Florida a wee-bit difficult with the snowstorms hitting, one on the heels of the other.

**TAJANA** added two more tigers to her cage act and the one tiger cub she has left is now a house pet playing with her Boston terriers....**WALLY & CHERYL**, **KATHY ENGLISH** and **DWIGHT HANSON** were on hand for the **KEPPO/DESIMINI** nuptials...**THE GREAT VASHEK** and **HARRY THOMAS** were booked on **Circus Odyssey** by **SANDY DOBRITCH**. Sandy and Michele spent the holidays in Mexico with Michele's parents...Another Mexico vacationer was **CHARLES GERMAINE**....**EMIL & DEBBIE GOETCHI** visited **Circus Vargas** in Atlanta enroute to Saginaw for the **Fleekles** show....Aside to **Cliff Vargas**: Sorry I couldn't make your opening as planned. Everytime I shoveled my way out of the driveway a new snow storm filled it in!....(Femme clown **MARY WISE** touring with the **Voorheis** show....**BARBARA LUXEM**'s horse was trained by **DERRICK ROSAIRE**).

Glamorous **ANETA VARGAS** opened at **Circus** Jan. 1st for 6 months....**LARRY RUHL** (Michele & Michael, the act in which the late **BRENDA JONES** partnered for years) is now in Spain where he retains an apartment and where he plans to someday retire....**THE RITO BROS.** are currently with **Atayde** in Mexico....**IRIS KEPPO**, going to Nursing School and getting straight A's will open in March with **Gatti-Charles**....**PATSY** (Frank) **TOMPKINS**, mother of **BRADD FRANK**, who has been with **Commerford & Shea Concessions** for 4 years, reports the elaborate **Petting Zoo Units** will not go out this winter.

**BILL STRONG** says the cancellation of the **Circo Union** tour really put him in a bind. Thousands of dollars had been spent on new equipment, a deep freezer for meat and a light plant - just for that tour....**The EMMETT KELLY, Jr.** **Circus** was sandwiched between a **Ballet Company** and a **Symphony Orchestra** when it played the **Kennedy Center** in D.C.

**Circus** enthusiast **JOHN McCONNELL** recalls that during **World War II**, the **Barnes Circus** played at **Detroit's Olympia Stadium**, where John, who had a paper route, ended his daily trek. The featured act was the **Riding Hannefords** and the late **Kay Francis** received the lion's share of publicity. Upon learning

**Kay** was his own age, **John** identified with the teen-aged equestrienne and thus began an interest in her career that remained steadfast up to and including her untimely death. It's ironic, however, that although **John** became acquainted with the **Hanneford** family he never met or spoke to **Kay**.

**Movie** buffs will be saddened to learn the legendary **GRETA GARBO** is seriously ill. The screen immortal has authorized a bio to be published upon her death called "The Image of Garbo" which, for the first time, will reveal full details of her mysterious life.

**ED MIGLEY** advises that all equipment, newly constructed for **Circus Odyssey**, is ready for its "maiden voyage" to **Puerto Rico**. **Mayaguez**, due to problems with the **University**, has been cancelled and that week added to the **San Juan** run. **Migley** also has two weeks of **New England Police** dates scheduled for **April**.... Well, it's "rumor time" again for **UNCLE SID** (**Kellner**) - phone calls indicate he has unearthed an "angel" and the **G-M** show will start up in **May**.

Despite the tragic **December** fire in which he lost his chimps, props, wardrobe and truck, **JERRY LIPKO** announces his newly staged act with four chimps is ready for signed dates. The "Chimp Calendar" **Jerry** sent out, with amusing chimp pix for each month, is very clever and original....**Jerry** says he may tour with **Rudy Bros.** - ditto **BILLY RODGERS**.

The announcement that **MUHAMMED ALI** plans the movie **HANNIBAL** with a cast of 100 elephants elicits a smile. What else could possibly co-star with the self-proclaimed "greatest" EXCEPT - 100 elephants!!! See you down the road, luvs.

## NEW STAR

Officials at the **Nugget Casino** in **Sparks** (Nev.) have announced that henceforth their star elephant **Bertha** will take a back seat. The 14 year old elephant is suffering from arthritis in all four legs and her act will be carried on by the **Casino's** young elephant **Tina**, who debuts on **Feb. 3rd**.

**Trainer David Hall** has been teaching **Tina** the act for the past several months. The hardest of the tricks was teaching her to stand on her front feet atop a revolving pedestal, while supporting a girl on a trapeze from her mouth.

## MORE WOES

New legislation that would ban the exhibition of performing wild animals is expected to come before Congress sometime this year. According to the National Congress of Animal Trainers & Breeder's latest newsletter just such legislation is being prepared, with the backing of the Costeau Society. Advance reports indicate that the bill will be introduced by Senator Javits.

At the same time another bill is being prepared that would phase out all zoos. In their place a small number of Government-run "Survival Centers" would be established.

Those interested in animals and in fighting such bills as these are urged to join the NCATB, P. O. Box 4102, Santa Clara, Cal. 95054.

Meanwhile, members of the CFA hope to have one of their people on each circus, to talk to the public and to obtain signatures on petitions in support of the animal trainers, circuses and animal breeders.

### PIRACY CHARGED (Continued)

"The Americans committed air piracy of the plane and its cargo," Holer charged. "Under the Geneva Convention the plane had a right to land anywhere in the Western world with its cargo, in an emergency."

Holer's Marineland has five other dolphins from a previous shipment that arrived safely because the plane did not have to land in the United States.

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### THE GREAT AMERICAN CIRCUS DIRECTORY

\*\*\*\*\*

P. O. BOX 1616, SARASOTA, FLA. 33578

Dear Subscriber:-

Did you receive your December issue of "The Great American Circus Directory"?

It has been brought to our attention that several of our subscribers never received their December issue.

On Dec. 19th of '76, we sent out all issues of the magazine, bulk rate postage. Perhaps because of the Christmas mail rush several copies were delayed or misplaced.

If you have not yet received your issue, please let us hear from you.

Sorry for the delay.

Thanks to everyone who have given their support with subscriptions and ads.

Sincerely,

Emil & Debbie Goetschi

## Show Acts

The program presented at Saginaw, Mich., for the annual Elf Khurafeh Shrine Temple (Jan. 14-18) was produced by L. N. Fleckles. The staff included: Dorothy E. Winn, director/general manager; Al Dawley, announcer/equestrian director and Ron Kelroy, prop boss.

Featured in the program were: The Lodi Duo, cradle; Guy Gossing's tigers; The Albanis, aerial motorcycle; Randy and Sylvia, high perch; the Amazing DeMille, tightwire; Lamberti, Jr., one finger stand/balancing; Reynoso Bros., Pirates in the Sky; Sebastian's dogs; Sabo's Chimps; Storybook Animals; Aerial Ballet; Mister Rythm, Rythm, dancing horse; Pablo Rodriguez Troupe, aerialists; Intermission.

The Rock Smith Flyers; Jorge's Unpredictable Car; the Hernandez Troupe, teeterboard; The Hortobagys, teeterboard; Walt King's elephants; The Rosell Troupe, high wire; Friel-Smith Cannon Act.

Clown Alley featured: Blinko, Maran, Happy Kellems, Mustafo, Al Hasan, Nada and DoBino.

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## PEOPLE

**STAN KRAMIEN** is calling his new magic show "Magicazam" and will soon take it on tour. He is setting dates now.

**STEVE BAKER** (Checkers) and **GARY RAY** (Patches) are spending the winter with friends in Austin, Texas. In addition to school assemblies and shopping mall shows, the clown team are doing several instructional seminars for the city sponsored Zachery Scott Theatre. They are also appearing on local talk shows.

**JAMES M. COLE** is currently making his 60th annual circus tour. His show is playing sponsored dates in the east.

**HARRY THOMAS** and his tigers will be featured on a Jan. 31st ABC-TV special sponsored by Encyclopedia Britannica.

**WAYNE BOLZ** has been working to reactivate the Seils Sterling CFA Tent in Wisconsin. He also books dates for Franzen Bros. Circus

**BETH NUFER**, stunt girl, made a 46 foot fall from a water tower for a TV pilot film called "Holocaust."

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## Miscellaneous

A Mexican Circus is definitely coming into the States this summer. The show will make six month test tour which ends in California.

The Lu Lu Shrine Temple is in Philadelphia and not Wilmington as was previously reported.

The Carson & Barnes Circus plans to start its 1977 season in Alabama in early March.



## In Memoriam

**TEX SCARBROUGH**, one of the last owners of Jungleground, at Thousand Oaks, Calif., died in his sleep in the early part of Dec. 1976.

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# PHOTO

.....Phil Jordan

A third of a century after it was taken, it remains one of the most famous news photos ever. Few non-war photos have been able to match its "you are there" impact.

Against a background of clouds of smoke, it shows famed clown Emmett Kelly in his "Willie" make-up and tatters, carrying a bucket of water in a futile attempt to fight the show's tragic big top fire in Hartford, Conn., on July 6, 1944.

The trouble is, that photo doesn't really portray what it seems, according to the man who should know, Kelly himself.

"It was so hot that day," Kelly recalled for CR, "that I was afraid the heat would melt my putty nose and it would fall off."

"I didn't go on until the Wallendas' high wire act, which followed the big cats and I was sitting in the dressing tent, perhaps 25 yards from the performers entrance to the big top, trying to keep cool before I went on.

"Then I heard someone walk by the dressing tent and say something about 'fire'. That's always a dangerous word around a circus, but it was more so that year; the circus tried to buy fireproof canvas that year, but World War II was on and it was all being used for army tents.

"Like a damned fool, I grabbed a bucket of water that was sitting there and ran toward the big top. At first I didn't see anything, and then I saw a little smoke at the front end of the tent, and little flames burning in a circle, an area no bigger than a washtub.

"But I couldn't get to it," Kelly continued. "It was way up there, going 60, 65 feet into the top of the tent. There was no way in the world to get to it,

"What could I do with a bucket of water? I couldn't throw it 65 feet into the air.

"It was useless. I just threw it to one side."

And no photo had been taken . . . so where did the world-famous photo come from?

"The photo of me in newspapers and magazines carrying a bucket of water, that came later," Kelly told CR.

"That photo was taken after the fire had burned out," he said, "though I didn't know it had even been taken until several days later.

"There were still scattered fires around the area, straw burning, and bits of loose canvas. Then I saw the wooden axle of a generator wagon was burning.

"I grabbed a bucket and filled it at a canvas watering trough set up for the show's horses and a couple of grooms did the same thing. We threw the water on the axle and then a circus tractor pulled the generator wagon away.

"When a circus press agent told me a few days after the fire, 'That was a hell of a photo!' I didn't know what he was talking about. It seems an editor had seen it, wanted to use it and had called him to make sure of the caption.

"Later on, it was in Life and all the magazines and all the papers.

"I found out the rest of the story the next season. We were playing Madison Square Garden when a boy of about 16 came up to me and said he wanted to shake my hand.

"Then he told me, 'I'm the one who took that picture.'

"He'd taken his camera to the circus with him that day, was there when the fire broke out. So many people panicked and that's why so many died, but he kept his head. He climbed to the top of the stands, jumped off, used his pocket knife and cut through the sidewall and stepped out to safety.

"As a matter of fact, he didn't have to cut the sidewall — he could have just lifted it up and walked right out.

"Then he saw me with the bucket, running to the generator wagon. He sold it to the editor of one of the Hartford papers and the editor, who didn't know the whole story, put it on the news wires.

"And that's how it really happened. The editor didn't have the whole story, but that's the one people still believe.

"It was horrible," Kelly summed up. "I never felt so helpless in my life.

"People were dying . . . and there wasn't a damned thing I could do..."

(Next Week "Hartford")

# DAVE MERRIFIELD

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# THE EVEL KNieVEL

## SPECIAL

January 31, 1977

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Booked By

*Paul V. Kays*

ARTISTS' MANAGER-AGENCY

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# NOTICE

This commentary is written in resentment to the great injustice done to circus people by the C.B.S. Circus of Stars show presented on Monday night, Jan. 10th.

Yes, I speak for thousands of highly skilled professional circus people - including many who refused to work this show because of their integrity - good people who refused to sell and disgrace their heritage for a few lousy dollars.

I have never witnessed such an expensive production conglamorated with the result of such garbage to mock and degrade the circus profession.

This is one producer who was approached from several angles by several people - to be a part of this mess - but I flatly refused. Circus is my first love and no amount of money can make me sell out to such a fraud to the American viewers.

Not one single word or honorable mention was permitted - to the people who have dedicated their lives with perfection and training to make circus business a profession which is the greatest of all entertainment.

Still this show degraded circus business to less than nothing. They tried to make it look phoney - as if any joker could be a circus performer or animal trainer in two rehearsals. Yes, this is true.

My company took a poll on the results of the show, which indicated that these TV stars, unwittingly and unknowingly, made fools out of circus people, by trying to prove that they - the superstars could do just as well with one or two rehearsals (some even indulged a whole week) as circus people could do in a lifetime of struggle to perfect their acts.

"Ha - Ha - Big Deal, nothing to it - look at me."

It's a poor way to build fading ego, while stepping on someone else to elevate yourself.

My God, what is this world coming to when people as big as C.B.S. are so blind and stupid to approve of such a degrading mess - and in the process, cheated the American public out of real circus entertainment.

My son used to do better in the back yard at 5  
(Continued on Page 17)

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**A-1 CONCESSION MGR. and SIDE SHOW MGR.**

**REPLY TO OPEN LETTER IN C.R. — Jan. 17, 1977 issue:**

VICTOR and LINDA FLORES

Thank you for admitting you took the pony "Smokie" in Fort Worth during the Texas Shrine Circus date. I thought you would contact me by mail for the Reward, instead you answered thur an ad in Circus Report. I did give my address and phone number.

And knowing where you live, I plus two witnesses looked for your place over 6 hours on Jan. 13th, when we came to San Antonio for the pony. Your address is a P. O. Box drop and no one ever heard of you.

If you need the reward money so bad Please call me collect and I will help you out. Please take good care of my pony until we get together. Phone: (512) 585-1418.

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**ZOO STORY —**

At the Detroit Zoo a man dropped his lighted cigar on an alligator's back, then laughed as the coals burned into the skin and the creature trahsed about in pain.

Two teen-age boys strangled the farm animals at a New York Zoo. Their parents couldn't understand why authorities were upset.

In Los Angeles, boys drove an elephant berserk by tossing hot cherry peppers into his food.

There seems no rational explanation for the increasing brutality toward animals in the nation's zoos. Everywhere, guards are being increased, not to protect the people, but rather to protect animals from people. Of all the zoos, none reports more brutality than Detroit's.

Other crimes against animals include: a steel tipped arrow was driven into a duck's chest.... Boys peppered a pregnant doe with firecrackers,

**MAGIC**

"Merlin's Wonderful World of Magic" as presented at Circle Star Theatre, just south of San Francisco, last week featured:

Merling, the Magician; The Tibetan Sorcerer; The Amazing Cantini; Dr. H. P. Lovecraft and Paul, the Magician.

she convulsed and miscarried....A hippo tried to swallow a tennis ball tossed into its mouth, it choked and died....An Australian Wallaby was stoned to death.

In New York's Central Park Zoo a man tormented a brown bear with a pointed stick. The bear clamped his teeth into the man's arm and was tearing it off, when a policeman, in an effort to save the bleeding man, shot the bear.



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## In Print

"New Republic" magazine for Jan. 15, 1977, has a cover photo of a bull line headed for the show's watering troughs.

"Horse & Rider" magazine for Jan. 1977 has a special feature article, with photos about film star and western performer Buck Jones.

"Soviet Life" magazine for Jan. 1977 has four pages of photos of Russian circus performers, including a hula hoop bear, elephant, dogs, hippo, aerialist, tigers, etc.

"Western Horseman" magazine for Jan. 1977 has a story on the Budweiser Clydesdales and Jonnie Stinson and her trained trick horse "Star Baby."

"Real West" magazine for March 1977 has a story and photos about Tom Mix in Arizona and some of his early film features.

## Show Report

Patterson Bros. Circus, produced by Ida Patterson, gave two performances at Battle Creek, Mich., on Jan. 15th. The show's announcer was Les Gibson and the clowns were Les Gibson, and Irvin Romig (Rickey, the Clown). Music was provided by the Henneberry Family.

The program featured: Lee, Rita and Mickey Henneberry, juggling; "Rickey" and the slide trombone; Jeff & Leta, comedy dance team; Gloria Peebles Busy B's (monkey and dogs); "Rickey" Wild West Roping; Lee and Rita Henneberry, magic/illusions; Irv Langs chimps; Clowns with Skunk-burgers; Bud and Enda Jeffreys, aerial cradle; Henneberry Family, uni-cycles.

..... Kaye Scheiman





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**TV Feature**

A special TV feature, a four hour adaption of the Charles Dickens novel "Hard Times" is currently being filmed in Manchester, England. The program series is being co-produced by British and New York TV companies and will be aired late this year.

The set covers five acres and includes the re-creation of an 1850 circus. Some 100 extras and 25 circus acts were hired for the show.

**Radio Feature**

On Jan. 13th, well-known western performer and rodeo star Bernice Dean was featured on the "Voice of America" program. The show's host Roland Massey set up a telephone circuit from Palmdale (Calif.) to the recording studio in Washington, DC, for his interview. The discussion covered her life as the wife of a cowboy, along with her experiences on the rodeo field and entertaining people around the world, including many of the royalty of Europe.

The interview was developed after Massey saw a photo of Bernice in the December issue of the Western Horseman magazine in an article "Girl Ropers - Then and Now".

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