

BACK YARD

Volume V, Issue #93

June 15, 2000

"Let's Take A Walk Down Memory Lane With The Wheeling, West Virginia Shrine Circus"

By Cherie Valentine

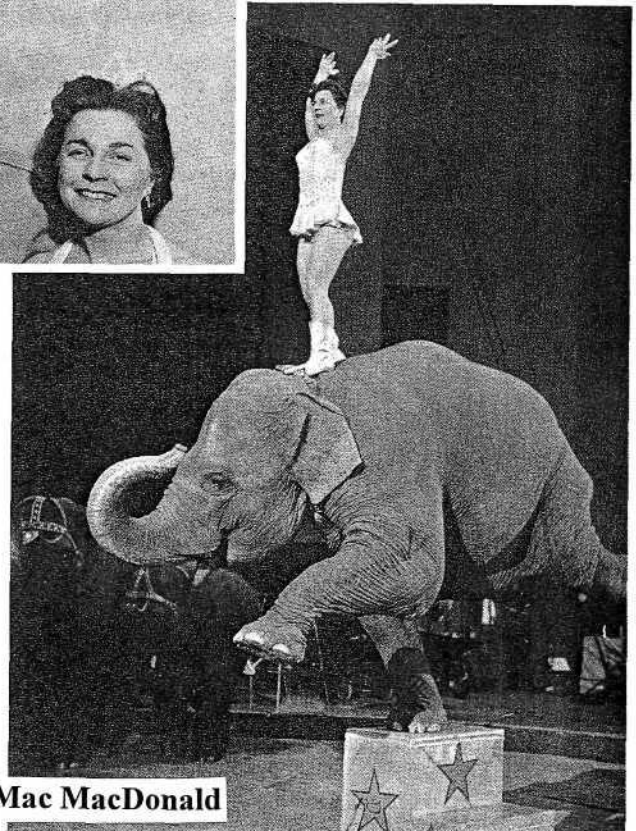
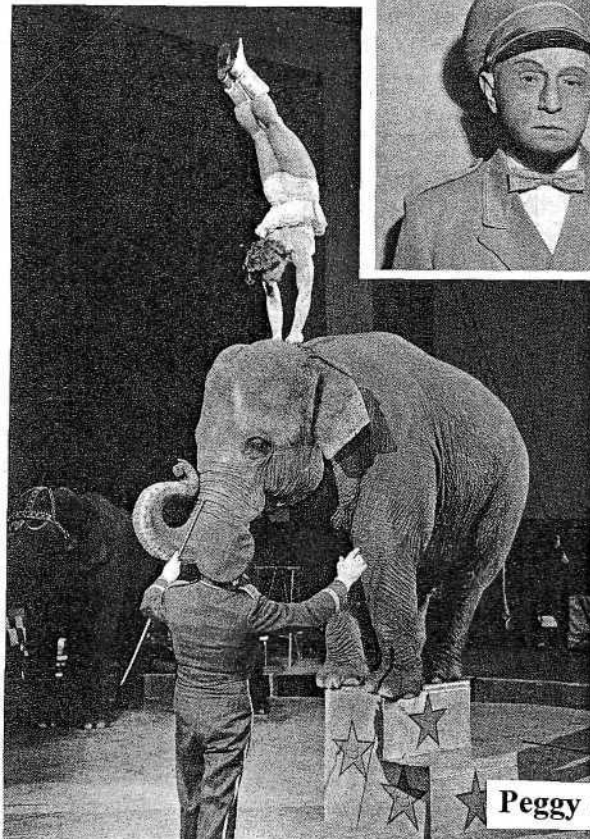
I recently purchased eight old Wheeling Shrine programs on E-bay and what a delight to look thru all the performers and circus history I found inside!

The years are 1950, 1955, 1956, 1957, 1963, 1967, 1972 and 1973. I want to tell you about the performers and the little circus history articles that are included in each program. Hope you enjoy the journey!

The 1950 program has a great cover with a huge clown face and a big top going all across the bottom of the

page. "3 Big Nights-July 31, Aug. 1 and 2. Official Souvenir Program of the Big Show." The producer/director was Tom Packs; musical director, Jack Cervone. Opening act was Prof. George Keller, "unarmed-using only his bare hands," consisting of lions, tigers, leopards, pumas, jaguars and black panthers. Next, the Aerial Elton's Sky Revue, atop a 125' structure; the Renowned White Horse Troupe, from Nebraska's Ranch in White with snow-white, pink-eyed Albino Stallions; Juggling and Balancing with Miss Dagmar, the Cathalas and the Aurelios; Foot & Hand Dexterity with Jack Meyand and

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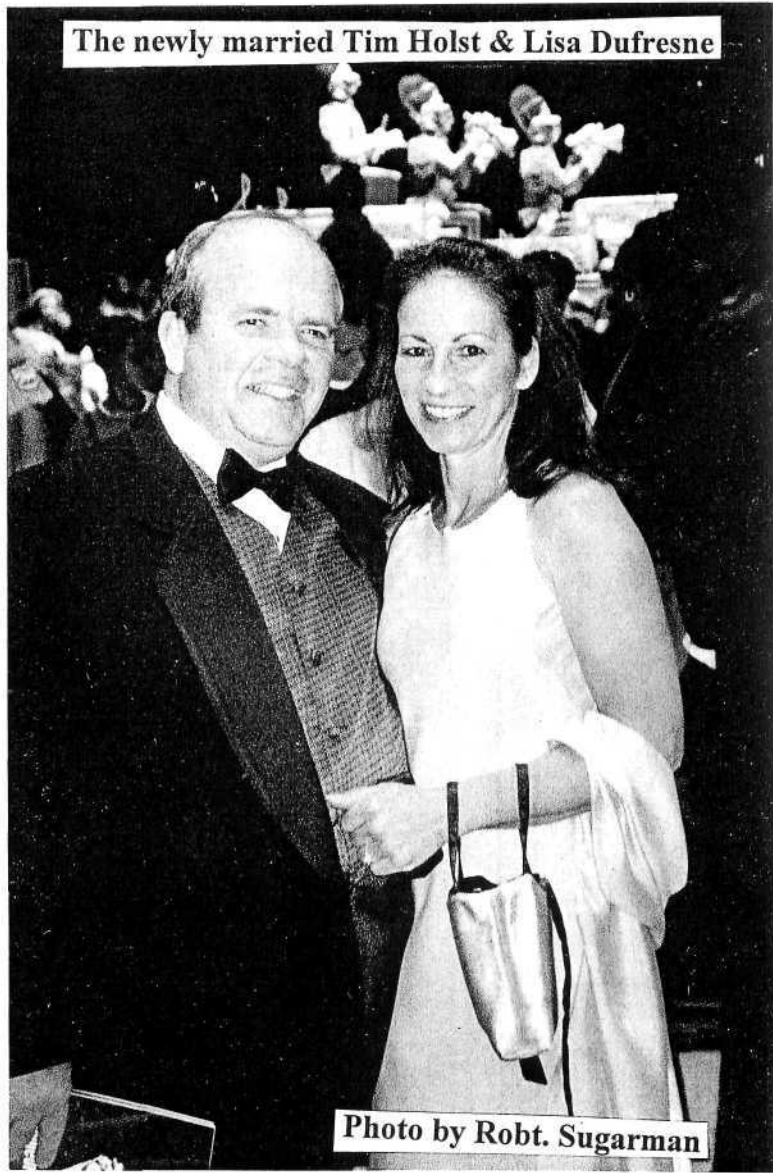


Peggy & Mac MacDonald



Valentine Collection

The newly married Tim Holst & Lisa Dufresne



FOX 79

THE FOX !!!

My Dear Friends,

There is not to much news so I will write what ever I can thing off.

I just went through my old mail and there was a bid about Circus Busch Roland in Germany. A girlfriend of mine went to see it. She said there were not many anymal acts any more. They had 3 elephants, 6 horses but she said they had a big wild animal act with lots of lions and tigers. I guess she expect lots more elephants. She also writes it was a great show but all the performers were from Russia, Romania and Chekey. As she was told they are working for cheap. This is a shame, I think, as they have great acts but go all for little money. This is here true to I was told. Once it was all the Mexican acts who went for low prises, now its the acts from Europe from the East. Well I guess one of these days the government or union will move in and make it a minimum to pay. This will be good for all the acts here in the good old U S A.

Just strolling to my last years Christmas mail and found out that I never got to mention that my dear friend George Wisdom passed away over two year ago, but I think I just put his wifes letter in in full. George was for many year the man who put the fireworks on at the Tom Packs Circus. And what a great spectacular presentation this was. He also was a great person who would always be ready to help anyone in need. So here is the letter.

Hi! It isn't too happy this year. George Ben Wisdom passed away May 21, 1998. He had a heart valve replaced and he never recovered. He was sick for a year. He was in and out of the hospital with congestive heart failure. He had a military funeral, which he requested. We had just built a small home, so I am thankful of it. It is on one of my son's property, so he lives close to me. I keep busy doing volunteer work, but the nights are the hardest. I wish you all the best. He really looked forward to the holidays, because he always enjoyed all the cards and letters from old friends and army buddies. We are trying to build a Veterans Memorial Wall in front of the new civic center if we can raise enough money.

That was his dream... Sincerely, Carol Wisdom.

Oh yes, Showfolks of Sarasota had its Social again the first Saturday of June. I did not attend, as the man I am happily married to is not in good shape and I do not like to leave him alone. When he is back on his feet and acts his normal honory way I will get back to socialising.

By the way, I am selling the ads for the circus program book and would very much appreciat all of you out there your help. Please send in your ads. I really would appreciate it. And if you know of a person who would like to put a small or big ad in please tell them to do so. Any help will be greatly appreciated by me and the Club. Thank you. HELP. Oh also, if anyone of you tried to call me, sorry my phone was all messed up. First I could not get any calls in and then it went dead all together. Now it is all well again.

OK, so far no one has found Charky for me. I guess she just dropped out of side.

Anna Del Monti has recovered from her broken leg and she likes to thank all of you who send her cards. She really appreciated it. Now she is back doing repair jobs for the ladys to shorten or slimming the garnments.

Laura May Petrello is now living all alone sins her dear mother passed away to. To bad she is not in Sarasota so she could get together with old friends at the Club.

Pat Kirby is staying with Rusty sins she had been ill and hospitalized. But as I am told is doing well. To bad her nice home is sitting there empty.

I do not see much of Lawson any more, he stays real close to his wife Margie. He sold most of his property on Whithfield Ave.

There will be a new elected stars in the Ring of Fame this comming January, so far there is no one elected. There are about 30 names send out to all the once who are already in the Ring or there next of kin who still are involved in the circus business. Then the once who have the most votes will be the elected. Listen, you can not be

(Continued on Pg. 9)

Wheeling Shrine Circus.....

Co. and Jack & Jennie; Contortion, Aerial Buffoonery and knock-about antics with Bill Bentlage, Jimmy Troy and Chic Yale; Young Penny, presented by Mack MacDonald, Little Tommie, presented by Peggy Henderson and Sonny Moore's Canine Roustabouts; Torrice-the Viennese Sky King, sway pole; La Tosca, bounding rope; Thompson's Lippizanners; the Great Arturo's, high wire; Clauson's Bears and Andre Guerre's Seals; the Flying Meteors and the Bill Valentine Troupe; Capt. Wm. Heyer riding "Starless Night" and "Crown Jewel," acrobatics with the Maschininos, the Boginos and the Madsens; Clowns: Chic Yale, Jimmy Troy, Billy O'Dell, Henry Boers, Jackie LeClaire and Lew Hershey; Tom Pack's Siamese Elephants with Mack MacDonald, assisted by the dainty and lovely Miss Peggy Henderson; the White Horse Troupe; Aida-the Star in the Moon.

The 7th Annual Osiris Temple Shrine Circus was Aug. 1-3, 1955. Programs were a mere 25 cents. It was produced again by Tom Packs, with Jack Leontini, asst. to the Producer. The opening band concert consisted of the Shrine's 60 piece band. The opening act was Pat Anthony, "Presenting America's first and only G.I. Wild Animal Trainer." Next were the Crowleys, the Edmond Trio and the Raymonds, trampoline; the Two Sky Masters, sway pole; Marcelli & Janis and Jack Meyand & Jeanette, slack wire & monocycles and Jan Risko & Nina, plate spinning; the Paramount Bears, with "Zero" the uncaged Polar Bear, Al Antonucci's Chimps (with Cheeta, Bonzo and Pancho) and Alarno's Trained Pigs; The Alzana Family, high wire; the Osiris Elephants, presented by James and Jo Madison (photos of the Alzanas & Madisons); the Flying Fagnolis & the Flying Maxellis; Karlis Peterson & His Jockey Dogs; Les Hildays, aerial unicycle; Acrobatics with the Badictons, Franklin and Astrid and La Belle Norma, wire; the Alberto Zoppe Family with Cucciolo (with photo); George and Lexi Bruno, aerial; the Celebrated Zacchini Sisters, cannon.

With the Edmondo Zacchini double repeating cannon were Victoria & Duina. "Victoria, second to leave the cannon, overtakes Duina in mid-air and is first to hit the net, following in split-second succession by her sister. The cannon was invented by their father, Edmondo, on the Isle of Malta in 1920. According to "Papa" Zacchini, imitators don't last long. The fatality list has reached 24." Pat Anthony said, "Anybody could step into the cage and for a few minutes at least the cats wouldn't do anything because they'd be too surprised. But at the first sign of fear, they'd sense it. That would be the beginning of trouble. Cats are unpredictable. A bark or a roar doesn't mean much, but when it comes to a deep, throaty growl, then look out."

A year ago, Pat struck a match to light a flaming ring thru which one of his animals jumps. The flaming head of the match flew off and struck him in the eye, barely missing the eyeball. A few minutes later, Pat drew a deep breath to shout an order at a male lion and a live bee flew in his mouth. "It sounds funny now, but between my eye and that bee sting, I nearly lost control."

"Some wives hang on their husband's every word, but a pretty 25-year-old British woman hangs on her husband's teeth. The pair, Andre Pincemen, 33, of Bordeaux, France and his wife, Hilda, are known professionally as Les Hildalys. Andre started bicycling in a circus back in 1938 in France, while Hilda was a high wire performer with her brother and 2 older sisters in England. The couple met in New York in 1948. Hilda had a bad fall from the wire that year, breaking her spine and Andre spent the next 7 months visiting her in the hospital."

The 1956 Shrine Circus Concert Band played "Barnum & Bailey's Favorite March," by King; "Entry of the Gladiators," by Fucik; "Galop-Go," and "Gentry's Triumphal March," by Jewell; "The Big Cage Galop," by King; "Olympia Hippodrome March," by Alexander; "Mother Goose March," by Goldman; "Speedway Galop," by Richards; "The Circus Bee March," by Fillmore;

(Continued Pg. 6)

CAPT. KEN—IN THE TRENCHES!

By Mike Cecere

There has been an enormous amount of rhetoric in recent months in the various circus fan based publications about various fans helping out circus animal operations when questions of animal care and treatment have surfaced in the public.

And while a number of fans have put a lot of effort into these endeavors, the real "front line" of that battle is right on the circuses themselves.

And one guy (Among other Animal Pros) who is doing more than his share is none other than Capt. Ken Turtle Benson, Elephant Supt. on America's small town favorite circus, Robert's Bros.

Whether there are one or one hundred anti-circus protesters on the lot, exercising their First Amendment rights, hostile media or shrinking lots to play on, Capt. Ken takes it all in stride.

A Viet Nam Veteran, who served valiantly in the elite U.S. Naval special forces, he shows the same resolve showing in Mechanicsburg, PA that he showed patrolling the Mekong Delta back in South Viet Nam, many years ago.

Capt. Ken and the Roberts show have one of the best, most intelligent programs of public education about elephants in captivity and least adversarial contacts with Animal Activists.

As Capt. Ken often says, "I defended the rights of the American people to express their opinions publicly during my military service and defend that right still today."

When asked if it ever irritates him to be questioned about his care of elephants in captivity, he characteristically says, "I tell my side and facts. They give their views, that's what America is really about!" And who would be more qualified to speak on the subject? He spends every waking hour and is never more than a few yards away from the rest of the time. He's out there twenty-four-seven, under all conditions, Doing, not just Talking. Capt. Ken T. Benson, Still in the Trenches!! God Bless America!

Passing Of Our Circus Friends

Ray Govus, of Marion, South Carolina, a Back Yard

subscriber and CFA member #9328, passed away last month. He is survived by his wife, Maria.

*The Great Circus Parade, for the first time ever, will be televised in a live, coast-to-coast PBS broadcast, Sunday, July 16, 2-4 p.m. CDT. You can visit the Parade's web site at www.circusparade.com. Activities for the Festival begin July 7 with the loading of The Strong Investments Great Circus Train at Circus World Museum in Baraboo. 75 antique circus wagons will be loaded on 18 vintage rail flat cars. On July 8, the Train will embark on a 3-day journey to Milwaukee for The Great Circus Parade. There will be new passengers on board this year's Train-jumbo African elephants and they will make appearances at major stops.



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WHEELING SHRINE CIRCUS.....

"Circus Echoes March," by Hughes; "The Little Giant March," by Moon; Galop "Fire Jump," by Evans and "The Billboard March," by Klohr.

The staff is the same as 1956. Opening act was Jules Jacot's Jungle Kings, with lions & tigers. Next was the Wierengard Family, high act; Acrobatics with the Chiesas, Mia & Matti and the Tsilaks; Nicolini's Chimps, Roland Tiebor's Seals and Jack Joyce's Exotic Animal Revue with camels, llamas, zebra and Shetland pony; Greta Frisk, trapeze; Count Ernesto Wiswell, "Dizzle Lizzie" car; the Shrine Circus Elephants; the Platos, double trapeze; the Frielani Family, cycling; the Arturo Family, high wire; bar act, the Three Merkeys and the Joanides, slack wire; the World Famous Clauson Family Bears with 6 bears, including Sherry & Brandy (photo); Tell Teigen, 100' high pole; the Bostock Kristensens, riding act; the Flying Malkos & the Flying Deislars; the Great Seabright, high act.

"Shrine Circus Concession Prices, Pay No More!" Peanuts, Crackerjack, ice cream, pop corn, cotton candy and snow balls were all 15 cents and soft drinks were 20 cents and programs 25 cents!

The 1957 Shrine Circus was July 29-31 and was again produced by Tom Packs, with William Pruyn as Musical Director. The Concert Band played the same songs as last year. Opening act was Prof. George Keller, cats; Huestrei's Hollywood Skyrockets, aerial; the Scott Brothers, comedy, the Dubskys, acrobatic, Carmen Edler, tight wire and El Gran Esqueda, juggling; Glamorous La Norma, high trapeze (photo) and the 2 Sils Sisters, aerial rotating loops; the Shrine Circus Elephants with Norma Davenport; the Flying Deislars and the Flying Siegrists; Cimse's Scotch Collies, Pancho's Spider Monkeys, Welde's Bears (photo of Mr. Welde) and Lanero's Performing Porkers; Betty Tilton, aerial spiral track; Jack Joyce's Exotic Animals; the Theron Family, cycling, the Hungaria Troupe, balancing, the Dollies, cycling and the Great Eris, one-finger stand; Betty & Benny Fox, 120' aerial dance act; the British Dorchester

Family, riding; Celeste, the Girl in the Rocket Ship. There is a second photo of La Norma, stating she was featured in the circus epic, "The Greatest Show on Earth." There is a photo of clowns Whiteside & O'Donnell with their dog, Nort. Concession prices have changed a little: hot dogs, 20¢; peanuts and potato chips, 10 cents and soft drinks, 15 cents. The next program is from 1963, June 18-20 and still produced by Tom Packs, with Jack Leontini, General Manager; Karl Wallenda, Equestrian Director; William Pruyn, Musical Director and Dick Ware, Announcer. Opening act was Aerial Ballet with Del Oros and next was Col. Chet Juszyk, lions; Capt. Williams, astride "Pierre D'Or"; La Norma, trapeze (photo); Manuelo Bros., balancing, Lady May Trio, jugglers and the 6 Armors, teeterboard; the Shrine Circus Elephants with the Pettus Family; "Triumphant High Wire Return, the Acclaimed Wallendas" (photo); the 4 Flying Artons; Trio of Alaskan Bears presented by Alva Johnson, the Dane Merry-Go-Round with Leon Smith and Uncle Heavy's Pork Chop Revue with Boyd Kimes; the Cathalas, balancing, Los Del Morals, perch and the Platinos, tight wire; Wm. Buschbom, Liberty horses; the Urmis Duo, sky dancing; the International Sky Kings, aerial; Finale with the Urmis Duo and their 120' high mid-air exchange. There is a great photo of Karl Wallenda doing a hand stand on the shoulders of Herman on the wire. Correct me, Jenny, if I am wrong about it being Herman! Programs are now 50¢ and circus novelties are 35¢ to \$1 and hot dogs, 25 cents.

The 1967 Shrine Circus was July 21 & 22. Staff is the same with Producing Clown, Alfredo Landon and it lists Mrs. Tom Packs, President of the Tom Packs Organization. Opening number is the Aerial Ballet, staged by Karl Wallenda. Next is Rudy Docky's Basketball Playing Boxers; Les Saphyros, motorized somersaulting phenomenons; Col. Elk Gordon, lions; Guzman & Monique, aerial motorcycle; the Houcs, juggling, the Suomians, balancing, Miss Clarissa, tight wire; Al's Lemon'zeen;

(Continued on Page 11)

AN INTIMATE CHAT WITH SUE LENZ

Part III Sarasota CFA Convention

By Cherie Valentine

Sally had broad palms and little stubby fingers like a gorilla. Her feet were short & fat-and little toes. We really feel, that way back then, I think there was a little bit of monkey business going on somewhere. I know nothing about gorillas but they seem to be much more quieter, to be thinking more. They seem to have more patience-chimps don't have that much patience. They forget very fast. If they have an argument with each other, it's quickly and they are over it.

Question: "Have you ever bred chimps while on the road?"

Answer: One. He was the apple of my eye-I delivered him, his mother didn't want him. She didn't have milk and we took him away from her when he was 12 hours old and he was one of our best performers-he was a born performer.

Rudi was learning him the stilts. He used to get so angry because he couldn't do it and he knew what he was trying to do and he'd get angry at himself. He couldn't understand why he just couldn't walk. But, unfortunately, it was our fault, he was totally spoiled-and when he was 12 years old, he suddenly looked at Rudi one day and said, "It's you or me."

We were with Circus Vargas and we were in El Paso and we'd come out of the tent-he'd never given us any trouble whatsoever-when you get the aggression, of when they're maturing, it's a very quick process. It's not something that takes a long time-it's over and done with very fast. We were in a building in El Paso and they had put a carpet down in the ring, which was a square carpet and the chairs were all setting along the edge of the carpet.

I was doing the train and Roger was going to jump on to the train to do the iron jaw and as I was driving it, the other chimp was touching the carpet and Rudi told him not to and he flew for Rudi so viciously-like "Don't tell me what to do,"-and I saw it and I called his name and he straight away stopped. And Rudi said, "Did you see that?" He

couldn't believe it because this was our kid. We made an excuse-we'd been in the tent so long and now we were in the building and it's different-must have been one or 2 shows later, the same thing again. Rudi went to make Roger loose to get on the train to do the iron jaw and as he made him loose, the other chimp flew for Rudi again and Roger, the big male, put his arm around his neck and stopped him. And I shouted his name and he stopped again. Well, once could be an accident; twice, it's no accident; the third time, you're stupid. So we never worked him again because, what are you going to do? Rudi was the dominate male and the chimp wanted to be. He loved me and it broke my heart.

We looked for a home for him and I looked with my eyes shut. I just didn't want to part with him. We found a place just outside San Antonio and when we were going to rejoin Vargas for the second year, we stopped off and left him there. I was so devastated-we did 10 miles and went to a trailer park. I said, "I can't drive."

But we went back the following year and saw him and it was very heart breaking. Then later, Tony Fossett had a chimp in there with him and when there's two together, it is always better.

I don't know how Sue Lenz did this presentation! She used no notes and was never at a loss for words. Sue and Rudi deserve a lot of credit for the care and love of their chimps over the years. Sheelagh Jones and I both had tears in our eyes while we listened to Sue talk about her "kids."

Adam Forepaugh Tent No. 2 Reactivated

This CFA tent was organized in 1930 and after years of inactivity, is now ready to accept members. They have voted to keep dues low & membership is open to all current members of the CFA. Join now and be part of the Central Pennsylvania Circus Experience. Dues are \$6 and can be sent to Sherry Hilton, Sec.-Treas., 1028 3rd Ave., Duncansville, PA 16635. Dave Orr is the President of the Tent. There is a 2 page article sent with application on Adam Forepaugh, 1830-1890. He owned more elephants in his day-39. Barnum had 36.

RINGLING RED: Lafayette, LA-6/22-25; San Antonio-6/28-7/2; College Station-7/10-12; Houston-7/14-23; Dallas-7/26-8/6; Ft. Worth-8/9-13; Colorado Springs-8/16-20; Wichita-8/24-27; Kansas City-9/6-10; Indianapolis-9/27-10/1; Detroit-10/4-9

RINGLING BLUE: Phoenix-6/22-7/2; Las Vegas-7/5-9; Fresno-7/12-16; Long Beach-7/19-23; Anaheim-7/25-31; L.A.-8/2-6; San Diego-8/9-13; Oakland, CA-8/16-20; San Jose-8/23-27; San Francisco-8/30-9/4; Sacramento-9/6-10; Seattle-9/14-17; Portland-9/21-24; Salt Lake City-9/27-10/1.

"Kaleidoscope": Detroit (Southfield) Mi-6/23-7/16

BIG APPLE CIRCUS: Chicago-Arlington Intl: 6/10-25; Charlestown, RI-7/2-10; Hanover, NH-7/13-18

Carson & Barnes: Hammondsport, NY-6/15; Penn Yan- 6/16-17; Owego-6/18; Cortland-6/19; Whitney Pt.-6/20-21; Walton-6/22; Gloversville-6/23; N. Adams, MA-6/24; Chatham, NY-6/25; W. Springfield, MA-6/27; Canton-6/28; Norfolk-6/29; Braintree-7/1.

Sterling-Reid Circus: Ft. Wayne-6/15-16; Hazel Park, MI-6/17-18; Midland-6/19-20; Flint-6/21-22; Belleville-6/23-25; Toledo-6/26-27; Sandusky-6/28-29; Painesville-6/30-7/2. (Believe it or not: I got a root canal in Painesville while on the Beatty show! Cherie)

UniverSoul Circus: Indianapolis: 7/12-16

Peru Hall of Fame Swap Meet: 6/23-24

George Hubler Circus: Berea, OH-6/15-18

George Carden Circus: Sheboygan, WI-6/25 (Armory)

Circus Model Builders Convention-Boise, ID-6/22-25

Circus Historical Society Convention-Bloomington/Normal, IL-9/6-9

Roberts Bros Circus: Londonderry, Vt-7/4; Brunswick, Maine-7/27 (Thanks to Richard Reynolds-the New Hampshire Richard-for the update!)

Wenatchee Youth Circus: Marysville-6/17-18; Union Gap-6/24; Liberty Lake-7/1; Wenatchee-7/3-4; Orcas Island-7/8-9; Edmonds-7/11-12; Roche Harbor-7/14-16; Sequim-7/22-23; Renton-7/26; Moses Lake-7/29;

Vancouver-8/4-13; Shoreline-8/20; Federal Way-8/26-27; Metaline Falls-9/2-3; Chelan County Fair-9/6-7

BACK YARD

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News From Our Circus Friends

*Harrison Sayre writes "On 6/10 the Rudy & Erna Rudynoff Tent 127 held their annual luncheon for the Kelly Miller Circus personnel in the tent at Frederick, Md. This is the 16th year and it is looked forward to by both circus people and the CFA members in the area. Heidi Herriott and Joan Galvin from Ringling were with us and reported on the upcoming Legislative Hearing HR 2929. They urged fans to attend the Hearing to lend support to Heidi, Joan, David Rawls and others testifying in opposition.

This constant barrage of State, local and Federal legislation against elephants and other animals in circuses must be watched for action taken to defeat the animal rights activists action. The Bill in Maryland was defeated this year for the 3rd time but I am sure it will reappear again."

*The Terrell Jacobs Ring newsletter reports Mike Piccolo has broken his ankle and I am sure he would like to hear from his friends. Please write him at 1420 Center Ave., Washington Plaza #202, Pittsburgh, PA 15219.

*Ken Holehouse worked the front gate while visiting Carson & Barnes Circus and said busy was steady every day. Tell us more about your stay, Ken! I know little Jennie was a big hit!

THE FOX.....



more fair than that. Also I was told about people just from the Ringling Circus get there this is not true. It just so happens that most of the performer were one time or other on the Ringling show. Believe me there is no preference of on what show they were on. By the way the Royal American Circus will be playing in Bradenson on July 10th. Just one show at 7 PM. It is the building when you go on 41 right on the bridge between Bradenton and Palmetto.

Well let me close for this time.

Lots of Love,

Your Fox



(Thanks, Jenny. For those that want to send Jenny your ads, please write her at 2708 DeSoto Rd, Sarasota, FL 34234.)

Shrine Circus In London, Ontario

By Jerry Nicholls

The London Mocha Shrine sponsored it's 15th annual Circus at the Western Fairgrounds 6/10 with 3 shows and 6/11 with 2 shows. Enthusiastic, capacity crowds attended, despite many activists picketing the lot. They were held by security about a half a block away from the red & yellow one ring Big Top, belonging to Tarzan Zerbini who has produced the show for the last 15 years. Tarzan worked the elephant act and the rides himself. The rides were inside the ring at intermission. The show vehicles and the private vehicles made up a very large backyard which was completely surrounded by temporary free standing fencing. Due to a rain storm, the tent was flooded with over a foot of water & tear down delayed till 6/12. Program: Overture, Circus Maximus Band, under the direction of Gen. Mgr. Larry Solheim; Ted McRae, 3 tigers, 2 female lions, 1 very large lion; Poppy, Music Box Parody; Erika Zerbini, Liberty Ponies; Miss Kandy, Hula Hoops; Poppy, comedy hula hoops; Miss Crina, trapeze; Sandow Troupe, from Russia, acrobatics; Anatolie, balancing cubes; Martin Alvarez, strap act; Poppy, removing chair from under 4 audience members; African Troupe, tumbling & feats of strength; Tarzan, 3 Indian Elephants; Sawdust & Spangles, Grand Finale. The

entire program was under the direction of President and Talent Coordinator, Tarzan Zerbini; Elizabeth Zerbini, Vice President; Gen. Mgr. & Musical Director, Larry Solheim; Pierre Spenie, Animal Dept. and Costin Csizmas, Tent Master.

News From Our Circus Friends

***Richie Gaona** is working on a circus movie and they are looking for one trapeze artist only that can do some acting but will need to fly trapeze on trapeze bar on a full-size rigging. They will have to train with Richie from July 10 to Sept. 25; 20-30 years old, (that lets your editor out!), good looking. He is also looking for a girl doing swing, single trap to double for the girl actor. If you know of anyone that fits this description, please contact Richie at: 5702 Lubao Ave., Woodland Hills, CA 91367 or call at 818-710-8191.

***Richard Reynolds, of Atlanta**, writes "In the May 15 issue, the pigmy hippo shown on the leash in the photo was **Betty Lou**, long a RBBB menagerie feature. That particular photo was taken in 1948 when Betty Lou did a walk-around in the Spec, 'Twas The Night Before Christmas.' That year, because she appeared in the performance, Betty Lou was kept in the backyard in her cage wagon. As far as I can recall, Betty Lou is the only "field circus" hippo to be kept in the backyard instead of the menagerie or out on the midway as a pit show. And, 1948 was the second time she did it. The other was 1943 when, owing to wartime restrictions, the show had to be reduced in overall size. Hence, the usual menagerie tent, with full complement of cage wagons, was not carried. Instead, some cages, including Betty Lou's, were carried and kept in the backyard for use in the spec, which was a replica of a street parade. Betty Lou was captured in 1940 on a Firestone Rubber plantation in Liberia. Harvey Firestone offered her as a gift to John Ringling North and she arrived for the circus in New York in May, 1941. She was a RBBB animal until she was sold in 1958 to the Overton Park Zoo in Memphis. She died there on April 27, 1970. (Thanks, Richard)

MIKE'S BOOK REVIEW BAUDY, THE ANIMAL MAN

By *Mike Cecere*

(Written by Robert Baudy with Sandra Thompson)

My good friend, Paul Horsman, America's top circus memorabilia dealer and bookseller to the stars, called me a couple weeks ago with his news. He'd been able to get a copy of Robert Baudy's book, *Baudy, The Animal Man*, which is the biography of Robert Baudy with writer Sandra Thompson. Published by Rainbow Books, it's 555 pages of pure adventure for the bargain price of thirty dollars (\$30)!

Just say the name Robert Baudy to hardcore wild animal trainers, historians and circus fans and they will tell you the same thing, first class. As a boy growing up in the 60s, when Baudy toured America with an astounding display of monster sized, pure bred Siberian tigers, I was privileged to view it several times at Shrine circuses.

It was retable for high class equipment, lighting and one of a kind showmanship. That made it the top cage act for the entire decade. In addition, he also had a wonderful leash leopard act which climaxed with a huge leopard leaping into his arms from quite a distance. It never has been equaled in presentation nor quality of animals to this day.

Also, he had an outstanding act of trained greyhounds which is what brought him from Europe in the 50s. His story is one of struggle and triumph of the human spirit from his boyhood to his service in the French Resistance against the Nazis in World War II. It's easy and fascinating reading of a complex and exciting life and a view of the hey day of Shrine circuses, variety shows, nightclub shows, using circus acts and animal acts on television.

And the even more exciting story of his breeding and raising hundreds of the most rare big cats at his beautiful natural habitat facility in Florida. Through his efforts of breeding and collection, these rare cats and other creatures, which are losing their homeland, dozens of species owe their future

survival to him. His adventure continues to this day. So do yourself a favor and get a copy of *Baudy* today! Thanks, Paul. (Write Paul Horsman at 7926 State St. Rd, Port Byron, NY 13140.)

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***Maury Mead** attended Tomi Liebel's "**Liebling Bros. Family Circus**" at DePere, Wisconsin. The circus grounds had a pony sweep, elephant ride and "Titanic-Slide." The show lineup was: Palumo family, trampoline; Tomi Liebel's One Man Band; Miss Ruby & Lady Fransiesca, Spanish Web; Chicago Mutts dog act by Phil Dolci; Miss Cathy, Hula Hoops; Alien pitch; Lady Franciesca, Liberty Horses; Matthew Martinez, Rola Bola; Sandro Trio, hand balancing; Tomi Liebel's kissing monkey; Boxing Kangaroo, Martinez Family (the kangaroo won!); Ms. Eliana & Lady Franciesca, trapeze and Nosey, the performing elephant presented by Tomi Liebel. After the big top acts, a petting zoo with animal attractions, the Slide, pony & elephant rides are available. Tomi said he will be acquiring a new top in June. This was a very strong show.

***Earl & Bernice Krauzer** wrote that **Edna Antes**, who worked for the Beatty show for so many years, celebrated her 92nd birthday June 2. What a lovely lady and she always found time to talk to the fans that visited the show.

***Ed Limbach** wrote "**The Orrin Davenport-Jake Mills Tent** is marketing a new CFA shirt and will have an ad in the next issue of *White Tops*."

***Richard Via and Kent Ghirard** went to the Hawaii State Fair June 10 to see the bears and seals. Let us know what all was there!

***Malvina Ball** writes that she knew **Mayme Ward** in 1927, the same year she met **Mickey King**. "The girls in the flying act would watch us (**The Three DeLong Sisters**) and we would watch them when they were on." How about writing about some more of your memories, Malvina??

***Hundreds** turned out for **Ringling's** Elephant Walk in Wilkes-Barre, Pa. In front were 11 Asian elephants, then 3 Alpacas rode in the back of a truck, 2 camels and then 20 horses, including a pair of miniature ones.

WHEELING SHRINE CIRCUS.....

Antalek's Chimps, Lona Koloman, dogs and the Vidbels, horses; the Amazing Lazlo, magic; Cristiani Elephants with the Oscar Family; the Flying Alexanders, featuring Fay Alexander (photo); the Bertinis, unicycling (photo), the Kolozsy Troupe, teeterboard and the Keppo Family, acrobatics; Rasmussen Rasini, somersaulting racing car; La Dania, the Astrostar, aerial rocket/trapeze. There is a nice article on the Alexanders below their photo. Fay Alexander, in 1958, doubled for Gilbert Roland in "The Big Circus" and in 1962, Fay doubled for both Doris Day & Martha Raye in "Jumbo."

The 1971 Shrine Circus was July 30 & 31 and staff remains the same but with Karl Killinger, Musical Director (it says Karl!), Austin Miles, Ringmaster and George Voise, Electrical Engineer.

Opening acts were Robt. Johnson, one-finger stand act, Berosini Sisters, tight wire and Sylva Trio, rola bola; Tom Pack's Clown Alley, featuring Alfredo Landon, Enrico Bogino, Jay Cristiani, Blinko and Jack Healy; Pat Anthony with mixed male and female lions and Royal Bengal tigers; Don Giovanni, comedy aerial lamp post; Joyce Linaries, poodles; Hernandez Troupe, teeterboard, Les Bertinis, unicycles, Emillo Roberto, juggling and the Bonette Family, trampoline; the Jordanas, upside down aerial unicycle; Alberto Zoppe's Jocky Dogs (photo); Fratelli Murillo, aerial motorcycle; the Diano Quintette of Shrine Elephants, starring full-tusked giant, "Tommy," presented by Lee Keener; Albertino's Riding Academy; the 4 Flying Armors with Reggie Armor's triple & featuring 14-year-old SaSa Armor; the Great Wallendas with Karl Wallenda, the Incomparable Stadium-Walker and Celebrated Conqueror of Tallulah Falls Gorge (photos); DeLong as Geronimo.

The 1972 Shrine Circus was scheduled for June 23 & 24, as printed on the program, but inside was a piece of paper with the program listed and saying "Re-scheduled" July 28-29 at the top. This circus

was a production by the Wallenda Circus, Karl Wallenda, Executive Producer (the following will be the names as printed in the original program) Wm. Browning, Musical Director, Wm. Kay, Ringmaster, Al Ross, Producing Clown, Giovanni Zoppe, Rigging Director, Frank Torrence, Electrical Engineer and Rodolfo Guzman, Props Supt. The opening overtures featured Al Ross, Jack Healy and Albert White and was followed by the Enricos Comedians, Charivari over elephants; Carmen Del Teide, trapeze; Frank Magy Rosi & his comedy Nubian Lions; Elizabeth Nock & Miss Lizette, aerial; the Mariettas, unicycling wonder kids, the 5 Ceperos, acrobatics; Sabo's Chimps; the Jordans, aerial unicycle; the Jose Aguilers, perch; Rosita and Alberto, plate spinning; the Centurians, "Human Helicopters"; the Hellers, trampoline and the Almiros, juggling; Barrocaldi's Dogs; Norbu, the Almost Human Gorilla, presented by Miss Arden (photo); DeLong as Geronimo, 70' leap into an Apache War Drum; Diano's Elephants, starring "Tommy," presented by Jeanette & Lee Keener; Switzerland's Stratospheric Sensationalists with a triple exchange of positions-sway poles; the Indomitable Karl Wallenda traversing the summit of Island Stadium on a 5/8" cable, "A walk in the sky where even angels fear to tread!"

The re-scheduled program had a very different line-up which included the 4 Dubskys, perch; Miss Charmaine, ponies, dogs & monkeys; the Janos, chimps & dogs; Lai Founs, hair hang; the Hall Family, cycling; King's elephants; Tonietta Rizzi's Uncaged Leopards; Kastle's Bears; Sensational Leighs, space wheel; the Royal Hungarian Family, risley; Miss Carla, "Swing & Sway Girl," in evolutions on a 125' high bending mast.

Concessions prices were hot dogs, 30¢; pop corn, cotton candy, peanuts, snow balls & drinks, 25¢; novelties, 50¢ to \$2 and programs, 50 cents. If anyone can tell us why the Shrine Circus was re-scheduled, please write. Also, if anyone has the missing years, please copy and send along. If anyone has memories of attending the circus in Wheeling, please share them with us.

**Tim Holst, Ringling Bros. & Barnum & Bailey
Vice President, Weds Animal Trainer, Lisa Dufresne
By Robert Sugarman**

Oxford, Massachusetts: Tim Holst and Lisa Dufresne, prominent animal trainer currently preparing acts for the Ringling shows, were married May 27 in a private ceremony at the Oxford Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. The ceremony was followed by a family reception. A larger celebration of the marriage will take place in Tampa in December when both units of the Ringling show are in residence.

After graduating from the University of Utah, Mt. Holst spent two and a half years in Sweden as a Mormon missionary. On his return, he started work on a Masters Degree at the University of Utah, but, encouraged by a sympathetic uncle, applied to Ringling's Clown College. He was accepted. After graduation, he joined the circus as a clown. He later became Ringmaster and Performance Director before assuming his present position. As Vice President of Production & Talent, he oversees the operation of the 2 units of Ringling and the new Barnum's Kaleidoscope. He also helps plan the next year's Ringling show and scouts for talent around the world.

Ms. Dufresne joined the Ringling Red Unit as a dancer when Mr. Holst was the show's Performance Director. Their paths continued to cross over the years. Ms. Dufresne also worked with Circus Vargas and appeared on various Shrine dates and fairs and developed an interest in high school (dressage) horses. She received her certification as a veterinary technician from Becker College in Massachusetts. She was soon developing her own animal acts, mostly involving horses. She created a barnyard act for the Ringling Red Unit in the 1991-1992 tour and appeared on the Gold Unit that played in Japan. Lisa returned there with the George Lucas SuperLive Adventure Show for which she trained dogs and horses. The following year, she developed a mixed animal act she presented on the Big Apple Circus. In 1999 she received her Bachelor's Degree in Animal

Behavior from the University of Florida. She is currently completing her Masters Degree in the Animals and Public Policy program at Tufts University while preparing two animal acts for the next Ringling show. This summer she will present her horses at Equitana USA in June and will finish the summer season at Southwick Zoo in Mendon, Massachusetts. The couple's principal place of residence will be Sarasota, Florida. They have a second home in Vermont. (Thanks, Robert. I worked on the Big Apple Circus with Lisa and she helped me on the novelty stand!)

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The Elephant Company Opens Summer Season

The Elephant Company, of Ft. Meade, Florida has opened their 3rd consecutive season at York's Wild Kingdom, York Beach, Maine, on May 27. They will reside at the park through Labor Day, 9/4.

TEC provides Elephant rides, pony rides and Moon Bounce for the Zoo/Amusement Park. Additionally, the company performs it's educational elephant show "Elephantastic!" and holds an Elephant Encounter three times daily. Owned by David and Carmen Tesch, other staff include Don Wixom, Elephant Handler, Lisa French-Taylor, animal handler and Lydia, a 53-year-old Asian Elephant. Ernest Tarbox, Back Yard subscriber, has visited Don and Don plans to visit Roberts Bros. and the Beatty show while they are in the area.

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Circus Sarasota Presents "Dan Rice and the American Circus"

July 5-30 at Theatre Works, 1247 First St., Sarasota. Tickets are \$10 (Children \$6). This is a 1 hour, high energy clown show. Dan Rice takes you thru 200 years of big-top entertainment with a little madcap "help" from his friends. Also, Circus Sarasota Presents "Summer Clown Workshop Series," July 5-30 with 19 sessions where you can learn circus skills and character development techniques from a faculty of internationally respected clowns and circus artists, at the Players Studios, Sarasota. For more information, call 941-355-9335 or visit their web site: www.CircusSarasota.org

**From "Black Bras Don't Show The Dirt!
Or Life On A Mud Show"**

*By Bunni Bartok Perz
The Performer*

What are you doing here? The rain. The mud. The breakdowns. Why do you stay? The torn wardrobe. The heat. The cold. Too many miles to travel every day. Many hours with no electric. Late, half, or no pay. Often, the "locals" looking down their noses.

"The circus is here. Something may be stolen!" The merchant supposes. You've been out of bottled gas for a week. You'd love a hot meal, but the stuff in the "fridge" didn't keep. You have piles of laundry to do. But you can't get to town.

Half the time your truck needs to be jumped, 'cuz the battery's run down. Six working men quit, so you're doing "Chinese." You can't lock your trailer 'cuz you've misplaced your keys.

The Donniker's full and there's been no place to "dump." And tonight is another hundred mile jump. But when the tent's finally up and all the lights go on, and you hear the band play your song. Then you go in the ring, give your biggest smile. Is this what makes it all worthwhile? You finish your act and the people cheer! Now you know just why you're here!

What a treat for your editor to see Bunni, Jan and Tony in Sarasota at the CFA Convention. I love the 2 books she published and she has given me permission to re-print some of them in Back Yard. She still has some of the above book available and if you would like a copy, please write her at 144 East Rd., Sarasota, FL 34240-9550. This book was published in 1984 and she said she will still sell them at the 1984 price of \$5 plus \$1.50 postage. Florida residents, please add your sales tax. Now, you know how prices have gone up since then-look at our gas!-so if you'd like to send a little more along, please feel free to do so. This is a great book-64 pages-plus it contains a lot of drawings by Bunni. In case you'd like a little more: "Favorite (and not so favorite) Quotes Heard on the Lot." "Any mail today?"; "When are the new route cards

coming out?"; "We need him! But don't pay him more. Give him a title."; "Wish they'd turn the light plant on. I'm missing 'As the World Turns.'"; "We gotta "dump" tonight."; "Wish I had the front door." So, if you'd like to read more and see Bunni's fantastic drawings, please drop her a note to get this book for your collection! Tell her Mozart told you!

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News From Our Circus Friends

Al House writes, "New York Magazine, 6/12, has an ad for the "Barnum's Kaleidoscope" to open in NY City's Bryant Park, just behind the Public Library on Nov. 22 and close Dec. 31. The ad heralds a contest to find a family to go to Detroit to preview the show and to write their thoughts to appear in an upcoming special advertising section of the magazine. A photo of the family unit also must be sent. The one lucky family will be chosen from: a couple who want to experience pure unfettered entertainment; family with children who want to provide their kids with the circus experience & a couple with grown children who have traditionally attended the circus throughout the years.

Sharpen your wits & get out your pens. The prize is valued at about \$1000 per person and will take place July 1-16, this year. The contest's address is New York Magazine, Attn: Creative Services Dept., c/o "Barnum's Kaleidoscope Contest," 444 Madison Ave., NY, NY 10022.

This conflicts with the dates of Big Apple Circus that opens in the middle of October and ends after the first weekend in January of the new year. Bad weather had some ill effects on circus business recently. Vidbel Circus lost Cornwall, NY, due to a bad line of thunderstorms and rain.

They replayed the date May 26. Beatty-Cole also had bad weather on the last night of their Little Ferry (6/1-2) NJ date. A line of wind, rain & lightning, came thru the area just before 7 PM. Doors were opened early to get all inside. However, most of the rain circled out of the area, but winds persisted. Beatty-Cole also had to change lots for the latter date.

The scheduled lot was too soft and negotiations with a local shopping center took until midnight to negotiate. The show's new lot was previously off limits to circuses. (Thanks, Al)



A PAWS FROM MOZART

By Mozart Valentine

MEOW everyone, welcome back to my column. I received a nice note from my friend, **Lloyd Fengel** and he said "This morning I was talking to a cat in my alley. He or she seemed very friendly until a woman came along pushing a baby buggy and then the cat left me and joined the woman. On second thought, guess I would have done the same thing. Females have always seemed more attractive than males. Mozart, do you have a girl friend?" Well, when I was younger I noticed the girls. Then one day, Mom took me to see Dr. Fraker and when I came home, it was never the same! The only girl in our house is my canine companion, Honey, a German Shepherd!

My friend in Indiana, **Larson E. Whipsnade**, sent along clippings from the paper about the darling baby elephant, **Amali**, at the **Indianapolis Zoo**. "Three month old Amali, the world's first artificially conceived African elephant, was hurt June 2 when **Ivory** pushed her. Ivory is also pregnant and due to deliver the world's 2nd artificially conceived African elephant in August. Ultrasounds revealed no serious internal injuries but Amali initially was in distress and might have suffered shock. 2 keepers will be at the exhibit with the baby to increase visual contact." As of June 8, Amali will be on exhibit from 1-3 daily. She is also out intermittently in the morning. She's doing great and is up to 354 pounds!

My friend **Allan Stopyra**, of Syracuse, sent an article about baby **Preya** of the **Rosamond Gifford Zoo** at Burnet Park. Preya is 3 months old, 4 feet, an 8" increase since birth, weighs 600 pounds, a 314 pound increase and her training for animal demonstrations begin in about 3 months. There is a picture of Preya, tagging along with **Romani** and **Siri**, and performing with **Mick Case**. The Zoo has a lot of activities going on during the day, so if you're in the area, stop by and say hello to them!

Great Mews from the **Knoxville Zoo**. 2 Elephants are wearing custom-made styles by local designers.

One sports shiny metal bands that protect his cracked tusks, the other has a boot on her left foot when she's outdoors. **Tonka's** injured tusks and **Mamie's** infected toenail could have been "a life-threatening situation if we let either of those situations go," said **Becky Hargis**, the Zoo supervisor of elephants. Also new to the Zoo are 2 gorillas, **Ernie** and **Bebe**, which came from the **Cheyenne Mountain Zoo** in Colorado.

Sad to report **Thong In** has died of an infection a month after being wounded in the foot by a land mine in Thailand. The 38-year-old elephant died 6/5. **Motola**, who had to have her foot amputated, is recovering and vets hope to fit her with an artificial foot.

A headline from Oakland, Ca.: "Help Me Get Back To My Baby!" A mother otter, **Harriet**, was stolen from the **Oakland Zoo**, June 5. Harriet's pup, **Willow**, has not eaten since her mother disappeared. Harriet's mate, **Ozzie**, has eaten only sporadically. With donations from private individuals, the reward for her safe return has swollen to \$12,000!

The **Detroit Zoo** has three 35-pound tiger cubs, born 2 months ago, now on exhibit. The Zoo's 10-year old male **Bransk** was paired with 4-year old **Chanda**. The Zoo is one of 11 zoos in the country participating in an intensive breeding program to keep the species alive.

More news from the **Indianapolis Zoo** or should I say soap opera news! It seems **Eddie**, the zoo's male giraffe, was romancing both the herd's matriarch **Elena** and her daughter, **Nishani**. Both females gave birth June 2! The new calves stand 6' and weigh about 100 pounds. The little two-timer, dubbed "Fast Eddie" by the staff, is 4 1/2.

Our **Miller Park Zoo**, here in Bloomington, had some excitement! A drunk leapt the fence and was petting the snow leopard when it bit him! The man told police he had drunk 2 pints of vodka earlier in the day! No wonder my feline buddies told him to leave them alone! *UPS has donated a 40' drop frame semi to my elephant friends at the **Elephant Sanctuary!** Thanks, UPS! **Meow For Now, Mozart**

Bea (Konyot) Warfield



Barbette

**Can Can Aerial Ballet
Polack Western Circus**

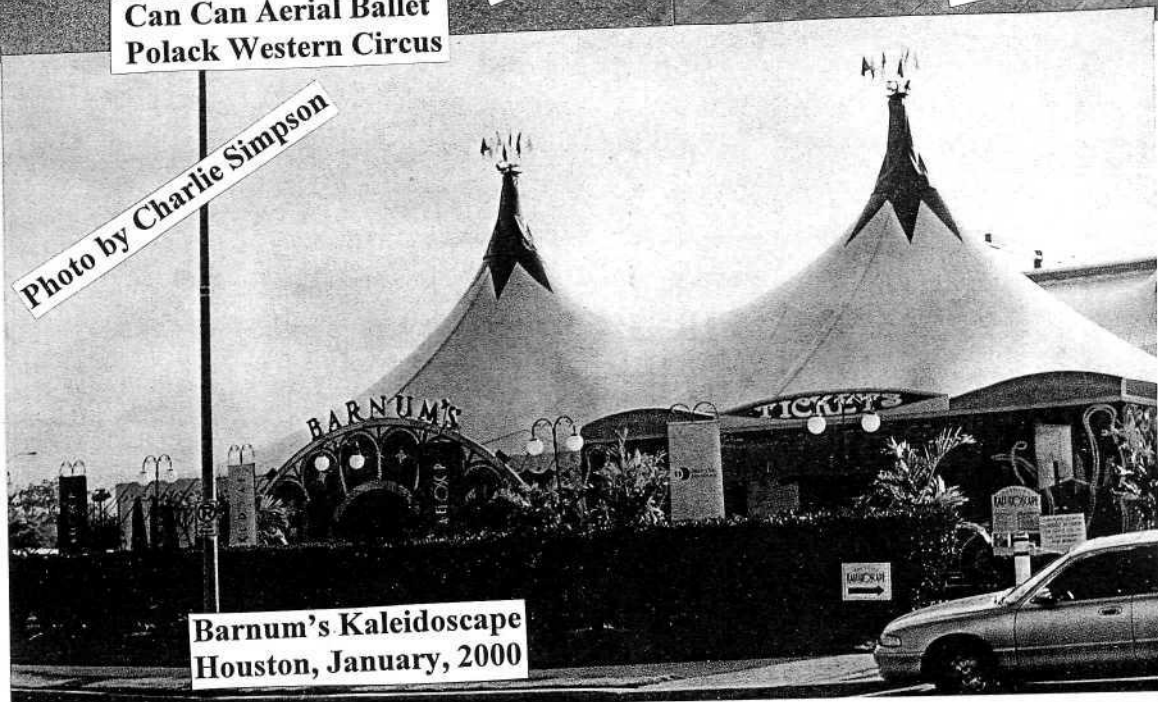
David Strong



1966

**Darlene Williams
Daughter of Rex**

Photo by Charlie Simpson



**Barnum's Kaleidoscope
Houston, January, 2000**



MICKEY KING