

BACK YARD

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CIRCUS KIDS by Bill Ballantine

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That super-colossal, splendiferous, spangled spectacle, the circus, is just a homey sort of pleasant place to the children who travel with it. A shabby stray dog, sniffing around the circus back yard (behind the big top), is really much more fun for a circus kid than the same week in and week out, become kind of common place.

Actually, the most fascinating attraction to the canvas-covered kids of the Ringling Bros. & Barnum & Bailey Circus is a runty green parrot owned by the manager's wife. Even clowns can't get much of a tumble. Their wild-eyed shenanigans are taken for granted in a community alive with snake charmers, aerialists, midgets, sword swallowers, fire-eaters, giants, & people who can balance on any part of their anatomy, including one finger.

Circus kids like clowns well enough (most of the littler boys want to be one) & they are often fond of the real men behind the false noses, but their interest in buffoonery is apt to be coldy professional. Take for instance David & Alan, the Welsh tykes with the Alzana troupe of high-wire walkers. ("Hairbreadth Harold! He walks & leaps! Where ayn-n-n-gels fear to tread!")

Twice daily, for 1 season, rain or shine, they watched Lou Jacobs' famous clown gag in the center ring with his Lilliputian comedy auto. If Lou left out one tiny bit of familiar funny business, they'd be around to his dressing room after the act & solemnly tick him off about it. Little Jimmie, the midget stooge in the number, finally asked Alan why all this gigantic interest, & was told that when they got bigger the kids planned to "take over the act." They were only 4 years old then, or Lou might have worried. In one respect, circus youngsters are like most other kids: they all think mama & papa are just about the greatest people on earth. At the performer's entrance to



the big top during the show, there will usually be a circus kid watching a circus parent. Maybe it's little one-year-old Mousie, in openmouthed awe of her bespangled daddy making fools of his wild performing bears. Mousie always stands quite alone at the edge of the hippodrome track, but at least 1 pair of discreet but wary eyes is looking out for her-the ringmaster's perhaps, a roughneck prop hand's, or an usher's.

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Dolly Jacobs



Mabel Stark

Jimmy Armstrong

Cliff Grotzbach

Sally Marlowe



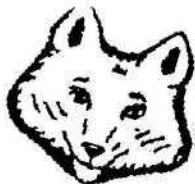
Ringling 1953



Clyde Beatty



THE FOX!



My Dear Friends;

It is sad, very sad, it broke my heart, we lost a very dear friend of mine and of many more people. Jim Nordmark was friends to so many people and helped so many people. He never turned his back on anyone. He was very, very sick and he would not let any one know it. He had cancer of the throat and it had gone already in to his stomach. He must have been in terrible pain. I talked to him just minutes before he went to the hospital. We talked about two hours. He told me that he had sold his house, had the movers coming to store the rest of the circus equipment. He also needed a place for his two dogs and cats and that he at this time was staying at a Motel. He told me he had no plans as of yet for the future. The last thing he said was that he was feeling really bad and was planing to call his doctor and drive himself to the hospital. I also told him lets go out to eat the coming week. He thought this was a great Idea. So two days later I tried to get in touch with him to find out he was not at the Motel any more. After several phone calls I found out he was in intensive care. After I finally was told that anyone could go see him I marched myself to Doctors Hospital. Their I stood in front of an empty bed. I could not move. I just froze. A nurse came up to me and informed me that Jimmy had past away an hour ago. It hit me hard and I am still in shock. The funeral was very fast, two days after he past away, as his sister had to go back to Washington State. Allan Hill gave the Eulogy and spoke wonderful about Jim. Jims three children and exwife were there. Jims sister-halfsister and Stepmom were there and some friends. He was not there as there was no casket and he was already cremated. Most of his friends did not find out about it till after and some of them I guess will find out from my letter. Jim was a great man, a great friend and a great Showman. He was a quiet person, and a lovely friend to many. Rest in peace my dear dear friend.

We also put an other dear friend to rest Tex Copeland. A few of us went out on the boat, Ann his dear wife, Son Kim and Grandson spread the Ashes in the Gulf of Mexico. After that everyone went to Showfolks were Ann had prepared a great buffett for all his former friends. Tex was a big supporter of Showfolks. I met him when I first arrived in America when he came along with my mom and dad to pick me up from the train in Tampa.

I know he will be well received by all his former friend who already went there before him.

The other day I saw the daughter of Count Nicolas. Quite a few people lately ask me were the Count disappeared to. Well now I know. His Eye sight has gotten so bad that he could not tend for himself any more so he is now in a nursing home. Daughter Bonnie has two children and a third on the way, also her husband and her have their own business to attend to so there is just no way they can take care of him and son Tuffy is all year long on the road. I went to see the Royal Palace Circus and really enjoyed it. Boy everyone was present, it was like a big reunion. By the way I really loved that baby Elephant which Tommy Thompson presented. It really works great and look's like it enjoys performing. The Dubskys had again like the previous year all ringside seats for all the old timers and had a very good show, a show you can be proud of. Alberto and Sandy Zoppe' just played with there Circus in Pittsburg PA. I had a line up written down, but sorry I could not understand it to well. I understand after that 3 day engagement they will be for three weeks with the Hammid show.

Bill Balentine is at the Pines Nursing home and Gustino Loyal is at the same place. Timmy Loyal came home for a few weeks to visit with his Father.

I visited Circus Flora while it was in Irving TX. The Wallendas 7 men pyramid was performing there and I went and just surprised them. Believe it or not, when I arrived there with my grand daughter Erika we checked in to the Motel and then went over to the Mall across the street. Of all the Malls there would you know it Delilah and Lijana had to be at the same place. Delilah came up to me and moved real close to me and said "Mama???" What are you doing here. Well so I surprised her but not the way I expected. So the only one who did not know I was coming was Tino and Olinka. After the performing of the 7 men pyramid the owner of the show marched me in the center ring. Tino just looked in disbelief. He later on told me he was thinking what is she doing in the Ring with us, then it dawned on him, what is she doing in Texas. Well it was a great surprise and I spent 7 lovely days with them. There I also saw Oracio and Peggie Zoppe' and they told me they may just come Florida this winter for the reunions. Also, I ask all of you if any of you have seen Francis Jones from Syracuse NY. Well surprise surprise, there she was. She showed up right in front of me. Boy this was a happy reunion, she also is planing to come this winter to

(Continued on Page 4)

THE FOX!!.....

Sarasota. Now there is still Sharky not accounted for. Now the Ring of Fame Elected for this year are:

Albert Rix

Captain Heyer

Charles Moroski

Palacios

Irvin & Kennett Feld

By the way, the voting is done by the people who are already in the Ring of Fame. This is a fair vote. As if anyone knows best who the best are are their already in the Ring.

Nina Unus, after retiring for a few month, is back at work, they called her to just help out, but it became again a permanent thing. So she is bac stuck working and as she says, it is nice being needed.

Well, while visiting the Royal Palace circus, I came across Hans Winn, and he informed me that he is one of the few who still has a big troupe. This is true, as now a days now one wants to pay good salaries any more.

When I visited Allan Hill office, I saw Carin cristiani their. She really looks good and is doing very well after her accident.

While in Texas I spoke with Giovanni Zoppe' he has a real nice lady friend, but he is still running away from marriage. I guess he still thinks the grass a greener on the other side. I hope he will not wait to long and this girl will look for some one more reliable.

Oh yea, Attos Zamperla had an other Accident, this time some one hit his car. He got hurt again, poor guy, he just can stop having accidents. He is right now in his glory as he has his little daughter with him, but he has to bring her in a few days back to her mother.

Tino Wallenda did a sky walk in Tennessee and the Mayor gave him the key of the City.

Freddy Canastrelli is back in town and as he told me he is here to stay.

Kate Machino which was the late Joe Machinos wife died this last June. She was in her 90. Now her daughter called me and told me that the house and land is for sale. So there are now two houses for sale on Henrietta place. the second one is Angela Revolans home.

Pat Kirby is not staying in her house as she is still recovering and Rusty is taking care of her.

I was told that Elena Bulgaro won her fight against the Lutheran Ministry. You know, shortly after they put her in the Hospital, her house burned down. Just like it did

with Inge Woods.

Oh, very importend: Lijana Wallenda Troffer will get married Dec. 6th to Tony Hernandez. They will move to Chicago were Tony has a teaching job.

JENNY WALLEDA is not working for the Royal American Circus any more.

PINKY Delmonti moved his motorhome from Mia Ottos big house, as it will be sold. But he did not move far. Mia bought herself a little house, so guess what. Pinky moved their. He is right now on a cruse tour with Mike Ashton. I guess this is all for this time. I only like to put a few more write ups in, and also an exact line up of the Circus reunion days. Please keep this list handy and also please tell everyone about it.

Lots of love,

Your Fox

*****REUNIONS 1998*****

OLD TIME CIRCUS REUNION AND CHRISTMAS PARTY

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10TH

BARTOK - HOXIE - ALLAN HILL SHOW

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11TH

RINGLING CIRCUS

MONDAY, DECEMBER 14TH

TOM PACKS - HAMID MORTON -

ORIN DAVENPORT - POLACK BROS. -

EVENTS INTERNATIONAL - CLYDE BROS.

(HOWARD SUIZE) - BILL & DICK GARDEN

CIRCUS

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 17TH

CLYDE BEATTY - MILLS BROS. - DAILY BROS -

FLOYED KING BROS. - SELLS & GRAY -

CHRISTIANI BROS. - HAGAN & WALLACE -

VON BROS. - SPARTEN - CIRCUS KIRK -

CIRCUS GENOA - ADAM & SELLS - COLE BROS.

ENTER AT 6:00. SIT DOWN DINNER AT 7:00

PRISE \$15. PER PERSONS

MUST HAVE RESERVATION & MONEY IN BY
LATEST DEC. 1ST.

PRESENT CAN NOT COST MORE THEN \$1.00

Please contact Jenny Wallenda at:

2708 DeSoto Road, Sarasota, FL 34234

(Also, those that would like to help her, please do!)

*****CIRCUS KIDS.....*****

Tiny Albertino (Teeno) Zoppe will likely be in the center backtrack entrance during the riding act, perched on the shoulders of the Hungarian acrobat who is a genuine gypsy, watching his father ride the big bouncy rosin-backs. And Gilbert, aged 4, stands way off down by the bandstand, straining through the maze of lights, aerial rigging, & quarter poles, to see his mama swinging on her trapeze, high above the center ring. "Ooo-la-la! Ma-ma! says Gilbert as La Norma (his mama, billed as "Den-mark's Bird of Par-adise!") hangs by her teeth & whirls so fast her wavy shock of golden hair looks like spun maple sugar.

During the summer, there are usually more than a dozen children traveling with the Ringling Bros. Circus, a few less in the fall when the school-agers go back to Sarasota to add book learning to sawdust learning.

The biggest family ever to hit Ringling was the riding-act Cristianis. They had 5 kids-all grown now & running a circus of their own. Last season when I toured with the Greatest Show on Earth, beside Mousie (Jeanette Rix), Gilbert, Teeno, & the Alzana boys (now about 8 years old), the kid lineup included 3 fresh-from-Germany *Jugend*: Berni, 16, Dieter, 15, & Bernt, 14, young acrobats apprenticed to a risley act (foot juggling using people instead of props); Elona, 5-year-old daughter of this risley act bossman; young Alfie Freddi, who performs with his father in both a trampoline & a teeterboard act; Antoinetta, 10-year-old deadhead (non-working) member of the Zoppe troupe; Linda Lawson, daughter of the show's asst. manager; Curtis Genders, son of the front door supt., and Emrick Mroczkowski, whose father trains the liberty horses. These last 2 joined out just for the summer fun. They used the time profitably, picking up new acrobatic tricks from the flying trapeze leapers, and considerable pocket money from selling "bugs" (chameleons) & balloons on the midway. Those were the regulars; through the season there were others off & on, out for a few days or a few weeks under canvas.

Circus families spend all of their day at the show grounds, going to their staterooms only after the night show for late supper & to sleep while the train moves overnight to tomorrow's town. The kids who are big enough have their own bunks; small ones' snuggle in with mama or papa.

Family dressing rooms at the lot on the Ringling circus are under the grandstand seats in the big steel seat-

wagons spaced around the perimeter of the big top against the sidewall. When the circus is on the move, the wagons carry trunks, aerial rigging, props & other paraphernalia. In the earth-floored cubicles between the wagons, dressing rooms are set up for other acts, clowns & girl performers not in regular acts.

One afternoon I was sitting with La Norma & Gilbert's father, Andre in their wagon. It's in a rather nice neighborhood-clowns on both sides-and is shared by Lola Dobritch, who walks the tight wire in ballet slippers ("Dainty Swiss Miss Beyond an Abyss of Intrepidity").

Young Gilbert had been missing for about an hour, but, circus fashion, no one was concerned. Andre felt that the kid hadn't gone off the lot (that boundary is seldom crossed), & he knew that circus children hardly ever get hurt on the lot. There are too many "uncles" on the lookout. Circus discipline is excellent too. The kids know enough to beware of tractors, back ends of horses, front ends of elephants, not to poke fingers in cages & not to touch things that are not their own.

Berni from the risley act came by to report in German that Gilbert had gone off with Cucciola, the midget, to get some watermelon. Andre passed this to Norma in Danish, & she told me in English. Gilbert finally showed up laden with drippy chunks of watermelon. "Daddy, a bear bit me an' a tiger," he said by way of explanation. (Turned out to be slight pin scratch & a mosquito bite.) Gilbert said an "uncle nice-man" provided the watermelon. In one sticky hand he held a grimy little card. It turned out to be an invitation to Albertino's 1st birthday party. "At seat-wagon 15 in Phoenix, between shows." La Norma told me that hanging by her teeth over the center ring is a cinch to the job of keeping Gilbert clean. To give a kid a bath on the lot, you plunk him into a bucket. Little ones fit nicely; for bigger ones you improvise. However, the train carries a laundry car; & this plus the automatic launderettes available in towns en route simplify circus mothers' washday problem. Nonperforming mamas have more time & find the old-fashioned circus way-by hand in buckets-good enough, certainly cheaper, but also a lot more work.

The water man furnishes only 4 bucketfuls a day (morning 2, evening 2), & any extras have to be lugged over from the water wagon. On sunny days, laundry gets strung up on lines between the big top's guy ropes; on dank days, it hangs around the warm light-plants. Circus kids take afternoon naps just like townner children.

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CAPTAINS COURAGEOUS

BY MIKE CECERE

One of the most oft-asked questions around elephants is about the people who work with them.

And while much of the pioneering work was done with these great beasts by circuses, today the cutting edge of such work is in zoos. Perhaps the biggest differences are in how the people working daily with elephants operate. In zoos, often the staff work 5 days a week, regimented by labor unions & public employee work rules often.

Not that they don't give it 100 % when it's called for. The fine condition of their animals & high reproduction rate is proof they know their business. And as many of these fine folk are from academic backgrounds, they often make decisions by committee and work in tier fashion. In contrast, the circus business is a lot different.

No matter who you are, how much formal schooling you have or what union you belong to, it's only those who prove by work that are put in charge. The circus is perhaps the last place in America, (besides farming), where you can still work your way up & be promoted on the merits of your work. A circus on tour is a busy place where everyone must do their job. And only those able to operate on their own & run their departments are successful. Age is no barrier either. Many of us become department heads or "Captains" at a very early age, some of us in our teens.

And an old saying I remember the famous Robert Dale Cline saying, "Once a Captain, always a Captain." Which means, once you become a Captain you always retain that standing, unless, of course, you mess up & don't do your job properly.

I was fortunate to have come up in the business when a lot of the great master trainers still walked among us and doing your job right was the most important thing.

Coming up on a circus, especially a tent show doing one night stands, teaches you things no school could ever teach you. After loading, unloading, cleaning, training, feeding, washing, presenting & generally looking after every need of the giant creatures in all kinds of conditions, you deserve to be in charge.

In fact, with the trend of big zoo parks going to no contact with the elephants, we should be making a greater effort to attract some of the very talented zoo people to come work in the circus. One thing for sure, if someone wants to work hands on with an elephant, a circus is a good place to start.

And, if they work hard enough, they can be a Capt. too!

CIRCUS ATYDE IN LOS ANGELES

REPORTED BY BOBBY HAKES

After the opening, comes 2 cloud swings, side by side. Next, is a clown number with a breakaway bike, unicycle & tiny bikes. Following is hula hoops with aerial finish by Dessi Espana. Next, are the Ramos strap act, duo with Aztec feather headdresses, using a smoke machine. The Russian bar is next with a double back somersault finish, with 6 men & 1 woman. Raoul Pescalo, clown does a gag with a picnic cooler, as he tries to eat a hot dog (great dog!). A woman then presents a Liberty act with 8 ponies. Intermission. The Globe of Death (Mike Cecere's favorite act!) opens the second half, with 3 riders & Dessi. Next is a clown jump rope gag with a man from the audience. The elephant act is next with 6 elephants, including 2 small Africans. They do the barrel, rolling globe, & a long mount finish. The clown, Raoul, is next with 3 "stuffed" elephants (wind-up toys)-(great dog!). Vivian Espana is next with a single trap & head balance on motorized swivel. Teeterboard is next with The Boichanovi (?), 2 women & 7 men. They do a single back to 2,3, & 4 high, double. Twist then back to 3, single to 4, single to hi-chair, single twist to 4; double to 4 & finish-single to 5 (pole & mechanic). The flying act net is then set up. The Rodogels, use multi-perch & Russian swing; main below pedestal, man on & above catch bar, above trapeze. 2 men & a woman on pedestal. They do the passing leap, triple, & bounce to catch bar. A clown with suitcase starts the finale, with the entire cast introduced. Thanks, Bobby.

Tom Shaffer, of Phoenix reports the Culpepper & Merriweather 1-ring circus has completed its season & returned to its winter quarters near Phoenix in Queen Creek, AZ. The 1999 season will begin about March 1. They are currently the only circus with winter quarters in the state of Arizona, although there are rumors that the new Circus Chimera is looking for possible winter quarters in Arizona or New Mexico, or some other southwest location. Circus Chimera originated in Oklahoma & is wrapping up a very successful opening season, with a long run in the San Francisco area.

Sheelagh Jones, of Chicago reports the annual luncheon of the John Davenport/Col. Earl Tegge Tent will be Nov. 14th, in Rosemont, IL. Afterwards, they will attend the Ringling show at the Rosemont Horizon. **Please give us a report, Sheelagh!**

*****CIRCUS KIDS.....*****

The only difference is they've learned to sleep through all sorts of noise-tractor clatter, elephant trumpeting, clown explosions, & that biggest noise of all-the circus band. Gilbert naps in the back of his father's wagon on a cut-down canvas cot. Linda, fancier, lolls in a fringed hammock slung in one of the dressing rooms. Albertino gets his baby winks in a portable crib set up outside the Zoppe wagon, & the steady drone of the light plant near by bothers him not at all.

Circus youngsters are great noise ignorers. The circus train is a good conditioner. It is hauled as freight, & this sort of travel is unbelievably rough-so much switching & crashing about in freight yards & on sidings, plenty of jarring stops & jerky starts, almost none of that easy glide-out stuff that you get on regular trains. And the windows have no glass-only slatted louvers & insect screens-so that when an honest-to-gosh real freight train roars by, the sheer force of it almost blasts you out of bed into the aisle. Teeno's birthday party was very festive. Colored balloons & serpentine were strung from the wagon to the sidewall, & there was a large cake, drooling with globs of pink roses.

Refreshments (jelly beans, chocolate buds, peanuts & soda pop) were laid out on the flat, round side of one of the big reels that carry light cables into the big top.

All the kids were there, several performers & a couple of wistful-looking ushers whose kids were back home & far away. Albertino didn't rate the full circus band, so Little Jimmy, the midget, played *Happy Birthday* on his trumpet. He also brought each of the kids a present (trinkets from the Phoenix five-and-dime). Antoinetta wouldn't let Jimmy kiss her because her mother told her never to let little boys get fresh.

The baby gorillas couldn't come at the last minute. (Mlle. Toto had a slight snuffle; and the keeper was afraid the kids might catch it. There were plenty of up-ended buckets for the kids to sit on, for the Zoppe wagon is occupied by 8 people: Cucciola, his mother, his 2 sisters, Alberto and Jenny (Albertino's parents), Alberto's sister, Tosca, & the *Grandmacita*. (Her job is making the frilly pink paper hoops that Alberto leaps through in his act.)

The kids had a big time. Young Alfie wore the cowboy suit that one of the clowns had given him. (I'm told he wore it to bed the first night just like any American kid.) Gilbert, with his toes stuck in Dixie cups, gave an imitation of Miss Lola on her tight wire. And Cucciola exhibited his baby alligator. ("He don't bite. Sticka you

finger in, & you see.") Albertino's papa showed some movies on the open wagon door: Albertino one day old; Albertino 14 days old, holding onto papa's finger; Albertino 7 months old, doing credible somersaults on a bed; and Albertino, same age, *really* walking; and Albertino poised on one foot on papa's hand held high over papa's head. Rose Hanlon, the lady clown, soulfully accompanied the pictures on her trombone. After everything had been eaten, the kids plunged into the big top & improvised a reckless game on the hanging end of a 40-foot-long web (a sleeve-covered rope used for aerial acrobatics.) Cucciola made a sling seat & swung in great arcs, trying to knock down the other kids. This hilarity continued until the cry of "Do-o-ors! Everybody out!" which means the public is coming.

These birthday parties are big events for the kids, but there are lots of other things to keep them entertained. They like to bounce on the trampoline. The acrobats don't mind as long as they don't catch the kids at it, & if they take off their shoes. They young kiddos use the bear slide as a seesaw. The little girls like to ride in the Spectacle-not to be on an elephant, but because here is a chance to wear make-up. All the girls have dolls, & all the dolls can do somersaults, layout backs, & round-off flip-flaps. If they lie forgotten at tear-down time, one of the clowns or an acrobat will toss them into his trunk for an overnight stowaway! Dangerous toys are kept to a minimum (things like boomerangs & cap guns), & water pistols are kept under control-squirting fathers & personal friends permitted, no squirting elephants. Sometimes silly toys like roller skates will turn up. Try roller skating sometime in high grass.

Mousie, the bear man's daughter, has the most envied toy-a real live Teddy bear-but Albertino gets to ride a horse anytime he wants to. To supplement formal schooling, one of the young clowns, Albert White, runs a between-shows school for any kid who wants to come. The curriculum is rather conventional-reading is from 1st-grade readers, sums & spelling are elementary, no geography or biology. Language is no problem at the school. The foreign kids all learn English very quickly from the others. And they prefer it to their native tongue, Gilbert dislikes French & calls Danish "mama's French." Even little Mousie won't speak German, except to count up to ten, which she also does in English. She already has a fair American vocabulary: hello, bye-bye, cookhouse, Mexico, hi, mama, hi-mama, popcorn and lemonade. Behavior of circus kids is usually very good.

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127th EDITION RINGLING RED UNIT:

St. Louis, MO-Kiel Center-Nov. 4-8

128TH EDITION RINGLING BLUE UNIT:

Rosemont, IL-Rosemont Horizon-Nov. 4-15

Chicago, IL-United Center-Nov. 17-29

Huntsville, AL-Van Braun Civic Arena-Dec. 3-6

Miami, FL-Miami Arena-12/26-1/3

Sunrise, FL-Nat'l Car Rental Center-1/7-1/10

Jacksonville, FL-Coliseum-1/14-1/18

BIG APPLE CIRCUS: New York City-

Damrosch Park, Lincoln Center October 22 thru January 10

George Carden Circus: Glenpool, OK-Nov. 3; Alua, OK-Nov. 5; Miami, OK-Nov. 7; Ft. Worth, TX-Nov. 9-21; Ada, OK-Nov. 22 (Thanks to Bill Loter of Hugo, OK for sending these in.)

BACK YARD

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RINGLING'S HOT TICKET? - 10/26/98

By Michael Pollick-Sarasota Herald

"Occupying center stage at the Ringling Museum of the Circus is a metal platform, on which 2 dozen faceless mannequins wear famous circus costumes.

The platform, installed in 1986, is known among circus folks as "The Erector Set" because it looks like a large version of the old toy & because it has no relationship of any kind to their craft. 12 years later, the costumes still have no placards to identify their wearers. While the art museum benefited from a \$20 million face-lift in 1990, & Ca' d'Zan is in the midst of a \$10 million beauty treatment, the Ringling Museum of the Circus has, for

the most part, gathered dust. Museum officials have their eye on a prize-elevating the complex to national status thru a \$50 million-plus fund-raising drive that would leave it with a new entrance, new visitors center, new galleries for contemporary art & a new library, conservation & storage facilities.

Some wonder whether it is feasible for the fine-art advocates who run the complex to create a good circus museum. It would be interesting to ask Prof. George Keller. He is represented by one of the 2 dozen faceless mannequins...the one wearing the gold-striped pants, the Eisenhower jacket with the sequins & the jaunty military cap. Keller, who died in 1960, was an art professor who became a lion tamer.

"They could have labels," said Richard Lisy, a photographer & circus history buff from Cleveland, who pointed out Keller's unmarked costume to a reporter. His diagnosis: "It's that art-museum mentality, more art than history." Deborah Walk, the circus museum curator, who has no staff, said she plans to create labels for the costumes, but has been waiting while volunteers research the costumes.

The place makes some circus people mutter in disgust. "It doesn't look like anything," said Arthur Grotefent, of Sarasota, who performed as one of the Wallendas for 28 years. E Verner Johnson, the Boston consultant, says, "You have this incredible asset. Why aren't you doing more with it? It is one of the pieces that puts you on the national map..if it's done in a way that is of a national class." Marlow Cook, one of the trustees, says, "If I had a major collection, & went thru that building, I wouldn't give it to you. I'd give it somewhere else..Because that facility is not adequate for a worldwide facility to represent the industry of circuses established by the Ringling family."

David Ebitz, director of the museum said for an expanded circus museum to be built, donors who specifically want one must come forward.

In May, Dolly Jacobs & Pedro Reis held a live circus on the grounds. 5000 people came thru the turnstile. "It came to life, is what happened," Dolly said. Tom Dunwoody, of the Circus Hall of Fame, in Peru, IN said, "An art museum & circus museum really aren't compatible. We found out that the museum can't stand by itself." Mac MacDougall, former Ringling mgr. says, "Maybe they need a good circus promoter to come in there & show them how to draw money & draw people. That is what it is all about!" (Thanks to Dale Riker for telling me about this article.)

*****CIRCUS KIDS.....*****

When the Alzana kids were smaller, they used to mess up their wagon making-up like clowns while the family was out performing in the big top. And one time, they white-washed some trunks. But those are normal deviations. Once though, a couple of performers' kids were barred from the sideshow because the snake charmer was afraid of them, but that was exceptional.

Circus children all get along together famously. There is no racial intolerance & no wrong-side-of-the-tracks business. They *all* live down by the railroad, right *on* the tracks! Circus mamas are apt to be very healthy & they take childbirth casually. Miss Lola rode a unicycle on her tight wire until she was 7 months along with her little Emil (he's with his father now on another circus). She rejoined the show when the boy was only 1 month old. Lola kept her pregnancy secret until 6 months (her ballet tutu was a great maternity garment). At 7 months, she casually visited an obstetrician in Providence, RI. He didn't know her profession. "Is it all right if I keep on walking?", she asked.

"Depends on what kind of walking," he said. She flipped open a magazine which had a picture of her on the wire. The doctor blanched, then made her promise to get down off the wire right away-well, maybe tomorrow, because he had tickets for the circus that night & he wanted to see, with his own eyes, a 7-months' pregnancy riding a unicycle across a tight wire!

Circus kids all love circus life & hate to leave their sawdust world for school in the fall. I was sitting with Minnie Alzana, fearless Harold's wife, in their wagon just after Alan had left for Sarasota. " 'E didn't cry or make a fuss, but 'e came right out & said 'e'd rather stay on the circus," Minnie said. "The day before 'e left for school, 'is father took 'im up on the wire. At first 'e didn't want to go, but I said, 'C'mon, ducks, I'll go too,' & then 'e went. 'Arold wanted to see 'ow 'e'd react, if 'e'd get scared or not. 'E 'adn't been up for a long while. 'E liked being pulled up on a rope around 'im. 'Arold took 'im across on 'is shoulders. 'E was looking down at Veronica, the juggler. I think 'e wanted to get back down there to 'elp 'er pick up the balls she'd drop. The only time 'e made a murmur at all was when 'Arold wanted to do 3 'igh. So we just went a little piece out on the wire, didn't go all the way."

Minnie marked her place in a paperback she was reading (*Chad Hanna*) & continued. "We used to take 'im on 'Arold's shoulders before 'e was 3, 'Arold would tie 'is

feet in so's 'e couldn't fall, but people made complaints & the police came & we 'ad to stop." You know, if I was a circus kid, I'd sort of hate to leave such a wonderful life too! **THE END** (No date given for this article.)

BIG TOP TO RETURN AS CITY LANDMARK

From the Sarasota Herald by Dorothy Pratt. Thanks to Bobby Hakes for sending this in.

The National Circus School of Performing Arts, established this year in Sarasota, has purchased the tent to use for performances starting Thanksgiving Day & as a circus arts classroom starting Jan. 4. The shows herald a return of the seasonal performances that were a part of the local scene when Ringling Bros. wintered in Sarasota from 1927 to 1958 & in Venice from 1959 to 1992. Proceeds from the shows will support the school.

The tent is to go up on a pasture west of I-75 on Fruitville Rd. The daring, 7-man pyramid of the Wallenda Troupe will highlight performances during the first few weekends. It will be the first performance of the 7-man pyramid in Sarasota since 1977, when it was done for the filming of a movie about the Wallendas. "We'd like to help the circus school get going so that Sarasota can again be the circus capital of the world, said Tino Wallenda-Zoppe, grandson of the legendary Karl Wallenda. His troupe of 13, which includes 10 Karl Wallenda descendants, resurrected the dangerous act last March in Detroit. "We've heard from so many Sarasotans who love circus. Now, we're hoping they'll prove their love by coming to our circuses," said Pedro Reis, founder of the Circus School. Pedro & co-founder Dolly Jacobs are friends of the Wallendas & performed their own aerial act in Detroit last March on the same bill. The school has free use of the property thru March. The tent, worth \$300,000 was designed in Italy & used by the Moscow Circus. It was purchased for \$100,000 with a loan from Sarasota Bank. "We really need people to help us get on our feet & then we want to be self-sustaining," Pedro said. "We hope to get donations of generators, forklifts, lights. We have plumbers & electricians giving their time & the performers are working from their hearts for peanuts." David Rosaire will present his Pekinese dog act. The board of directors include Andy Carlson, chair; Allan C. Hill, Arthur Goldberg, Rita Adler, Deborah Walk, Tom Johnson & J. Mack Reid. "Our aim is to offer students an additional source of education & revive the faded image of the circus arts," Pedro said. **If you'd like to help call Pedro at 941-924-7054.**

******VALENTINE VAULTS-FROM 1954-THE GOLDEN YEARS OF THE BILLBOARD******

Jan. 30, Sarasota: **Emil Pallenberg** has announced that he is retiring. His bear act has been well known for more than 45 years, & it was he who originated many of the tricks that have become standard for bear acts. His first professional appearance was the the Apollo in Hamburg, Germany in 1908. His final engagement was Sept. 19, in South Paris, Maine. **Mrs. Catherine Pallenberg** retired 5 years ago. For 12 consecutive seasons they were with Ringling, & made 3 other seasons with Ringling. Their son, **Emil, Jr.**, is resuming his bear act now..The acts at the **Des Moines Shrine** show in May are: **Ed Widaman's** elephants; **Lang Troupe;** **Bobo Barnett;** **Clark's** seals; **McDermott's** bears..The **Gil Gray Circus** in Lincoln, NE had: **Joe Horwath's** lions & tigers; **Aerial Dukes;** **Mel Hall;** **Bill Powell,** wire act; **Pallenberg's** bears; **Flying Malkos;** **Bob Hakes'** high pole; **Ricci's** juggling; **King's** camels & llamas; **Wong Troupe;** **Dolly Jacob's** elephants. **Cleo Plunkett** is equestrian director..8 baby elephants were delivered to **Louis Goebel** at Thousand Oaks, CA May 3. **Moulin,** was delivered to the **Moulin Rouge** for training by **Tony Gentry.** The remaining 7 will be delivered to zoos. The animals were captured near Cambodia & loaded in Saigon for shipment here..From **Ringling,** **Mary Jane Miller** reports: girls on the show gave a baby shower for **Dolly Copeland & Jeannie Sleeter.**The show hit the heat peak in Huntington, WV where the temperature reached a torrid 106!..**Carmen Ferroni** rejoined but will be unable to remove the cast on her back for several weeks..From **King Bros:** **Mr. & Mrs. Milt Herriott** left for Peru to start fair dates..**Jimmy Douglas** is keeping busy working in the pie car, making wardrobe & clowning..From **Mills Bros.,** **Jo Jo Lewis** reports that **Eva Lewis** pulled in 8 breem & **Abe Goldstein** came up with a good sized bass at Lake Luzon. A fish fry was enjoyed by all..**Billy Barton & Duane** escaped uninjured when high winds struck Buckeye Lake, OH. For awhile they feared for their trailer & rigging when the blow uprooted trees. **The Sensational Kays,** high wire, followed the act in..From **Polack Eastern,** **Henry Kyes** reports: **Rose Murphy's** trailer was sideswiped by a tourist. She left to join the **Flying Malkos.****Harold & Eileen Voise** have gone all out on Western togs..**Mike Sardon** is gin rummy champ of the week..**Mrs. Hanneford** is doubling at the popcorn stand with **Rose Murphy.****Harold Voise** celebrated his July birthday in

Yellowstone Park..A utensil shower was given for **Jimmy & Joan Olson.**From **Hunt Bros.:** The **Loyal-Repensky Troupe** joined, reporting their long jump from Sarasota was made without incident.

***RINGLING DONATES \$20,000 FOR ELEPHANT* RESEARCH, 10/16/98**

Ringling Circus announced that it will make 2 donations of \$10,000 each to outside organizations protecting & preserving the endangered Asian elephant. The first goes to the **Kumari Fund** of the **Friends of the National Zoo,** an initiative dedicated to scientific research into the origin & treatment of gastrointestinal diseases affecting elephants. Named after a young elephant that died at the Zoo in 1995, the **Kumari Fund** supports research about the causes & treatment of disease among young elephants. The research to date has identified the virus that killed 16-month-old **Kumari,** the 1st Asian born at the **National Zoo & scientists** are working on the source of the microbe, as well as treatment & prevention of infection. The second donation is earmarked for an elephant hospital located in Thailand's **Elephant Conservation Center.** It consists of an intensive care unit, a lab & several infirmaries & rest areas. The hospital has treated about 300 elephant victims of cruelty & abandonment since its founding in 1994. The donation will go to the medical care of the Asian elephant patients at the hospital.

ROLF ZAVATTA, 92, DIES IN FRANCE

Rolf was one of the most celebrated white-faced clowns in France. He was best known for his act in partnership with his brother, **Achille.** **Achille** killed himself in 1993, after his traveling circus went bust.

In 1939, Rolf was in Germany, but hurriedly headed for France, leaving behind even his most treasured costume. It had belonged to **Antonet,** partner of the great **Grock.**

Rolf worked with the **Cirque Medrano** and **Cirque d'Hiver** and **Cirque Pinder.** Rolf's mother was a wire walker and trapeze artiste. He made his debut in 1912 in a riding act.

DON'T FORGET TO SEND IN YOUR CHRISTMAS GREETINGS AND ADS SOON. THE DECEMBER 15TH ISSUE IS CLOSER THAN YOU THINK!!!!

STEEL DREAMS by MIKE CECERE

During my many years in the circus business, I've been fortunate to view some really great talent. Naturally, as a wild animal trainer/elephant man, those are the acts I'm most interested in.

However, I know a good "people" act when I see one. And one of my favorites has always been The Globe of Death.

Only recently in this country have we seen the wide popularity of these acts catch on with the public. I really got to see a wide variety of globe acts when I toured in South America in 1983.

Just about every circus from the biggest to the smallest down there has a globe act. And outside the U.S., the circus is on its own as an entertainment entity, no Shriners, Jaycees or other sponsors. It's got to be a good show to draw the paying public.

Often the shows I was on would play for weeks in big cities in Columbia & Peru, with other shows close by. (No TV except Baywatch and soccer down there folks!)

And we'd go visit "Busmen's Holiday" style so I got to see quite a few daring teams of globe riders down there.

You'd have the young fellows on their way up wanting to go faster than anyone else. Then, you'd see the older guys who'd crashed a few times, giving a good show but staying within the speed of light.

I even saw one small show that had bought a globe from a larger circus that had one damaged in a truck wreck. What was funny is that several panels were dented badly & he only could run the globe a certain way. But in the little villages that show played it was plenty exciting for them! Another large show I was on owned all the animals, the large rigging & owned a cannon, Globe of Death, high wire rigging, flying return rigging & a Wheel of Destiny & had a group of young people who would alternate in all these acts.

Just the other night, I saw a TV special on NBC that had that outstanding Globe of Death act from the Rivera Hotel Casino in Las Vegas. That brought back lots of memories of tropical places and Steel Dreams.

OINKING FOR HELP-PITTSBURGH 10/10/98

Pot Bellied Pig Saves Owner's Life by Lying in Front of a Car, by Mike Fuoco: It was just like those "Lassie" episodes where Timmy would injure himself in the wilderness & the ever-loyal, super-intelligent collie would run to town, bark for help & lead rescuers to her master. OK, it was almost like that. Except that Jo Ann

Altsman, of Beaver Falls, didn't twist her ankle but had a heart attack. It was in the bedroom of her vacation trailer on Presque Isle. And the pet that ran-er, waddled-for help was a Vietnamese pot-bellied pig named LuLu. When you think about it, LuLu's real life feat the morning of Aug. 4 was much more amazing than any of Lassie's fictional rescues because she can't bark. That didn't matter. Smart pig that she is, LuLu did the next best thing. She laid down in front of a car on the road outside the trailer & then led the disbelieving motorist to Jo Ann, whose ordeal lasted 45 minutes. Had 15 more minutes elapsed, doctors told her, she likely would have died.

"Pigs are very, very smart. They are smarter than dogs," Jo Ann, 57, said. She is recuperating from heart surgery she underwent 9/15. Take that Lassie! And you too, Bear. That's Jo Ann's Eskimo dog, who did nothing but bark at her after she collapsed & tried to summon help by breaking a bedroom window. Her husband was fishing on Lake Erie at the time. "LuLu looked at my head. She made sounds like she was crying. You know they cry big, fat tears." But LuLu pulled herself together, & headed outside thru the piggy door & into the fenced-in yard. She somehow pushed open the gate & walked into the road. She waited until a car approached & then walked onto the road & laid down in front of it. Several times she returned to Jo Ann, only to leave again & try to get help.

One man stopped, but later said he was so unsure of what the creature on the road was that he was afraid to get out. "She's not very attractive," said Jo Ann. But another motorist stopped for the prone pig & got out. LuLu knew just what to do. She led the man to the house & the rescue. "I heard a man hollering thru the door, 'Lady, your pig's in distress.' I said, 'I'm in distress too! Call an ambulance.'" Jo Ann never learned the man's name. Medics quickly arrived. But when LuLu tried to get into the ambulance with her, medics gently let LuLu know she had done enough for one day!

LuLu was 1 one year old July 4. LuLu went from 4 pounds to 150! And counting. And how did Jo Ann thank her? "She got a jelly doughnut!" Somehow, Lassie no longer came to mind!

Bob Grant reports The Chappie Fox Ring of Olympia, WA held its Grand Opening Show with 4 of our members showing at the Nat'l Armory Oct 24. There was 3 circuses-2 American & 1 European & a carnival. Another show is in Nov. (Hope your computer gets well!)

AN APPEAL TO ALL CIRCUS PEOPLE

BY FRANK ROBIE

The Animal Welfare Committee needs all articles published concerning animal welfare. The animal cult and the Animal Rights Terrorists have funds while we are a grass roots operation.

Please send any articles, pro or con, for evaluation and information. It doesn't require much to help defeat the cultists. A letter to the Editor, the radio station, and TV will be a proper foot forward.

Send to any member of the Animal Welfare Committee of CFA, via Secretary or Editor or direct to: Frank Robie, 185 Jackson Ave., Rutherford, NJ 07070.

The Seattle Times, June 28, 1998. "Animal Rights Terrorism": Two federal research facilities lie in ashes outside Olympia. Animal rights extremists are gloating over the weekend fires as examples of "non-violent, professional action." No matter how professional the incendiary devices & press releases, there is nothing non-violent about reckless zealotry in the name of saving animals. It's domestic terrorism.

Animal abuse is reprehensible, but extremist crusaders choose their targets indiscriminately. The 2 wildlife research centers burned down last weekend were engaged in benign activities beneficial to nature & humans. The researchers' work included developing repellents to keep forest animals away from young trees & protecting property owners from problem animals.

No one was hurt, but the predawn blazes caused an estimated \$400,000 in damages. They appear to be part of a larger pattern of destruction for the cause of "animal liberation."

According to the Dept. of Justice, there have been more than 300 incidents of violence across the country in the name of animal rights. Activists take credit for threats, vandalism, physical assaults, fire-bombings & even attempted murder. Terrorism of any kind-whether it's to save trees, animals or the unborn, is unacceptable in a civil society.

(This information has been submitted by Frank Robie, CFA President, 1994-95. Your comments are welcome.)

NEWS FROM OUR CIRCUS FRIENDS

Phil Thorick, Binghamton, NY reports: Billy Martin's Cole All-Star Circus has started its fall route thru the Northeast. Features are the "Alien Encounter", Joanne Wilson's dogs; Emil & Debbie's whip & juggling turns; trampoline & cradle with Kim Sue & Vlastic & Angela

Martin's trapeze, as well as the clowning of Paul Parsons. Billy is promising some big surprises & an all new show next spring. Thanks, Phil for the report.

News From Sarasota: John & Tina Winn will be appearing on the KISS Halloween special from Calif. Look for it on FOX TV Halloween night. Mrs. Corona (Serge & George's mom) was rushed to the hospital, & is now on the mend. We wish her well.

Gordon Taylor, Atlanta, GA reports that he went to Dalton, GA to see the Beatty Circus & to Chattanooga to see Tarzan Zerbini's show. (Both great shows). He reports that some of those on Tarzan's show were sick because of some bad food. Tarzan has bought a new top & it is really something, as Gordon saw a photo of it. Thanks, Gordon!

Bob Kitchen, Fall River, MA reports that Vidbel played 2 dates in Rhode Island to good business. Tarzan also played a Shrine date in Rhode Island. Thanks, Bob.

David Orr, Duncansville, PA reports: that he made Baraboo, Milwaukee & Peru. He received a lot of nice comments on Back Yard, that he passed out in Milwaukee. Thanks, Dave. He said not enough has been written about the great show Greg Parkinson put together in Baraboo. Also, how great Larry Stout's Circus World Band was, featuring Tony & Sarah Bruno. Greg & Karen DeSanto combined their 17 years of professional experience to bring some of the best clowning that Dave has ever seen at the circus. This was Dave's best trip to Baraboo in 12 years! There were many improvements, including the \$1.2 million C.P. Fox Wagon Restoration Center, right down to the Jacobs-Barreda Elephant Bath-each day at 5 p.m. on the banks of the Baraboo River. Patrons & town folk alike either stayed for this, or just drove down the river to watch. Everyone please put this on your calendar for 1999!

Tommy Hanneford brought out his new "Pictorial Showcase" program, designed & printed by Spotlight Graphics. Ron Morris & his crew did a fantastic job. Tommy always comes up with the surprise act or 2. The very young Roman Tomanov was on the aerial straps & Incredible Gena Swartsman was the new juggling sensation! Also, Youthful Tommy had John Herriott guide the entire show of Karoly's, Grandma, Bow & Arrow Crossbow of the Jose Vital Troupe & Missy

(Continued on Page 14)

THE LAST RIDE by MIKE CECERE

In all our lives we run into exceptional people in our travel through life & one of the biggest adjustments you have to make as you get older is the passing of friends.

And among those of us in the animal business it can happen when you least expect it, in ways you'd never imagine. Recently, in the wee hours of Labor Day, 1998, it happened again. One of my good friends and neighboring farmers, Beryl Stone, Sr., a lifetime draft horse man, was killed at the New York State Fairgrounds when high winds collapsed a tree onto his travel trailer.

A kinder man you'd never find. Kind to his large family, kind to his animals & a friend and neighbor who would do anything for you. His sudden passing hit our community hard & a huge crowd turned out for his services. As a final tribute, his fellow draft horse people got out their best wagon & hitch and drove in a procession to the church. They then slowly carried him to our little country cemetery where generations of his family rests, dating back to the 1700s! And even those who had harvesting & field work to do stood by their fields & the side of the roads as Beryl passed by. I know one thing; that he would have enjoyed seeing all his friends come out to watch his last ride.

****A TRUE CIRCUS FRIEND****

The CFA Convention is a place to meet old friends and make new ones. As your editor was visiting one night with friends, I saw a man with an armload of photo albums. I walked over to see what he had. They were filled with old pictures of many different circuses. As I turned the pages, I noticed a photo of Fred Logan, back when he worked the cats on the Kelly-Miller Circus. I turned the page and exclaimed, "That's Ora Logan, Freddie's wife!" The albums belonged to Dick Mong, of Seneca, PA. I told him Circus Pages was coming to my hometown in a few weeks and I knew Freddie would love to have a copy of the photos. He not only sent me copies to give Freddie, but ones for me too! Dick sent an 8x10 of Freddie to have him autograph it to him, and enclosed a pen too! With the photos was a note to Fred. He said I could read the note & I copied it down because it moved me so much. Dick said in '61 or '62, he took his young son to see Kelly-Miller set up in Seneca. After talking for awhile, Fred invited Dick to watch him train a group of young lions. The next time he saw Fred was in Oil City. Fred had broken his ankle a few days before & John Cline was working the cats. Dick was disappointed that

AT LIBERTY

ELEPHANT SUPT.

AND

TRAINER

FRED C. LOGAN

c/o Mary Jo Zerbini

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he could not see Fred work. While watching Fred near by, Dick saw Fred's signal to John. Fred crossed his crutches. John then crossed his whip and pole and the lion sat up! It was my pleasure to deliver the photos to Freddie and bring together two old pals that met many years ago.

CHARLIE DE WEIN PHOTOS: While your editor was at the Convention, I bought some photos from Charlie. When I got home I read what Charlie had written on the backs of them. They were photos of little Bobby Cline, of the Beatty show. "I put him in the Springfield, Ohio Hospital when Bobby had a laceration of the leg & had gangrene set in. I took him chocolates & cigarettes each day. Upon release from hospital, I brought him some clothes and a suitcase and bought him a plane ticket to go rest at home in Philadelphia." One photo is a close-up of Bobby with a hat on & bull hook resting on his knee. The other is Bobby standing by "Pete" in harness. Thank you Charlie for being a true Circus Friend!

NEWS FROM OUR CIRCUS FRIENDS.....

the Clown Troupe. This was probably one of Tommy's best Milwaukee productions. The 1999 Circus Train will tour 4-days prior to Milwaukee, so more Wis. circus fans can see the Circus Train.

Since the Emmett Kelly Tent Banquet was Oct. 10th in Hagerstown, with guest speaker, Grandma, let's hear from those of you that attended! Dave sent along a brochure of the Railroaders Memorial Museum in Altoona, PA. Please check out their web site at www.railroadcity.com

Richard Tuck, El Cerrito, CA writes that tragedy struck at the circus, Oct. 22, as a young trapeze performer fell from her perch & landed on the asphalt pavement below.

Until this year, I have been just an average circus fan, but for the last 3 months I have been spending most waking moments helping out with a young circus that has been playing Northern Calif. It is named Circus Chimera & it is a brand new circus that just began performances on April 28th of this year. It is a wonderful circus, full of very talented performers.

The 22nd, they were putting on their show in Jack London Square, in Oakland & it was an especially exciting night. 19-year-old Ginger Knieppe was going to unveil her brand new trapeze act. Just after intermission at the beginning of the 2nd act, everyone in the show was gathered in the tent, along with all the audience members. All eyes were glued on the single trapeze as 5' 2" Ginger started her aerial silks act. Then, she started climbing the silks 30 ft. into the air to reach the trapeze.

The music was building & tension filled the air. Ginger took her position on the single trapeze & did her first stunt. The audience was thunderous with their applause. From where I was seated, I could tell that Ginger was very nervous. After all, she was unveiling an act that she had been developing for months in secrecy.

Then, just as Ginger was about to do her 2nd stunt, something went dreadfully wrong. She was swinging from the bar one moment, getting ready to curve her body up & over the bar, but somehow she pushed too hard & her body totally cleared the trapeze & she went plunging to the ground below. The safety device attached around her waist broke her fall slightly, but her entire weight landed on her right arm & wrist. For a few seconds, she lay on the ground & the entire arena sat motionless. Then she began to cry out in pain.

Workers dashed into the ring & fellow performers quickly gathered around Ginger to lift & carry her out of the ring.

The audience sat quietly as the music stopped & the center ring was plunged into darkness. It took a couple of minutes for the music to resume & for the next act to get ready to begin their performance.

Meanwhile, behind the scenes, in the rear of the tent, Ginger lay crying in agony. An ambulance was quickly dispatched, but it seemed forever before we heard the screaming sound of the ambulance signal. I meanwhile sat next to Ginger & held her hand & wiped her forehead. Her make-up was streaked down her face with tears & she was trying to hold up her badly twisted wrist.

A fire truck arrived first, & the rescue team tried putting a splint on Ginger's arm until the ambulance could arrive. Ginger was screaming in agony, as they tried to straighten out her arm & wrist to wrap them in a splint. I felt hopeless sitting there holding her other hand while this 19-year-old girl tried bravely to endure the pain throbbing thru her right arm.

When the ambulance finally arrived, it did not take long before they had her strapped to a portable bed & were taking her away to the nearest hospital. The performance continued, but everyone was overwhelmed with concern & grief. For a trapeze aerialist to land on her wrist might mean the end of a brilliant, young career in the circus. Her mother owns a circus school in Toronto & Ginger has always made it clear she intends to spend her life performing. We all felt awful. At the end of the show, I made my usual announcement to the audience, but I also asked for their prayers for Ginger.

2 hours later, some of the other performers returned from the hospital but not with Ginger. They had gone to visit her & had hoped to bring her some tonight. She is instead spending the night in observation. The doctors took x-rays & are waiting for the results. They have injected her with pain killers & she is sleeping restfully.

I am now home & have tried sleeping, but I keep reliving those moments earlier this evening, when a beautiful, talented young lady, with a great smile & a wonderful personality plunged to the ground in the midst of her debut performance.

(On Oct. 22, Richard wrote: Ginger has a broken left thumb & a broken right wrist. If Ginger needs to stay in the hospital, the entire circus wants to go visit her (once she is out of the emergency room!)

Thanks Richard for this report.

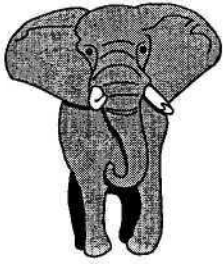
Ruth Cristiani Cole Circus 1946





McAFEE RIDING ACT AL G. BARNES CIRCUS 1932

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