



"America's favorite Circus Weekly"

4th Year

February 17, 1975

Number 7

## R-B's Blue Unit on Tour

The second year tour of Ringling-Barnum's Blue Unit is already well underway. The show continues to draw critical praise at each of its engagements. The circus is currently playing at the Omni in Atlanta (Ga.)



Featured in the big show performance are Charley Baumann and his tigers, the Samel mixed group of wild animals, Michu, the world's smallest man, the Flying Gaonas, Elvin Bale, aerialist, Jeannette Williams and her horses, and what has been described as the largest contingent of circus clowns in the world today.

The RBBB Red Unit's salute to America's 200th birthday continues to receive standing ovations at every performance. The big spectacular has been described by many critics as a "must" for every real American.

### Show Opens

The All Star Circus, produced by Nordmark & Hood Presentations, of Sarasota, Fla., opened its 1975 tour at Warner Robins on Wednesday (Feb. 12) to good crowds.

(Continued on Page 14)

### A Contest

Pet owners have been invited to enter a contest sponsored by Kal Kan Foods and the big Ringling-Barnum Circus. Participants are asked to write in 25 words or less why their dog or cat is the Greatest Pet on Earth.

Each entry must be accompanied by a code number, or label, from a can of Kal Kan Dog or Cat food. Mail to: Kan Kan,

(Continued on Back Page)

# HIS BIGGEST 3-RING CIRCUS

....by KAYE SCHEIMANN

When we visited the Hubert Castle Circus at Fort Wayne (Ind.) on Feb. 1st it was truly a big show. It is a strong program, one of his best, with some new acts and even a European import.

The circus is produced by Hubert Castle, The ringmaster/announcer is Cleo Plunkett and the band is directed by Clement Toca. The show's producing clown is Rex Young.



Included on the program are:

Tarzan Zerbini - wild animals  
 The Clowns - Safe Cracker  
 Esmeralda, Janet, Evita, Irma  
 - single trapeze  
 Oscar Macias - cloud swing  
 The Lenz chimps  
 Clowns - The Army Cannon  
 Dale Harney - illusions  
 Barbara, Loni, Lilian - foot  
 jugglers

## Miscellaneous

The Hamid-Morton Circus will open its 1975 tour next week at Topeka (Kansas). The dates are Feb. 28-Mar. 2nd.

The Cycling Wizzards - cycles  
 The Esqueda Troupe - unicycles  
 Lee Marx - juggling  
 Joan Pinson - the Marhal camels  
 John Cline - liberty horses  
 Charmaine's playmates  
 The Fossetts - gorilla parody  
 Jacqueline Zerbini - aerialist  
 -- Intermission --  
 The Flying Valentines  
 Clowns - The boxing match  
 Mel and Aurelia Hall - monkeys  
 Jim and Jeannine Hall - bears  
 Carmen and Irwin Hall - baboons  
 The Hermans - perch pole  
 Clowns - a tug of war  
 Sir Victor Julian - dogs  
 Clowns - fire crackers  
 The Alejandros - tight wire  
 Tony Fossett - bounding rope  
 Oscar Macias - balancing  
 John Cline - elephants (3)  
 The Pinsons - elephants (5)  
 The Keeners - elephants (5)  
 Aerial Youngs, Tibi and Eve,  
 Aerial Teds - aerial cradles  
 Eddie Ventura - crater crash

## Added Notes

In its recent newsletter the National Congress of Animal Trainers and Breeders (NCATB) offers much information on what is happening in regards to the animal control laws.

Of special interest is the report that Dept. of Agriculture inspectors will be enforcing the Marine Mammal Act, This means they will be making inspections, filing complaints, etc.

Also noted is the fact that Indian elephants are a "concern" to the Dept. of Interior. However, the agency has stated that "elephants are not a priority with us now."

L. David Harris points out that there is confusion regarding the "endangered" and "threatened" provisions of the Endangered Species Act. There is apparently little interest on the part of Congress in adopting an amendment to establish a "threatened" category for animals. It is possible that the Dept. of Interior can set-up such a category on their own, but that remains for some future date. In the meantime animal owners must have their permits and are warned that thus far no animals have been transferred down to a possible "threatened" category.

The NCATB needs both moral and financial support to fight the current bans and those that



STRUPPI HANNEFORD is shown here with the plaque she received when honored by the Ringling Museum of the Circus at its annual "Circus Celebrity Night."

will be coming up. If you'd like to help send a donation to: Rev. L. David Harris, Exhibition Animal Legal Fund, 622 Independence Ave. S. E., Washington, DC.20003

# ROUTES

- Beck's Circorama  
Feb. 8 Sheffield, Ala.
- Big John's Tent Circus  
Feb. 17 Blythe, Calif.  
18 Edgemont  
22 Hacienda Heights
- Hubert Castle Circus  
Feb. 5-9 Memphis, Tenn.  
21-23 Albuquerque, N.M.
- Circo Americano  
to Mar 9 San Juan, P.R.
- Circus Vargas  
to Feb 19 Birmingham, Ala.  
20 Opelika  
21-23 Jacksonville, Fla.
- Circus of Wonders  
Feb. 17 Fort Bragg, Calif.  
18 Ferndale  
19 Eureka  
21 Crescent City
- M & M Circus  
Feb. 19-22 Rochester, N.Y.
- Polack Bros. Circus  
Feb. 21-23 Reading, Pa.
- Ringling-Barnum - Blue Unit  
to Feb. 23 Atlanta, Ga.
- Ringling-Barnum - Red Unit  
Feb. 18-23 Richmond, Va.
- Royal Lipizzan Stallion Show  
to Feb. 23 San Juan, P. R.
- ..... OTHER ROUTES .....
- Hungarian Folk Ballet  
Feb. 20 Oakland, Calif.



Pictured above is Florence Tennyson who toured as featured soloist with Cole Bros. Circus in 1940.

- Ice Capades  
Feb. 19-23 Notre Dame, Ind.
- Kramien's magic Capades  
Feb. 17 Deming, N. M.
- Fred Waring Show  
Feb. 23 Oakland, Calif.

HELP ..... !

We need reports on the shows playing in your area, plus news of all sorts.



The above picture was taken on Cole Bros. Circus at Oakland, Calif. in 1940. The name of the clown holding the ice is not known. That's Otto Greibling in the center, the show's producing clown, with Happy Kellams on the right.



**EASTERN  
FAIR  
MEETING**

Many show folks were attending the eastern fair meeting at Portland, Maine on Jan. 25th. Among those seen were: Reithoffer show representatives; Smokey's Greater Shows; Goodings Million Dollar Midway; Langill Amusements; the Dean, Flynn and Ace Amusements; Funorama and King Reid Shows.

Agents included: Dick Bronson; Adams and Soper; Lordly and Dame and Al Martin.

Also attending were Joey Chitwood, Buddy Wagner, plus representatives of the Pine Tree Showman's Club.

## Photo Title

Today's centerfold picture was obviously taken on the old Ringling-Barnum Circus. We have been unable to determine the young lady's name or the year the picture was taken. Can any reader provide this information

## In Memoriam

**WILLIAM (Bill) DEDRICK** (82) died at a hospital in Riverside (Calif.) on Jan. 28th of cancer. He owned the Dedrick Dog & Pony Circus and was a sign painter, who lettered and put scroll on many west show trucks.

**JUANITA DEISLER** (58) retired circus performer, died at her home in Gibsonton, Fla. on Jan. 8. She started her circus career on Cole Bros. in 1937, in 1940, she and her husband, Roy, joined Ringling-Barnum as the Flying Royals. She did two and a half somersaults and double pirouettes. They also toured in shows around the world. Her husband, a brother and two sisters survive.

**THEODORE (Ted) HAMILTON** (85) died at his home in Peoria, Ill. on Jan. 17. He was a tattoo artist with Barnum & Bailey as well as many carnivals. During World War II he operated a hotel in Peoria.

## INDOOR ACTS

Animal Acts, Chimps, Dogs, etc.

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## Random Ramblings ..... by ART "Doc" MILLER

The 1934 Silver Bros. Circus was owned by Sam Dock and his daughter and son-in-law (Claire and Ray Brison). Previous to 1930 Sam had continually operated a wagon show since 1890, using the title Dock and Jordon and The Great Keystone Show. (Incidentally, the famous Nellie Dutton (Jordon) was born on this show).

When the Brisons became partners they motorized the show, using the title Brison Bros. until 1933, when the title was changed to Silver Bros. (Sam had once trouped on the old Harris Nickel Plate Circus and felt the name Silver might hold an equal allure.

The physical equipment consisted of two long wheel base Chevy one ton trucks, upon which had been built home-made trailer bodies. One of these carried the poles and canvas, while the other had a "boxed-in" portion to house the air calliope. The rest of the body carried seats and misc. equipment. A third truck, a one ton Model A, carried the side show, dogs, small caged animals and cookhouse. It pulled a small home-made living trailer which served as a ticket wagon. Another truck, also a Model A Ford, with stake body, carried the ponies, mules and goats. This also pulled a small home-made living trailer.

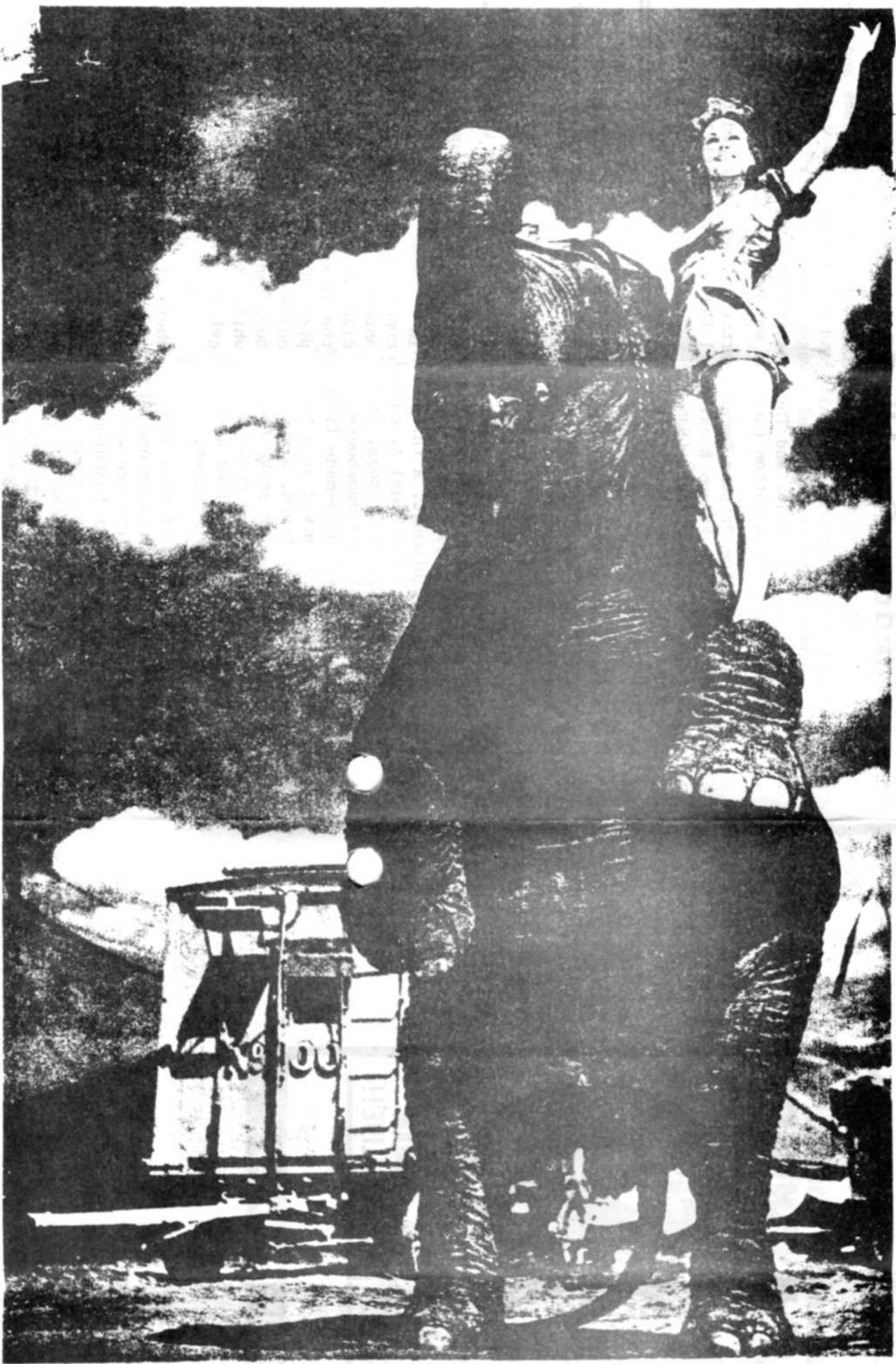
For a show of this size (big top was a 50 with one 30 ft middle) the performance was surprisingly good. It featured a pony drill, pick out pony and trained monkeys by Sam Dock; trapeze, contortion rings, trained dogs by Claire Brison; revolving ladder, juggling, clowning by Ray Brison; January mule,

trained goats and impalement by Ed Davidson, who also acted as boss canvasman. He had been with Sam since 1915, when the latter promoted him from the old McDonald Bros. wagon circus, where he was little more than a slave.

Another performer did a couple of acts in the big show in exchange for operating the concert (magic and illusions). Another party acted as electrician and clown in exchange for the outside grab joint. A four piece band was carried, also a colored cook and two working boys handled the stake driving, while everyone pitched in to get it up.

The show made friends everywhere it went and usually repeated in the same territory every other year. They covered the area from Virginia to Maryland, West Virginia, Penna and New York. In the fall they usually toured the eastern coastal towns, in Penna.

(Continued on Page 14)



# YEARS AGO

Pittsfield, Mass. - June 17, 1923

The Ringling-Barnum Circus went through here today enroute from Schenectady, N.Y. to Boston, Mass.

The first section went through between 8:30 and 9 a.m. and consisted of 21 cars. These included: 14 flat cars, 4 horse cars, 3 sleepers and 56 wagons.

The last section went through at 11:30 a.m. and consisted of 21 cars. These included: 7 horse cars, 5 stock cars and nine sleepers.

In 1923 George M. Bragg had two circus units on the road. He managed the No. 2 unit, while the No. 1 unit was managed by Dorothy Klayton.

Both shows went out on Jan. 1st and operated continuously through Jan. 5 of 1924.

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# ANOTHER BIG SEASON

....by KAYE SCHEIMANN

For the past month the Voorheis Bros. Circus has been playing dates in Michigan and Ohio. The feature acts include the Alberto Zoppe Troupe, consisting of Alberto, Sandi, Carla and Giovanni. This year Alberto is introducing his bare-back riding lion "Tayjura." His riding academy number features Carla as the ballerina on horseback and Giovanni as the comedian.



The circus was produced by Col. Wm. Voorheis, who is also the announcer and drummer. Danny Daniels is the organist, while the producing clown is Irving "Rickey" Romig.

The program as presented at Elida, Ohio (Jan. 29) featured:

Pre-show clowning Rickey Romig  
Peanut Pitch  
Bobby Duo - juggling  
Jose Cole - balance  
Clown - musical trombone  
Barry, Nancy, Steve and Norm Miller - comedy trapeze  
Alberto Zoppe Troupe  
Arturo Ponce - head balance trap  
-- Intermission --  
Bobby and Jane Lang Family - an acrobatic teeterboard  
Arturo Ponce - gorilla parody  
Irving Lang's chimps (2)  
Clown - Hypnotism  
Steve and Norm Miller - cradle  
Alberto's Riding Academy

## PEOPLE

HARRY J. JENKINS, circus organist, will tour with the Mid-American Circus this year.

LIVEWIRE, the Clown (Harry Jenkins II) will present his

## FOR SALE

CLOSING OUT CIRCUS COLLECTION...

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gorilla parody, juggling and clown numbers on the new Parley Baer and Bob Trippe Circus.

### Palace, New York

(Reviewed Saturday Evening, Oct. 22)

On the strength of a character of entertainment quite different from what the Palace patrons have been accustomed to, besides on its merits as a show, this Circus International of Boyd & Wirth's should do a mopup on the main stem these next seven days. It has all the requisites of "box office," all the color and romance appealing to children in a jamboree of ace big-top acts. It is a bit ragged in spots, true, and RKO sort of kicks itself in the neck by faulty ballyhoo out front, but the drawing power is there.

In spotting five freaks in the front lobby as free acts the theater is doing itself more harm than good. Not only do the crowds clutter the entrance to the extent that ticket holders have to fight their way in, but the sight of unfortunate humans in many cases not conducive to ticket buying. The freaks are Major Mite; the Carlson Sisters, fat girls; Sealo, the seal boy; Mildred, the tattooed girl, and Ajax, the sword swallower. They came with the show, RKO buying the entire layout for the week for \$5,200.

Another unfortunate occurrence at the Palace this week is the day and date booking of *A Bill of Divorcement* with the circus. This is a picture for sophisticates and certainly way over the head of any kid under 13. It is the type of mistake that occurs quite often in the modern show business, as for instance the playing of *Skippy* at Loew's State with a nude and blue Texas Guinan flash.

The ring acts in the Circus International are topnotchers. They include May Wirth and Family, bareback riders; Robinson's Military Elephants, Christianson's Famous Stallions and Marie's Ponies, Dogs, Monkey and Kicking Mule. The specialty turns are on par with the ring acts. They are Tiny Kline, in her "Slide for Life"; Erma Ward and Ed and Jenny Rooney, aerialists; the Picchianni Troupe, seven excellent teeterboard acrobats, and Tarzan, the human chimpanzee.

Erma Ward drew a terrific round of applause during and after completing 101 one-arm turnovers. The Rooneys also went strong with their stunting on the trapeze. Miss Kline's iron-jaw slide from the loges to the stage, however, looked puny in comparison with the stunt she pulled yesterday in sliding from the roof of the Edison Hotel to the roof of the Palace Theater Building. In setting up the apparatus on the balcony the stagehands annoyed the patrons so that Miss Kline was under a bad handicap even before she started.



### HISTORICAL FACT .....

The Hilliard & Main Circus of 1888 traveled on wagons and carried 114 horses and mules. They had one elephant (Babe), plus a group of 10 cages and 2 camels.

The big top was a 110 ft. one pole round top.

Tarzan, a dwarf, exceedingly made up as an ape, fooled most of the audience tonight into believing that he was really a beast. This act is the outstanding hit of the show and had the crowd laughing almost the entire time it was on.

Bluch Landorf and Band provide the clowning interludes in the show and most of their laugh attempts thudded in the aisles in front of the Saturday night audience of grownups. The 12 Greenwood Girls, dancing troupe, and the clowns help distract the patrons' attention from the continuous shifting of props during the running of the show.

Andre Dumont, in regulation circus attire, is doing the announcing of the show, and Christianson is acting as ringmaster. May and Stella Wirth provide a strong flash windup to the layout by racing two chariots on treadmills.

The pit band, led by Roy Smith, starts the show by entering from the back of the orchestra. JOE SCHOENFELD.

# WHO KNOWS THE ANSWER?

Trying to cope with inflation and recession while confronting the every day problems of operating can be quite a task for any circus owner.

Inflation, of course, has hurt everyone, but in most instances the increased costs can be passed on to the buyer. The showman is in a different position for he really can't pass on the added costs, but rather must absorb them himself.

The showman feels the pinch like everyone else, and is looking for new sources of revenue. The very nature of his business is such that he must travel many thousands of miles, thus requiring many tanks of gas, plus food for animals, license fees, taxes and insurance, etc., all of them going up and up.

It is difficult for the showman to calculate his costs and profits. The margin is small and there is a limit to what he can pass on to the public.

The public, of course, has its own idea of what a circus should cost, and if the showman's costs are too high then he will easily and quickly price himself right out of business.

His only hope is to increase his gross turnover so the small margin provides him with a profit. To do this he must have good attendance at every performance.

The weather, lot location and time of year can all be critical and frequently causes

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## MISCELLANEOUS ....

Ward Hall and C. M. Christ are looking for side show people.

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small crowds. As a result there is no profit on a bad day and it is impossible to make up the losses.

Many shows have reported they've done well, despite poor economic conditions, and it's always good to hear those reported stands. Hopefully, this has been achieved from more people attending the circus and not from increased prices, with less people in attendance.

It is not good economics for shows to increase their revenue while decreasing attendance from high prices. Far more benefit would be achieved by finding ways to attract more people to the circus, who pay a fair price, and not a high price

So we come to the c64.00 question -- "How do you get more people through the gates?"

Who knows the answer?

Do you?

RANDOM RAMBLINGS (Continued)

One season an epidemic in the north forced the show to invade the deep south and with cotton and tobacco prices down, business was poor. Eventually the show reached Louisiana and became stranded, then camped all winter on a deserted plantation.

Enroute through the Georgia turpentine camp region, a ragged turp employee quickly fixed one of the show's balky motors. Brison immediately offered the man a job and after learning he was double-jointed, saw the possibilities of making him a contortionist. But the man shook his head and claimed he owed the company so much money he'd be in debt for the rest of his life. Knowing the Southern operators cheated their unschooled employees, Ray slipped money to the man and told him to meet them in Alabama. Needless to say the man was there waiting for the show when it arrived at the scheduled location. He turned out to be a top notch mechanic and good performer, and later was with Barnett Bros., Dales Bros. and other shows.

When spring arrived on that deserted plantation and with no money on hand for licenses, tires or batteries, it was old Ed who dug down into his grouch bag and came up with the money to move the show. No one ever

NEW SHOW OPENS (Continued)

A new feature on the show this year is a three piece band (trumpet, organ and drums) directed by Charles Schlarbaum. Additional musicians will be added for important dates.

Another new feature is the addition of a billing car, managed by show press agent, Stan Mulford.

Show staff and acts are:

- Jim Nordmark - president
- Regina Nordmark - comptroller
- Bob Adams - general agent
- Charles Court - promotion mgr
- Hines Rucker - general manager
- Patti Rucker - road tres/novelty
- Craig Carlson - transportation
- Steve Hill - prop boss
- Terry O'Brien - concessions
- Randon Sink - chimps (3)
- Big Ten gym champ
- O'Brien's show acts
- Craig Carlson - balance/tumbling/high stilts

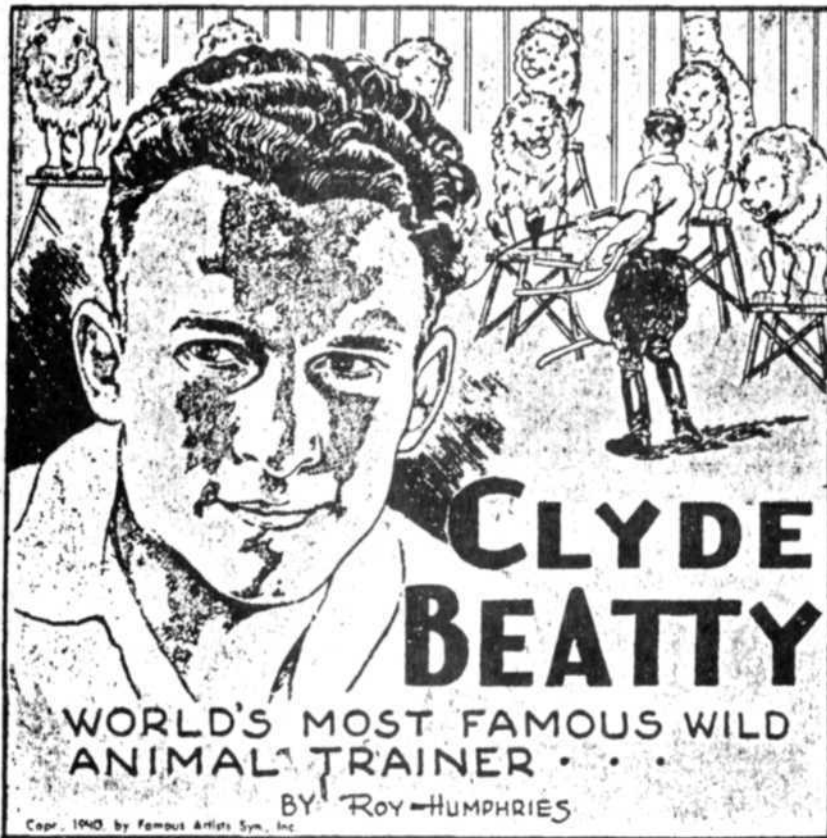
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realized that this man had saved \$100 for emergencies.

This was the only time that the Silver Show was ever stranded. All the other years they ended the season a winner.



# CLYDE BEATTY

WORLD'S MOST FAMOUS WILD  
ANIMAL TRAINER . . .

BY ROY HUMPHRIES

Copyright 1940 by Famous Artists Syn., Inc.

NO MAN FACES DEATH  
MORE OFTEN THAN A  
WILD ANIMAL TRAINER.  
HE MUST BE ON HIS TOES  
AT ALL TIMES. THOSE  
SAVAGE BEASTS ARE  
ALWAYS PLOTTING AND  
SCHEMING SOME WAY TO  
STRIKE. ONE FALSE MOVE  
ON THE TRAINERS PART  
WOULD MEAN DISASTER



THE BIG SHOW OPENS  
IN CLEVELAND TODAY

(Continued next week)

# PEOPLE

RAVEEN, the Magician, is currently appearing at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas (Nev.) with Steve Lawrence and Eydie Gorme.

DAN GABERT (CFA) recently visited circus friends in Florida and the Ringling Museum.

BOB HOFMEISTER, who sold his Appaloosa liberty act two years ago, reports the horses work each day at the Mission de Campanerie, in Mexico. In addition to the liberty act the horses are used for Roman riding and trick riding.

DON BRIDWELL (Whizzer, the Clown) is recuperating from a minor breakdown last year, at a Minnesota hospital. Cards and letters should be sent to: Don Bridwell, 2000 South Minnesota Ave., St. Peter, Minn. - 56082.



## A CONTEST (Continued)

"Greatest Pet on Earth, P. O. Box 8253, St. Paul, Minn. 55182 before May 15, 1975.

The prizes range from an African Safari to a visit to Cirque d'Hiver in Paris, or a visit to your favorite European circus, a chance to attend the RBBB opening in Madison Square Garden or a visit to Circus World in Florida. Also planned as gifts are circus motif old-style mirrors.