



"America's Favorite Circus Weekly"

4th Year

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Number 3

## Gatti-Charles Set For Long Tour

"Our 1975 season will open early in March," reports Major Matthew J. Gatti, owner of Gatti-Charles Productions, Inc., producers of The Great American Continental 3-Ring Circus and The Great Canadian International 3-Ring Circus. "It will be our longest tour, ever - more than 30 weeks."

"Out of 23 acts, eleven will be new including Ada Smeija's

### A Wild Bull

A young elephant ran wild through the streets of Paris on Jan. 2nd, breaking shop windows as he ran. A group of firemen, police and curious spectators followed to watch see the damage

A circus trainer brought along an older elephant, thinking this might tend to calm the young animal, but it didn't work.

The elephant was finally captured and returned to a local circus after the animal became trapped in a stairway.

caged tigers; The Great Bardo, aerialist; European Musical Clown Rudy Dockey and his dogs; Rice's Exotic Animal Revue; and four new, well-experienced clowns. Herb Miller, brother of the famed Glenn Miller, will be our musical director."

### Mattel Report

In its latest report to the stockholders, Mattel, Inc., states that its sales and earnings for the nine month period ending on Nov. 2, 1974, were ahead of last year.

Net sales of continuing operations were up 11% to \$243,

(Continued on Page 11)

## Acts Set

Novelty acts booked by Simone Finner Enterprises for the Merv Griffin TV show airing across the nation in January includes: Frank Mygoroski, trained dogs; Norm Nielsen, magician with the floating violin, and Professor Florey, novelty illusions.

A number of variety acts have been booked by Simone Finner Enterprises for revue shows including: Michael Brunn, juggler and Gene Detroy and the Marquis Chimps, featured in "Femmes de Paris" at the Americana Hotel, Miami Beach; Lee Edwards & Co., illusionists; Glenn Falkenstein, mentalist, and Norm Nielsen, magician in "The Wonderful World of Magic" at the Las Vegas Hilton Hotel, Las Vegas; and the Great Tompsini, comedy magician, appearing in "Vive Paris Vive" at the Aladdin Hotel in Las Vegas.

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## In Memoriam

HARRY ARTHUR JOHNS, one of the last of the sign painters who worked for the American Circus Corp. shows. He also painted many modern shows, ran his own sign business and was a sheriff of Miami County (Indiana). He passed away on Dec. 9th at Peru, Ind., at the age of 74.

ROLLIN SHERBONDY, a former Ringling-Barnum dummer for 15 years. He also played with the Holton Elkhart Band and had retired in 1968 from the Frank Holton & Co. a band instrument factory. He passed away at the age of 72 late last year in Albany, Wisc.



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# yep, 'twas a rough year

"It was just one of those bad days and the tour was almost over when Hoxie Tucker came to visit us. I asked him if he'd like to own another circus, he looked things over made an offer and I let him have it," Jim Silverlake, former owner of the Barnes & Daily Circus, told Circus Report this week.

The show included five trucks, two elephants, a llama, sheep, mule, a 60x125 big top, the seats, a side show and a 45 KW light plant. Enroute to Hoxie's quarters one truck was lost when it rolled over. The office trailer, which it was pulling, was only slightly damaged.

The show started its 74 tour at Freetown, Ind., on Apr. 20th and closed in Northern Alabama on Oct. 22nd. Business in Illinois, Missouri and Iowa was good. A new truck was added and later another elephant and truck were purchased.

The show continued moving through Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Indiana, Kentucky and into Alabama. A storm damaged the big top and so the old one in quarters was brought out for show.

By Labor Day the weather was turning cold and business started to drop off and during October it was very poor. Prior to the closing the show had been cut back to five trucks, the caged animals were disposed of and the side show was turned into a snake show, that seemed to do rather well.

"I thought I'd seen the

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## PEOPLE

The WALLENDIA TROUPE and The FLYING FARIAS were featured on Mike Douglas' TV Show taped in Maimi, Fla. last week.

DAVE HOOVER, wild animal trainer, recently purchased a new Air Stream trailer and Chevrolet Suburban.

ANTONIO's balancing act was accidentally omitted from The Circus Vargas program listed in last week's paper.

MICKEY HANSON, former ice skater and juggler, clowning for a Children's New Years Eve party at Wichita, Kans.

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last of the old show when its new owners (Parley Baer and Bob Trippe) asked if I'd come and work for them. So I'll be back again this season, to keep the show moving and work the bulls, but it will be called the Mid-American Circus," says Silverlake.

*Perry Phillips*  
1-10-75

**LAS VEGAS**—Hottest show in town right now is "Hallelujah Hollywood" and it's playing to sellout audiences nightly in the Ziegfeld Room of the MGM Grand Hotel. Produced and directed by Donn Arden, this may be the best spectacular ever seen on the famous "Strip," and there have been some good ones. Arden is somewhat of a legend in this town. He's been director of the famous Lido show at the Stardust for many years and also directed the award-winning "Hello America" show which has had a long run at the Desert Inn. Add to this these exciting



Phillips

"pzazz" spectaculars and it's easy to see that Arden knows how to put one together.

"Hallelujah Hollywood" has already won seven awards since it opened and should run for at least two years. It has a cast of over 100 and the show's production numbers are spectacular

in every sense of the word. Arden has drawn from some of Hollywood's great moments for this one, sprinkled it generously with Ziegfeldiana and topped it off with first-rate specialty acts. The costuming is superb. There are well over 700 costumes seen in this show and they evoke any number of "ohs" and "ahs" from the audience. Ziegfeld himself, were he still with us, couldn't help but be more than a little envious.

I can't begin to list all of the production numbers and their special effects. They are

#### HISTORICAL FACT .....

On its 1922 tour the Ringling-Barnum Circus carried a small side show called "Wonderland." This show had a two wagon front, 3 ticket boxes, 3 ticket takers, plus a 15 piece band and 14 attractions inside.

The other side show was called "Curioland" and carried 12 attractions, plus six cages of animals.

all good and run the gamut from camels and llamas in a "Kismet" scene to an underwater sequence with a dolphin and mermaid. And if that isn't enough, Arden manages to sink a pirate ship right on stage. The split-second timing in scenery change is worth the price of the show alone.

All of these split-second changes take place because the Ziegfeld Room is the nearest thing I've seen to a completely electronic show room in the country. The lighting has been set through computers and remote controlled drops are the rule rather than the exception. And where is the orchestra while all of this is going on? Would you believe it is a floor below the showroom stage? Closed circuit television and sound signals are piped to the orchestra with the director, Anthony Costa, and his musicians dressed in casual attire. They could, as one hotel executive put it, play in their shorts were it not for one Sandra Seymore, the only female in the orchestra and a second violinist.

The show's premier specialty act is Siegfried and Roy, two of the best illusionists I've ever seen. The act is not without its dangers, for Siegfried and Roy work with a panther, a lion and a Bengal tiger. If you've never seen a real live 500-pound Bengal tiger disappear on stage, you will if you see this show. Summing it all up, "Hallelujah Hollywood" is a must for any visitor to this entertainment spa.

# French Star Injured In Fall

High wire artist Philippe Petit, who gained fame last summer when he walked a wire between the twin 1,350 ft. towers of New York's World Trade Center, was hospitalized early this month (Jan. 7) after falling during a circus rehearsal.

The 25 year old Petit was preparing for an evening performance with the Ringling-Barnum Circus at St. Petersburg (Fla.) when he slipped off the wire and fell 30 feet to the concrete floor.

A witness to the accident told reporters that Petit fell while descending a slanted wire. He appeared angry with himself, the witness said, and told those nearby that he couldn't believe what had happened. "I don't ever fall," he was quoted as saying.

Hospital attendants said that Petit was in guarded condition. He underwent surgery for possible internal injuries shortly after being admitted to the hospital, they added.

## Miscellaneous

The Japanese Justice Ministry has announced it will be cracking down on the entry of foreign entertainers coming into Japan.

Circus Vargas personnel have been busy painting and repairing the show equipment at the Alameda County Fairgrounds (Pleasanton, Calif.).

Polack Bros. Circus drew some 28,000 spectators at its three day stand in Tampa, Fla. late last year.

## ROUTES

### Circus of Wonders

- Jan. 20 Elsinore, Calif.
- 21 Hemet
- 23 Lakeside
- 24 Santee
- 25 Simonmeade
- 25 Enroute
- 26 Tijunga

### Cole All Star TV Circus

- Jan. 21 Canton, Pa.
- 22 Spring Mills
- 23 State College
- 24 Bloomsburg
- 25 Huntingdon

### Ringling-Barnum - Red Unit

- Jan. 22-28 Miami Beach, Fla.

### Royal Lipizzan Stallion Show

- Jan. 21-22 Augusta, Ga.
- 24-26 W. Palm Bch, Fla.

### Stebbing's Circus

- Jan. 24-Feb. 2 W. Palm Bch, Fla.

..... OTHER ROUTES .....

### Ice Capades

- Jan. 21-26 Calgary, Alta.

# Show Scores at Florida Stand

The Wonderful World of Horses, starring The Royal Lipizzan Stallion Show wound up its 1974 tour at the new Lakeland Civic Center in Lakeland, Fla. on Dec. 26-28. During the three day engagement some 20,000 people attended the show, a much larger turnout than had been expected, making the total gross \$60,000.



The show has been rescheduled once again for Jan. 2-4 in 1976 by Producer Gary Lashinsky and Civic Center Director, Neal Gunn. The promotion was sponsored by the Lakeland Civic Center and their staff did the entire promotion under the direction of Neal Gunn.

The show's first date of its 1975 tour, at Madison Square Garden's Felt Forum, (Jan. 3-12) was running well ahead of the advance sale of a year ago.

## film work

Aerialist Vick Hunsberger recently worked on the Universal picture "Hindenberg" where he doubled for the actor playing the part of acrobat Joseph Spah (known professionally as Ben Dova). Spah survived the "hindenberg" disaster by jumping from the airship at a height of some 40 ft. He suffered only a broken heel.

Vick Hunsberger has been catching the triple regularly since last October when he caught it at the Fresno (Calif.) Fair.

## HISTORICAL FACT .....

For its 1922 tour the Ringling-Barnum Circus carried 351 baggage horses

## ROUTES

Kramien's Magic Capades

Jan. 17 Hawthorne, Nev.  
18 Tonopah

Mexico Folk Ballet

Jan. 20 San Jose, Calif.

Star Filled Magic Show

Jan. 25 Oakland, Calif.

Windjammers Unlimited Convent'n

Jan. 24-26 New Orleans, La.

## Important Note!

If your animal act is licensed under the Animal Welfare Act don't forget to renew that license when it becomes due.--

The license fee is payable within 30 days of the expiration date.

Failure to pay the license fee could result in a revocation of the license and/or a fine.

# Circus Giant Is Retired

One of the world's tallest men -- Rayfield Johnson, who is 7 ft. 5 in. tall -- lives in retirement on a small farm near Peris, Calif., in Riverside County. His past life, he recalls, was "king-sized" and an interesting one.

At 54, Johnson putters around his farm, but says "I'd rather be working. But I don't seem to get many druthers anymore."

Johnson is a self-educated man, who built his own king-sized cane and has his shoes -- size 18 special made, at a cost of up to \$183 per pair.

For two years he toured with the Harlem Road Clowns, a basketball show. Then he traveled with carnivals and for a time was a feature attraction on the Clyde Beatty Circus and King Bros. Circus side shows. It was all fun, he says, and gave me a chance to travel around the country.

Today that life is all behind him, for his huge body is bent with arthritis and curvature of the spine. Doctors blame some of it on his size, and he must seek periodic treatment at a nearby hospital.

"When I was 20, doctors told me I'd never father any children because tall people like me aren't supposed to be producers," Johnson said. "Well, I fathered eight sons and two daughters and I'm no magician."

"People like to stand next



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to me and compare their height or their hands or feet with mine," he said. "I guess I've been photographed alongside of people thousands of times. I enjoyed all the children, that part of it. But it could get tiring, standing for so long."

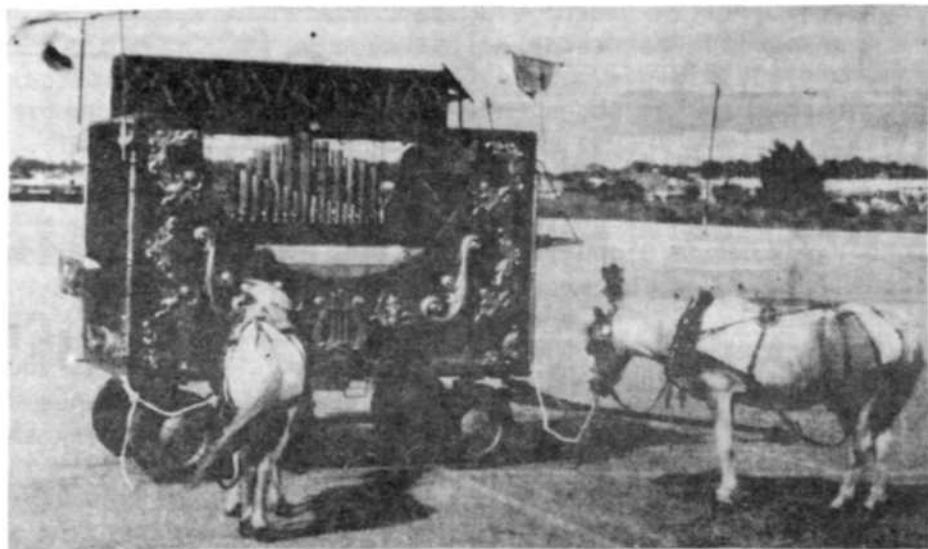
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## SHOW DATE (Continued)

the circus exhibit, which will be opened soon. The exhibit includes the full miniature circus plus a collection of old posters, letters, programs, etc. which date back to the 1850's.

"Visitors are always wel-

come," the Duncklees state. "In fact we find that many people come back again and again and bring their friends. We've had general tourists, circus folks and even foreign visitors who have heard about our museum and come to see what we have."



RBBB  
-1941-

# At 81 He's Plenty Active

A former wild west show star keeps busy these days at his home town of Ponca City (Okla.) teaching local 4-H Club members some of his tricks. At 81, Mike Sokoll seems inexhaustible as he helps youngsters learn the art of rope spinning.

Sokoll, a native of Hungary, was a potato peeler on the 101 Ranch when trick roper Joe Borrero befriended him and started to teach him rope spinning. Soon he was a star with the 101 Ranch Wild West and toured with them everywhere, including Europe.

One of Sokoll's best tricks was a backward somersault off a galloping horse, landing on his feet, while continuing to spin a big rope loop above his head. Then with the loop still spinning he would jump back on the horse.

A high point of his career, says Sokoll, was the time he appeared before the king and queen of England in 1914. Also at this same show were the queens of Denmark, Sweden and the Netherlands.

Right after the grand entry, he said, the show was stopped and it was announced that war had been declared between Germany and England.

The show broke up and returned home, minus its horses and equipment, which was taken over by the British. Later on they sent checks to pay for our losses, he added, but they never did make any compensation of my special custom made saddle.

In 1915, Sokoll quit the

## Show Date

"Our 1974 season was the longest one yet," says Henry and Ruth Duncklee. "It ran from March 10th to Dec. 22nd."

The Duncklee's display their model of the early Ringling Bros. Circus each year, as well as operating a general interest museum and gift shop. It all started as a two week event, some ten years ago, and now it's a ten month operation in the same location.

At the present time work is underway to renew and improve  
(Continued on Page 8)

101 Ranch Show and went out on another wild west show, but it just wasn't the same, so I went back home,

He's lived in Ponca City ever since and for the last decade has been teaching the 4-H Club members how to handle a rope. Most of my advance students know dozens of routines, he says proudly.

*a report* (Continued)

853,000, while net income totaled \$2,567,000 or 15¢ per share. This compares to a loss of some \$7,635,000 or 45¢ per share for the same period in the previous year.

Mattell continues to list all operations of the Ringling Bros.-Barnum & Bailey Combined Shows and Circus World as discontinued operations. The company still plans to sell these subsidiaries when and if a buyer is located.

The company's report lists the following figures:

Net income for the three month period ending on Nov. 2, 1974, for Continuing Operations came to \$6,263,000, as compared to \$8,864,000 for the same period a year earlier. For the nine month period (ending on the same date) income for 1974 came to \$2,860,000 as compared to a loss of \$1,509,000 the previous year.

Net income of Discontinued Operations for the three month period ending on Nov. 2, 1974 was \$90,000 as compared to the \$833,000 reported a year earlier. For the nine month period ending on the same date there was a loss of \$977,000 as compared to the loss of \$1,509,000 in November of 1973.

The per share figure as reported for Continuing Operations for the three month period ending on Nov. 2, 1974 was 37¢, compared to 53¢ for the previous year. For the nine month period, ending on the same date the per share figure was 17¢ compared to a loss of 9¢ in 1973.

The Per share figure as reported for Discontinued Operations, for the three month period ending on Nov. 2, 1974 shows no per share figure as compared to 5¢ for the previous year. For the nine month period ending on the same date a loss of 6¢ is listed, compared to a loss of 36¢ for the previous period.



# YEARS AGO

July 6, 1920 - Pittsfield, Mass

Ringling Bros. - Barnum & Bailey Circus arrived here this morning from Bridgeport, Conn.

The First Section came in at 5 a.m. and had 22 cars (3 horse, 16 flats, 3 sleepers and an auto - 50 wagons with 23 cages)

The Second Section came in at 10:45 a.m. with 23 cars (six horse cars, 10 flats, 4 sleepers -- 27 wagons and 3 autos).

The Third Section arrived at 11:45 a.m. with 25 cars (five horse cars, 16 flats, 4 sleepers -- 47 wagons, one auto and two chariots).

The Fourth Section arrived at 1:47 p.m. with 25 cars (seven horse cars, 6 stock cars and 12 sleepers).

They have 30 elephants, a baby camel, 8 camels, 140 ring horses, 20 ponies. The tents include an 8 pole big top; menagerie (sidewalled); two side show tents; cookhouse; 4 small tops; dining tent; private dining top; two horse tents; black smith shop; wardrobe; bad; ushers; dressing; candy butchers; ring, stock and candy stands.

The show was so late getting in that the parade was cancelled. The first show started about 5 p.m. while the night show went on at 8 p.m.