

The Great Debate

Circus protesters pledge to prevent animals from being forced to perform in circuses

By: Lindsay Foster
Features Editor

Posted: 1/7/02

Gael Murphy vehemently believes animals shouldn't be used in circuses. And along with Florida Voices for Animals and Students for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, she wants the public to know.

The two groups stood on the corner of Morgan Street and Channelside Drive Saturday in front of the Ice Palace, armed with flyers, homemade pamphlets and stickers to hand out to patrons on their way to Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus. The overall goal was to get their information out.

"Those who read the information will understand why we're here," said Murphy, education coordinator for FVA. "It's time we stop the exploitation of exotic, beautiful animals."

For years, a number of animal rights groups have claimed circus employees abuse animals. But on Dec. 21, 2001, Mark Oliver Gebel, an animal trainer for Ringling Bros., was on trial in California for the mistreatment of elephants. It took the jury two hours to acquit Gebel, which fueled animal rights activists who said they had documented evidence of the abuse. According to the Ringling Bros. Web site, the case was seen as a victory. Kenneth Feld, producer for Ringling Bros., said the case was "an orchestrated campaign by a group of extremists."

But through the ethical battle of animals performing, the public remains the ultimate decision maker of whether the show will go on. On Saturday, some took the flyers, others took them and glanced at the material, and still some read the information and threw the flyers in the trashcan at the corner. One man said he didn't want one because he didn't want to litter.

Donna Gregory and her family were heading to the circus, and she took a flyer, saying she would probably look at the information, but it wouldn't stop her from attending the show.

"My sister is big into not going to the circus," Gregory said. "It's a hard balance."

But whatever the reaction, the protesters stood rigid and strong, smiling at the passers-by, even if they didn't take the information. In previous years, FVA has held signs while protesting. Last year, Murphy rented costumes of a ringmaster and animals and whipped them during the protest. This year, the group decided to only hand out flyers and talk to the people who wanted to talk to them.

"There's a difference between when we hand out pamphlets and also have signs," Murphy said. "I think people are nervous about the signs. But the goal is exactly the same — to free animals from circuses."

Senior Stacy De-Lin said this was her first protest against the Ringling Bros. circus, but the overall

response was positive.

"I think we have a good impact," De-Lin said. "We're just giving out pure facts, pure information."

But according to Melinda Rosser, public relations director for Ringling Bros., these groups have incorrect information.

"No one has ever been hurt at any of our shows," Rosser said. She also noted that a group of flyers the protesters were passing out said the elephants were in an "African slave trade," but Rosser said the Ringling elephants are from Asia, and some performing are 30-50 years old.

"They're not pulled out of the wild," Rosser said.

She said the elephants are bred at the Center for Animal Conservation in Polk County, and not all are used for entertainment purposes. Only the elephants who show indications of talent, such as naturally standing on their heads, are chosen to be trained for the circus, she said.

But animal rights groups insist the animals are kept in inhumane conditions, many of them living with tuberculosis, and say a number of former trainers have come forth alleging to the abuse of animals.

Senior Lea Banks, a SETA member, said the reaction from people was generally positive throughout the day, and no one had been scowling or saying much to them. Banks planned to read an eight-page list of United States Department of Agriculture citations aloud later in the day, but said she thought the message would be far-reaching.

"They're going to tell their family and friends," Banks said. "This probably has a bigger impact than we realize."

In addition to flyers, a list of the elephants, some of which were performing in that day's show, was distributed. Banks was handing them to people saying, "meet the elephants."

Rosser said she hasn't seen many protesters at performances and said the people don't want their children being handed the material which was being passed out, noting the 3:30 p.m. show was a "full-house."

"They see it as being anti-American," Rosser said. Tom Rider, a former employee for the Ringling Bros. circus, reported to the Committee on the Judiciary on June 13, 2000 that abuse of the animals does occur.

"While I worked for Ringling Bros., I heard stories all the time about dangerous elephants and how they could kill you if you got too close," Rider said in the report. "After my three years working with elephants in the circus, I can tell you that they live in confinement and they are beaten all the time when they don't perform properly."

Also, the USDA has cited Ringling Bros. at a number of incidents. Among the USDA inspection reports are violations of improper caging of the animals, vent failure, animals being infected with tuberculosis without receiving treatment and food storage violations. One violation also notes elephants having "minor lesions, scars or abrasions."

Rosser said the circus is inspected by local, state and federal authorities in every city they perform in

and without notice. She said the food violations were simply a matter of covering up the feed and hay.

"It's the same typical citation as when you go into a restaurant," Rosser said. "Any restaurant you go to has been cited for the same violation."

Rosser also said the animals are trained by positive-reinforcement, and they are given treats, such a carrots, when they do tricks. Nearby, one circus employee was hand-cutting oversized carrots to feed to the goats.

"They're not putting them (the carrots) through a slicer and dicer," Rosser said. "They are cut by love and by hand."

As the Ringling Bros. circus began at 3:30 p.m., FVA and SETA said they were pleased with their work. SETA planned to also attend Sunday's shows. Murphy said although the people didn't have much time to read the flyers while crossing the street, she hoped the information would sink in later.

"They may see something — they will see something — that may disturb some of them," Murphy said.

Despite the protesting, the Ringling Bros. circus is now entering its 132nd year, Rosser said, and it appears it will be around for many more years.

"It's a great American tradition," Rosser said. "It's the longest-running family entertainment show in history." But animal rights protesters promise to relentlessly pursue the circus and will continue attempting to give their information to the public.

"It's a tradition we should be ashamed of," Murphy said. "Circuses are great, but only circuses without animals."

- Contact Lindsay Foster at oraclefeatures@yahoo.com

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The cruelest show on earth comes to Asheville

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The cruelest show on earth comes to

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Asheville

By Willy Rosencrans

June 16 (AGR)— The Ringling Brothers Circus – the "Greatest Show on Earth" – reduced local performances here from three rings to one in 1998 with the construction of the Bi-Lo Center, a more attractive venue, in Greenville, SC. The Circus now refers to its Asheville show as a "Hometown Edition" and performed it June 9-13 at the Asheville Civic Center.

Cozy small-town guise notwithstanding, Carolina Animal Action (CAA) was there to demonstrate against it just as they have in the past, assembling a crowd on June 9 and 12 to expose its dark side.

"We were there to educate people about the horrors of how animals are treated," said CAA member Stewart David. "They spend their lives traveling in boxcars and trucks, they're beaten, they're forced to perform stupid tricks; the elephants are always in chains…

"Ringling Brothers claims that they take good care of their animals. But we've heard that the Detroit Zoo is going to send their elephants to a sanctuary because they can't take care of them properly."

About 30 people showed up at the June 12 protest, including 15 kids from five to 15 years old chanting "Animals sad, circuses bad;" demonstrators handed out 500 leaflets to curious attendees. Circus security was present with radios and cameras, taking pictures.

Some circus-goers were hostile, but there were also those who'd never thought about the animal abuse issue before; David says that every year a few people say they will never attend a circus which uses animals again. Some of the protesters went to a nearby bridge overlooking Highway 240 and held a sign over traffic speeding past below which read "Ringling Brothers: The Cruelest Show on Earth." David says the response from drivers was by and large positive.

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) has compiled a dossier of the Circus's animal abuse.

"Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus," says the group, "has failed to meet minimal federal standards for the care of animals used in exhibition as established in the Animal Welfare Act (AWA)." The report recounts numerous annual citations from the USDA for animal deaths, mistreatment, and torture, and says that "Of the 60 elephants touring with Ringling… 44 were captured in the wild. At least 18 elephants have died since 1992."

On June 13, 2000, Tom Rider, a former employee, testified before Congress that "[Elephants] are beaten all the time when they don't perform properly...When I became disturbed about the continual beatings, I was told, 'That's discipline.'"

Training commonly includes beatings, the withholding of food and water, the burning of front paws to coerce animals onto their hind legs, and the choking of big cats are choked

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with neck ropes. Elephants are bound from tusks to feet in martingales. Trainers keep them "constantly in pain or in fear of pain," says Tufts University veterinarian Paul Waldau, echoing Henry Ringling North himself ("They work from fear").

Critics of Ringling Brothers, owned by Feld Entertainment, the largest live-entertainment company in the world, refer also to its powerful misinformation campaign. The company's efforts to preserve its image as a purveyor of wholesome family entertainment have sometimes assumed Stalinesque proportions: Feld, according to a 2001 Salon article, initiated an 8-year surveillance and dirty tricks campaign, even hiring former CIA agents, against Janice Pottker, who'd published an article critical of the circus and was planning a book.

"We're not opposed to entertainment," says David. "There are a lot of great circuses without animals, like Cirque du Soleil... We want to encourage people to go see those shows."

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Sheldon Eisenberg, Esq.—"Standing for Animals"

On March 1, 2005, Sheldon Eisenberg from the law firm of Bryan Cave LLP discussed the issue of standing, which is rather unique in animal law. The issue is important because animals do not have standing and animal advocates usually do not, either. Mr. Eisenberg has successfully litigated a case concerning California's Humane Slaughter Act and a case involving "downed" animals, both of which raised difficult standing issues implicated in the protection of farm animals. "Downed animal" is an industry term describing non-ambulatory livestock, which collapse usually for unknown reasons, and are too sick to stand back up. In addition to inhumane and cruel treatment of these animals by the animal food industry, downed livestock may pose a grave threat to human health when circulated into the food supply.

Mr. Eisenberg also discussed his most recent project, which involves the use of California Business and Professions Code section 17200. He also discussed the issue of standing under that statute, as affected by Proposition 64.

2003-2004 lectures:

Terri Macellaro, Esq.—"Current Issues in Animal Law"

On November 17, 2003 the Animal Law Society held a daytime lecture with an audience of law students, including those who had never considered animal issues before. This was part of the Society's efforts to expand the pool of people interested in animal welfare, by drawing in students who did not have a preexisting interest in animal law. The Society was able to meet this goal by providing pizza at the lecture during lunch time. Terri Macellaro, Esq., a partner from the law firm of Christensen Miller, spoke on a broad range of topics facing Animal Law. These topics included the history of animal law, as well as pro bono animal cases that Ms. Macellaro had worked on.

Julie Greenfield, Esq.—"Exotic Newcastle Disease and Due Process"

On February 19, 2004, the Animal Law Society held a nighttime lecture with an audience of law students and practicing attorneys. Julie Greenfield, Esq., spoke about the mass killing of birds in response to the poultry industry's concerns about Exotic Newcastle Disease. Ms. Greenfield spoke about the legal basis for ending the mass killing, which resulted in the deaths of an estimated 5 million birds, without regard to whether they were infected with END. Joining Ms. Greenfield was a biologist who spoke about the pathological aspects of END and members of bird societies who gathered information and spread the word to others that there were legal means of resisting the seizure and killing of the birds.

Mindy Kursban, Esq.—"The Freedom of Information Act and Animals"

On March 16, 2004, the Animal Law Society held a nighttime lecture with an audience of law students and practicing attorneys. Mindy Kursban, Esq., Chief Legal Counsel for the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine, spoke about the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). FOIA is the means by which animal advocates try to obtain public records that reveal information about activities that involve animals and that are engaged in or supported by government. Ms. Kursban was representing PCRM in a lawsuit against the National Institutes of Health, alleging that NIH impermissibly redacted information from an animal experimenter's grant application. FOIA is useful in a variety of contexts that involve government inspections of facilities or government involvement in assessing situations that involve animals. However, government frequently throws up roadblocks to attaining information. Ms. Kursban discussed some of those roadblocks and how to dismantle them!

2002-2003 lectures (held as the Student Animal Legal Defense Fund):

Dr. Jennifer Conrad and Professor Taimie Bryant—"The Paw Project: The Legal Future of Non-Curative Surgeries"

On October 29, 2002, SALDF presented a lecture by two distinguished speakers, Dr. Jennifer Conrad and Professor Taimie Bryant. Dr. Conrad and Professor Bryant discussed the cruelty inflicted by non-curative surgical procedures on domestic and wild animals, and how the law may be used to prohibit such cruelty. Professor Bryant discussed the legal drafting process and why specific language was chosen by the Paw Project team. Dr. Conrad is the founder of The Paw Project, which rehabilitates big cats that have been maimed by the cruel practice of de-clawing. Professor Bryant became involved in this issue when she coordinated a legal drafting team that developed language to ban non-curative de-clawing of all animals. Professor Bryant teaches Animal Law at UCLA and, at the time of the lecture, was SALDF's faculty advisor.

Tom Rider and Jill Buckley, Esq.—"Circuses: Recent Legal Challenges and Evolving Standards of Animal Cruelty"

On November 14, 2002, SALDF presented a panel presentation featuring Tom Rider, former circus employee and Jill Buckley, Esq., counsel to ASPCA in its Government Affairs division. As a former employee for the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus, Mr. Rider witnessed first-hand the systematic, daily beatings suffered by endangered Asian elephants at the hands of trainers as they were forced to travel and perform. Due to the abuse, he quit his position at Ringling and began speaking out to encourage the protection of elephants in the circus. Mr. Rider, along with animal welfare organizations such as the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA), has been instrumental in bringing suit against Ringling Brothers under the Endangered Species Act, which prohibits the harming of any animals that is listed as being endangered. At the time of the lecture, the lawsuit was pending in the D.C. Circuit for the U.S. Court of Appeals. Ms. Buckley was responsible for drafting and monitoring animal welfare legislation, as well as lobbying to promote the passage or defeat of a bill. At the time

The Bohnett Animal Law Speaker Series



Thanks to generous sponsorship by the David Bohnett Foundation, the Animal Law Society at UCLA hosts a speaker series for all interested members of the UCLA, legal and animal rights communities. Attendance is free (though parking at UCLA costs $7) and MCLE credit is often available for attending attorneys.

PAST LECTURES:

2004-2005 lectures:

David Wolfson, Esq.—"McLibel"

On Thursday, September 9, David Wolfson from the law firm of Milbank, Tweed, Hadley, and McCloy discussed the treatment of farm animals in the context of his article "McLibel," as well as the effect of "customary farming practice" exemptions from state anticruelty statutes in the U.S.

The background of McLibel is that, in 1991, McDonald's sued two pro se defendants in England for defamation in relation to, among other things, allegations that McDonald's was culpably responsible for cruel common farming practices. The case, known as "McLibel," took seven years. Though McDonald's spent over $16 million on legal representation and had significant legal advantages, it lost major portions of the case, including the issue of animal cruelty. David Wolfson will discuss the background and holding of "McLibel" in relation to cruel common farming practices, its unique legal context, and the impact of the holding on animal law in general and state anti-cruelty laws in the United States. In addition, he will explore the contradiction that "McLibel" exposes: the fact that a common farming practice can be found to be cruel in the view of a reasonable person while legal pursuant to an anti-cruelty statute.

David J. Wolfson is a partner at Milbank, Tweed, Hadley & McCloy LLP, the author of "McLibel" in Animal Law, the author of "Beyond the Law: Agribusiness and the Systemic Abuse of Animals Raised for Food or Food Production," and the co-author of "Foxes in the Hen House: Animals, Agribusiness and the Law, A Modern American Fable" in Animal Rights: Current Debates and New Directions by Cass R. Sunstein (Editor) and Martha Craven Nussbaum (Editor). Mr. Wolfson also taught animal law at Harvard Law School and Yale Law School.

You can read David Wolfson's "McLibel" article in the journal Animal Law here. The citation to the article is 5 Animal L. 21.

For more information on how the "customary farming practices" exemption to many state anticruelty statutes gives the farming industry complete authority to decide what is "humane" to farm animals, you can also read Mr. Wolfson's "Foxes in the Hen House" article by clicking here.

Wayne Pacelle—"The Animal Protection Movement: Legal Policy, Science, and Sociology"

On November 17, 2004, the Animal Law Society held an evening lecture featuring Wayne Pacelle, CEO of the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS). The Humane Society of the United States is the biggest animal advocacy group in the nation, and represents more than eight million members and constituents and has an annual budget in excess of $80 million. The HSUS maintains active programs in companion animals and equine protection, wildlife and habitat protection, animals in research, farm animals and sustainable agriculture, and national and international humane education and environmental protection.

Mr. Pacelle graduated from Yale in 1987. In addition to being CEO of HSUS, he is co-founder and former chairman of Humane USA, a non-partisan organization that works to elect humane-minded candidates to political office. He is one of the nation's leading advocates of social reforms to benefit animals. He has been instrumental in passing countless state and more than a dozen federal animal protection laws, and has won 17 of the 22 state ballot initiatives with which he has been involved.

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of the lecture, Ms. Buckley was involved with a campaign to encourage the city of Huntington Beach to pass an ordinance prohibiting the use of exotic animals in circuses.

Carol J. Adams—"The Pornography of Meat"

On April 24, 2003, SALDF, in association with the Animal Issues Committee of the Los Angeles County Bar Association, presented a lecture and slide show by acclaimed author and activist, Carol J. Adams. Ms. Adams is the author of the groundbreaking book The Sexual Politics of Meat: A Feminist-Vegetarian Critical Theory, and many other scholarly books and articles focusing on the connection between feminism, animal rights, and vegetarianism. Ms. Adams' slide show was a thought-provoking and challenging presentation that discussed how images of women and animals in popular culture foster oppressive attitudes against both women and animals. It also suggested forms of resistance against the construction of individuals, human or non-human, as "meat."

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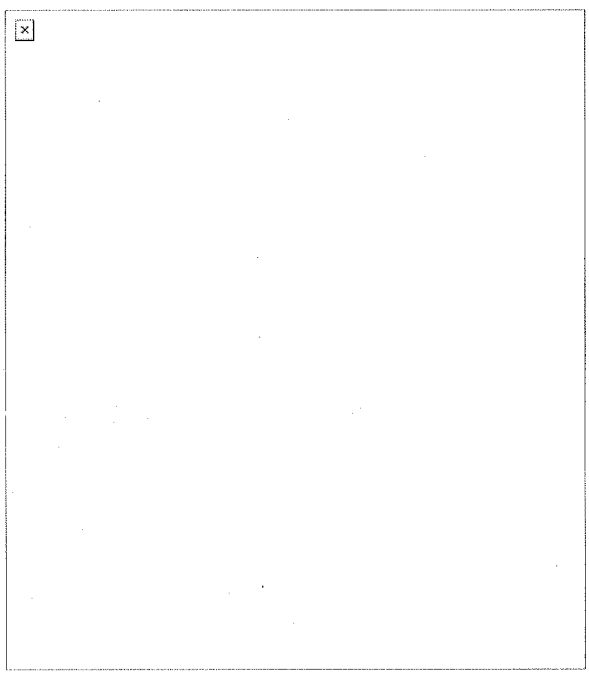
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THE BERKELEY DAILY PLANET

The Berkeley Daily Planet

Suit alleges cruelty to performing elephants

By Drew BeckSpecial to the Daily Planet



A California-based animal rights group is doing what it can to force circuses to stop using elephants in their acts, even invoking the Endangered Species Act in its quest.

At a press conference Thursday at the Oakland Zoo, PAWS, the Performing Animals Welfare Society, spoke out against the use and treatment of elephants in circus acts. They are taking legislative action against using elephants as well as suing Ringling Brothers' circus to stop what they say is abuse of the animals.

PAWS says that elephants in circuses pose a threat to trainers and audience members alike. They are supporting HR 2929, a bill to prohibit the use of elephants in traveling shows and elephant rides. HR 2929 is currently in the Crime Subcommittee of the House Judiciary Committee.

PAWS claims that the public is at considerable risk from elephants in traveling shows because of the harsh training and the restrictive conditions the elephants endure. The problem is that there is no healthy way to house elephants in a traveling environment. This, says ex-elephant handler Tom Rider, is why elephants shouldn't be allowed in circuses at all.

"The reality is that unless you have a facility like (the Oakland Zoo), you can't take elephants off restraints," he said.

PAWS is also bringing suit against Ringling Brothers circus claiming that they routinely violate the Endangered Species Act and the Animal Welfare Act in the training and handling of the elephants.

Among charges filed, the complaint cites Ringling Brothers with the forcible removal of baby elephants from their mothers before the age of two and with the inhumane use of beatings and chains in training. These are in violation of the AWA, which states that "physical abuse shall not be used to train, work, or otherwise handle animals."

"At Ringling facilities, baby elephants are torn from their mothers at an unnaturally young age and subjected to harsh treatment," says PAWS' Director Pat Derby. "Both mothers and babies suffer greatly from the unnatural and unethical treatment imposed on them at these training facilities."

Feld Entertainment, the owners of Ringling Brothers, argues that there is no basis for the allegations made by PAWS. Their staff "consistently provides the highest standards in the hands-on care of all (their) animals," they said in a statement issued Thursday.

We are "outraged by the allegations contained in two lawsuits brought against the company," the Feld statement said. "(We will) aggressively defend our good name and reputation."

Despite these claims by the circus, Derby hopes that the PAWS's lawsuit will serve as a model for others to follow.

"Our lawsuit is the first brought against a circus under the Endangered Species Act," she said. "We hope it will be a pioneer for performing animals rights."

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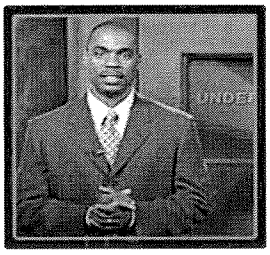
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Stories From the Inside

Statement of Tom Rider - Formerly of Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus

I am Tom Rider, a former circus employee. I worked with Clyde Beatty Cole Brothers Circus in 1997 as an elephant keeper and I loaded the children for the elephant ride. The elephant which we used, Pete or Petunia, was considered to be a dangerous animal and we were cautioned not to go near her. Despite this, she was used for rides before the show and during intermission carrying as many as ten children at a time on her back. She was surrounded by people waiting to ride. The only barrier between her and the public was a plastic net fence.

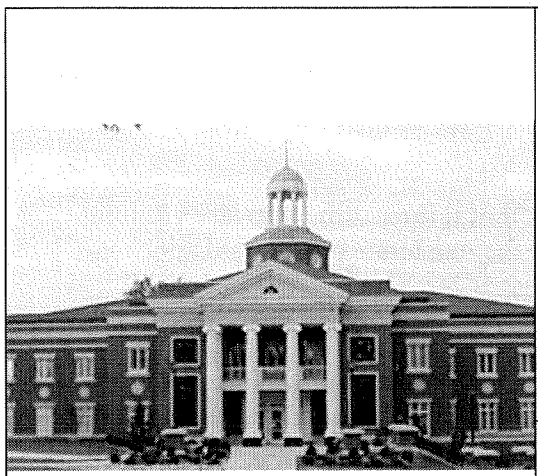
Typically during elephant rides, the handler walks in front of the elephant as she carries the riders on her back. If the elephant decides to wander off, it would take at least a few minutes for any handler to regain control. Since the elephant is surrounded by people, literally, there would be no way to prevent serious injuries if she decided to take off like the elephant in Florida. It never ceased to amaze me that the circus would tell people to put their children on an elephant's back when they knew how dangerous the elephant was.

I left Beatty Cole because in White Plains New York, when Pete did not perform her act properly, she was taken to the tent, laid down and five trainers beat her with bullhooks. Pete is now dead.

After I left Beatty Cole, I went to work for Ringling Brothers Circus in Austin, Texas. I was hired as a barn man's assistant and two months later, I became the afternoon barn man. In that capacity, I was present during the majority of the performances.

During my two and a half year's employment with the circus, I was slammed between two elephants while I was working in the stock cars. Even though the elephants were chained, they are capable of doing incredible damage and most of the staff had similar incidents. It was very common to be stepped on, hit by the tail or injured in other ways just because of the sheer size and power of the elephant. My experiences have left me with a considerable respect for the damage that elephants can do even unintentionally.

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The Georgetonian

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Ringling Bros. and animals: Make the Big Top a big flop

As earth's most complex and advanced being, man has a duty to care for his animal brethren

By KEN MAROTTE
Opinion Editor

Those of you who have deemed me merciless and hard-hearted may find solace in the following pronouncement: I am indeed a compassionate individual. Don't get too excited; this piece is not about gays or Arabs, or even gay Arabs. It's about our four-legged companions—those with whom we share our planet, those who live among us.

For clarity's sake, I am a proponent of animal welfare, not animal rights. The animal rights movement strives to establish rights for animals comparable to those enjoyed by humans. Since I cannot remember the last time my dog was incarcerated without due process for speaking seditiously against her government, I find the animal rights argument somewhat specious.

Advocates of animal welfare recognize that there is a distinct, special bond between man and animal. While nature maintains that animals exist for our benefit (i.e. meat), animal welfare folks believe that these animals should still be treated with the highest degree of dignity and lowest degree of cruelty possible.

It is out of this logical, empathetic concern for animals that I must speak out against a prominent realm of entertainment. Next week, the Ringling Bros. and Barnum and Bailey Circus will woo audiences in Cincinnati. Lord-willing, you too will reconsider seeing "The Greatest Show on Earth" after reading on.

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To read official circus statements, one might assume that its animals live more poshly than America's top one percent. A look at the record yields results to the contrary.

On their web page, Ringling Bros. brags that it must adhere to strict animal care standards as set forth by the USDA. But the existence of standards does not automatically ensure compliance.

Since 2000, Ringling Bros. has received numerous USDA citations for poorly-ventilated travel enclosures (from which numerous lions and tigers have died), inadequate veterinary care, improper food storage, improper feeding and poor sanitation. In addition to straight-forward violations like these, Ringling Bros. has been cited for denying USDA workers access to animals and records at one of its "conservation" centers.

Even states have started taking action; in 2001, California humane officers charged a Ringling Bros. elephant trainer with animal cruelty. Why? This "trainer" used a sharp, metal bullhook to wound an elephant that hesitated before entering the performance ring.

In Congressional testimony, former elephant handler Tom Rider commented: "[Elephants] live in confinement, and they are beaten all the time when they don't perform properly ...When I became disturbed about the treatment of the elephants, the continual beatings, including the baby Benjamin, I was told, 'That's discipline.'"

If you haven't heard these facts before, I'm not surprised. Because the Ringling Bros. circus is a legend, it is always a large attraction. Because it's a large attraction, it raises millions of dollars each year. And because of its large purse, Ringling Bros. has the capacity to quietly and easily pay its way through most any animal care violation.

You and I are the only ones who can end this travesty. By boycotting the circus and telling your friends and family the truth about its record, we can make a difference and demand change. But until then, the status quo of mistreatment and exploitation will remain the same.

I agree with conservative columnist Matthew Scully, who commented: "If reason and morality are what set human beings apart from animals, then reason and morality must always guide us in how we treat them, or else it's all just caprice, unbridled appetite with the pretense of piety."

Reread his quote, for it is true. We, as the most advanced organisms on earth, have the highest abilities for care, compassion and empathy. It is our solemn duty, therefore, to tend to those creatures that have been entrusted to our care.

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NEWSROOM for July 10, 2000

Aired July 10, 2000 - 4:30 a.m. ET

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ANNOUNCER: Seen in classrooms the world over, this is CNN NEWSROOM.

TOM HAYNES, CO-HOST: Kicking off a new week here on CNN NEWSROOM. Thank you for joining us. I'm Tom Haynes. We have a lot on the agenda today and we'll start in the Mideast.

In today's top story, Israel's coalition government collapses on the eve of a critical summit at Camp David.

In "Environment Desk," Capitol Hill talks elephant rights.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

BOB BARKER, ANIMAL RIGHTS ACTIVIST: They are beaten, they are starved, they're deprived of water and they're deprived of food, they're shocked -- all of these things.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

HAYNES: Then we head to Japan for some monkey business in "Worldview."

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

NAOKI SHIMABARA, TAMA ZOO (through translator): We want to show visitors how clever the chimpanzees are. The vending machine is more advanced than tools they have used before.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

HAYNES: They're the stuff of champions: Meet Wimbledon's winners in "Chronicle."

In today's news, this week's high-stakes Middle East summit at Camp David. U.S. President Clinton is urging Palestinian and Israeli leaders to "seize this moment." The two sides will come together to try to bridge differences in a number of key areas before a self- imposed deadline in September. Mr. Clinton has chosen Camp David as the venue because of its historic significance.

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Andrea Koppel explains why.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE) ANDREA KOPPEL, CNN STATE DEPARTMENT CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): Camp David -- the very name has become synonymous with the historic peace agreement Israel and Egypt negotiated in 1978. Over 13 long days, Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, Israeli Prime Minister Menahim Begin, and U.S. President Jimmy Carter and a small group of their advisers worked around the clock at Camp David, a rustic mountain retreat in Maryland.

SAM LEWIS, FORMER U.S. AMBASSADOR TO ISRAEL: It's a place where you can both have private talks with people away from the eyes of anybody else, where you can get away from arguments and think quietly.

KOPPEL: But as Sam Lewis remembers, these relationships were frequently put to the test. In one instance, President Sadat confided in President Carter what Sadat said was his real bottom line for a peace deal.

LEWIS: And then he very ingeniously said, in effect, Jimmy, I trust you; you are my friend; you will never betray me -- put himself in Carter's hands, if you will.

KOPPEL: President Carter was the chief U.S. negotiator, the one who shuttled between the separate Israeli and Egyptian cabins at Camp David. His aides say the president's role was indispensable.

JODY POWELL, FORMER CARTER ADMIN. PRESS SECRETARY: And helping the parties to understand what the possibilities were, and in making clear that if there was not an agreement, then he intended to make a public report of what had happened and give his own views on the reasons for failure.

KOPPEL: The summit did come close to failing on numerous occasions. In fact, no sooner had it begun than Mr. Carter instructed the U.S. team to begin drafting a presidential speech explaining why the summit failed. But at the last moment, there was a breakthrough.

ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI, FMR. CARTER ADMIN. NATL. SECURITY ADVISER: And I remember vividly the dark clouds that had gathered, and it started pouring and thundering. And there was a moment of awe that something historic had been achieved.

KOPPEL (on camera): Ultimately, President Carter's former advisers say, the decisive moment in these negotiations hinged on whether the leaders themselves really wanted an agreement, or if they were prepared to pay the price of walking away, questions Ehud Barak and Yasser Arafat will be forced to answer soon enough when they get their turn at Camp David.

Andrea Koppel, CNN, the State Department.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

HAYNES: Just a day before the Middle East summit is to begin, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak finds himself alienated by his own government over fears he'll concede too much to the Palestinians. On the table at Camp David: relocating or compensating more than 3 million Palestinian refugees; determining the borders of a Palestinian state; and settling the future of Jerusalem, with the Palestinians demanding as their capital East Jerusalem.

With more on the dissension within the Israeli ranks pre-summit, here's Jerrold Kessel.

Quake help not fast enough, says Indian PM

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(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

JERROLD KESSEL, CNN CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): Prime Minister Ehud Barak says he'll travel to Camp David to try to make peace no matter what. But the rabbis of the Shas ultra-religious party, whom the Israeli prime minister has courted assiduously for the past two weeks, have again put him in the hot seat. Shas decided to pull out of Mr. Barak's government on the eve of his departure for what's been billed "a make-or-break peace summit."

The Shas defection is only the latest link in a fast-evolving chain reaction that undercuts Mr. Barak's domestic political stability and leaves him with a minuscule coalition. The first step, a walk in to walk out, Natan Sharansky, head of the Russian Immigrants Party, shows his letter of resignation. He says Mr. Barak has already promised to give away too much land to the Palestinians.

NATAN SHARANSKY, RUSSIAN IMMIGRANTS PARTY: There was no attempt to bring together a broad consensus among the members of the coalition on the peace process. Unfortunately, they've already reached some understanding with the Palestinians in the secret negotiations which cannot be acceptable.

KESSEL: The right-wing National Religious Party is also out. And more seriously for Mr. Barak, his foreign minister, David Levy has decided not to travel to the peace talks.

In contrast, Palestinians seem to be closing ranks around their leader. Yasser Arafat is rallying support. His invitation to some small factions in the PLO to join him at Camp David has been accepted.

This Palestinian political cartoon suggests it won't be easy with each side seeking to pull President Clinton's peace drive its way. Both sides say they have their danger lines, seemingly parallel lines that can't cross. Another cartoon shows a worried Mr. Arafat watching Ehud Barak drawing his lines. The awareness must cut both ways, says Israel's chief negotiator.

SHLOMO BEN AMI, CHIEF ISRAELI NEGOTIATOR: They should draw a line between national myth and national interest. That is, you must adapt the mythology to the inevitability of compromise, and this is exactly what we should do. And when you face such a dilemma, there is a sense of rebellion.

KESSEL (on camera): As his rebellion built up, Mr. Barak with bravado said he'll still go to the summit if only half his cabinet and just a quarter of parliament was behind him. With that dire prediction now reality, Mr. Barak's immediate goal is to try to keep his promise just by getting through the next few hours so that he can board his plane for Camp David. Jerrold Kessel, CNN, Jerusalem.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

ANDY JORDAN, CO-HOST: "Headlines" heads to the British province of Northern Ireland. It has long been a flash point between Protestants who traditionally have wanted to stay loyal to the British crown, and Catholics, most of whom have in the past preferred separating from the United Kingdom. An annual Protestant parade through Drumcree came and went peacefully Sunday. British police prevented the Protestant Orange order supporters from marching through the contentious Catholic district in Portadown. The standoff at Portadown is an annual showdown, and often results in violence, but not this year.

HAYNES: All right, how many of you have been to the circus? Raise your hands. Then you've no doubt seen those trained elephants.

Well, the fate of those pachyderm performers is now before the U.S. Congress. Recently, an assortment of circus trainers, animal activists and celebrities gathered on Capitol Hill for a hearing on the Captive Elephant Accident Prevention Act. The proposed legislation would make illegal the use of elephants in traveling shows or circuses, and for the purpose of offering elephant rides.

Jeanne Meserve has more on the measure. And a warning: Some of the pictures are disturbing.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Ladies and gentlemen, children of all ages...

JEANNE MESERVE, CNN CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): They are the greatest draw to the greatest show on Earth, but a bill on Capitol Hill could effectively ban elephants from circuses and outlaw elephant rides.

BARKER: They are beaten, they are starved, they're deprived of water and they're deprived of food, they're shocked -- all of these things.

MESERVE: Animal rights activists allege mistreatment makes the animals a public safety risk. They point to the rampage of the Asian elephant "Tyke" in 1994. She killed her trainer and injured several spectators before being shot and killed. In another incident, an out- of-control elephant injured six in Florida. But the circus industry says the danger is exaggerated.

CATHERINE ORT-MABRY, RINGLING BROS./BARNUM & BAILEY SPOKESWOMAN: We have never had an incident that has put a member of the public at risk. The incidents that you may see on broadcasts or see repeated over and over and over are the same ones. They are isolated. They are very rare.

MESERVE: Circus treatment of elephants is policed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. But Tom Rider, who worked for two major circuses, says the animals are routinely abused with something called a bullhook.

TOM RIDER, FORMER ELEPHANT KEEPER: The only way that they think they can make the elephant do something, they'll take the hook and hook them behind the ear, yank their head down, and it's very painful to the elephant. I mean, they scream and try to get away.

MESERVE: But Heidi Herriott, a third-generation circus animal trainer, says she has never seen an elephant mistreated.

HEIDI HERRIOTT, OUTDOOR BUSINESS AMUSEMENT ASSN.: We were never more than just a sneeze away from the elephants. And I can attest to the fact that these animals are very happy, stimulated, well-cared for animals.

MESERVE (on camera): At a congressional hearing, there were dueling stories and statistics, and conflicting portrayals of circus elephants. Supporters of the legislation painted them as two-ton potential killers, while opponents said they were good will ambassadors for an endangered species.

Jeanne Meserve, CNN, Capitol Hill.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

HAYNES: All right, so you heard about elephants in the "Daily Desk" today. Well, we're packing more pachyderms into "Worldview." We're all about the

environment and nature. Our stories take us to Asia and North America. Hear about how cities and neighborhoods are growing in the U.S., and get the scoop on something we call "sprawl." You'll also learn about the growing Hispanic population. Go ape over animals as we take you to Japan. And don't forget those animals who never forget -- the elephants -- in India.

JORDAN: India is a populous Asian nation. Much of it forms a peninsula that extends into the Indian Ocean. Its capital is New Delhi, and it is the country that gave its name to the Indian elephant, although you can find these beasts in the forests and jungles of other southern and southeastern Asian countries as well.

Indian elephants are smaller than African elephants. But you can also tell them apart because their ears are only about half the size of their African counterparts, and they have arched backs with two humps on their foreheads. They have five toes on their front feet and four on the back. Since they can carry heavy loads, the huge beasts have been an important part of the logging industry in Asia.

But Indian elephants are becoming scarce in their native country, as Chris Riker explains.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

CHRIS RIKER, CNN CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): India's wild elephants are a national symbol of sorts, and a big draw for tourists wanting to see them in their natural habitat. But logging and urbanization are forcing many elephants into urban areas in search of food and water. In recent years, attacks by wild elephants have increased, resulting in destruction of homes and crops, and sometimes even resulting in death.

DHARANI DHAR BHUYAN, SCHOOL TEACHER (through translator): An elephant entered my house at night. It broke the place of worship, destroyed the grain pantry and then broke another room in the backyard. Fortunately, it left our main rooms unbroken. If it had tried to break into our living rooms, all of us would probably have died. I estimate the total loss at 40,000 to 50,000 rupees.

RIKER: Because of these attacks, elephant trainers in the area are taking steps to tame the wild elephants. But animal rights activists say the training methods are causing the deaths of many of the giant creatures. The animals are frequently tied up for long periods, beaten and starved and frightened with fire. Trainers say that's what it takes to tame the biggest land mammal.

DUNBESWAR MECH, ELEPHANT TRAINER (through translator): These newly captured wild animals consider everyone, from man to dog, their enemies. They can turn violent at any time. That's why we keep them roped.

RIKER: The head of India's Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals calls the training methods "brutal" and says poaching for ivory is also decimating the population.

MANEKA GANDHI, ANIMAL RIGHTS ACTIVIST: Elephants are almost extinct in India. I say this with great responsibility because we have less than 20,000 elephants. And remember, the Asian elephant is not like the African elephant. Only the males have tusks. There are less than 800 tuskers left in India, which means now your semen distribution is really low because there are only 800 inseminators and they are being killed all the time.

RIKER: India banned the capture and training of elephants in 1987. But the government lifted the ban 10 years later after a sharp increase in the number of elephants entering villages and destroying crops. It remains to be seen

whether India's elephants and humans will manage to live side by side in peace.

Chris Riker, CNN.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

RUDI BAKHTIAR, CO-HOST: We turn from India to Japan for a little monkey business. Monkeys are some of the world's most intelligent animals. They belong to the order of primates, the highest order of mammals, which also includes human beings, apes and lemurs.

There are about 200 species of monkeys, but they're classified into two major groups: Old World monkeys and New World monkeys. New World monkeys live in Central and South America and have nostrils spaced widely apart. Old World monkeys have nostrils which are closer together and live in Africa and Asia. Just like people, Old World monkeys have 32 teeth. New World monkeys have more -- 36 -- and some of them can pick up things with their tails, a skill which eludes Old World monkeys.

We head to Japan to check out other monkey skills. Zoo keepers there have added something extra to their chimpanzee exhibit.

And as Marina Kamimura tells us, it's a test of that old adage "monkey see, monkey do."

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

MARINA KAMIMURA, CNN TOKYO BUREAU CHIEF (voice-over): Chimpanzees have been wowing crowds for decades with their antics at this Tokyo zoo. Some of their habits are unbelievably human-like; others, we certainly hope not.

Now, zookeepers are giving their monkeys another taste of modern human culture by installing a vending machine in their compound. It wouldn't be the first time that chimpanzees tried to use one. On top of her amazing grasp of the three Rs, Ai-Chan (ph), Japan's most famous primate, knows how to use money to buy grapes and bananas from a vending machine. But Ai-Chan was taught how to do things like that.

(on camera): Zookeepers here are hoping that their chimpanzees will get the hang of using a vending machine naturally, by watching humans do the same thing nearby.

(voice-over): It's not as far-fetched an idea as you might think. These chimpanzees have displayed a passion for other human experiences, making the zoo extremely optimistic about the success of their experiment.

Take the UFO Catcher. That's the Japanese name for an arcade game, featuring a mechanical arm players use to try to fish out a prize. Here, the monkeys have their own version of the same game, even though the main challenge for them appears to be just making sure no one steals the prize.

SHIMABARA (through translator): We want to show visitors how clever the chimpanzees are. The vending machine is more advanced than tools they have used before. It would be perfect if they could figure it out and throw the can away in the end.

KAMIMURA: It'd be great if humans could do the same thing, too. But given their notoriously short attention spans, zookeepers won't even hazard a guess as to how long it will take their chimps to conquer the vending machine. For now, it's just another novelty item for them to peer at, or simply ignore.

Marina Kamimura, CNN, Tokyo.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

HAYNES: Environmentalists are concerned about a new menace sweeping the United States. It's called suburban sprawl, and it's striking open areas surrounding many of the nation's big cities. Last year alone, more than 1.5 million new homes were built across the U.S., many on what was once countryside. As Deborah Feyerick reports, New Jersey is among a handful of states trying to stem the tide.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

DEBORAH FEYERICK, CNN CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): Farmland has defined East Amwell, New Jersey's cultural fabric for generations -- cows and corn and the rambling fields that Theodore Rabachefski has cultivated for decades.

THEODORE RABACHEFSKI, RETIREE: Well, I'm an outdoorsman, so maybe that has a lot to do with it, you know? And I like the open spaces.

FEYERICK: At a time when suburban homes and strip malls are seeping into the countryside in places like California, Florida and Arizona, East Amwell's spaces have remained open, mainly because of local New Jersey officials like Barbara Wolfe.

BARBARA WOLFE, PLANNING BOARD DIR.: And if this had been sold for housing, as was being considered 15 years ago, we wouldn't have these farms here today.

FEYERICK (on camera): Fearing uncontrolled growth and traffic, sprawl and crawl, town leaders embraced a three-part, state-inspired plan: pay farmers to sell their land-development rights to the state, give tax breaks to those who donate their land to the community, and change zoning laws.

MAYOR LEE HAMILTON, EAST AMWELL, NEW JERSEY: It's controversial because it's regulation. And the people who have large pieces of land think that it reduces the value of their land.

FEYERICK (voice-over): More than 30,000 new homes and apartments were built in New Jersey last year. Developers say with demands so high, zoning unfairly restricts business.

HOWARD WOLFE, COMMUNITY BUILDERS ASSOCIATION OF N.J.: There are some other undertones which I don't know are true or not, but it seems that the people who live in, quote, "exclusive areas" don't want to invite new people in.

FEYERICK: New Jersey's governor has made the environment a top priority during her second term, slating one million open acres for preservation.

GOV. CHRISTINE TODD WHITMAN (R), NEW JERSEY: It's not a question of environmental protection or growth. It's not one or the other. It has to be both things together. Businesses are going to stop coming if the quality of life for their workers isn't good.

FEYERICK: Twelve states, New Jersey included, have comprehensive plans to combat sprawl. Experts say the goal of smart growth is finding a balance.

ROBERT BURCHELL, RUTGERS UNIVERSITY: Everybody wants a better environment, wants a better-looking environment, wants economic

development. As long as someone is not denied in that process, everybody benefits.

FEYERICK: Reversing sprawl before it gets out of control.

Deborah Feyerick, CNN.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

HAYNES: Along with the housing boom, the U.S. is experiencing a population boom, driven in large part by the Hispanic community. Sometime within this decade, they will surpass African-Americans to become the nation's largest minority. That growth is most noticeable in the southern third of the nation, closest to Mexico and the Latin countries of the Caribbean.

As Aram Roston reports, it's a diverse population.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

ARAM ROSTON, CNN CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): A Census Bureau report says 44 percent of Hispanics in the U.S. don't have a high school diploma. Take Lucio Martinez. He has two children who both attend school in Athens, Georgia. That's a chance he never had growing up in Mexico.

(on camera): And you never went to school a day in your life?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Anytime. Only worked.

ROSTON: Because his English is so poor, his children have to translate for him.

The federal government says there are about 32 million Hispanics in the United States, and projects that, in five years, there will be 38 million, surpassing the number of African-Americans. The Census Bureau emphasizes there are wide differences in education, income and poverty levels.

In the South, the Hispanic population has increased more than 20 percent since 1994. That's the fastest growth in the country. Many still work as migrant laborers, as field hands, and in construction, but the community is becoming increasingly stable.

SAM ZAMARRIPA, LATIN AMERICAN ASSOCIATION: We're talking about the large families that are here for the long term.

ROSTON: Rosa Casas (ph) is part of a growing business infrastructure that meets the needs of Mexicans who are here without language skills, and even helps them before they arrive in the U.S.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: After they send this application to the National Visa Center, they get the appointment for the interview into that squad.

ROSTON: Cuban-born Luis Cassaras (ph) sells spices and Mexican food items in Atlanta.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Everybody wants to get to Atlanta because it's growing.

PROF. GARY BACHTEL, UNIV. OF GEORGIA: Basically, the Hispanic population really fits well into the South because of a couple of things. One is they're family-oriented. Second, they're really religious. And third, they're

hardworking. And so those are a very Southern tradition.

ROSTON: The statistics indicate U.S. hospitality has its limits. A quarter of Hispanics in the U.S. live in poverty.

Aram Roston, CNN, Atlanta.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

ANNOUNCER: You're watching CNN NEWSROOM, seen in schools around the world, because learning never stops, and neither does the news.

HAYNES: When you get hungry, you probably run to the fridge to see what your parents picked up at the grocery store. But have you ever thought about what it takes to get all that food to the supermarket? Well, some seventh graders don't have to think about the process at all. They're actually doing it.

Bill Delaney has the story.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

BILL DELANEY, CNN CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): What shouldn't be any self-respecting seventh-graders idea of a good time: work, hard work, starting at 6:15 in the morning. At The Farm School in Athol, Massachusetts, though, somehow, digging....

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: You could even go deeper than that...

DELANEY: ... planting, grooming...

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Get both hands behind it, get your body behind it.

DELANEY: And often enough on what's a full 12-hour day, a fair amount of groaning...

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Up, up, up, up. OK, that's good.

DELANEY: ... all seem to add up to -- amazingly enough -- fun.

(on camera): Did you think you were going enjoy this?

CLINT HAYMON, SEVENTH-GRADER: No, not that much. But it was -- I was surprised. It was a lot funner than I suspected.

VAPOR BROWN, SEVENTH-GRADER: It's teaching me the responsibility of how to handle things and how the attitude you should have every day when you wake up in the morning.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: This is our planting line.

DELANEY (voice-over): A positive attitude toward good, old- fashioned work that Farm School founder, Ben Holmes, first learned about as a boy from San Francisco summering on his uncle's Ohio farm.

BEN HOLMES, FOUNDER, THE FARM SCHOOL: There's something about just having your hands in the soil. There's something in us, I think, that naturally needs this kind of work. Farming is something that's a part of us. It's been part of our culture for millennia.

DELANEY: Now, the school's trying to raise money to buy the 130- acre

property it's leased for 10 years, where every year at least 1,200 children for three-day stints learn about honest-to-God work.

(on camera): The essence of the philosophy of The Farm School is illustrated by what's going on behind me here: real work, in this case building a stone wall, not as a kind of exercise, but because this real farm needs a stone wall.

(voice-over): The farm sells to a small local dairy cooperative and sells its produce, and simply wouldn't make it without the children's labor.

HOLMES: There's been a real disconnect between adults and kids. This is a real reconnect. They're entering a world of adults, a culture of adults here, who values them as partners in a real project.

DELANEY: In a classroom without four walls, where the lessons are often down and dirty, and deep.

Bill Delaney, CNN, Athol, Massachusetts.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

HAYNES: On to the grass courts of Wimbledon now where Pete Sampras served himself a piece of history on Sunday. The defending champ picked up his 13th Grand Slam title, breaking the world record held by Australia's Roy Emerson. The king of slams beat Australian Patrick Rafter in four sets, tying a 111-year-old record for Wimbledon wins.

Fifth-seeded Venus Williams picked up the woman's title, beating number two seed and defending champion Lindsay Davenport in straight sets. To get to the finals, Williams had to play and win a very emotionally charged game against her own sister in the semifinals.

And we're going to play our way on out of here. Thanks for joining us today. We'll see you back here tomorrow. Take care.

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03/07/2005

Lawmakers hope to ban circus elephants

By SUSAN HAIGH
Associated Press Writer

HARTFORD -- They may appear to be passive pachyderms, but performing elephants can be deadly, say some lawmakers who want to ban them from traveling shows and circuses in Connecticut.

Advertisement


Bob Commerford, owner of R.W. Commerford and Sons of Goshen, said such a law would put him out of business. He owns three elephants. Since 1964, Commerford and his family have traveled to fairs and festivals with elephants and other exotic animals, setting up an exotic zoo and offering elephant, camel and pony rides.

Commerford said he hasn't had any problems with his elephants, two Asians and an African.

"I just use common sense with it," Commerford said. "I never beat them or do other things that people say we do."

But some state legislators say elephants are trained through pain, force and fear. Such experiences, combined with the effects of captivity, drive some to go on rampages and trample human beings, sometimes to death, activists say.

"When they're not in their little pens, they're chained up," said Tom Rider, a former circus worker who testified Friday before the legislature's Environment Committee. "Th-ese elephants are chained and beaten every day."

Circus operators discounted the claims, arguing that they provide healthy environments and meet or exceed federal animal welfare standards.

"Our elephants live longer and healthier lives because of the care they receive," said Tom Albert, vice president of governmental relations for Feld Entertainment, which produces Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus.

The legislation before lawmakers, proposed by state Reps. Steven Fontana, D-North Haven, and Diana Urban, R-North Stonington, would prohibit the use of elephants in traveling shows, theatrical exhibitions and circuses that come to the state.

A similar bill has been proposed in Massachusetts.

Fontana said he is offering the legislation as protection for the animals and also for those who train or watch the animals perform. Between 1990 and 2003, according to the animal rights group People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, captive elephants have killed 65 people and injured 130 others.

Last month, in Fort Wayne, Ind., a circus animal trainer loading elephants into a trailer was trampled to death after he fell. At least two of the three Asian elephants -- each weighing more than 7,000 pounds -- stomped on him, the coroner said.

In 1985, a New London woman was killed after a circus elephant grabbed her with its trunk and threw her to the ground in the parking lot of the New London Mall.

Ringling Bros. says there is no evidence that captive elephants are more prone to aggressive or erratic behavior than those in the wild. The circus company says trained elephants behave more predictably.

Albert said no patrons have been harmed by elephants at any of the 700 shows the three traveling Ringling Bros. circuses put on each year. A handler at Ringling Bros.' animal retirement facility in Florida was killed about 10 years ago.

"That's an awful lot of shows without having any kind of problem," Albert said.

But several animal rights activists in Connecticut told lawmakers they don't trust Ringling Bros. Some brought copies of videotapes they claim show evidence of elephant abuse.

Nancy Mathews of Fairfield said she protests the circus every time it comes to the Arena at Harbor Yard in Bridgeport. Mathews shows patrons a sharp-ended bullhook that she and other advocates accuse circus officials of using on the massive animals.

"I would like to go home today and tell my son...that finally someone who has the power to make a difference in the lives of these animals is going to do so," she told lawmakers.

If the bill becomes law and performing elephants aren't allowed in Connecticut, the Ringling Bros. circus won't be coming. Albert said the 24 elephants that regularly perform in the traveling shows are the biggest stars.

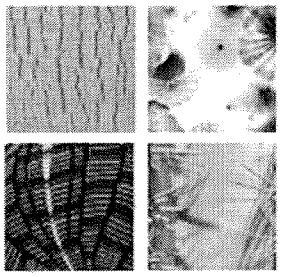
"Not bringing the elephants is not an option," he said. "We're not going to leave them at the state line or at the train yard."

The bill awaits action by the Environment Commit-tee.

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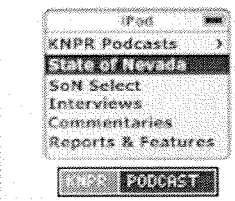


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Muth and the Gleaner

followed by

Gubernatorial Candidate: Jim Gibson [D]

No. 692 of 06/21/06: Our favorite bloggers, **Chuck Muth and Hugh Jackson**, join us to will be in studio to riff, reflect, needle and take your comments & questions. And the **Ringling Circus** is coming to town: but are the animals being treated humanely?

Then: A series of discussions with leading candidates in Nevada's gubernatorial race takes place this month. Today: **Jim Gibson** [D]. Note that all except Rep. Jim Gibbons [R] will be interviewed live and take listeners' questions to (702) 258-3552 or via son@knpr.org.

Muth and the Gleaner

» **Hugh Jackson** of LasVegasGleaner.com
» **Chuck Muth** , of ChuckMuth.com
...respond to your thoughts on Americanness in light of the Iraq War, the fight against terrorists, immigration--and more

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Circus

» **Linda Fasco**, Animal Rights Activist
» **Tom Rider**, Former Employee, Ringling Brothers *...on the welfare of animals in circus life*

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Election '06

» **Jim Gibson** [D]
...responds to listener questions on his gubernatorial candidacy

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- Animal Protection Institute
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- NV: Candidates Filed For Office
- Ringling Bros.

Links from Recent Programs

Comments

Steve in Las Vegas: I remember someone on your program mentioning that Truman would have never doubted the loyalty of the opposite party,

that is not the same now. What ever happened to the 'Loyal opposition'?

Brian in Las Vegas: Politics is not linear with one right side and one left side. It is multi-dimensional. There is no middle. To polarize political opinion leaves most of the people marginalized.

Mike in Las Vegas writes: Chuck and Hugh are great, but I wish you had chosen guests that were less emblematic of the "two-party" system. I am one of the few people I know that are aware of this fact: Americans are not as divided as they seem, it is Our Choices in politics that are increasingly limited.

Macauley in Las Vegas left a message: Le's not forget that Saddam was paying suicide bombers to attack Israel and also, after the invasion, that our forces found thousands of suidide vests primed with explosives.

Steven in Las Vegas: School Yard bully, is that really the America we want to be?

Dan writes: Chuck pointed out that Saddam being on trial is the main accomplishment of the Iraq War. But the crimes for which he's being tried were all committed in the 1980's. Saddam was no more than annoyance in 2003.

Nicholas writes: Your guests want to know where to start cutting the budget. That's easy. We can start by eliminating the IRS and adopting a national sales tax. Then we can chop the entire department of HEW, which has not met its objectives in either health, education, or welfare. Linda writes: Iraq is becoming increasingly important as people become more aware that as the government spends more and more on the war (one multi-billion dollar "emergency" grant after another) it's spending less and less on social services and infrastructure, as our national debt skyrockets. People used to think that the "government" is the expert on national defense, and who are we to criticize when we aren't privy to all the facts? But this administration's mistakes are so blatant that they become harder to defend, and everyday folks are forced to take a stand.

Linda adds: I couldn'tbelieve Chuck Muth's assertion that the US would prevail in a war against North Korea or Iran. We can't beat a few thousand suicide bombers, but we're going to beat North Korea? Get real.

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Elephant Cruelty

By jodi41086
Created Feb 22 2007 - 21:21

Elephants and Circus Cruelty

In childhood memories, many times going to the circus and seeing all the tricks the animals could do was something that was looked forward to all year, but behind the scene's the animals treatment does not show the same kind of fun and joy. Elephants, being another species that is disappearing quickly, are a big attraction for crowds of people in the United States. The treatment of these animals is the only way to maximize their life expectancy. Putting them in unnatural climates and habitats like at the circus, or the animals that are kept at different locations for movies, does will not provide an adequate lifestyle for these majestic creatures. Along with trying to educate our public of the animals we are shortening their lives in the process. We need to open more sanctuaries for these large creatures and give them room to roam. Instead of having our animals do tricks in the circus they should be getting the most natural atmosphere which sanctuaries could provide.

Ever been to the circus to see the elephants do trick, perhaps you saw one stand on their heads? This trick is famous because the mammal is so large, not often seen in nature where we live. Elephants can weigh up to eight thousand pounds and should not be standing on their heads. They do not know or perform most of their tricks in the wild it must be taught, and the methods of teaching are not always following animal rights laws

of that state, town, or city. Just to completely avoid this on growing debate of right or wrong certain largely populated area have completely banned circus's, rodeo's, and other animals acts. Those place include Stamford, Connecticut; Hollywood; Florida; Boulder, Colorado; Pasadena, California; and soon to be Denver Colorado. (Donna Vickroy, P2)

The circus coming to a city near you may not be as innocent and cheerful as is led to believe. The APHIS or Animal and Plant Health Inspections Service is apart of the United States Department of Agriculture that provides current health and care for all animals and plants. There are many recent findings of circus's not following the proper health requirements for elephants. "On March 17th, 2004 APHIS inspectors, for the first time in history of the agency, ordered removal of an entire heard of circus elephants from an Illinois company, Hawthorn Corporation owner. The John F. Cuneo openly admitted to nineteen charges against the Animal Welfare Act(law effective 1966 to

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ensure animals have the right to good living). One of the nineteen charges includes "failing to handle elephants in a manner that did not cause physical harm, behavioral stress, and trauma." The company than was charged with a fine of $200,000.(National Geographic News, P2)

Ever heard of the "Ringling Brothers" who were in trouble in the year 2000 for mistreatment of their Asian elephants. The Ringling Brothers being a very known circus in the United States helped bring this problem be recognized by the public. The handlers inflicted horrifying methods of training including beatings with bull hooks, constant chaining, and forcibly taking baby elephants away from their mothers. Dumbo is a child's Disney movie and it focuses on dumbo being separated from his mother and the heartbreak. (I'll admit I cried many times as a child while watching this movie, that

passion for animals has always been in my heart.) Also on the Discovery channel they show camera crews get targeted and almost stampeded due to the fact they were a little too close to the baby. Most animals need mother child bonds and will fight back and that's where the animal is also more likely to get beaten and left with open wounds. It's a

never ending cycle unless we completely rid the U.S. of animals doing tricks for entertainment. (National Geographic)

An ex-employee, Tom Rider, turned in video's showing the abuse the Ringling Brothers Asian Elephants were going through. "Most of the time the hitting was done because they wouldn't do the command fast enough. One time, my boss was mad at his wife and came in and beat the elephants."(Tom Rider) He also claimed to have witnessed handlers harming the elephants so badly with bull hook that they would leave open bleeding wounds. The evidence was gathered between 1992 thru 2003, helping to correctly charge the Ringling Brothers with a lawsuit and fine. Tom Rider stating "I've devoted my life to these elephants, and until these elephants are out of the Ringling Brothers circus, this is what I'm going to do". A true activist and animal lover dedicating free time to the welfare of these elephants. (National Geographic)

Pat Derby, founder of the "Performing Animal Welfare Society (Paws), operates three large sanctuaries for abused animal actors. This seems to be a growing problem in the United States due to the growing demand for kids and family movies. Animal actors are very cute, and make great profit. The rigorous training however, these animals get put through is horrible. There are reports of animals especially elephants, with lacerations, and open wounds due to beating for not being quick enough. Larger animals move more

slowly than smaller therefore rushing these animals should not be taking into physical

abuse, just more patience. Derby's facility was "the first to use non dominance technique successfully". She created a meter long pole that is used to lead the animal not to beat it, and works in most cases except circus animals. The tricks that are taught to these animals are not natural and can cause great health damage, even death. These animals feel that its not right and struggle and are beaten until they complete their task, then they are given a treat or food as a reward. It seems like

giving an unbelievably difficult task to someone under qualified to complete it and abusing them physically until the task is done. I would not want to be beaten to get my work done and then be given treats, since when has that worked on anything and worked in the long run.(Donna Vickroy, page 3)

Since elephant habitat continues to get smaller we are running out of places to hold this beautiful creatures and help fight their extinction. African countries are still dealing with lack of precipitation, causing the land to dry up. Without the adequate amount of rainfall the vegetation runs scarce and animals become extinct. Activist, Butler states that "It could be true that some elephants travel thirty miles a day in some

circumstances. In other circumstances, though, elephant populations don't move at all and decimate that region." (Donna Vickroy page 3) This shows that these animals do not only need space but atmosphere or nature habitat and the closer to their natural habitat the better.

Sanctuaries and zoo's may be our only hope for these animals. The fact that there is estimated only three hundred captive in North America owned by circuses and zoo's. Elephants could be extinct before the next one hundred years. "One study predicts that in

fifty years only seventeen elephants will be left and those will be too old to breed."(Maryann Mott, P. 3) Sanctuaries generally have more available space for the animal to roam as opposed to a zoo which is limited and has other animals to cater to as well. Today's zoo's are trying to create identical habitats for these animals to help increase their chance of survival. Our technology is not progressing fast enough for these animals, sanctuaries could work if they receive more government funding and donations made by the general public. Education at zoo's does not seem to have as quick as an effect as looking into our circus's and rodeo's and seeing the pain, and struggle these animals are going through.

Circus's provide food and water for their animal actors but what about surroundings? Are the elephants provided water holes to bath or time to relax from traveling and working? Many questions for elephant safety has made this topic so debatable. An elephant should have plenty of places to room to roam and concrete floors are not anything like real ground. "Imagine 10,000 pounds of pressure on their feet and joints on hard concrete. "It's a recipe for Disaster".(Smith, Maryann Mott, P2) Sanctuaries are our only hope to save these animals. Increase awareness and proper funding for the sanctuaries would increase the chances of these animals from being wiped off the face of the earth. With the natural habitats for these animals depleted by drought or man we need to provide more sanctuaries now to ensure our children can see the world as we do today.

Works Cited:

1.) Donna Vickroy, "Time to Pack Up the Trunks?" Daily Southern, February 2005, www.animalsvoice.com [1]

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2.) Maryann Mott, "Elephant Abuse Charges Add Fuel to Circus Debate" National Geographic News, April 2004 www.animalsvoice.com [2]

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Elephant trainer going on trial for animal abuse

SAN JOSE, Calif. (AP) -- This is the moment animal activists have all been waiting for: One of the biggest stars of the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus is going on trial for allegedly abusing an elephant with a metal hook just before a show.

Protesters have complained for years that circus animals are trained with painful methods and inhumanely chained, caged and handled. But few circus workers have ever faced criminal charges.

Activists hope Monday's trial of animal trainer Mark Oliver Gebel, son of the legendary circus showman Gunther Gebel-Williams, will lend more credibility to their allegations against "The Greatest Show on Earth."

"This is going to be a very interesting trial, mainly because it is Ringling, which bills itself as the top-of-the-line circus, with the best record, best resources, best treatment of animals," said Richard Farinato of the Humane Society of the United States.

Gebel, 31, is charged with animal abuse for allegedly puncturing an elephant's hide. The offense carries up to six months in jail and a $1,000 fine.

His attorney, James McManis, calls the case preposterous. He said Gebel would never be anything but kind to animals, having grown up around them during the 21-year Ringling Bros. career of his animal-trainer father, who died in July at age 66.

In the circus program, Gebel says his bond with the elephants "is as powerful as between any friends."

"I think these animal rights people are making a big mistake if this is where they're going to make their stand on animals in the circus, because nothing happened here," McManis said. "This is going to be a big embarrassment"

Humane Society officers and a San Jose police officer were monitoring the animals outside an arena here on Aug. 25 when they allegedly saw Gebel, wearing a flamboyant coat with a high collar and tails, lunge at two elephants and yell at them to move faster. They say an elephant named Asia quickly jolted forward.

The elephants went into the arena and performed, but after the show, the witnesses noticed "a nickel-sized red bloody spot" on Asia's left front leg.

The witnesses believe Gebel punctured Asia's hide with an ankus, a hooked metal stick that resembles a fireplace poker. Ringling Bros. says the ankus, or bull hook, is used to guide elephants like a leash, not to cause pain.

McManis contends that Asia's red mark disappeared when she was washed later that day, and that a veterinarian found no sign she had been injured. He said the witnesses were too far away to clearly see what Gebel was doing and had an anti-circus agenda.

Last year, the same witnesses said they found cuts and puncture wounds on seven Ringling elephants

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performing in San Jose. Prosecutors said then that there was not enough evidence to bring charges.

This time, the witnesses' reports were enough to persuade prosecutors to take the case. Prosecutor Carolyn Powell said she has gotten hundreds of supportive letters and e-mails from animal lovers around the world.

Among the supporters is Tom Rider, a former Ringling barn worker who now travels the country protesting with animal rights activists at Ringling performances.

"They use the bull hook in an aggressive manner every day at Ringling," Rider said. "They hit them on the head, trunk, legs, shoulders -- it's systematic, daily abuse."

In 1998, Ringling's parent company, Feld Entertainment, settled a complaint from the U.S. Department of Agriculture by agreeing to pay $20,000 to elephant-related causes after an ill elephant was forced to perform before it could be examined by a veterinarian. The animal died.

Since then, Agriculture Department investigators have looked into at least two complaints from the public about puncture wounds or lesions.

on Ringling elephants.

In both cases, the agency found no evidence of any wounds or abuse, though the inspections occurred 21 days after one complaint and four months after the other.

Pat Cuviello, 41, who has covertly videotaped workers at circuses in the San Francisco Bay Area for 14 years, showed The Associated Press footage of several Ringling Bros. workers -- though not Gebel -- poking or hitting elephants, in a few cases after looking around, apparently to see if anyone was watching.

Ringling spokeswoman Catherine Ort-Mabry said those workers were reprimanded for "unprofessional behavior" but did not harm the elephants.

"If there is trauma to an animal, it shows up in the animal's behavior," she said. "You can see the obvious affection between the animals and the handlers. The animals are healthy, in good shape and they live great lives."

On the Net:

Ringling Bros.: http://www.ringling.com/AmazingAnimals/home.html

Humane Society: http://www.hsus.org/current/biglie--bigtop.html

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Earth Matters

Ski Industry Tries to Improve Environmental Image; Canadian Couple Aims to Preserve Great Bear Rainforest; Japan's Chimps Get Special Gift

Aired June 18, 2000 - 4:30 p.m. ET

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

NATALIE PAWELSKI, HOST: This week, on EARTH MATTERS, a cool break from the summer heat, as ski resorts promise to go greener. But some don't believe they'll deliver.

The sea, the sky, the land -- visit a stunning and natural place, and find out what's threatening to change it forever.

And, monkey see, monkey do. Consumer culture makes inroads in a Japanese zoo.

Those stories, and more, on this edition of EARTH MATTERS.

Global warming hits home.

Welcome to EARTH MATTERS at our new time. I'm Natalie Pawelski.

It's one of those complicated, big-brain issues that can seem too remote to worry about. But for Americans, a new report has some ideas about what climate change could mean in your own backyard.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

PAWELSKI (voice-over): East Coast islands sinking under rising oceans. Rocky Mountain meadows disappearing. Pacific Northwest forests thriving. That could be the future of America, according to the first "National Assessment of Climate Change Impacts on the United States."

TOM KARL, U.S. GLOBAL CHANGE RESEARCH PROGRAM: There are a number of issues where we still remain uncertain, but we want to alert the possibility of changes, so that the society can take advantage of those changes that would be beneficial, or adapt to those changes that could potentially be negative.

PAWELSKI: The draft report, put together by a government advisory panel, predicts average U.S. temperatures will rise between five and 10 degrees Fahrenheit over the next century, as greenhouse gasses, notably carbon dioxide from burning fossil fuels, form an atmospheric blanket that traps the sun's energy and heats the Earth.

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Farmers could benefit. It's expected crop yields will rise. And some forests would enjoy a few good decades because of warmer temperatures and higher levels of carbon dioxide. But other trees, like the sugar maples of New England, are not expected to survive the heat, and the big forests of the Southeast may be broken up into a tapestry of grasslands and woods.

President Clinton used the report's release to rap congressional skepticism about global warming.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: We need a climate change on Capitol Hill on this issue, and it should not be a partisan issue. This is about science. This is about evidence. This is about things that are bigger than all of us.

PAWELSKI: But some skeptics say this report is about politics, an election-year assist for Al Gore.

CHRIS HORNER, COMPETITIVE ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE: The political impact is: it provides him cover, it provides him the opportunity to go on the offensive.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

PAWELSKI: The report says whatever changes global warming might bring to the United States probably won't do much damage to the economy, as a whole. But some businesses could suffer, including ski resorts. That may be one reason 160 ski areas are signing on to an environmental charter, they're pledging to cut down on the kind of pollution blamed for global warming and, otherwise, try to be a bit more gentle on the Earth.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

PAWELSKI (voice-over): Ski areas boast some spectacular terrain and market themselves as a way to enjoy the great outdoors. But by their very nature, they put pressure on the mountains.

LISA GRAUMLICH, MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY: It's not the ski runs, per se; it's the fact that you're really talking about an urban environment in the middle of nowhere.

PAWELSKI: The National Ski Areas Association has announced a new environmental charter called "Sustainable Slopes."

MICHAEL BERRY, NATIONAL SKI AREAS ASSOCIATION: Ski areas, as you know, are located in truly beautiful places. We have a special duty to ensure that they remain beautiful places.

PAWELSKI: The charter's provisions, all voluntary, are aimed at controlling sprawl and cutting down on traffic and air pollution, saving energy, encouraging recycling, and conserving water, even while making snow. But some who've long battled the ski industry are not impressed.

JEFF BERMAN, COLORADO WILD: These principles appear to have been written so that all ski areas already comply. It is not a challenge in any way, and it won't do anything to dissuade ski areas from expanding into sensitive areas like category three at Vail. PAWELSKI: Vail's expansion plans have attracted the wrath of environmentalists, and a radical group claimed responsibility for setting a fire there in 1998 that caused more than $12 million in damage to buildings and lifts. And that is exactly the kind of controversy the environmental charter's signatories are hoping to avoid.

BERRY: This is our effort to make a commitment in the future so that in fact

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we don't have to deal with some of the problems that we've dealt with in the recent past.

PAWELSKI: Across the country, ski-area use was down for the second season in a row. The industry hopes marketing the experience as environmentally friendly will help attract people to the slopes.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

PAWELSKI: Coming up, a record death rate for Florida's manatees.

But, first, find out why some people are pushing for elephant- free circuses.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

PAWELSKI: Welcome back.

Elephants are a big part of circus tradition, but some want that to change and they've taken their case to Congress.

Jeanne Meserve reports.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Ladies and gentlemen, children of all ages...

JEANNE MESERVE, CNN CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): They are the greatest draw to the greatest show on Earth, but a bill on Capitol Hill could effectively ban elephants from circuses and outlaw elephant rides.

BOB BARKER, ANIMAL RIGHTS ACTIVIST: They are beaten, they are starved, they're deprived of water and they're deprived of food, they're shocked -- all of these things.

MESERVE: Animal rights activists allege mistreatment makes the animals a public safety risk. They point to the rampage of the Asian elephant "Tyke" in 1994. She killed her trainer and injured several spectators before being shot and killed. In another incident, an out- of-control elephant injured six in Florida. But the circus industry says the danger is exaggerated.

CATHERINE ORT-MABRY, RINGLING BROS./BARNUM & BAILEY SPOKESWOMAN: We have never had an incident that has put a member of the public at risk. The incidents that you may see on broadcasts or see repeated over and over and over are the same ones. They are isolated. They are very rare. MESERVE: Circus treatment of elephants is policed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. But Tom Rider, who worked for two major circuses, says the animals are routinely abused with something called a bullhook.

TOM RIDER, FORMER ELEPHANT KEEPER: The only way that they think they can make the elephant do something, they'll take the hook and hook them behind the ear, yank their head down, and it's very painful to the elephant. I mean, they scream and try to get away.

MESERVE: But Heidi Herriott, a third-generation circus animal trainer, says she has never seen an elephant mistreated.

HEIDI HERRIOTT, OUTDOOR BUSINESS AMUSEMENT ASSN.: We were never more than just a sneeze away from the elephants, and I can attest to the fact that these animals are very happy, stimulated, well-cared for animals.

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MESERVE (on camera): At a congressional hearing Tuesday, there were dueling stories and statistics, and conflicting portrayals of circus elephants. Supporters of the legislation painted them was two- ton potential killers, while opponents said they were goodwill ambassadors for an endangered species.

Jeanne Meserve, CNN, Capitol Hill.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

PAWELSKI: From giants of the land to giants of the sea, Florida's manatees are having an awful year. The endangered animals are dying at a faster rate than ever before.

John Zarrella reports.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

JOHN ZARRELLA, CNN CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): For 24 years, officer Dennis Harrah has witnessed the slow march toward extinction.

DENNIS HARRAH, FLORIDA MARINE PATROL: I've probably picked up hundreds of dead ones since I've been here.

ZARRELLA: On the Banana River on Florida's east coast, Harrah does what he can to slow what may now be inevitable.

HARRAH: Afternoon.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Afternoon, sir.

HARRAH: I'm Officer Harrah with the Marine Patrol. The reason I'm stopping you is you were speeding in a manatee zone coming under the bridge.

ZARRELLA: In Florida, the manatee's natural habitat, there are just an estimated 2,200 left alive. New state figures show one manatee every day is dying, the highest death rate ever. In the first four months of the year, one-third of the 124 manatees found dead were killed by boat collisions. Yet some boat owners believe the manatee speed zones are a concocted nuisance.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: All the liberal bleeding hearts made it one. There are more manatees now then there have been in 50 years.

ZARRELLA: That's far from the truth, say veterinarians at the Miami Seaquarium's critical care facility, where there are more injured manatees than ever before. Gulliver is one of them.

GREG BOSSART, VETERINARIAN: In Gulliver's case, there were three rib fractures. And as a result of that, he developed a fairly large abscess in here that we've been treating.

ZARRELLA: A year of treatments and antibiotics has reduced the size of the abscess. Gulliver's medical bills are nearly $100,000. Gulliver is lucky. He has a chance to fully recover and return to his natural habitat.

BOSSART: This kind of human-related mortality would not be publicly nor politically tolerated if it was a more charismatic species, like a dolphin or a killer whale.

ZARRELLA: As Gulliver rehabilitates, there are two new arrivals: Boca, hit

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by a boat, has a collapsed lung. Bonnie has fishing line tangled around her flipper. As with the entire species, their condition is guarded.

For CNN EARTH MATTERS, I'm John Zarrella.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

PAWELSKI: Later on EARTH MATTERS, monkeying around with technology at a Japanese zoo.

But, next, we take you on a journey into the forest to introduce you to a modern couple who are fighting to preserve an ancient forest for future generations of people and wildlife.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

PAWELSKI: Welcome back.

The word "rainforest" conjures images of steamy jungles packed with monkeys, parrots, and other tropical animals. This week's "Solution Seeker" centers on a different kind of rainforest, and the couple committed to saving it.

David George has the story.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

IAN MCALLISTER, CO-FOUNDER, RAINCOAST CONSERVATION SOCIETY: Few people even realize that Canada has a rainforest.

DAVID GEORGE, CNN CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): The Great Bear Rainforest, it's one of the healthiest, most intact ecosystems on Earth. But a Canadian couple living in the heart of the forest wonders how long that will be the case.

MCALLISTER: You think that these forests have been standing for thousands of years, and a couple of weeks from now, all these trees will be gone.

The single largest threat to this ecosystem is industrial clear- cut logging.

GEORGE: Ian McAllister and his wife Karen have spent the last 10 years fighting to save this forest. In 1990, they formed the Raincoast Conservation Society, a watchdog group that collects photographic and scientific evidence of what's happening in the Great Bear. They're trying to change logging laws, and protect the wildlife in the rainforest.

MCALLISTER: These ancient temperate rainforests are more endangered than the Amazon currently, because they covered historically such a small part of the globe. We've already lost half of that, and most of what remains is found on the coast of British Columbia in the Great Bear Rainforest.

GEORGE: This landscape is home to hundreds of species, on the land and in the water. Grizzlies, deer, dolphins, and whales. It is also the only place you will see the rare spirit bear. But the McAllisters say they're watching this forest float down the river by the boatload.

KAREN MCALLISTER, CO-FOUNDER, RAINCOAST CONSERVATION SOCIETY: I can't imagine having to look out my window and not see this view. It would be terrible. But when you watch a barge full of logs go down everyday, in front of your place, you know that it's happening.

I. MCALLISTER: Over 50 percent of these trees that are cut down go to the United States, and 40 percent of that goes just to building houses in the United States. So they are destroying homes for spirit bears and grizzly bears to build homes for Americans.

GEORGE: The McAllisters say logging is affecting habitat for salmon, and the animals that feed on the fish.

I. MCALLISTER: All the forests are being clear-cut, the rivers silted. We've watched the grizzly bears and the salmon disappear in those valleys.

GEORGE: From these remote headquarters, the McAllisters' work has not gone unnoticed. They've written a book, been featured in numerous news articles, and they've caught the attention of some powerful supporters, like U.S. environmental attorney Robert Kennedy Jr.

ROBERT KENNEDY JR., ENVIRONMENTAL ATTORNEY: There's a way to log many of these rainforests without destroying them, and to do it sustainably, and we've seen the beginnings of that. The work of Ian and Karen McAllister has been invaluable. GEORGE: The McAllisters' new project: assessing the status of wolves in the Great Bear Rainforest. They hope their work will help the creatures of the forest and the forest itself to survive for centuries to come.

For CNN EARTH MATTERS, I'm David George.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

PAWELSKI: Next week on EARTH MATTERS: every year, these sunken treasures draw thousands of people from around the world. But while divers look for an underwater adventure, many coral reefs are breaking under the strain. We'll show you what one group of divers is doing to change that. Reef relief, next week.

From the jungles, to big cities, Gary Strieker has covered the world showing EARTH MATTERS' viewers the environment's best and worst- kept secrets. This week, he won the prestigious Kozik Award, the National Press Club's honor for excellence in environmental journalism. He won for his chronicles of the African bush meat trade, the killing of monkeys and gorillas for meat.

Here's a sample of Gary's award-winning work.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

GARY STRIEKER, CNN CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): Many researchers now believe HIV infection in humans can be traced back to chimpanzees or other African primates, probably transmitted by blood contact to people who hunted and butchered the animals for human consumption.

This hunter says he's shot many chimpanzees and gorillas and was nearly killed by a wounded gorilla last year. He's now infected with several viruses similar to those found in apes. There's no way to know how he was infected, but because apes and humans are so closely related, viruses are easily transmitted between them. And some scientists believe a survey of bushmeat hunters would show a high rate of infection by viruses linked to those carried by apes.

Researchers are also planning studies of wild chimpanzees to measure the prevalence of SIV infection and to learn how they carry the virus without developing disease.

DR. ERIC NERRIENET, PASTEUR INSTITUTE OF CAMEROON: The

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most important thing is to understand why African monkeys naturally infected with SIV don't develop AIDS disease in contrast to humans.

STRIEKER: If chimpanzees have developed a biological defense to cope with their virus, understanding it could possibly lead to a cure for AIDS in humans. But the increasing commercial trade in bushmeat is threatening the very survival of chimpanzees in the wild.

For CNN EARTH MATTERS, I'm Gary Strieker.

(END VIDEOTAPE) PAWELSKI: You may not be able to teach an old dog new tricks. But in this week's "Parting Shot," a Japanese zoo is proving the sentiment does not necessarily apply to apes.

Marina Kamimura explains.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

MARINA KAMIMURA, CNN CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): Chimpanzees have been wowing crowds for decades with their antics at this Tokyo zoo. Some of their habits are unbelievably human-like; others, we certainly hope not. Now, zookeepers are giving their monkeys another taste of modern human culture, by installing a vending machine in their compound. It wouldn't be the first time that chimpanzees tried to use one.

On top of her amazing grasp of the three R's, Ai-Chan (ph), Japan's most famous primate, knows how to use money to buy grapes and bananas from a vending machine. But Ai-Chan was taught how to do things like that.

(on camera): Zookeepers here are hoping that their chimpanzees will get the hang of using a vending machine naturally, by watching humans do the same thing nearby.

(voice-over): It's not as far-fetched an idea as you might think. These chimpanzees have displayed a passion for other human experiences, making the zoo extremely optimistic about the success of their experiment.

Take the UFO Catcher. That's the Japanese name for an arcade game, featuring a mechanical arm players use to try to fish out a prize. Here, the monkeys have their own version of the same game -- even though the main challenge for them appears to be just making sure no one steals the prize.

But given their notoriously short-attention spans, zookeepers won't even hazard a guess as to how long it will take their chimps to conquer the vending machine. For now, it's just another novelty item for them to peer at -- or simply ignore.

Marina Kamimura, CNN, Tokyo.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

PAWELSKI: And that's all the time we have for this week. Thank you for watching. Tune in again next week at our new time for another edition of EARTH MATTERS.

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COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

MINUTES: MARCH 7, 2005, 4:00 PM

IN ATTENDANCE:

COMMUNITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEMBERS: José Alvarado, Chair, Robert Astorino and Lois Bronz.

OTHERS: BOL: Barbara Dodds, Kiley Blackman, Animal Defenders of Westchester, Tom Rider, former trainer, Richard Presser, Greenburgh Parks & Recreation Commission and Louise Simons.

ITEM DISCUSSED: Proposal to ban exotic animal acts in Westchester.

With a quorum present, Chair Alvarado called the meeting to order at 4:25 pm.

Minutes of the meetings of June 1, 2004, June 21, 2004, Aug 21, 2004 2pm, Dec 6, 2004 3pm, Feb 14, 2005, Mar 1, 2005 were approved--moved by Leg. Bronz seconded by Leg. Astorino.

Committee items 17, 21, 30, 37, 41, 45, and 46 were received and filed--moved by Leg. Astorino and seconded by Leg. Bronz. The items remaining in committee: 3, 9, 47, 54 & 55. (Item 21, presently discussed, was removed in error—will be put back as a continuing item)

Proponents of the ban made a number of comments reiterating their position. Legislator Alvarado told them that this meeting was to hear another side of the question and that this time was allotted to the Hanneford Circus owners through a conference call.

Mrs. Stuffi Hanneford, the co-owner of the Hanneford Circus, was contacted by telephone by pre-arrangement. Mr. Alvarado told Mrs. Hanneford that the committee has been asked to consider banning wild animal acts.

Mr. Alvarado: Can you tell us your perspective on the treatment of these animals.

Hanneford: I do appreciate the call—may I ask you what is the problem? What seems to be the problem to taking away the animals from the education of kids who never would be able to see them? What animals are we talking about?

Alvarado: We're not talking about horses and dogs we are talking about wild animals like elephants, lions and tigers.

Hanneford: What do you know about the animals? Why are you trying to take them away from the circus—what seems to be the problem?

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Alvarado: The alleged maltreatment of them in training, health issues, etc.

Hanneford: We are governed by the PETA people which are against the animals, but we are very appreciative to the PETA people that they control the system from mistreating animals.

The USDA controls us. Our animals are registered in Washington DC. All these problems have absolutely been taken care of and Hanneford Circus has never had any problems or any complaints that the animals have been mistreated or not taken care of. I have been a successful trapeze artist in circuses for many years and my love of the animals has been overpowered by what you can do for these beautiful creatures. You people have no idea—because you are in business, you are behind computers, behind desks, your'e doing your paper work. But we are the people now well educated by {PETA, by USDA, and the County Health Department. There have never been any problems in our 30 years at Westchester County Center. We have a beautiful relationship with Mayor Delfino he has only missed our performance one year.

And why are we discussing something that takes away from the children, which is an education. Some of them don't know what an elephant is until they come to see the show, they see an elephant, they see a tiger. The parents are absolutely enthused and even the parents want to ride an elephant, a life achievement which they never could do in a zoo or anyplace else. In Thailand, where the elephants are used for helping as working animals, they are not mistreated. The same here.

We control. The worse thing is that we cannot control the human being lying in the streets in New York City and other places. Our animals are taken care of 24 hours a day. They get watered in the morning they get fed in the afternoon they get watered three or four times a day and the cages are cleaned. You've never had the experience where the animals are happy to see you. Hanneford has been in this business for many years for generations and we have been the most successful and proud people in this business. Why are you trying to take the enjoyment away. Why change it? Animals have been in the circus for hundreds of years. Now all the sudden things are stirred up by the computers, the CDs, and kids sitting home watching this on. The circus is the greatest family entertainment in existence. It is clean, it is wonderful and it is happy entertainment. The people leave Westchester County telling us how much they enjoyed the show and how great it is. I cannot fight you because you are sitting too much behind the computer from nine to five but we are working 24 hours a day to take care of our animals not because of the money because of our love of the business.

Leg. Bronz: Can you give us some specific comments on the veterinary care of the animals . . .

Hanneford: Anything that goes wrong we have animal care, a plan provided by USDA that is well organized and well commanded by our people.

Bronz: Who in Westchester is responsible for the inspections and reports?

Hanneford: We are registered by USDA. I don't understand why you people want to take the animals. In the wilderness they would be dying twenty years younger. We have been well educated by USDA and PETA people.

Alvarado: We listen to propositions from people against wild animal acts.

This is your opportunity to tell us how the animals are treated and why we should continue to have these acts in Westchester.

Hanneford: The animals are treated to the best--the horses, the elephants were not tied down they have the fencing and the tigers have bigger clean cages. Ladies 40-50 years of age rode the elephants and they were as happy as kids.

Alvarado: You mentioned that you have thirty years experience with Westchester County. Do you consider this last season as successful as in the past?

Hanneford: It was. Elephants used to do work like pulling up the tents. If you ever could see them in an electric fenced in area and give them a tire or a ball how they play and what fun they have and how beautiful it is. Elephants are treated correctly today.

Alvarado: I apologize for not reaching out to you when you were in town.

Hanneford: Mayor DelFino was there and he is the kindest, greatest person and I'm sure he would be the first one to see anything wrong. He said it is the best family entertainment. We bring to you what we love most and know best. My husband is the eighth generation in this business.

Bronz: Do you rent animals or do you own them?

Hanneford: We own two animals and we rent animals

Bronz: Who do you rent animals from?

Hanneford: From Brian Franzen. He has been with us for four or five years and his animals are very clean and well kept.

Alvarado: Thank you Mrs. Hanneford for your participation and time. (hung up)

Tom Rider said that Brian Franzen was the Ringling name that Brian Cristiani uses and he has him on film hitting animals. He also said that the day after his testimony before Congress, he was told by Michael Dunn, the Under Secretary of Agriculture in the Clinton Administration, that it was true that Ringling Bros. trains the USDA inspectors. He then told about working at a benefit show in the county when an elephant was beaten into submission out of sight because she was not fast enough. In his opinion, the whole county needs to restrict circuses or take a big hit in liability. He also discussed the stressful birth delivery and removal of infant elephants. Hanneford gets their elephants from Cuneo Hawthorne Corp. who has had them all confiscated.

Mr. Alvarado asked Mr. Rider if he used to train animals. Rider said he was the afternoon barn man from 3:30 to 10:30 and was supposed to never take eyes off the elephants. Several people gave rebuttals to some of what Mrs. Hanneford had to say.

Mr. Alvarado reminded those in attendance that this meeting was not designed to be a forum but to gain information on the Thank you so

designed to be a forum but to gain information on the Thank you so much for your time and please let us know what is next and this committee will continue to look at it. When you want to take it beyond this committee. With a quorum this committee can sign out a resolution against wild animal acts in the future if the members feel that is something they want to do. He asked Barbara to look into the County's liability issue. He thanked everyone for attending and the meeting was adjourned.

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Circus In The Spotlight

SAN JOSE, Calif.. Dec. 17, 2001

(AP) This is the moment many animal rights activists have all been waiting for: One of the biggest stars of the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus is going on trial for allegedly abusing an elephant with a metal hook just before a show.

Protesters have complained for years that circus animals are trained with painful methods and inhumanely chained, caged and handled. But few circus workers have ever faced criminal charges.

Activists hope Monday's trial of animal trainer Mark Oliver Gebel, son of the legendary circus showman Gunther Gebel-Williams, will lend more credibility to their allegations against "The Greatest Show on Earth."

"This is going to be a very interesting trial, mainly because it is Ringling, which bills itself as the top-of-the-line circus, with the best record, best resources, best treatment of animals," said Richard Farinato of the Humane Society of the United States.

Gebel, 31, is charged with animal abuse for allegedly puncturing an elephant's hide. The offense carries up to six months in jail and a $1,000 fine.

His attorney, James McManis, calls the case preposterous. He said Gebel would never be anything but kind to animals, having grown up around them during the 21-year Ringling Bros. career of his animal-trainer father, who died in July at age 66.

In the circus program, Gebel says his bond with the elephants "is as powerful as between any friends."

"I think these animal rights people are making a big mistake if this is where they're going to make their stand on animals in the circus, because nothing happened here," McManis said. "This is going to be a big embarrassment."

Humane Society officers and a San Jose police officer were monitoring the animals outside an arena here on Aug. 25 when they allegedly saw Gebel, wearing a flamboyant coat with a high collar and tails, lunge at two elephants and yell at them to move faster. They say an elephant named Asia quickly jolted forward.

The elephants went into the arena and performed, but after the show, the witnesses noticed "a nickel-sized red bloody spot" on Asia's left front leg.

The witnesses believe Gebel punctured Asia's hide with an ankus, a hooked metal stick that resembles a fireplace poker. Ringling Bros. says the ankus, or bull hook, is used to guide elephants like a leash, not to cause pain.

McManis contends that Asia's red mark disappeared when she was washed later that day, and that a veterinarian found no sign she had been injured. He said the witnesses were too far away to clearly see what Gebel was doing and had an anti-circus agenda.

Last year, the same witnesses said they found cuts and puncture wounds on seven Ringling elephants performing in San Jose. Prosecutors said then that there was not enough evidence to bring charges.

This time, the witnesses' reports were enough to persuade prosecutors to take the case. Prosecutor Carolyn Powell said she has gotten hundreds of supportive letters and e-mails from animal loveraround the world.

Among the supporters is Tom Rider, a former Ringling barn worker who now travels the country protesting with animal rights activists at Ringling performances.

"They use the bull hook in an aggressive manner every day at Ringling," Rider said. "They hit them on the head, trunk, legs, shoulders - it's systematic, daily abuse."

In 1998, the U.S. Department of Agriculture accused Ringling of forcing a sick elephant to perform before it could be examined by a veterinarian. The animal died. Ringling's parent company, Feld Entertainment Inc., settled the complaint by agreeing to pay $20,000 to elephant-related causes.

Since then, Agriculture Department investigators have looked into at least two complaints from the public about puncture wounds or lesions on Ringling elephants.

In both cases, the agency found no evidence of any wounds or abuse, though the inspections occurred 21 days after one complaint and four months after the other.

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Pat Cuviello, 41, who has covertly videotaped workers at circuses in the San Francisco Bay Area for 14 years, showed The Associated Press footage of several Ringling Bros. workers - though not Gebel - poking or hitting elephants, in a few cases after looking around, apparently to see if anyone was watching.

Ringling spokeswoman Catherine Ort-Mabry said those workers were reprimanded for "unprofessional behavior" but did not harm the elephants.

"If there is trauma to an animal, it shows up in the animal's behavior," she said. "You can see the obvious affection between the animals and the handlers. The animals are healthy, in good shape and they live great lives."

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Circus Elephants Are Hooked on Performing

By Barbara Stagno

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It's intermission at the Clyde Beatty-Cole Brothers Circus during its July performance in Queens, NY. Time for the elephant rides. Backstage, the elephant trainer prepares Jewel, one of four elephants, to give rides. Jewel is outfitted with a gaily-colored banner atop which sits a saddle. It is really more of a platform for holding squirming children. The banner has bright, yellow stars splashed all over. It does not, however, hide the heavy chain harness that is winched tightly against Jewel's body to secure the platform; or the lackluster expression on her face.

Jewel is brought outside and the rides begin. She is led around and around in a small circle while her trainer shouts at her as they engage in what is clearly the interplay of slave and master. "C'mon Jewel! Over here Jewel. Now!"

The verbal barrage does little to motivate her. What really moves her is the metal hook he continually pokes her with. Known as a bullhook, or ankus, it is a tool designed specifically to dominate elephants. Not only is it deceptively sharp, it is nearly invisible to all but the most astute observer. It takes little force to deliver pricks that remind the elephant of the pain it can inflict when used more forcefully. It is also suitable for concealed dragging: just place it in the corner of the animal's lip or ear—and pull.

Currently, use of the bullhook is completely legal. Even so, the Clyde Beatty Circus has come under recent attack by government authorities for inflicting injuries with it. In April 1999, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) charged the circus with violations of the Animal Welfare Act, citing that four elephants had bullhook wounds. Nine months later, the circus was assessed a $10,000 civil penalty to settle the charges. The USDA agreed to suspend the fine, provided the money would be used to hire a consultant to instruct them on the proper handling of elephants. Since the Clyde Beatty Circus is hardly a fledgling operation, this arrangement is, at best, questionable. One month later, a follow-up USDA inspection found new wounds on two elephants that were caused by beatings with a bullhook.

Means for Motivation

While touring New York City in July, Jewel's handler is observed using the hook with discretion. When not poking her, he holds it handle-side down, so that the sharp end is concealed in his palm. Jewel's headdress has recently been outfitted with a little ring, so that he can hook the bullhook into that and drag her. But the USDA's ongoing reports of elephant wounds create the suspicion that the bullhook may be used more freely when not in public view. Jewel has two golf-ball sized holes in her ear. Another elephant, Helen, also has a visible hole in her ear.

The hole in Helen's ear is probably the least of her problems. For more than a year, she's walked with a visible limp in her right rear leg. Like many circus elephants, Helen has become increasingly lame due to lack of proper exercise and the strain of performing unnatural tricks day in and day out. Her disability is so pronounced that last year, a cruelty officer in New Jersey slapped the circus with charges for forcing Helen to work while injured.

These charges were recently dismissed, even though Helen was observed in March by three veterinarians who determined that she has a chronic, degenerative condition which is aggravated by grueling circus routines. At the time, Helen was being forced to give rides and perform circus tasks, including pulling a caravan of tiger cages. Though the circus claims to have released her from such duties, she is still performing tricks that put stress on her painful knee, like standing on her hind legs and kneeling.

The Reality of Retirement

In Defense of Animals (IDA) would like to see Helen relieved from the pain of constant performing. But we also shudder to think what may happen to Helen if she's truly "retired" from circus life. Her situation is a chilling reminder of the last two disabled elephants, Conti and Pete, whom the circus removed from service.

Conti and Pete (a nickname for Petunia) were also lame from circus abuse. Following an outpouring of

pressure from animal activists, the circus made a snap decision last July to "retire" them both. But there were no green pastures or days in the sun for these elephants. Within a month, both were dead. Pete collapsed in a field and lay on the ground for two and a half days before circus personnel lifted her with a crane. Upon rising, Pete drank some water, urinated several liters of blood, and dropped dead.

The necropsy report on Pete described hemorrhaging throughout her body. Her handlers say it resulted from her fall, but what would cause such a fall? The hemorrhaging may have resulted from her struggle to upright herself, a struggle which her caretakers allowed her to endure for nearly three days before intervening. It may also have occurred from beatings.

Although the cause of the elephants' deaths will never been proven, it is the opinion of IDA that they received some sort of harsh and ugly treatment which led to their sudden, unexplained deaths. Even if the elephants collapsed due to lameness, why did the circus wait to raise Pete back on her feet? Why did Conti die of similar causes less than two weeks later? The independent veterinarians who conducted the necropsy on Pete refused to do one on Conti, claiming that they were too disturbed by what they had found on Pete. The USDA has closed the inspection on this matter and seems content with the number of unanswered questions surrounding it.

The tragic deaths of Pete and Conti are not the whole story. Since 1991, the Clyde Beatty-Cole Circus has been cited six times by the USDA for a variety of infractions, including unsafe trailers and failure to provide adequate veterinary care for its elephants.

Veterinary care at Clyde Beatty is at best perfunctory. According to the USDA, Helen has a paralyzed tail, the result of a truck accident, and has not been adequately treated for this condition. Because her tail is immobile, it collects fecal material which stagnates. Bessie, another elephant, has been urinating blood for months. Untreated and undiagnosed, the circus dismisses her condition as insignificant. All four elephants are in need of basic foot care, a vital necessity for elephants forced to live and work on hard surfaces that are totally alien to what their feet would encounter in nature.

So goes the life of a circus elephant. On June 13, 2000, Congress held hearings to consider H.R. 2929, The Captive Elephant Accident Prevention Act. This bill would, if passed, ban the use of elephants in traveling shows. Tom Rider, a former elephant trainer, spoke at the hearings. In his testimony, Rider offered these sobering words:

"I worked with Clyde Beatty Cole Brothers Circus in 1997 as an elephant keeper and I loaded the children for the elephant ride. The elephant which we used, Pete or Petunia, was considered to be a dangerous animal and we were cautioned not to go near her. Despite this, she was used for rides...carrying as many as ten children at a time on her back.

"I left Beatty Cole because in White Plains, NY, when Pete did not perform her act properly, she was taken to the tent, laid down and five trainers beat her with bullhooks. Pete is now dead."

Barbara Stagno *is Northeast Regional Director for In Defense of Animals, a national organization dedicated to ending the abuse of animals by defending their rights, welfare and habitats. To learn more or to join their campaigns call (212) 462-3068 or visit www.idausa.org.*

How You Can Help Circus Elephants

* Contact: Commissioner Henry Stern, NYC Department of Parks and Recreation, 830 5 Ave., NY, NY 10021; phone (212) 360-1305; fax (212) 360-1345. Request that he stop granting permits to perform in the city's parks to any circus that uses animals.

* Contact: Dr. Ron DeHaven, Animal Care Deputy Administrator, USDA/APHIS/AC, 4700 River Rd., Riverdale, MD 20737. Ask that the USDA revoke Clyde Beatty's permit based on its ongoing, documented record of animal abuse.

* Contact your Congressional Representative and ask him/her to support H.R. 2929. Also contact your U.S. Senators and ask them to introduce a companion bill in the Senate.

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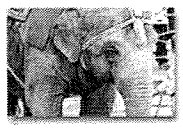
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LOCAL NEWS

Nebraska: Circus elephant treatment targeted under bill

1/11/2006



LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) -- Marian Price remembers taking her children and grandchildren to the circus and letting them ride the elephants.

She never thought twice about it.

But when the self-professed animal lover was shown videotapes that she said contained evidence of elephants being mistreated, she was horrified.

That's what motivated Price, a state senator from Lincoln, to introduce a bill Tuesday that would prohibit the use of bullhooks, electrical prods, ax handles and other devices on elephants in Nebraska. The proposed penalty under the bill (LB1000), which would not ban the use of elephants in circuses or zoos, would be up to one year in prison and a $1,000 fine.

No state has passed such a law, but a handful of cities have specifically banned the use of the bullhook, a canelike device with a sharp hook on one end, said Nicole Paquette, general counsel for the Animal Protection Institute.

The animal rights group, through a series of television ads, billboards and other means, has for years accused circuses of animal cruelty.

Use of the bullhook is not cruel, said Tom Albert, vice president of governmental relations for Feld Entertainment, which produces the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus.

The bullhook, which he called a guide, is a tool that is used by circus animal handlers to control and direct elephants' movements in compliance with Ringling Bros. policies, Albert said.

"It's the equivalent of a leash and collar on a dog," he said. "If you can't use a guide with an elephant, you're effectively preventing people from being able to work with elephants. ... Any tool can be misused. But that doesn't make the tool wrong."

Bills such as the one Price introduced have a hidden political and philosophical agenda pushed by animal rights groups, Albert said.

"They don't want elephants in circuses and zoos," Albert said.

The bill is not about stopping circuses, said Tom Rider, who worked as an elephant handler with Ringling Bros. from 1997 to 1999 and now travels the country speaking out against how circus animals are trained.

What the bill would do is stop circus handlers from hitting or hurting elephants, Rider said.

Rider, who met with Price and bill co-sponsor Ernie Chambers last fall, said the top priority for those who care about elephants is banning the use of the bullhook.

"I saw the use the bullhook. They beat, hit and poked these animals every day," Rider said from Orlando, Fla., where he was following the circus protesting the use of the device. "The bullhook is a weapon. It's not a guide or a tool like the circus likes to say.

"Elephants have to be beaten to do these stupid tricks in circuses. I've seen it every day."

Albert said Rider's accusations have been reviewed and dismissed.

Ringling Bros. work closely with the elephants and believes the animals are among the healthiest and most well-adjusted in terms of temperament that can be found, Albert said.

And, he said, proposals such as Price's are not necessary because existing animal cruelty laws already prevent elephants from being treated improperly.

For Price, the images she saw on the videos provided by Rider were enough for her to make up her mind that something more had to be done.

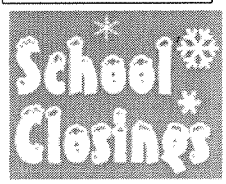
"I was horrified when I saw how they mistreated animals," she said. "This legislation would be a deterrent."

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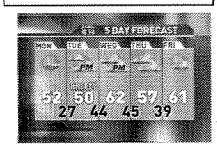
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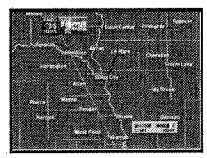
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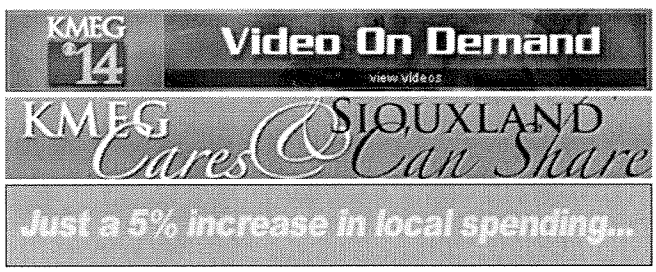
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SIOUX CITY Journal.com

Date posted online: Wednesday, January 11, 2006

Circus elephant treatment targeted under bill

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) -- Marian Price remembers taking her children and grandchildren to the circus and letting them ride the elephants.

She never thought twice about it.

But when the self-professed animal lover was shown videotapes that she said contained evidence of elephants being mistreated, she was horrified.

That's what motivated Price, a state senator from Lincoln, to introduce a bill Tuesday that would prohibit the use of bullhooks, electrical prods, ax handles and other devices on elephants in Nebraska. The proposed penalty under the bill (LB1000), which would not ban the useof elephants in circuses or zoos, would be up to one year in prison and a $1,000 fine.

No state has passed such a law, but a handful of cities have specifically banned the use of the bullhook, a canelike device with a sharp hook on oneend, said Nicole Paquette, general counsel for the Animal Protection Institute.

The animal rights group, through a series of television ads, billboards and other means, has for years accused circuses of animal cruelty.

Use of the bullhook is not cruel, said Tom Albert, vice president of governmental relations for Feld Entertainment, which produces the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus.

The bullhook, which he called a guide, is a tool that is used by circus animal handlers to control and direct elephants' movements in compliance with Ringling Bros. policies, Albert said.

"It's the equivalent of a leash and collar on a dog," he said. "If you can't use a guide with an elephant, you're effectively preventing people from being able to work with elephants. ... Any tool can be misused. But that doesn't make the tool wrong."

Bills such as the one Price introduced have a hidden political and philosophical agenda pushed by animal rights groups, Albert said.

"They don't want elephants in circuses and zoos," Albert said.

The bill is not about stopping circuses, said Tom Rider, who worked as an elephant handler with Ringling Bros. from 1997 to 1999 and now travels the country speaking out against how circus animals are trained.

What the bill would do is stop circus handlers from hitting or hurting elephants, Rider said.

Rider, who met with Price and bill co-sponsor Ernie Chambers last fall, said the top priority for those who care about elephants is banning the use of the bullhook.

"I saw the use the bullhook. They beat, hit and poked these animals every day," Rider said from Orlando, Fla., where he was following the circus protesting the use of the device. "The bullhook is a weapon. It's not a guide or a tool like the circus likes to say.

"Elephants have to be beaten to do these stupid tricks in circuses. I've seen it every day."

Albert said Rider's accusations have been reviewed and dismissed.

Ringling Bros. work closely with the elephants and believes the animals are among the healthiest and most well-adjusted in terms of temperament that can be found, Albert said.

And, he said, proposals such as Price's are not necessary because existing animal cruelty laws already prevent elephants from being treated improperly.

For Price, the images she saw on the videos provided by Rider were enough for her to make up her mind that

something more had to be done.

"I was horrified when I saw how they mistreated animals," she said. "This legislation would be a deterrent."

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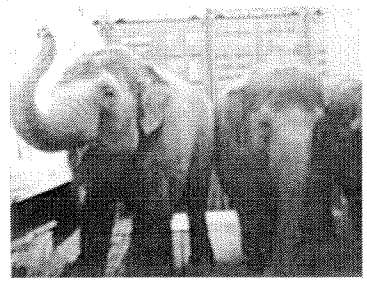
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PL 11330

Animal Defenders International

9,000 miles of misery

13 January 2006



In March 2000, a Chipperfield Enterprises Ltd. Employee, Tom Rider, decided enough was enough and blew the whistle on the abuse he had witnessed in the circus. He told of the deprivation and violence to three Chipperfield elephants as they travelled from the USA and across Europe.

Rider had worked in circuses for years in the USA, first with Clyde Beatty Cole Circus and then with Ringling Brothers Barnum & Bailey Circus, but did not become disillusioned until he encountered Chipperfield Enterprises.

Chipperfield Enterprises

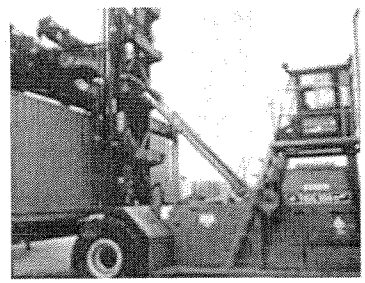
Chipperfield Enterprises Ltd operates from a 'farm' in Oxfordshire and is run by Dicky Chipperfield (Mary's cousin.) AD supporters are familiar with the farm, which has been infiltrated by our Special Investigations Department (SID) and the subject of several exposes. Here the lions and tigers spend most of their time in small metal containers or on beastwagons. When the Ads were working there, the site housed 18 lions and 5 tigers with at least, another 29 big cats out on tour with circuses. Conditions for the animals are miserable and there are grave safety concerns - a worker had his arm torn off by a tiger, and lions have escaped. Dicky also has a conviction for importing a lion in a cramped container.

Chipperfield has had a relationship with Ringling Brothers Circus in the USA for some time. His step son, Graham Thomas Chipperfield, has presented a group of ten Chipperfield lions and three Asian elephants, Letchmai, Mina and Camilla, over several years. In late 1997, Graham was joined by Dicky's son, Richard Chipperfield Jr, with twelve tigers. An AD field Officer had worked with these tigers at Chipperfield's Circus, and our SID team then trailed them to Monte Carlo, before they left for the USA.

Early in his stay with Ringling, Richard Jr. undertook a press call with his tigers. There appear to be no definitive report of events, but a tiger called Arnie, seriously mauled Richard's head. As Richard was dragged from the ring by circus workers, another tiger attacked his leg. Graham Chipperfield later shot Arnie several times, killing him. The animal was caged at the time. Tom Rider was at the circus that dav. and his understanding

was that Richard had posed for the cameras, then turned to Arnie and blown in his face; as he turned back to the cameras, Arnie had responded by biting the back of his head. Richard was hospitalised for some time, both he and Graham subsequently left Ringlings.

A Journey of Misery



So it was that in November last year the Chipperfield elephants came to leave Ringlings, for Europe. They were accompanied by Tom Rider whose shocking account of the journey appeared in the *Daily Mirror*. The Following are extracts from those articles which he verified in interviews with the Ads.

On 18th November 1999, the elephants began a 350 mile journey from Tampa, Florida to Charleston, Carolina crammed into a metal container on the back of a lorry. They were shut in the lorry for two days and watered just once.

Once loaded on the cargo vessel in Charleston dock, they were allowed out of their container into an exercise area between the other containers. This was barely large enough for one elephant, let alone all three with containers towering up on all sides. As the boat began to move they became restless and were returned to their container. Whether it was because of the noise, the motion, environment or all of these, the elephants refused to come out of their container again during the voyage.

Also on board were 16 big cats, including three cubs, in a 53ft long beastwagon. One cub died during the journey.



On November 28th, after ten days at sea, they arrived in Algeciras in Spain. Tom said, *"The elephants were in the worst state I had seen them, kicking and shoving the doors to get out. We set them loose in the container yard for 20 minutes, but put them back as they tried to break through the fence. The undersides of their bellies were shaking, twitching with stress."*
In four days in Algeciras, the elephants came out twice and with reduced supplies, were living off hay.
Between 2nd and 5th of December, the animals were transported by road to Amsterdam - the elephants were watered twice. They were in Amsterdam until the 12th, but because it was damp and raining the elephants stayed in their container except for one 25 minute break.

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On 12th December it was on the road again to France, arriving on the 14th. Tom records that this was *"The first time I saw Dicky use a bull hook and an electric goad to control the elephants in rehearsals. Dicky told Martin (Lacey junior) to give them a command. If they didn't respond, to give it to them a little heavier in a deeper voice. If they didn't respond, he would let them have it with the hook. "Get into 'em" he'd say."* (The Ads have video of Dicky giving similar instruction with regard to big cats).

In France it snowed, so the elephants remained in the truck. Leaving France, they drove through the night to arrive at Circus Barelli in Dresden the following night. The elephants came out of their transporter, to be chained by the legs in a tent, with no heating. Tom Raider says, *"In rehearsals, Dicky would use both hands, yanking at them with the elephant hook. Letchmai was used even though she was declared as having arthritis the previous year. Animals were chained up from 9am to 8.15pm with no movement. In the ring, Dicky was using a hand held stun gun on the elephants. Dicky used the hook behind the ear, legs, trunk and chin. They were left with blood dripping. They would use the 'zapper' electric shock as well, both Dicky and Martin, if the elephants were not moving. When Mina did not move fast, Martin would hit her with the hook around the head. After the show he started beating Camilla because the act had not gone right."*

From Dresden, the animals headed to Massey near Paris for the annual circus festival. Tom described it as, *"Very, very cold, wind blowing through the elephants' tents."* A heater was bought to keep them warm.

Then it was on to Gottingen in Germany - a two day journey with one water break. Even there, the elephants were kept chained in the dark before moving on to Frankfurt. Tom stayed with the circus in Frankfurt until March 12th, when he decided to leave and make his way to England. Before he left he says: *I counted the marks on the elephants' legs from the hook. There were 72 on Mina's front right leg, 36 on the back, 27 on Camilla's front leg, 9 on the back right leg and marks behind the ear."*

The Ads monitored the elephants for two days whilst they were with Circus Barelli. The elephants spent the night and most of the day on short chains attached to a front and a hind leg. Before performances they were allowed into a pitifully small electric fenced enclosure, quite clearly inadequate to exercise an elephant. They did not have free access to water and when chained in the tent, were reduced to drinking from puddles.

The *Mirror* reported that Dicky Chipperfield had claimed that the bull hook was blunt and *"widely used"* with the prod to train elephants, and that the animals could exercise in

Holland albeit on a 20ft chain. *"There are elephants treated far worse in India, you know."* He claimed to be concerned with the way the elephants were being kept at Barelli and that he would try to get released from his contract with the circus.

This whole tale shows the deplorable way that animals treated in the circus, but what is most shocking is, as our pictures show, the way these poor animals are treated is typical circus husbandry whether in the UK or not.

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Chicago Considers Banning Mistreated Elephants

by Kari Lydersen

After all three of the Lincoln Park Zoo's elephants met untimely deaths, wildlife experts urged the Chicago City Council to embargo captive elephants in the interest of sparing them physical and psychological misery.

Chicago; Mar. 6, 2006 – Winifred Kiiru cried the first time she saw an elephant in a zoo.

In her native Kenya, she says, children rarely saw elephants but grew up revering them. When Kiiru visited zoos in the United States as part of her work as a wildlife ecologist, she was shocked to see the huge animals confined to small areas and suffering physical and psychological problems.

"Visiting the Los Angeles Zoo was the most miserable experience of my life, seeing these majestic animals bobbing and swaying in [typical] expressions of stress," Kiiru recently told members of the Chicago City Council. The aldermen are considering an ordinance that would essentially ban elephants from Chicago zoos and circuses.

Referring to the reeling elephant on display in Los Angeles, Kiiru said, "Imagine my horror when the tour guide told a child who asked what the elephant was doing that it was 'jamming to the music in its head.'"

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As Kiiru and others who work closely with elephants testified at the February 23 Chicago City Council hearing, elephants in captivity suffer severe foot infections, arthritis, psychological problems and stress disorders at inordinately high rates because they are almost always denied the range of movement, mental stimulation and social interaction they enjoy in the wild.

A growing number of zoos around the country have closed their elephant exhibits and turned their elephants over to sanctuaries, where they can roam more freely in conditions similar to their native African or Asian habitats.

A growing number of zoos around the country have closed their elephant exhibits and turned their elephants over to sanctuaries.

These moves are a response to growing awareness of illnesses afflicting captive elephants as well as an alarming number of elephant deaths in US zoos over the past few years. At least 46 elephants have died at institutions accredited by the American Zoo and Aquarium Association (AZA) since 2000; more than half of them were younger than 40, while normal life expectancy is about 70 years. According to the AZA's website, about 300 elephants live in AZA-accredited zoos.

Within a six-month period in late 2004 and 2005, three elephants at Chicago's Lincoln Park Zoo died. On May 1, 2005 a 36-year-old African elephant named Wankie died after falling ill during transport from Chicago to Utah's Hogle Zoo. The position she had been transported in crushed her organs, leaving her to be euthanized upon arrival in Salt Lake City.

Les Schobert, a former general curator at the Los Angeles and North Carolina Zoos, told *The NewStandard* that Lincoln Park Zoo officials did not spend enough time training Wankie for the trip, in a rush to get her out of the city before a May 12 City Council hearing on elephant welfare.

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"Hustling Wankie out after only crate-training her for a few weeks was silly: it cost her her life."

This News Article originally appeared in the March 6, 2006 edition of *The NewStandard*.

Kari Lydersen is a contributing journalist.

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PL 11335

he said. "If I were going to ship an elephant in a crate across the country, I'd train her for two months, not two weeks."

The other two Chicago elephants died of a respiratory disease and an unknown cause, possibly related to a leg injury.

Lindsay called them a "shell" of the animals he studied in their native habitats.

Leg and foot problems are a leading cause of death for elephants that spend long hours standing on cold concrete, often in their own excrement. They often develop foot abscesses, which are difficult to treat. The infection could then migrate through the pad of the foot to the bone.

"Once it's in the bone, almost no one can cure it," said Carol Buckley, co-founder of the1,000-acre Elephant Sanctuary in Tennessee. "It's a very painful death."

Elephants in the wild typically walk 30 to 60 miles a day on a variety of terrains – a routine that is virtually impossible to replicate in a zoo.

The current AZA space requirements for elephants are a 400-square-foot outdoor space and an indoor area big enough for the elephant to comfortably lie down. The AZA did not return a call for this story.

Zoo administrators have argued that elephants walk out of necessity in the wild, but don't actually need to walk when food is brought right to them.

"The argument that elephants don't need to move because they have plenty of food is contradicted by the fact that elephants [in the wild] move even more when they have plenty of food because they have plenty of energy," said Dr. Keith Lindsay, a Canadian biologist, at the hearing. Drawing on his research in Kenya, Botswana, Mali and South Africa since 1977, he estimated that elephants spend about 18 hours a day on the move in their natural habitat.

The Chicago ordinance would mandate zoos provide each elephant with at least five outdoor acres and five indoor acres. Since it is doubtful any zoo within the city could meet those requirements, it would essentially ban elephants in Chicago's zoos.

At the City Council hearing, AZA President Beth Stevens defended the current health-and-safety protections for zoo elephants and characterized the proposed ordinance as a political maneuver by animal-rights groups.

"This ordinance is not about elephants in Chicago," she said. "It is an attempt to make Chicago a national example of getting ... elephants out of zoos, and tomorrow getting other species – giraffes, lions, gorillas – out of zoos.

The proposed ordinance would also mandate that traveling exhibitions like circuses provide 1,800 square feet of outdoor space for a single elephant, equal room indoors per animal, and 900 additional square feet in and out for each additional elephant.

The elephants' keepers would also be barred from using pain-inducing training instruments, including bull-hooks, electric prods and baseball bats. Since such implements are regularly used in most circuses, the ordinance would bar mainstream circuses, including those run by Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey, from entering the city.

Tom Rider, a former elephant-keeper for Ringling Brothers, testified at the hearing that elephants in circuses "live in extreme confinement and endure miserable, inhumane conditions."

"Ringling handlers beat elephants named Nicole and Sophie for not performing well, and the elephants' screams could be heard outside the tent," said Rider, who has filed a lawsuit against Ringling Brothers charging animal abuse.

Tom Albert, vice president of government relations and animal handling for Feld Entertainment, which manages Ringling Brothers, said there are a few "bad apples" among circus trainers, "but it's not fair to condemn everyone because of them."

He said the circus opposes the ordinance, especially its limit on the use of chains, bull-hooks and other training tools.

"It's like any other tool," he said. "If you use it properly, it's not a problem. When you tether an elephant you're talking about chains, because they need to be strong enough. The fact that someone, somewhere is misusing these tools doesn't make them wrong."

PL 11336

He said that while the proposed space requirements probably would not pose a problem for the circus, the limits on training methods would prevent the circus from coming to Chicago.

Elephant experts say that the mistreatment of elephants could have dangerous implications for humans as well. Elephants remember if a trainer or handler abuses them, sometimes waiting months for an opportunity to take revenge.

At the Chicago hearing, a former Florida police officer testified about a rampage by a circus elephant named Janet who he ultimately helped shoot to death.

"She decided she didn't want to be a circus elephant anymore," said the officer, Blayne Doyle, who was attacked by Janet as she ran wild in the circus tent with five children on her back. "We ended up shooting her 56 times [after removing the children], and she didn't die right away; she lay there crying for 10 or 15 minutes before we could put her out of her misery."

If the ordinance is passed, Chicago zoos would likely follow the example of the Detroit Zoo, which turned its elephants over to the Performing Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) sanctuary in California in 2004.

Conditions are especially bad for elephants in circuses or zoos in northern climates, where they must spend much of the winter cooped up indoors. "We would exhaust every option to keep them moving and stimulated," Patti Miles, a former zookeeper at the Detroit Zoo, told the Chicago Council. "But there was no way to compensate for the climate and the lack of space and social opportunities. I would feel so much guilt and shame seeing such a fantastic animal locked inside bobbing and swaying."

Other zoos that have ended their elephant exhibits since 1999 include the San Francisco Zoo, the Chehaw Wild Animal Park in Georgia, the Louisiana Purchase Gardens and Zoo in Louisiana, and the Mesker Park Zoo in Indiana. In the United Kingdom, the London Zoo, the Edinburgh Zoo and the Bristol Zoo have made the same decision.

Some argue that elephants should remain in zoos and circuses because they act as "ambassadors" for the animal kingdom, fostering the public's appreciation for wild animals and the environment.

On the AZA website, then-interim executive director Kristin Vehrs describes AZA member zoos as places for the public "to make a connection with wildlife."

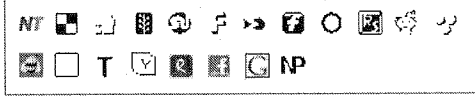
However, this argument rings hollow to many elephant and conservation experts, who argue that most captive elephants do not look or act like elephants in the wild. Lindsay called them a "shell" of the animals he studied in their native habitats.

Conservationists note that if US institutions want to support elephant conservation, the money spent to import and showcase elephants would be better spent on habitat preservation in the elephants' native countries.

"We continue to run our zoos like menageries in the early 1900s," said Schobert. "Every zoo doesn't need to exhibit every animal. If a child wants to see the Golden Gate Bridge, they can see it in films or pictures. If they want to see the real thing, they have to go to San Francisco. It's the same with elephants."

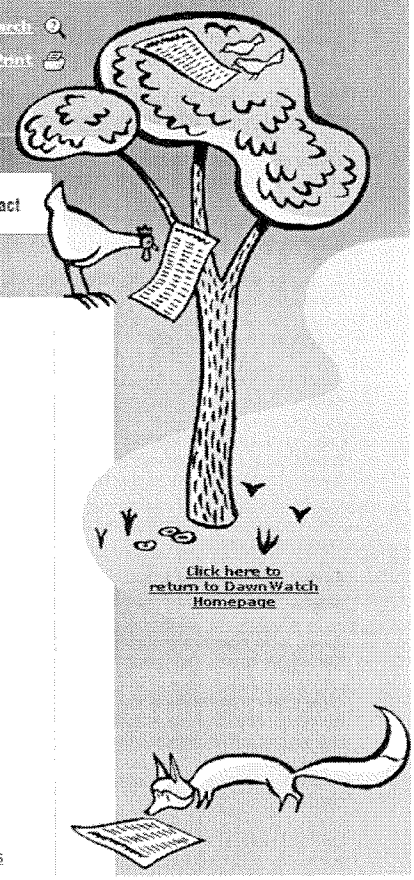
At the hearing, Kiiru testified: "Children across Africa have never seen elephants. Yet people in the Western world believe that it is their right to see elephants, no matter what the cost to the elephant."

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Chicago Tribune
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Pg. 4

Lawsuit claims big top is elephants' nightmare
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By Vincent J. Schodolski, Tribune national correspondent

LONG BEACH, Calif.

There was the big top, a giant blue tent. There were acrobats, a trapeze and even a couple of clowns. There were hot dogs and popcorn and lots of overpriced souvenirs.

But there were no animals, and that kind of spectacle may be coming to your neighborhood if animal-rights activists and the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals have their way.

Cirque du Soleil is world-famous for its innovative approach to circus performance, and many conventional circuses may start looking more like Canada-based Cirque as communities across the U.S. ban, or seek to ban, circuses with exotic animal acts--especially those involving elephants.

About 15 U.S. cities have ordinances banning circus acts that involve animals, and a measure is pending in the Chicago City Council to require that each elephant within city limits have at least 10 acres of personal space.

While activists express concern about all exotic animals in circuses, there is special worry about elephants. The animals often spend as many as 22 hours a day tethered, usually with chains on their ankles, said Colleen Kinzley, curator of the zoo in Oakland, who has worked extensively with elephants.

In the wild they roam and forage for as many as 18 hours a day, experts say.

The ASPCA is one of four plaintiffs in a lawsuit against the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey circus and Feld Entertainment, the company that owns the giant circus.

Using the federal Endangered Species Act, the plaintiffs argue that the way elephants are trained and housed by Ringling Bros. violates the law.

"We allege that the way they train their elephants wounds them," said Kimberly Ockene, one of the attorneys in the case, which is in the discovery phase in federal court in the District of Columbia.

She said the use of a metal bull hook to train the elephants and the practice of separating baby elephants from their mothers too quickly causes the animals physical, emotional and psychological suffering.

Ockene said the suit, begun in June 2004, likely will go to trial sometime next year.

Ringling Bros. said their elephants live a pampered existence.

"Our animals are amongst the best cared for anywhere," said Thomas Albert, vice president for government relations and animal policy with Ringling Bros. "Sadly, our elephants are better cared for than many children in this country."

Under the Animal Welfare Act, the U.S. Department of Agriculture is charged with guaranteeing the welfare of exotic animals in zoos and circuses.

Albert said the USDA regularly inspects Ringling Bros. facilities and that the things the ASPCA and the other plaintiffs allege would make it impossible for the circus to continue with elephant acts.

"They are alleging that anytime we do anything with an elephant we are violating the Endangered Species Act," he said.

At any given time, Ringling Bros. has about 54 elephants. Three of the traveling circuses have nine or 10 elephants on the road with each of them. A smaller one-ring circus travels with just two, he said.

`Leaders in animal care'

Ringling Bros. does a great deal to benefit elephants and other exotic animals in its possession, Albert said.

"We have been the leaders in animal care for 136 years," he said. The circus' breeding program, Albert said, was responsible for 19 elephant births in the last 14 years, accounting for 45 percent of Asian elephant births in the United States.

The elephants not on the road are kept at a Florida facility where they rest and are involved in breeding operations.

In the suit, a former Ringling Bros. employee, Tom Rider, said that during his years caring for elephants with the circus he witnessed many acts that he considered cruel.

Rider, who also is a plaintiff in the suit, said he saw routine beating of elephants among other acts during his nearly two years with the circus.

"While working for Ringling Bros., Mr. Rider saw several of the other elephant handlers and `trainers' routinely beat the elephants, including the baby elephants, and he saw them routinely hit and wound the elephants with sharp bull hooks," the lawsuit states.

The suit also says that such actions were carried out throughout the country as the circus moved around.

Dan Stockdale, a consultant and exotic animal trainer who also has worked with Ringling Bros., said he had a different experience.

"I have found almost all of the facilities I have visited to be extraordinarily professional and well-managed operations," Stockdale said. "I have had the privilege of being behind the scenes with several organizations and have seen surprisingly clean conditions, excellent medical care and very creative ideas for daily enrichment."

Oakland Zoo curator Kinzley said circus conditions can cause problems for the animals.

"The biggest issue facing elephants in circuses is that they spend a lot of time contained and with ankle chains," she said.

She said such confinement could cause the elephants to gain excessive weight and engage in "swaying" where they move their bodies from side to side. "When they are in chains, this is the only motion they can do," Kinzley said.

Natural behavior suppressed

She said confinement also prohibits natural elephant behavior such as bathing and mud wallowing.

Anyes Van Volkenburgh, a veterinarian in Malibu, Calif., said it is unnatural for exotic animals to live in a circus environment.

"Circus animals are deprived of living their lives according to their nature," she said. "Their instincts are not honored, their natural needs are ignored. As a result their mental and emotional health suffers as signified by stereotypical behaviors like pacing."

Van Volkenburgh said that such behaviors weaken and suppress the animals' immune systems and make them more susceptible to disease.

Cirque du Soleil is far from the only non-animal, themed circus performing in the United States. Circuses.com, a Web site maintained by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, lists 25 animal-free circuses.

Among them are: Bindlestiff Family Cirkus--vaudeville-style acts; Circus Luminous--elaborate costumes and a turn-of-the-century look; Cloud Seeding Circus--works with schools and museums; Flying Fruit Fly Circus--circus, dance, theater and live percussion; and New Pickle Circus--choreographed adventure of acrobatics, aerial work, dance and clowning.

vschodolski@tribune.com
(END OF TRIBUNE ARTICLE)

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PL 11340

Big top debate

BY EMMILY BRISTOL

As the circus rolls into town for shows June 22-26 at the Orleans Arena, no doubt the big top will be a big draw for lots of people -- especially animal rights activists campaigning against circuses that use animals in their act.

"The point of the protest is to inform the public," says Michelle Thew, CEO of the Animal Protection Institute. "Ringling Bros. puts out a lot of spin about what they do. We hope the information we give them [fans], even if they've already bought a ticket, that they think about it before they buy another ticket."

It's an old debate. In one corner, Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey circus claims audiences want the animals in the show -- specifically elephants. And circus reps say they treat the animals well and that the tricks performed each night mimic activities they would do in the wild.

"Most of the people who come to the circus is because of the animals," says Bruce Read, vice president of animal stewardship for Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey. (This circus is a division of Feld Entertainment, which also owned the Siegfried & Roy act that ended when Roy Horn was attacked by one of the tigers in the show and left with permanent injuries.)

In the other corner are animal rights activists who say Ringling Bros. talks a good game about treating the animals well, but in reality are working the animals to death in unsavory conditions.

"The elephants spend 95 percent of their lives in chains and are confined to about 3 feet of movement when they're not performing," PETA Campaign Coordinator Matt Rice says. "Ringling Bros. has killed more elephants than it's bred. Š But most of their elephants are captured in the wild, not bred."

The circus' treatment of elephants is at the center of a 2000 lawsuit filed by former Ringling elephant crewman Tom Rider. In his federal lawsuit, which is still in the discovery phase, Rider alleges that he saw cruel treatment of the elephants on a daily basis and that the company violates the Endangered Species Act. Many non-profit organizations have joined Rider in the lawsuit: Animal Protection Institute, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Fund for Animals and the Animal Welfare Institute.

Rider worked for the circus for about 2 1/2 years before quitting because of what he saw happening to the animals, he says.

"When you see all that [I saw], you know why I filed the lawsuit," Rider says by phone from the van he both lives in and tours the country in to speak out against circuses with animals. His living and travel expenses are paid for by private donations and several animal welfare groups.

Rider says he was present the July 1999 day when the 4-year-old Asian elephant "Baby Benjamin" drowned. According to Rider and video footage of the incident on the Animal Welfare Institute's website, the elephant is seen preferring the deeper part of a pond out of fear of his Ringling Bros. handler, who witnesses say often beat Benjamin with a bullhook. A bullhook is a long stick with a curved, sharp hook on the end often used to train elephants.

"Ringling might say [it was] drowning. I'm telling you now that the [U.S. Department of Agriculture] said it was from poking and prodding with sharp instruments, like a bullhook," Rider says. "This is the biggest cover-up in USDA history."

Ringling's Read says bullhooks are used only for training purposes and could be likened to a dog leash or reins for a horse.

"We use it as a guide and as an extension of the arm," Read says.

But Rider says during his time working for the circus he saw elephants injured by the bullhooks, especially in the delicate skin behind their ears and their anus.

"I saw aggressive hooking," Rider says.

For the local show, which is one of three traveling Ringling shows at one time, Read says there will be horses, elephants, doves, domestic dogs and domestic cats.

The protest, which will take place outside the arena, will include local animal rights activists, representatives from the institute and PETA. Rider, too, will be in town to speak out against the circus. Most of the protesters say they would be happy with circuses if they just got rid of the animals.

"[The circus] is teaching children that it's okay to see wild animals forced to do these unnatural and painful tricks," Thew says.

Emmily Bristol is a CityLife staff writer. She can be reached at 871-6780 ext. 344 or ebristol@lvcitylife.com.



May 19, 2005 Issue

Letters

The small print

There is a "scam" going on today, which although many people will avoid, still many others are caught in and end up paying for services et al, which they were not properly told of at first.

This is known as "disclaimers" (the small print which is so often becoming part of ads in newspapers or TV.)

Small print on TV is impossible to read, and is often just rapidly taken from the ad. At least in a newspaper, small print if at all legible could be read with the help of a strong magnifying glass.

There can be no legitimate reason for the firm behind those ads to refuse to bring all the facts to light in a proper manner. Why then should they be trying to hide those details?

If anyone is contemplating buying a product, or using the service offered, and there is a tiny print with the ad, I urge them to first ask the firm to send them a *written* copy of the disclaimer, at least then there could be no argument. Doing this will save you much grief.

Gerald Samkofsky
Chestnut Hill

Circus ban

People attend the circus because they profess to love animals (LuLu Shriners Circus offers family fun, *Local* 5-5). If they truly love animals, respect for these same animals should follow. Love and respect go hand in hand.

Stu Byskofsky of the Philadelphia Daily News wrote on April 20, 2004, "I quit circuses a few years back when I came to understand that what was fun for me was misery for the animals, the very animals I say I love."

Circus animals are neither loved nor respected by those who dictate every aspect of their being. The animals' lives are absolute hell. Richard Pryor's poignant words resound, "But for the use of physical punishment by their oppressors, animals would never be part of a circus."

Disgusted former circus workers speak of the "daily systematic abuse of animals." When ex-elephant handler Tom Rider complained about the continual

beatings of elephants, he was told, "That's discipline." Henry North Ringling, a founder of Ringling Brothers, spoke of the brutalities used and how fear deeply affects circus animals.

What's more, Tom Rider testified before Congress on June 13, 2000 regarding the safety of elephants in circuses. He warned that because of the way they live and are trained, these mentally changed elephants are extremely dangerous and should not be around the public. They behave instinctively and unpredictably, regardless of training. Some scientists believe elephants want out.

Over 50 communities here have banned or restricted the use of wild animals in circuses within their jurisdictions as a precaution. They've joined countries like Israel, Finland, Denmark, Sweden, Switzerland, England and Singapore. Sears, MasterCard, VISA, PECO and Burger King, among others, no longer sponsor circuses because of the potential danger to the public and because of the inherent animal abuse.

So, having professed our love and respect for hapless abused animals used in circuses for your entertainment, you have little choice but to patronize circuses featuring only willing human performers. Cirque du Soleil and Cirque Eloize have appeared in Philadelphia to rave reviews.

Unfortunately, ethics is still a secondary issue to consumers' self-interest. Let's hope that more of us can embrace them.

Bridget W. Irons
Chestnut Hill

Let's eat

As I understand it, the BID will now begin to approach potential tenants for the various vacant retail spaces in Chestnut Hill.

Please allow me to present my thoughts regarding this process. First and foremost, you must have a vision of what you want to create. Just filling the spaces is not enough. They must all work together and complement each other. Secondly, you must have a unified vision: the BID should be unanimous in what it wants.

Only when you have both of these elements — vision and unity — will you have the political strength to overcome the skepticism of potential tenants and the resentment of the affected landlords.

Please let me offer this as a vision: "Think globally and eat locally." Center city is booming because of all the nighttime opportunities — culture, entertainment and food. And let's face it, food is the greatest culture and entertainment of them all.

Granted, there are some very serious people who might think otherwise. They believe that participating in the local political process — associations, meetings, bylaws, committees, boards, discussions, voting, independence and freedom — is a more important pastime. To them I can only say, "Give me less democracy and more dinner. So, I'm shallow, so what: I'm hungry.

What do we need? An Indian restaurant, an Italian restaurant, a Mexican restaurant, a Thai restaurant — you get the idea.

And how hard can this be? Go buy the 2005 Zagat's, look for the best restaurants in each of the above categories, then go visit them and offer to set them up in Chestnut Hill.

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The Roanoke Times

Roanoke.com

Thursday, December 07, 2006

Civil war, civil conflict or simple crusade?

Civil war, civil conflict or simple crusade?

Crusade: any church-sanctioned war; vigorous, concerted action for some cause or idea.

A debate is emerging over whether to call the conflict in Iraq a civil war or sectarian violence. War can, in no way, be called civil. We do, however, recognize an uprising against the government in power as a civil conflict.

The struggle in Iraq doesn't seem to be directed at the government, but instead seems to be a conflict between two competing groups of Muslims -- the Sunnis and the Shiites.

Soldiers and civilians die in increasing numbers, but it is almost as if the military deaths and injuries are collateral. Each side seems to want the military to protect them from the other side.

Perhaps the military should be withdrawn from the areas of conflict and then, perhaps Allah, of infinite wisdom, will permit the right to prevail in what is obviously, at least to me, a crusade.

While looking for the word to describe the conflict, it occurred to me that the term "suicide bomber" tends to lend some dignity or religious overtone to an event that is at least murder and at most a great or total destruction of life -- a holocaust.

LArry Thomas Black
ROANOKE

Bush, Cheney should fight their own war

From the halls of Congress and the White House to Vice President Dick Cheney's hunting grounds, President Bush and Cheney sure like to practice their craft (lying).

Iraqi officials are telling the world that there is a civil war going on in Iraq, but our two great oil men deny this and tell us that "we are winning the war." Even fools know better.

Bush and Cheney are living in la-la land. Too bad these two draft dodgers can't fight in the war they love so much. The reason they love this war: They desperately want to control the wealth from Iraq's oil.

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Hope the U.S. can survive "Bushie" for two more years. He should be impeached!

IRENE FERGUSON
FINCASTLE

Animals harmed in the making

Observing wild elephants in Malawi, Africa while teaching there was one of the most moving experiences in my life. Seeing them still used in circuses deeply saddens me.

Former Ringling Brothers barn man Tom Rider stated in sworn testimony in a 2000 lawsuit with the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and other organizations against the circus that "the elephants were chained for as long as 23 hours a day and that Ringling Brothers routinely beats and hits the elephants, including the babies, with bullhooks."

Rider reported that he counted more than a dozen bullhook wounds on Zeena and Rebecca and that he witnessed severe beatings of an infant elephant.

Inspectors from the U.S. Department of Agriculture have found similar signs of abuses.

In just the past year, two Ringling Brothers' elephants died. One was just an infant.

As a teacher and a foster parent, I am very concerned about taking children to see a show based on violence. There are many better ways to spend an afternoon with your kids, like viewing an animal-free circus such as the Cirque du Soleil or enjoying Southwest Virginia's native wildlife on a family hike.

STEVE COXON
CHRISTIANSBURG

Circus finds plenty of suckers

P.T. Barnum might not have said, "There's a sucker born every minute," but whoever said it must have been mighty proud when the suckers lined up to see The Greatest Show on Earth at the Roanoke Civic Center this past weekend.

I knew we were in trouble when we entered the arena and saw one ring -- one. Chairs in "pods" on the floor level told it all. This was not going to be a circus, just a half-baked stage show.

Oh, they had a couple of contortionists, some tightrope walkers, acrobats, a few trapeze artists, a couple clowns, a few horses and one elephant. It just didn't feel like much of a circus.

We felt gypped. A lot of people on the way out were grumbling about it as well.

All in all, it was a total waste of money and time. Our five tickets were more than $180, and this show was not worth even half that.

I think that John Ringling would look at this version of his circus and shed a tear.

A cheap imitation of its former self, looking for all the suckers to sell some snake oil to. Ya know, some of those suckers are twins.

PL 11272

<<Back



Animal Rights Advocates Accuse Ringling Brothers of Mishandling Elephants

(Buffalo, NY, October 29, 2002) - - Controversy came along for the ride when the circus rolled into town Tuesday. Animal rights advocates accuse the Ringling Brothers of mishandling the elephants. **News 4's Erika Brason** reports from HSBC Arena.

The Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Circus is in town. The highly anticipated event for many families kicks off every year with a parade of sorts.

Tuesday, animals were led through the streets of Buffalo to HSBC Arena where they will perform through the weekend.

But there is another act that follows the circus from city to city, the animal rights group PETA, or People for the Ethical Treatment of animals, set up shop in Lafayette Square with a traveling TV truck to reveal what they say is the abuse of animals under the big top.

The group claims to have undercover video that exposes cruel and unusual treatment, especially to the elephants.

Tom Rider represents the group, "In Defense of Animals," and says he worked for Ringling Brothers as an elephant care taker.

In fact, Rider says a video is proof of the abuse using a metal hook, known as an ankus.

Officials with Feld Entertainment, parent company of Ringling Brothers, say the videos do not prove anything.

Feld Entertainment Public Relations Director Jennifer Maninger says the elephants are trained by repetition and are rewarded with food.

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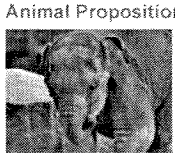
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LOCAL NEWS

Animal Proposition May End Circus in Nebraska



Animal rights activists could hit a home run if a new law is passed in the State of Nebraska. Proposition 1000 could put an end to training techniques that some say is abusive to elephants. It could also bring an end to the phrase, "The circus is coming to town".

Getting elephants to perform under the big top is about to take a sharp blow in Nebraska. Some lawmakers have begun to think twice about animal discipline.

The sticks they saw in some videos are called "bullhooks," and it's this device that's causing the most controversy.

"It's like reigns on a horse or leash on a dog. Sometimes you have to carry your children by their hand," said one elephant handler.

But a bullhook's far from a hand. A pointed metal end is used to direct the elephant. Trainers say it's essential, but animal rights activists think it's cruel.

A P.E.T.A. activist said, "All circus animals and particularly elephants and some of the great cats are broken by horrible beatings, and unimaginable beatings."

"Now, as you can see, right under the chin with the bullhook," described Tom Rider.

Rider is a former elephant trainer for Ringling Brothers, but now he's an activist. Last June, he first told FOX 42 News about the cruelties to circus animals, showing us shocking video he described as an elephant drowning on tape. It's a tape that may be used as evidence in a pending lawsuit against Ringling Brothers.

After hearing the news Wednesday, he says it's a great day for elephants. That is, if state lawmakers outlaw the use of bullhooks and other devices used to discipline elephants.

Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey circus is coming to town in just three months. But if legislative Bill 1000 passes before then, it's uncertain when, or if, the big show will ever make it to the city, or the state of Nebraska, ever again.

Circus officials reached by phone say banning the bullhook would mean an end to using elephants.

"If we were prevented from using the appropriate tools, that would mean we could not use elephants in our shows in Nebraska, [but] we are not going to go anywhere without our elephants. They're too important to us and to people who come see our shows," said one circus representative.

And that would mean a big blow to a tradition, one we call the greatest show on earth.

If Proposition 1000 passes, Nebraska will be the first state to address elephant handling techniques. Currently, the City of Chicago is looking into passing a city ordinance on the issue.

Story Created: Jan 12, 2006 at 12:50 AM CST

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LOCAL NEWS

Lawsuit Alleges Ringling Brothers Abuse Elephants

06/09/05



The big top is in town! Ringling Brothers' and Barnum and Bailey Circus will perform Friday through Sunday at the Qwest Center.

But some animal crusaders say Ringling Brothers is not the all-American family outing it bills itself as. A lawsuit has been filed in federal court alleging the circus mistreats its elephants, cruelty that has even led to death.

At the heart of the lawsuit is a video the crusaders describe as proof.

Tom Rider once worked as a trainer for Ringling Brothers, but he quit shortly after the death of an elephant he says he loved like family. That elephant, 4-year-old Benjamin, is seen in the video with Shirley in 1998 in Huntsville, Texas.

While traveling across the country with the circus, the two get to go for a rare swim when trainer Tom Hardens calls them out. Shirley goes, but Benjamin doesn't. Riders says there's a reason Benjamin ignores his trainer.

"The thing is, Pat beat the baby every day since he was born," says Rider.

Benjamin died that day.

Rider and three well-known animal rights groups have filed a lawsuit in federal court alleging Ringling Brothers consistently violates federal law by physically abusing endangered Asian elephants.

The United States Agriculture Department investigated the case.

"A necropsy performed, assumed drowning, cause unknown. The baby elephant did not drown. We even have an eyewitness that will take the stand this summer who will testify these babies were beaten all the time," says Rider.

Since the lawsuit is pending we cannot substantiate that claim.

However, undercover video taken when Barnum and Bailey was in San Francisco does show trainers repeatedly jabbing the elephants with a bull-hook. The tool is commonly used by trainers, but how it's used is key.

"You can tap, but you can't cut the skin," says Rider.

A reporter at our Fox affiliate KTVU in Oakland asked then head elephant trainer Troy Metzler about the use of the bull-hook.

"It's like reins on a horse or leash on a dog, sometimes you have to lead your child by the hand. Like I said, we love these animals very much," says Metzler.

Metzler was never Benjamin's trainer, but while investigating Benjamin's death, the USDA wrote about the man who was Benjamin's trainer when the elephant died.

"Mr. Harden's use of the ankus (bull-hook) created behavioral stress and trauma which precipitated the physical harm and ultimate death of Benjamin," the report says.

No charges were ever filed by the USDA and in fact, the USDA later wrote a letter stating Ringling was not responsible for Benjamin's death.

Ringling Brothers has never been fined for using the bull-hook.

"I love these elephants, that's why I'm doing this, not for me," says Rider.

But Rider and the three animal rights groups now plaintiffs in a lawsuit against Ringling Brothers are convinced the company should pay a price.

Benjamin was just one of three baby Ringling elephants that died in the last six and half years.

The lawsuit is still in the discovery stage and is expected to actually go to court early next year.

Story Created: Jun 9, 2005 at 8:27 PM CST

Story Updated: Jun 10, 2005 at 1:39 PM CST

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Action News Team
KCBS-TV CH 2 (CBS) Los Angeles 12/15/2004 05:00 AM - 06:00A

1. 00:12:16 TZ; Elephant: There are allegations of animal abuse in the wake of video being released that shows the drowning of a circus elephant. V; Benjamin and Shirley the elephants swimming in pond. An animal rights group says the trainer should have known the animal was in trouble and blames **Ringling Bros**. for it's death. GR; **Ringling Bros**. The circus maintains the elephant went into cardiac arrest. PC; Tim **Rider**, former **Ringling Bros**. employee, says Benjamin was constantly beaten. Jennifer Sabbe reporting. 00:14:07

2. CBS 2 News At 11:00
KCBS-TV CH 2 (CBS) Los Angeles

12/14/2004 11:00 PM - 11:35P

00:02:46 Elephant Death: A new video shows the death of an elephant, and now accusations of animal cruelty. V; Video of the death. GR; Statement by **Ringling Bros**. PC; **Tom Rider**, Former **Ringling Bros**. Employee, says that elephants were abused. Jennifer Sabih reporting. 00:05:11

3. KCAL 9 News At 10:00 PM
KCAL-TV CH 9 (IND) Los Angeles

12/14/2004 10:00 PM - 10:45P

00:03:39 TZ; Elephant: Animal rights activists say that abuse at **Ringling Brothers Circus** was responsible for the V; drowning of an Elephant 5 years ago. SB; Chris Derose, Last Chance for Animals, discusses trainer's responsibility. GR; USDA, **Ringling Brothers** reasons for death. SB; **Tom Rider**, Former **Ringling Bros**. Employee, describes abuse of elephant. Jennifer Sabih reporting. 00:06:47

4. CBS 2 News
KCBS-TV CH 2 (CBS) Los Angeles

12/14/2004 05:00 PM - 06:00P

00:47:36 TZ; Animal Abuse: Former employees and animal rights groups accuse the **Ringling Brothers Circus** of abusing their animals. V; **Ringling Brothers** logo. V; **Ringling Brothers** video of an elephant walk. PC: Chris DeRose, Last Chance for Animals, says that **Ringling Brothers** is directly responsible for the death of the elephant. PC; **Tom Rider**, former **Ringling Brothers** employee, says the baby elephant was beaten every day to make him do tricks. GR; **Ringling Brothers** statement. David Goldstein, reporting. 00:50:01

5. CBS 2 News At 4:30
KCBS-TV CH 2 (CBS) Los Angeles

12/14/2004 04:30 PM - 05:00P

00:00:14 Elephant Abuse: The 1999 drowning death of a **circus** elephant has stirred accusations of animal abuse in the **Ringling Brothers** Barnum and Bailey **Circus**. V; **Ringling Bros**. video. PC; Chris Derose, Last Chance for Animals, says **Ringling Brothers** is directly responsible for the elephant's death. PC; **Tom Rider**, former **Ringling Bros**. employee, says handlers beat elephants to make them perform. The USDA investigated the death and found no violations. David Goldstein reporting. 00:02:53

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Click here for brief listing of the speakers.

Carol J. Adams is the author of *The Sexual Politics of Meat: A Feminist-Vegetarian Critical Theory*, *Neither Man nor Beast: Feminism and the Defense of Animals*, a series on *The Inner Art of Vegetarianism*, and most recently, *Living Among Meat Eaters.* She is a frequent speaker on college campuses, where she shows the sexual politics of meat slide show. She has been an activist on issues related to feminism, abortion rights, homelessness, white racism, domestic violence, and animal activism. As an undergraduate, she organized against the Vietnam War and advocated for women's studies classes. She has also edited several books, including two on the relationship between feminism and animal advocacy.

Josephine Bellaccomo
Communications consultant Josephine Bellaccomo is founder and Executive Director of ActionDynamics, a training organization providing skills building workshops for animal rights activists. A former university professor with ten years professional communications training experience, Josephine specializes in developing and delivering presentations, and crafting powerful messages for the media. She has been an animal rights activist in New York City for more than five years, working with national and grassroots groups to promote veganism and to educate consumers about the dark truths of the fur trade and circuses.

Steven Best, PhD, is Associate Professor and Chair of Philosophy at the University of Texas, El Paso. He is author of numerous books and articles on social theory and philosophy. He is also President of the El Paso animal rights group, Voice for All

Animals, and Vice President of the Vegetarian Society of El Paso. He has two books forthcoming on animal rights, *Animal Rights and Moral Progress: The Struggle For Human Evolution* (Roman and Littlefield) and *PETA: A Critical History and Analysis* (Columbia University Press). Many of his writings are collected on his home page at http://utminers.utep.edu/best/

Lawrence Carter-Long
Formerly a poster child for cerebral palsy research, Lawrence Carter-Long has been active in both the disability and animal rights movements.He has spoken at colleges and universities across the nation and appeared on numerous television and radio programs including THE TODAY SHOW and CNN. Lawrence wrote a regular column for the ANIMALS' AGENDA magazine from 1996-1999 and is a frequent contributor to SATYA.

Michael Greger, MD, is a graduate of the Cornell University School of Agriculture and the Tufts University School of Medicine. As an undergrad, Michael coordinated CSETA, the Cornell Students for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, and was involved in national collegiate animal rights organizing. He is best known for his work on mad cow disease, but writes and lectures extensively on a number of other public health and social justice issues. Dr. Greger can be contacted at his home phone (617) 524-8064, or by email, mhg1@cornell.edu

Ray Greek, MD, is a physician who is board certified in anesthesiology and sub-specialty certified in Pain Management. He was an instructor at two of the United States' most prestigious medical schools and has published in the medical literature. He has performed experiments on animals and research with humans. Along with his wife, who is a veterinarian, he has written a book on the scientific fallacy of attempting to extrapolate the results of animal experiments to humans called *Sacred Cows & Golden Geese*. He is president of Americans For Medical Advancement, a 501c3 dedicated to educating the public about the hazards of extrapolating the results of experiments on animals to humans.

Kathy Hessler is a Professor of Law at the Case Western Reserve University School of Law where she will be teaching an Animal Law seminar starting the Fall of 2002. She is author of "Where Do We Draw the Line Between Harassment and Free Speech?: An Analysis of Hunter Harassment Law" which was published in Animal Law in 1997. She has also written "Planning and Conducting Protests: Legal Implications" and has presented at many student and activist workshops on the topic of nonviolent protest. Kathy has been teaching law since 1992. She also worked with Colman McCarthy for a number of years helping with his peace studies courses.

Elliot Katz, DVM, a native of New York City, is a graduate of the Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine. After graduation, Dr. Katz practiced small animal veterinary medicine in the New York Metropolitan area. In 1983, he founded In Defense of Animals (IDA), an 80,000 member non-profit animal rights organization. IDA is an international animal rights organization dedicated to ending the exploitation and abuse of animals by

working to raise their status beyond that of mere property, commodities and things. We simultaneously advocate for, and defend their rights, welfare and habitats. Dr. Katz is the father of two teenage daughters.

D'arcy Kemnitz has been active in protecting wildlife and animals for twelve years, beginning in the 1980's, when she organized her first all-volunteer grassroots group to protect animals and became Executive Director of a Wisconsin coalition called Alliance for Animals. During the 105th Congress, she worked for GREEN, the Grassroots Environmental Effectiveness Network, as their Midwest coordinator on the federal Endangered Species Campaign. Ms. Kemnitz graduated from Hamline University School of Law, where she was awarded the Eleanor Seiling Summer Law Scholarship at the Animal Legal Defense Fund. She is a frequent speaker at conferences concerning animals and the environment, including "E-Law" and "Eco-Visions" at Lewis & Clark and Rutgers law schools.

Patrick Kwan
Formerly an organizer for Animal Defense League and Coalition to Abolish the Fur Trade in New York City, Patrick is founder and Executive Director of Student Animal Rights Alliance, an organization dedicated building a culture of respect for animal rights with the leadership of students and youth. He has worked for several nonprofits, most recently as a Field Organizer for Amnesty International USA's human rights and the environment campaign. Patrick also serves on the Youth Advisory Board of Center for Environmental Citizenship and is an aspiring vegan food critic, restaurateur, and public interest lawyer.

Lisa Lange
As the director of policy and communications for People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), the largest animal rights organization in the world, Lisa Lange is an authority on animal protection issues. She devotes much of her time to public speaking, addressing live audiences in schools, universities, and civic clubs. Lange has debated animal experimenters, furriers, and meat trade officials on *Today*, CNBC, CNN's *Crossfire*, *Entertainment Tonight*, and countless other television and radio programs. Her involvement in animal rights began when she became a vegetarian as a teenager, after seeing how animals are raised on modern factory farms. Before joining PETA, she organized anti-captivity campaigns for marine mammal conservation organizations in California. Lange graduated *cum laude* with a degree in political science from Loyola University in New Orleans.

pattrice le-muire jones
Jones has been an activist since her high school days in the 1970s. She co-founded her college's first gay liberation organization. In graduate school, she participated in campus movements concerning peace and economic justice. At the University of Michigan, she taught a course in the theory and practice of social change activism. She formerly coordinated the Baker-Mandela Center for Anti-Racist Education and now coordinates an international coalition of environmental, animal liberation, and social justice organizations dedicated to ethical and

effective solutions to hunger. She and her partner run a chicken sanctuary in Maryland.

Howard Lyman evolved from a fourth generation cattle rancher to an author, activist, vegan and co-defendant with Oprah Winfrey in the Texas cattle rancher's lawsuit. Howard travels an average of 100,000 miles a year, speaking and educating the public about organic, sustainable agriculture and the state of our current food choices and methods of food production. He has appeared on more than a thousand radio shows, hundreds of television programs, and has spoken to hundreds of thousands of people around the world. Howard has won several distinguished humanitarian awards, and is author of the bestselling book, *Mad Cowboy: Plain Truth from the Cattle Rancher Who Won't Eat Meat.*

Colman McCarthy is a Washington journalist who has written for The Washington Post since 1968. He is also the founder and director of the Center For Teaching Peace, a nonprofit group that helps schools begin or broaden peace studies programs. The Center conducts workshops and seminars on conflict resolution and mediation. He teaches at various colleges and high schools in the Washington D.C. area, and in his two years at American University, he was twice voted Adjunct Professor of the Year. He is a pacifist, animal rights activist and self-proclaimed anarchist.

Marianne Merritt has been practicing law since 1993 and has represented national animal organizations on a wide variety of legal issues. In addition to her regular practice, Marianne recently concluded teaching Animal Protection Law at the George Washington University Law School and in June 2001 taught a Continuing Legal Education class on animal law sponsored by the George Mason University Law School. Marianne works on animal issues through various means, including through litigation, legislative drafting, writing, and public speaking. One of Marianne's articles is going to be included in the upcoming *A Primer On Animal Rights* that will be published by Lantern Books and the Animal Rights Network.

Katherine Meyer has been practicing public interest law in Washington, D.C. for over 23 years. After working for Public Citizen Litigation Group for more than a decade, and then the public interest law firm, Harmon, Curran, & Gallagher, she and Eric Glitzenstein started their own firm in 1993, Meyer & Glitzenstein. Ms. Meyer specializes in a wide variety of federal and state court litigation, including animal and wildlife protection, environmental law, and open-government laws. She represents a broad spectrum of grassroots animal protection, wildlife, and environmental groups as well as writers, historians, and journalists seeking access to government information. Ms. Meyer is on the Board of Directors of Defenders of Wildlife and the Center for Auto Safety, and also serves on the Advisory Committee on Procedures for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit.

Amanda Moeckel is an alumna of American University where she was the President of the AU Animal Rights Effort (AUARE) for three years, and majored in Political Science and Art.She has done extensive animal rights work in D.C. with Compassion Over

PL 11297

Killing, as well as social justice work with the Ruckus Society and the Mobilization for Global Justice. She has helped to organize a handful of conferences and actions and led numerous nonviolence/direct action trainings for activists. Now she's putting her degree to work as a freelance artist and activist, spreading the animal rights message with her paintbrush.

Ingrid E. Newkirk is cofounder and president of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, the largest animal rights organization in the world. She has spoken internationally on animal protection issues, from the steps of the Canadian Parliament to the streets of New Delhi, India, where she spent her childhood. She is the author of several books including *You Can Save the Animals* and *Free The Animals!* as well as numerous articles on the social implications of our treatment of animals. Newkirk served as a deputy sheriff; as a Maryland state law enforcement officer for 25 years with the highest success rate in convicting animal abusers; director of cruelty investigations for the second oldest humane society in the U.S.; and Chief of Animal Disease Control for the Commission on Public Health in the DC.

Lydia Nichols is the Executive Director of the Coalition to Abolish the Fur Trade. During her eight years of experience with managing grassroots non-profit organizations and campaigns, she co-founded the Texas Establishment for Animal Rights, founded Animal Liberation of Texas. She acted as regional coordinator for a successful national anti-fur campaign against Macy's Department stores. Lydia was also involved in stopping the importation of three Amazon river dolphins to the Dallas World Aquarium, and helped lead efforts to obtain a permanent restraining order that halted one of the largest pigeon shoots in the country. Currently Lydia serves as a committee member of AGRO, a coalition to ban the aerial gunning of wildlife, and also participates on the Summit for the Animals' Executive Committee.

Miyun Park is the president of Compassion Over Killing (COK), a nonprofit grassroots animal rights organization based in Washington, D.C., and volunteers as the organization's production department manager. Ms. Park works full-time as the Web site director and production coordinator for the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine, and also serves on the Advisory Board for the Animal Rights Network, the publishers of *The Animals' Agenda.*

Bryan Pease is a 23 year-old, second year law student at the University of Buffalo. He received his undergraduate degree in Human Development from Cornell University. While at Cornell, Pease also studied vegan nutrition with Dr. T. Colin Campbell and ran the animal rights group there. Using tactics ranging from letter-writing to civil disobedience, Pease helped reduce Cornell's reliance on vivisection and dissection in the classroom and improve access to vegan foods in the dining halls. After interning in the New York State Assembly, he founded New York Coalition for Animal Defense (NYCAD), an inter-campus organization to advance animal protection through community outreach and political organizing.

Nancy Perry is the Director of Government Affairs for The Humane Society of the United States, overseeing local, state, and federal legislative campaigns. She has helped organize successful ballot measure campaigns to ban mountain lion hunting in California, baiting and hounding of bears and cougars in Oregon, and cockfighting in Missouri. After teaching and coaching speech and debate in the California community college system, she attended Lewis & Clark Law School. There, while earning her Environmental Law degree, she founded the Student Animal Legal Defense Fund, the Animal Law Journal and served as a director of the Oregon Bear and Cougar Coalition. She is currently a board member for the National Animal Law Center at Lewis & Clark Law

School.

Matt Prescott has worked on issues of animal rights and the environment for the last five years. The majority of his work in activism has been with groups such as Earth First!, The Animal Defense League, Food Not Bombs, Greenpeace, and SEAC. In 2001 Matt worked as Farm Sanctuary's Grassroots Campaign Organizer in their Watkins Glen, NY national office. Currently Matt works for the Student Environmental Action Coalition, as a member of their National Office Collective in Philadelphia. Matt also serves on SEAC's National Speaker's Bureau, giving workshops on topics ranging from organizing against corporate globalization, consensus decision making, to building direct action skills.

Tom Rider worked as a "barn man" at Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey circus beginning in 1997. During his almost two and one-half years working for Ringling, he repeatedly complained about the systematic, daily hittings, beating and abuse suffered by the endangered Asian elephants as they were forced to travel and perform. Due to the beatings, he quit his position at Ringling and began speaking out to encourage the protection of elephants in the circus. Tom now travels full-time via Greyhound Bus, arriving in cities before Ringling performs to tell interested members of the press his eyewitness account of the abuse behind the Big Top. Tom looks forwards to working with local activists as he travels.

Nathan Runkle
Serving full-time as the director of Mercy For Animals, a group he founded in 1999, Nathan has organized countless demonstrations and other actions. He speaks frequently on animal rights and veganism at universities, high schools, and at other events. In 2000 he received the Bill Rosenberg Award for outstanding contribution for farmed animal liberation. Nathan helped organized, and execute, an undercover investigation at two of Ohio's largest egg factory farms. The investigation, which resulted in the open rescue of 34 sick, injured, and dying hens, gained much attention for the plight of hens in the modern egg industry.

Kenneth Joel Shapiro is executive director and cofounder of Psychologists for the Ethical Treatment of Animals. Before starting PSYETA, he taught in the psychology department and counseled students in the health center of Bates College. He is founding editor of Society and Animals and cofounding editor of *Journal of Applied Animal Welfare Science*. His most recent book is *Animal Models of Human Psychology: Critique of Science, Ethics, and Policy*.

Paul Shapiro
Paul founded Compassion Over Killing in 1995 and serves full-time as COK's spokesperson and manager of COK's campaigns and operations department. A social justice activist for eight years, Paul has organized hundreds of demonstrations and other forms of community-based resistance and regularly speaks at dozens of conferences, high schools, and colleges on animal rights and environmental issues each year. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in peace studies and a minor in religion from George Washington University and serves on the Board of Directors of Student Animal Rights Alliance.

Barbara Stagno is Director of Programs and Northeast Director for In Defense of Animals, a national organization, based in Mill Valley, CA. She works on a wide variety of campaigns from circuses to antivivisection to feral cat advocacy. She holds degrees in zoology, nursing and music and worked for many years as a registered nurse before devoting her time to animal advocacy. Prior to starting work with IDA in 1995, Barbara was president of ROAR, a grass-roots animal rights group in New York.

Kim Stallwood is executive director of the Animal Rights Network and editor in chief of *The Animals' Agenda*. Born in England,

Stallwood started his career as the organizer of two animal protection groups, Compassion In World Farming and Coordinating Animal Welfare. He moved on to become acting general secretary for the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection, and later became the first executive director of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals. Stallwood became a vegetarian in 1974 after working in a chicken processing plant, and has followed a vegan lifestyle since 1976.

Click here for brief listing of the speakers.



6/5/01

Subject: Help stop the Cruelest SHOW ON EARTH.....NOW!
Date: Tue, 5 Jun 2001 12:27:22 EDT
From: Penzelda@aol.com
To: Penzelda@aol.com

Subj: You Can Help Stop The Circus!!
Date: 6/4/2001 5:36:36 PM Dateline Standard Time
From: <A HREF="mailto:ElisabethLB">ElisabethLB</A>

Please Post Far & Wide

The Town of Greenburgh, NY (in Westchester County) just hosted the notorious Clyde Beatty-Cole Bros.Circus. Witnesses in Greenburgh saw one of the elephants crying out loudly in terrible pain and struggling in agony as she could barely walk. She had been giving rides when she started crying and was then yanked away and isolated to avoid a further scene. This was captured on videotape.

Brief Background Info.:
Clyde Beatty's elephant Helen was lame and continually used for rides, performances, & to pull up the the tent. After a widespread campaign to retire her and finally a lawsuit, she was very briefly "retired". Helen, who was no longer profitable to the circus, was put to death 4 weeks ago. Clyde Beatty has refused to give any information on the details of her death, nor any health nor autopsy reports.
Helen joins a line of several Clyde Beatty elephants ordered to death immediately after being granted "retirement" --
She's the Fourth Dead Clyde Beatty Elephant in just Four Years.
Please do NOT let her death be in vain.
Clyde B.'s Animals Never Have a Good Day- they are horrendously abused every day of their lives.

SPEAK UP for the ANIMALS : They Need You!
Greenburgh Town Supervisor Paul Feiner, who is responsible for granting the CBCB circus a permit, has PROMISED an Ordinance to Ban Exotic Animal Acts
Keep up the pressure. Please call and URGE him to KEEP this PROMISE!
That is the ONLY way this ordinance is going to happen!

Paul Feiner- office: 914-993-1540 fax: 914-993-1541

(he freely gives out his home phone # to the public)
home phone/fax: 914-478-7144

Paul Feiner's e-mail: supervsr@cloud9.net Also: pfeiner@greenburgh.com

According to congressional testimony provided by former Clyde Beatty elephant keeper Tom Rider,"[I]n White Plains, N.Y., when Pete did not perform her act properly, she was taken to the tent and laid down, and five trainers beat her with bullhooks. Pete is now dead." June 13, 2000

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The Mirror

March 20, 2000, Monday

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 4, 5

LENGTH: 1259 words

HEADLINE: 9,000 MILES OF HELL;
TORMENT OF CIRCUS ELEPHANTS EXPOSED

BYLINE: Christian Fraser In Aschaffenburg, Germany, And Jeremy Armstrong

BODY:

A CHIPPERFIELD circus worker last night lifted the lid on the catalogue of cruelty his animals were forced to endure.

American Tom Rider travelled 9,000 miles with three Indian elephants and 13 tigers in a four-month nightmare journey from the US across Europe.

The beasts were shipped in tiny, dark cages and forced to stand end to end surrounded by their own waste. They were beaten if they failed to perform.

Elephant handler Tom, 49, worked with Dickie Chipperfield, cousin of Mary Chipperfield, his son Graham, and trainers Daniel Raffo and Martin Lacey jnr.

He claimed Dickie was so obsessed with money he demanded that "beastwagons" carrying the helpless animals be driven day and night between venues without a proper break.

Tom said: ""I couldn't bear to watch the cruel treatment any longer. Dickie has to be stopped. "What he has done is terrible. I want to expose him.""

Dickie, 57, has a previous conviction for cruelty. Last year The Mirror ran a series of articles exposing cruelty by Mary and Dickie. She was fined for beating a baby chimp called Trudy in her care.

The elephants, Leila, Mina and Camilla, are now thought to be with a German circus. They have made the world-famous circus family tens of thousands of pounds, from circus shows around the world.

Here, Tom tells of their needless suffering - and we will be handing our dossier of cruelty to the Home Office.

NOV 18: TAMPA, FLORIDA

Gruelling 350-mile journey. Animals' container was 8ft wide by 27ft long. I had to squeeze between "the girls" and the wall just to get in as they were staggered diagonally, crammed in.

They stayed locked in lorry for two days. Leila, who the keepers nicknamed Letchmai, was facing the front, Mina in the middle and Camilla at the back. Fed and watered once.

Nov 20-27: Carolina

First time elephants came out was on the boat in Charleston.

Exercise booth was barely large enough to house one, never mind three. We squeezed them out for 20 minutes.

As the boat began to move they grew more restless. Daniel put them back in the container in case they got out. They would not come out again.

There were 16 cats on the trip - including three cubs.

Their truck was nothing but a cage. It's 53ft long, four metres tall. The cages inside were eight foot by four. Cages housed two or even four at a time. The cats were only taken out to perform.

Nov 28: Algeciras, Spain

Elephants were in the worst state I had seen them in on arrival, kicking and shoving the doors to get out.

We set them loose in container yard for 20 minutes. Put them back as they tried to break through the fence. The underside of bodies were shaking, twitching with stress. Here for four days. They came out twice.

Our supplies reduced, elephants will be living off hay.

DEC 2-5 AMSTERDAM TRIP

Elephants back in the truck. Watered only twice on trip.

We used up the carrots and apples Dickie let us keep. Gave them two bales of hay a day, told Dickie I needed more. He insisted it was all they were getting.

Dec 5-12 Amsterdam

Damp and raining. So cold you could see your breath. Elephants, hate cold. Taken out for one day for 20 mins.

Poor conditions. Floor in the truck had holes in it, and they filled up with sawdust, dung, everything packed in, couldn't clean it up. Water on the side of the truck turning to ice. Total lack of exercise - 25 minutes in Amsterdam. Five days from Algeciras before they got out.

Raining, but they still should have come out. No vet checks on the first leg of the trip. First vet we saw was in January in Germany. Only person checking the condition of elephants was me.

Letchmai isn't supposed to work. She has arthritis. First time I heard about The Mirror was in Amsterdam. I asked Dickie if we were working in Holland. He said: "No. We are hiding out from The Mirror."

DEC 12-14 FRANCE

Journey to Fort Bernard, south of Paris.

Elephants thirsty. Drank three 55-gallon barrels of water. Would drink that in a day. The floor of the lorry and the floorboards had to go in the back, so the girls could not move at all.

For 35 days they were confined in a space five-feet smaller than it should have been. Dickie and I drove elephants.

Mina wouldn't come out of the truck. Dickie screamed at her but she wouldn't budge, too frightened. He got a truck and tried to drag her out with a chain.

It was a 3ft drop. When she hit the floor she started running into a yard where circus was set up. (Dickie denies using vehicle.)

Dec 14-16 Ft Bernard

First time I saw Dickie use a bull hook and electric prong to control elephants in rehearsals. Dickie told Martin to give them a command. If they didn't respond, to give it to them a little heavier in a deeper voice. If they still didn't respond, he would let them have it with the hook. "Get into em," he'd say.

From December 16 to 19, we were based on a farm at La Bezoche Gouet, Paris.

There was snow, so elephants stuck in truck for four days.

Dec 19-20 to Dresden

Chipperfield stressed out. To him, it is all money. He doesn't care about animals, just making some more and moving on.

We left France just before dark and we arrived at Circus Barelli the following night.

Dickie was driving by himself, constantly crossing the centre line, veering back and forth. The elephants would have been slammed against the wall.

He was popping Vivrin tablets, 200 mg of caffeine. His motivation seemed to be to get there, get the tent set up and leave.

Dec 21-Jan 9 Dresden

They kept them in the tent, chained up, the second night in Dresden. No heater.

In rehearsals, Dickie would use both hands yanking at them with the hook.

Letchmai was used even though she was declared as having arthritis the previous year.

Animals were chained up from 9am to 8.15pm, no movement.

In ring, Dickie was using a hand-held stun gun on elephants.

You could hear them whine when they were hit. He also used what I called the "Chipperfield hook", 36 inches long and a quarter of inches wide.

Dickie used the hook behind the ear, legs, legs, trunk and chin. They were left with blood dripping.

They would use the "zapper" electric shock as well, both If the elephants were not moving, when Mina did not move fast Martin would hit her with the hook around the head.

After the show he started beating Camilla because the act had not gone right.

On January 9 left Dresden to Massy, Paris. Only stopped once to water the animals. One hour's sleep.

Arrived in Massy, Paris on Jan 11. Very, very cold, wind blowing through the elephants' tents.

The girls were shaking all the time. Told Dickie and he bought a heater. Couldn't get it to work. So he borrowed one.

Drove to winter quarters near Gottingen, Germany on February 4.: Two days to get there. Stopped only once to water animals.

Elephants kept in the dark when we arrived. Not exercised. Girls kept in leg chains unable to move more than three feet. Drove to Frankfurt for February 13. Truck broke down so got a break.

Stayed in Frankfurt until March 12.

I decided to leave for England.

Counted the marks on the elephants legs from the hook. There were 72 on Meena's front right leg, 36 on the back, 27 on Camilla's front left leg, nine on back right leg and marks behind her ear. Wounds were bleeding.

Dickie told me that when Mary lost her licence for cruelty, all her animals went to him. He should never allowed to keep animals again.

jeremy.armstrong@mgn.co.uk

GRAPHIC: HORRIFIED: Chipperfield worker Tom; GRIM: Hosed in freezing weather; GLOOM: Jumbos kept in darkened tent; MISERY: The elephants on their ship voyage - for seven days they stood without exercise in their own waste Pictures: TOM RIDER

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: March 20, 2000

News Briefs

An interview with an elephant/Pol Pot doesn't live here anymore/Cameras on College Street?

By New Haven Advocate Staff

Published 05/11/00

Here we are, 15 of us in a row, awkwardly balancing our tonnage, strapped with headpieces branding us as property of Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus. They call this maneuver a "long mount," and it can be done sitting or standing. People gawk and cheer. It looks like we're laughing when we lift our curled trunks, but it's really a show of solidarity, like fists. We don't have middle fingers but we know how to say fuck you.

Ringling Bros. says they don't make us do anything elephants wouldn't naturally do. But where in nature do elephants stand on their hind legs and place their front legs on the back of the elephant in front? Or sit on stools? Or ride tricycles?

Ringling Bros. also claims to use voice recognition and rewards to get us to "display our natural movements in an entertaining fashion." They argue that circus elephants live longer in captivity--62 to 70 years--than zoo elephants or wild elephants. They reason that we live longer because of the intellectual stimulation we experience from performing and the nutritious elephant chow.

But the circus makes us look stupid and docile, masking our true nature as intelligent, sensitive and powerful animals. Every day I dream of running away from the circus. We're captives, trained to captivate audiences.

We Asian elephants are a dying breed in the wild. There are few of us left in our native habitats of India, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Malaysia. However, Asian elephants are not endangered in captivity, where we are bred for circus performances. Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey has a Center for Elephant Conservation in Florida, established in 1995, conserving more baby elephants for the circus. There is no program to introduce elephants back into the wild. Without the elephants, Ringling owner Kenneth Feld says, the circus would go out of business.

We hear the babies scream when the trainers beat them with the bullhooks. They swing these sharp curves of metal like baseball bats. The pointed ends rip our skin, causing infections and boils. Our skin, though 2 inches thick, isn't as tough as it looks. Babies are taught to lie down by being roped, beaten and yanked to the ground. Former Ringling employee Tom Rider of PAWS, an advocacy group for performing animals, has seen this firsthand. The circus will tell you that we are trained using positive reinforcement, such as praise and rewards. No where in their literature do they mention bullhooks.

It upsets the rest of us to see the babies flinch, knowing it will be this way for the rest of their

lives. We comfort each other. In the wild, babies nurse and stay close to their mamas, aunties, older sisters for at least six years. In captivity the babies are taken from their mothers after 2 years, roped and broken.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture stops in every now and again to make sure the circus is following the Animal Welfare Act. But the law does not regulate training or elephant breeding methods. And unlike the Humane Society and other animal welfare agencies, the USDA announces visits ahead of time, giving keepers and trainers plenty of time to clean up their act. Rider knows. As soon as the USDA leaves, everything returns to normal.

Just last December, the USDA found lesions from rope burns on two of our newest babies, Doc and Angelica, born at Ringling's Center for Elephant Conservation. Now the CEC is being closely monitored.

PAWS hopes to have a bill passed within the next year that will get all of us out of the business for good. Celebrities like Kim Basinger, Alec Baldwin and Bob Barker support our cause.

Some towns ban animal acts, but it's clear that's not the case in New Haven. As we were paraded around the Green last week, hundreds of families came to rejoice in our captivity. Even more came to the shows last weekend, financially supporting our misery.

The Center for Elephant Conservation director admits we need to move or else our muscles will atrophy. My sister, who is chained behind me after the shows, can't stand the confinement. She bobs her head, swaying from side to side, a sign of stress. She pretends she's walking like our wild ancestors, who have been known to cover 300 miles in a day, traveling between water holes. She wants to move. I know she's plotting.

Did you hear about the elephant Tyke in Hawaii who freaked out and killed her trainer and injured 13 others before police took her down in a hail of bullets? At least 11 people have been killed in the past 10 years by elephants who just couldn't take it anymore.

The circus says we are tremendously agile and athletic for our size. But who wouldn't move quickly when threatened with a beating? When you see a bullhook, know that it hurts. Know that we are being forced to perform. The circus is not teaching you about animals, it's teaching you about the cruelty of humans. All we want to do is take a long, long walk.

--Camille Jackson

Smile! You're on ... College Street?

If someone's watching New Haven neighborhoods through hidden cameras, Police Chief Melvin Wearing wants to know--and, in some cases, stop it.

Wearing says he was surprised to read in the *Advocate* about widespread claims in city neighborhoods that hidden cameras are keeping an eye on people on drug-plagued blocks. ("Streets is Watching," April 27.) Wearing says he was especially surprised to learn about cameras the city's traffic and parking department has placed at major intersections, supposedly to measure traffic flow and catch hit-and-run drivers. Wearing says he plans to meet with traffic czar Brian McGrath to learn more.

Several years ago, Wearing spoke out publicly against a plan to place cameras on major streets in the Fair Haven neighborhood to deter criminals. "I don't want cameras in the neighborhoods spying on people," he says. Cameras are justified and useful only in specific, limited situations, Wearing argues.

One of those situations may be when the bar crowds get out at 2 a.m. on College and Crown streets, he says. He says his department is currently discussing a plan to install cameras there. "You have 5,000 or 6,000 people who have been drinking coming out at once," he says. "But just having cameras throughout the community? I can't agree with that at all."

Press-Telegram

SUNDAY, JULY 16, 2000

Long Beach, California

Animal cruelty debate rolls in with the circus

Everyone loved Jumbo.

With a height of nearly 11 feet at the shoulder, he was the world's largest captive elephant. When London's zoo sold him to circus mogul P.T. Barnum in 1882, even Queen Victoria protested.

But the 16-year-old elephant's career as an American circus icon was short-lived. In 1995, he was being led across a railroad track when a freight train approached. The frightened Jumbo bolted



TOM HENNESSY

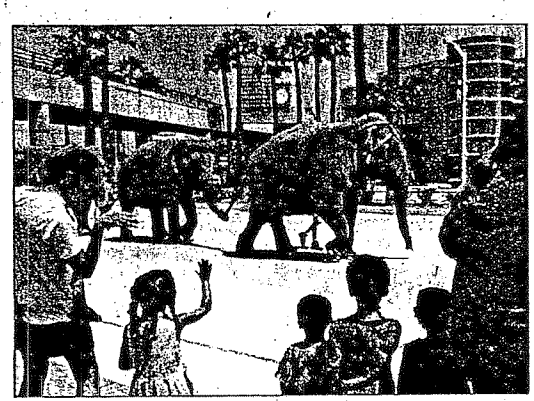
from his handlers and was fatally crushed between two rail cars.

It was the kind of tragedy animal rights advocates would rail about 115 years later.

That time again

When the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus rolls into town this week for a five-day stint, Wednesday to Sunday, at the Long Beach Arena, it will be toting a bit of extra baggage: a lawsuit filed Tuesday by four prominent animal protection organizations.

PLEASE SEE CIRCUS / A11



Elephants with the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus parade past a crowd along Shoreline Drive in Long Beach on their way to Long Beach Arena in this 1999 photo.
Craig Fujii / Press-Telegram

AWI 01554

CIRCUS: Critics file lawsuit

CONTINUED FROM A1

The suit charges in part that Ringling Bros. violates the Endangered Species and Animal Welfare acts by beating young Asian elephants as part of their training, chaining elephants for hours and removing babies from their mothers before they are weaned.

Ringling Bros. officials deny the allegations by the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Fund for Animals, Animal Welfare Institute and Performing Animal Welfare Society. They call the lawsuit "part of a political campaign to remove animals" from the circus.

That will not happen, says Ringling spokeswoman Catherine Ort-Mabry. "Animals are an integral part of the Ringling Bros. Barnum & Bailey experience. People love to see the animals in our shows."

Wrong image

Critics say circuses distort true animal life. And they point to scores of alleged incidents which, they say, add up to a pattern of abuse by most, if not all U.S. circuses.

Circus animals "exist in a pathetic state of captivity that denies them even the semblance of their native habitat," says Christine Wolf, director of government and international affairs for the national Fund for Animals. "What children learn from circuses is that it is acceptable to dominate another creature for profit and that beating and breaking animals just to provide entertainment is a normal function of society."

Critics also argue that circus animals, notably elephants are dangerous. Wolf: "Over the past 10 years, numerous attacks by elephants against handlers and spectators have plagued the circus industry."

Not so, says Ringling.

"There is no evidence at all that captive elephants are more prone to aggressive or erratic behavior than those in the wild," reads one company statement.

And Ort-Mabry adds, "Ringling Bros. has a perfect public safety record. In 130 years, we have never had an incident in which a member of the public was put at risk."

Elephant stats

Whether circus elephants are predictable or not, Florence Lambert, of the La Jolla-based Elephant Alliance, says they often do not fare well. In the last 7 years, she says, there have been 104 captive elephant deaths in the U.S. They included 54 Asian elephants, an endangered species. Of the 54 Asians, she says, 10 were with Ringling Bros.

Says Ort-Mabry, "I would have to check those figures."

The circus also denies allegations that it imports endangered Asian elephants to be used as performers, saying it ended that practice when the U.S., in 1970, became party to a treaty that bars trade in endangered species. To the contrary, says Ort-Mabry, Ringling is working through conservation programs "to save the Asian elephant for future generations."

Another Ringling brochure states: "In over 30 years of current ownership, Ringling Bros. has never been found in violation of the Animal Welfare Act for abuse, neglect or mistreatment of its animals." Ringling also denies that baby elephants are taken prematurely from their mothers.

Local view

In Long Beach, the head of animal control, the municipal unit which monitors the circus, gives it good marks.

"We've had absolutely no problem with Ringling Bros.," says Roger Hatakeyama. "They're very cooperative. Actually, they've even showed us things we hadn't checked on. They're very good about full disclosure.

"We're there when they unload the animals, and if we see a violation or a sick animal, they're on it right away."

Asked about signs of abuse to circus animals, Hatakeyama says they can be hard to spot. "Even veterinarians can have difficulty finding them. We have to look to the obvious. Do they have enough food and water? Are their corrals clean? Are there wounds that are being covered up? We look really close for these things."

Are the animals, indeed, dangerous? "I'm always concerned when you have wild animals around the public. You never know what might happen."

Enter Congress

In the center ring of the debate is the Captive Elephant Accident Prevention Act, which received a hearing in the crime subcommittee of the House Judicary Committee on June 13. It would bar circuses from presenting elephants.

Among those testifying at the hearing was Tom Rider, a former Ringling employee who said the company's elephants "live in confinement" and "are beaten all the time when they don't perform properly." He noted, "When I became disturbed about the treatment of the elephants, the continual beatings ... I was told, 'That's discipline' "

Ort-Mabry contends that Rider "left our employ on good terms and never brought his allegations forward although he later said he did." Ringling officials would have investigated if he had, she notes.

Critics say circus attendance has fallen as the public becomes more aware of animal abuses. But Ort-Mabry insists attendance is on the rise, and Ringling shows draw about 110 million spectators a year. "People love the circus."

One who does not is Ann Denison, a Long Beach advocate of animal rights who criticizes the Press-Telegram for co-sponsoring the Ringling show during its Long Beach engagement. "It troubles me that the P-T is supporting animal cruelty," she says.

Appealing to the public, she says, "Before you buy those tickets, please think about the circus from the animals' point of view."

My thoughts

While I have tried above to present a balanced view of the circus debate, part of my job as a columnist is to express my opinion. It will come as no surprise to regular readers that I am on the side of the animal-rights people. In 1995, I decided to never again attend a circus that includes animals.

I was persuaded to that decision in part by Lambert who, I once wrote, is to Ringling Bros. what Ralph Nader is to General Motors.

Subsequent research and a behind-the-scenes tour of a circus convinced me that Lambert and others are correct — if not in every detail, at least in the overall view that a circus is not a good place for an animal to be.

Tom Hennessy's viewpoint appears Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. He can be reached at (562) 499-1270, or via e-mail at Scribe17@aol.com

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Animal trainers, activists alike challenge role of animal lover

June 25,2004
Cari Hammerstrom
The Monitor

HIDALGO — Whether you believe animal acts are entertaining or just plain cruel, there's no denying that tending to 10 Asian elephants, almost a dozen Bengal tigers, eight zebras, 25 horses, plus camels, llamas and zebus is no easy task.

For the experienced animal trainers and groomers of the self-proclaimed "Greatest Show on Earth"— the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey circus — the job is round-the-clock and never-ending.

Exercising, feeding, training, feeding, washing, feeding, cleaning the stalls, feeding; taking care of the animal performers could be arguably the most difficult behind-the-scenes work the circus must do.

Animal caregivers must constantly travel with the circus herd, they are constantly building relationships with the creatures, and many even grow up with the animals.

Sacha Houcke, Ringling's director of animal care and trainer, said he "grew up in the middle of the animals." Houcke's father and grandfather both owned circuses, and Houcke said he has worked for his entire life as an animal trainer for circuses, including some in Germany and Switzerland.

As a child, Houcke said he would help train horses and elephants, and never contemplated doing anything else with his life. Houcke said he loves animals and feels he is doing what is best for them.

The circus is a place for majestic exotic and endangered species to flourish, he said.

"In a few years, there will be no place for the elephants ... We (Ringling) are trying to breed and trying to preserve the race," he said, referring to the circus's famous 200-acre Center for Elephant Conservation in central Florida, at which 15 baby elephants have been born since 1995.

Humans are increasingly encroaching upon the Asian elephants' natural habitat in Southeast Asia. Elephas maximus is currently a critically endangered species, with an estimated wild worldwide population of less than 40,000.

In addition to the Ringling circus being a safe haven for animals who face poaching and habitat loss in the wild, Houcke said circuses in general are a great places for people of all ages to experience beautiful animals up close and personal. Literature provided by the Ringling Bros. states that "studies have shown that the public display of performing elephants contributes to heightened public awareness of the animals themselves and of man's responsibility for their well-being and protection."

"Where else, except in the zoo, can you see an elephant so up close?" the sixth-generation animal trainer said.

In books, said Jessica Garcia, a Brownsville resident and People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals member.

"People can go to a museum or to a library instead of seeing them jump through hoops ... I don't think animals should be for our entertainment," Garcia said.

Many animal activist groups allege abuse of circus animals by Ringling employees. During training, these groups claim, elephants are poked with bullhooks and are beaten before performances. Whereas Ringling says it

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trains the animals with positive reinforcement, animal activist groups claim there's nothing positive about the treatment of circus animals.

A former Ringling employee, Tom Rider, has testified before the U.S. House Committee on the Judiciary regarding abuse of elephants and the danger circus animals pose to humans. He is also going to testify to the U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C. in a lawsuit that's been brought against Ringling by The Fund for Animals, Animal Welfare Institute, and the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

The lawsuit, which is based on the alleged violation of the Endangered Species Act, is currently in the discovery process, said Lisa Weisberg, senior vice president of government affairs and public policy for the ASPCA. Evidence for the animals rights groups includes video of cruel training practices, testimony from Rider, and numerous copies of Animal Welfare Act violations recorded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the government body in charge of enforcing animal protection laws.

Ringling claims that "in the over 35 years of current ownership, Ringling Bros. has never been found in violation of the AWA for abuse, neglect, or mistreatment of its animals."

But according to Weisberg, that still means alleged violations were documented. Ringling has just never been prosecuted, she said, calling the relationship with the USDA and Ringling cozy.

Weisberg said she hopes the "truth" about how animals are trained in the circus will be revealed through the lawsuit.

In the meantime, the show will go on, and Houcke will be working with his animal friends on their routines, simply feeding the elephants apples and bananas as treats.

"For me, I'm doing the right thing for the animal," Houcke said.

Ringling Bros. Barnum and Bailey will be performing at the Dodge Arena through Sunday.

Cari Hammerstrom covers law enforcement and general assignments for The Monitor. You can reach her at (956) 683-4424.

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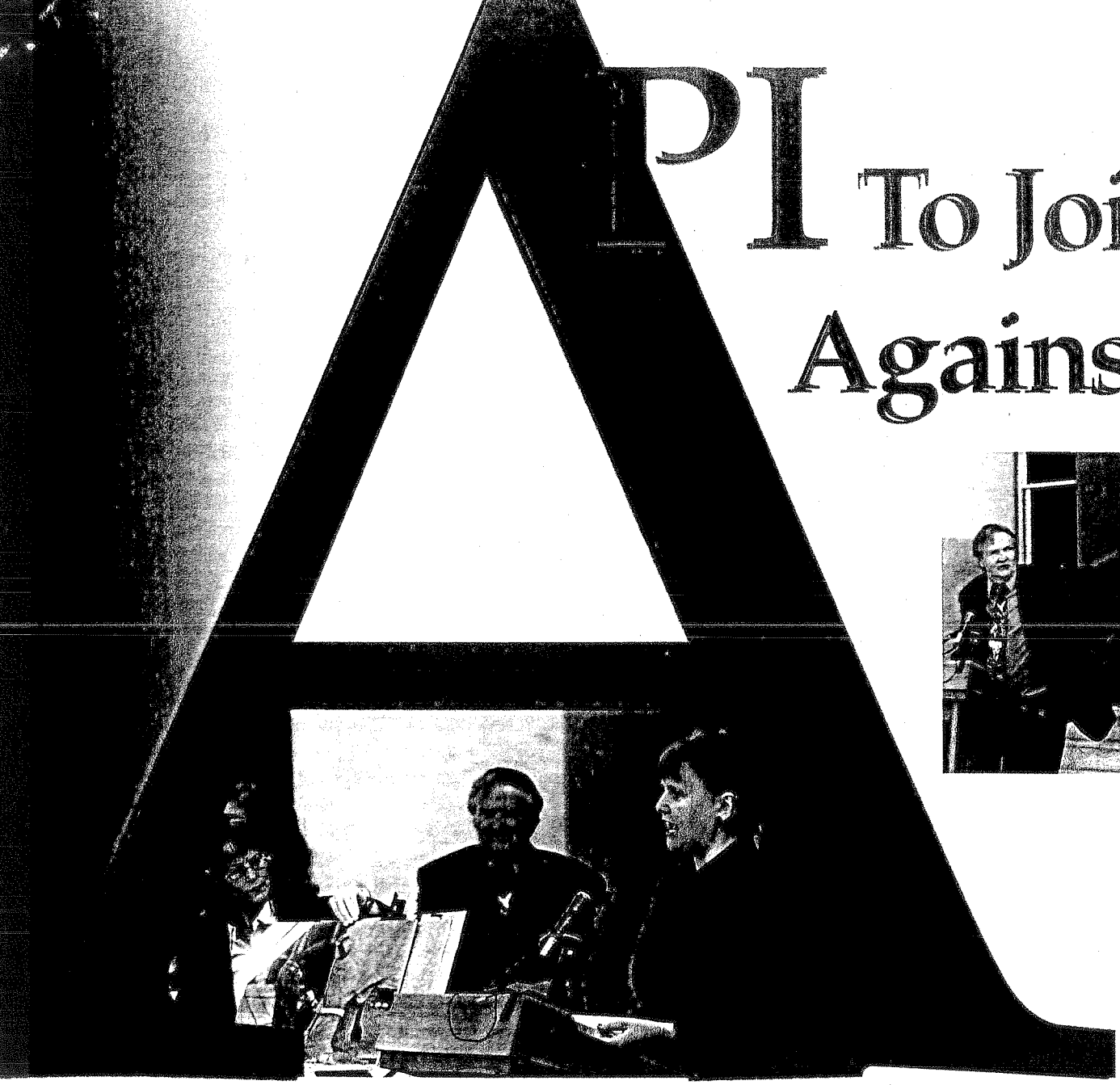
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API 5683

API is pleased to announce that in the fall of 2005, we petitioned to join the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, the Fund for Animals, and the Animal Welfare Institute in a groundbreaking lawsuit against Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus and its parent company, Feld Entertainment, regarding their mistreatment of Asian elephants. Also a plaintiff in the lawsuit is former Ringling Bros. employee Tom Rider, who worked as a barn man the circus for two-and-a-half years.

The Asian elephant is currently listed as an endangered species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), meaning that any acts that would "harm, wound, injure, harass, or kill" an Asian elephant in the wild or in captivity are prohibited.

Our lawsuit alleges that a number of Ringling Bros.' routine practices violate the ESA, including: 1) the forceful use of bullhooks — large clubs with sharp, curved points — to train and control the animals, 2) the chaining of elephants for most of the day and night, and 3) the forcible removal of baby elephants from their mothers at Ringling Bros.' breeding facility, the "Center for Elephant Conservation," where it produces elephants for use in the circus.

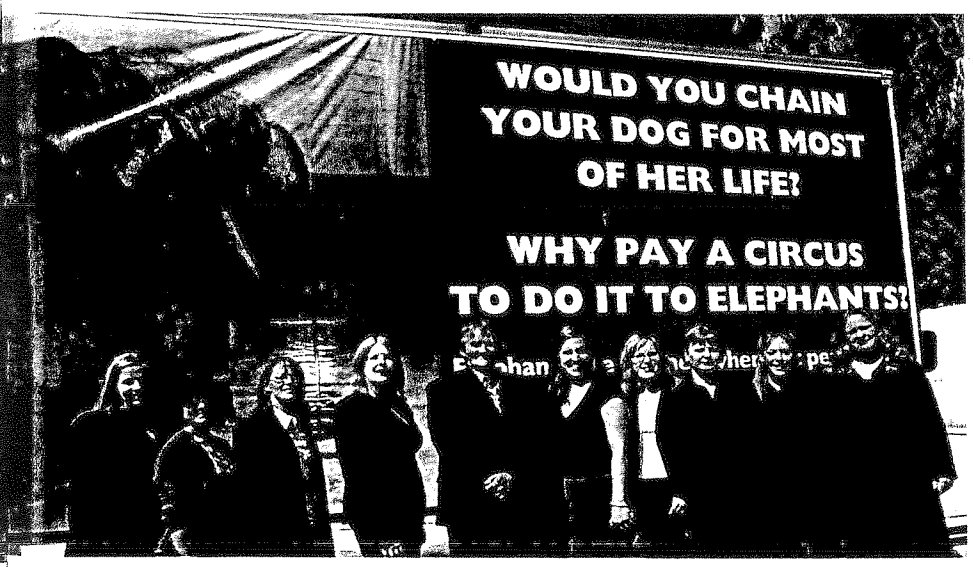
The plaintiffs have amassed a wealth of evidence to support our claims against Ringling Bros., including video footage, eyewitness accounts, and reports from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), which has jurisdiction under the Animal Welfare Act over all entities that use animals in entertainment. In addition, former Ringling Bros. employees will be testifying about the mistreatment of the Ringling Bros. elephants, including videotaped testimony that graphically demonstrates how the bullhook is used on the animals.

The plaintiffs also have evidence that many of Ringling Bros.' elephants have tested positive for tuberculosis, a highly contagious disease that can be transmitted from animals to humans, as well as sworn testimony provided to the USDA that Ringling Bros. has used elephants infected with

Lawsuit Ringling Bros.



Previous page and this page: API staff, including Chief Executive Officer Michelle Thew (seen at podium in photo on page 28) joined former Ringling Bros. employee Tom Rider (see at podium on page 29) at the California State Capitol to announce API's intent to join a groundbreaking lawsuit against Ringling Bros. for its mistreatment of Asian elephants. API's mobile billboard, showing a chained circus elephant, helped raise public awareness of how animals suffer when used for entertainment. (API photos)



tuberculosis in public performances.

The lawsuit is before the Honorable Emmet J. Sullivan in federal district court in the District of Columbia and is being handled on behalf of the nonprofit groups and Tom Rider by Meyer Glitzenstein & Crystal, one of the country's preeminent environmental law firms.

Likely in response to this lawsuit, Ringling Bros. has recently undertaken a major public relations effort claiming that the circus benefits the endangered Asian elephant by "conserving" it for future generations.

In its promotional materials, Ringling Bros. features its breeding facility, the "Center for Elephant Conservation," with photographs of the elephants who have been born there in recent years as part of what Ringling Bros. claims is an effort to "preserve this endangered species for future generations."

However, what Ringling Bros. does *not* tell the public is that none of these animals are being bred for reintroduction into the wild — rather, they are all being produced as stock for the extremely profitable circus.

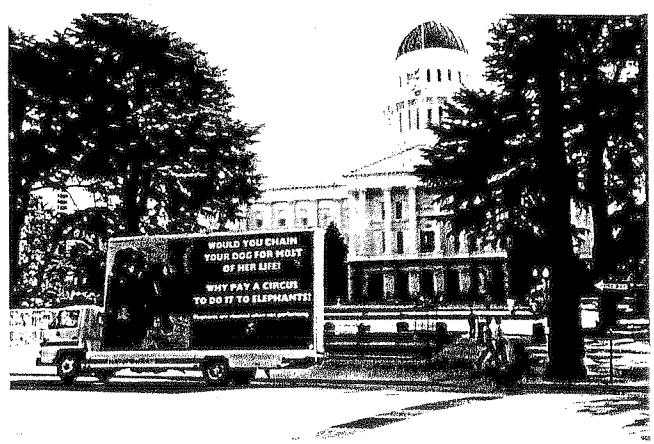
In addition, the promotional materials do not mention that at least three of the baby elephants born at its breeding facility have died — including four-year-old Benjamin, who died when his trainer came after him with a bullhook; three-year-old Kenny, who died after being made to perform in three shows although he was extremely ill and against the advice of the attending veterinarian; and eight-month-old Riccardo, who, in August 2004, mysteriously broke both of his hind legs while "climbing on a round platform 19 inches high," and was then euthanized.

API is pleased to be joining this lawsuit and looks forward to a victorious end. This lawsuit is just one of many ways that API works towards its goal of keeping wild animals where they belong: in the wild.

We will keep our supporters apprised of the lawsuit's progress in our publications and on our website, www.api4animals.org.

API 5684





BBC

really wild show

CIRCUS SPECIAL

Narrated by Michaela Strachan

Series producer Lucy Bowden (x 46635)

Ringleader:
Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls and
An enormous welcome to the great British circus. We'd
like you to sit back relax and of course enjoy yourselves
As we go on with the show!

******

Michaela VO:
Over the past few decades traditional circuses in Britain have been in decline, and we ask whether one of the main reasons is the changing attitudes towards performing animals?

Michaela PTC:
On today's Really Wild Show Special, we are going to take a look at the use of animals in the use of circuses all Around the world. We will be examining the training Methods, the way of life and discussing the ethics.

Martin Lacey
Traditional circuses is something that should not be Allowed to die. It is a tradition that was started here in England way ..back in 1768, and we exported it to every country in the World.

TOM RIDER
I want to see the animals out of the circus. I think I think that the generation that is coming up now is gonna realise that circuses is on its way out.

David Hibbling:
Animals for me...

..give circus, to quote a bit of French, "a raison d'etre", soul of the circus, and without at least horses, you just might as well throw away the sawdust arena and put the whole thing on a stage.

Michaela PTC
But what exactly does it take to get a tiger to jump through a hoop, or an elephant to stand on its hind legs? The way these animals are trained and the conditions they are kept in, has become more and more controversial.

Michaela VO:
The British group – Animal Defenders is campaigning for a global ban on animals in all circuses. They spent 18 months filming under cover all over the world, and wanted to show me the evidence they had gathered.

Tim Phillips
What we had found across the board was a culture of violence, where hitting animals, poking them, shouting at them, intimidating them, was part of the course. That's how they handled these animals.

Michaela
This sort of violence we are seeing is absolutely horrendous. But isn't just a case of just a few very cruel people giving all circuses a bad name?

Tim
Well even in the space of this footage, you are looking at half a dozen circuses already. And what we have found across the board was a culture of violence. You look at the scenes we filmed. This isn't something that was done surreptitiously by a few bad people, this is something which is openly accepted in the circusing industry, and still is.

Michaela
Tim would you say then that circuses with animals is an outdated concept now?

Tim
We simply don't need to be treating animals in this way. And what for, just for a few silly tricks for about 5 minutes in the ring these animals performances last and yet they live in chains and in cages on the backs of these lorries day in day out.

Michaela VO:
Animals performing these so called "silly tricks" has been a form of family entertainment for centuries. It was a British Cavalryman called Sergeant Major Phillip Astley who began circuses back in 1768. The word circus comes from the Latin word for circle and he had perfected a ring to enhance his ability to stand on the back of a cantering horse.

Gradually the horse displays were interrupted with clown antics, tumbling, juggling, then exotic animals were introduced and the modern circus was born.

Groups such as Animal Defenders are against many practices that involve animals, from experimentation to entertainment. Largely due to their campaigning circuses in the UK are now forced to perform out of town or have even been pushed out of business. Martin Lacey is angry at this persecution. He claims the public are being misled.

Martin Lacey
We are not gonna go away, I have been with animals for 40 years, I have done nothing wrong, we really do care for our animals. The sad thing is at the moment the public come along and they things like, "You're not allowed to have animals any more are you?" They have been brainwashed, and we are, and they go, "That's great, you've really got tigers?"
"Yes"
"You've really got.."
"Yes.."
"I want a ringside seat"
Particularly down London, there's no messing.
"I want to be as close as I can."

Boy 1
I like the tiger best, because the tiger was doing acrobatics and jumping through loads of hoops.

Boy 2
I like the tigers best.

Girl 1
Girl: It was good.
Michaela: What was you're best bit?
Girl: When all the animals came out.

Michaela
So would you prefer to see a circus with animals in it? Or would you prefer to see a circus without any animals in it?

Boy with glasses:
With animals.

Boy:
I like it because it makes the circuses better.

Michaela:
What do you think about the way they might train those animals to do those tricks?

Boy:
I think they train them well, because if they didn't train them very well, they wouldn't do the tricks.

Michaela:
Do you think that at any time that it might be cruel?

Girl:
No, if they treat them ok, then it's ok.

Michaela PTC:
The great British circus is one of the very few circuses left in the UK, that still uses performing wild animals like tigers, when the circus comes to town, there is little advertising for fear of protesters.

Michaela V/O:
But that isn't the case throughout the rest of Europe where circuses are a highly respected art form, alongside opera, theatre and cinema. David Hibbling is a circus consultant who's based in France.

Michaela:
David how long have you been involved in circuses?

David Hibbling:
A long time, ever since I was 17 years old. I told my mother at the age of 4 that I was going to be a ring master.

Michaela:
What made you fall in love with circuses at 4 years old?

David Hibbling:
The romance of circus but also the animals, very much the animals, I'd seen animals in zoos, I'd seen them on television documentaries, but here for the first time I had seen animals working with people, I too could work with tigers be close to elephants be close to sea lions.

Michaela:
What do you think now of having animals working with circuses.

David Hibbling:
Now I still believe in my heart of hearts that circus by its nature is not cruel, but I think circus has to change to different tastes, different cultures, and I believe it must constantly look at what animals we use in circus how we use them and how we care for them.

Ringleader:
I think you can have any animals in circus providing having the correct facilities for them.

Jan creamer:
There aren't any species that we would say are acceptable in a circus.

David Hibbling:
Though I don't believe circuses should have rhinoceroses, large hippopotami, polar bears and the great apes.

Michaela:
Why is that?

David Hibbling:
I don't believe the circus, personally, can offer the requirements for their mental and physical well being.

Michaela v/o:
The majority of these performing animals are bred specifically for a life in the circus. They spend most of the year living out on the road travelling from location to location. A few years ago the RSPCA wanted to determine how this lifestyle affected the animals. Dr Marthe Kyle- Worthington who's an animal behaviour expert was asked to carry out a scientific study in the uk. She spent 3000 hours with zoos and circuses, and whilst she did make a number of criticisms concerning the living conditions and training methods her conclusions came as a blow to the animal activists.

While there are improvements that must be made, circuses do not by their nature cause suffering and distress to animals...

Dr Marthe Kyle Worthington
.. On balance I don't think that the animals best interests are necessarily served by activities aimed at trying to ban circuses.

Michaela:
Marthe It sounds like your conclusions are that if you are going to have animals in captivity there are better stimulated in a circus environment than a zoo.

Dr Marthe Kyle Worthington
As a concept, as an idea, I think circuses are probably better generally for animals, because they do things and they change locations it's more interesting for them.

Michaela:
This constant change of location means many hours on the road not something the animal activists support.

Dr Marthe Kyle Worthington
They were all very relaxed about the transporting remember they had done it a great deal, one of the things they become used to all sorts of things, animals just like humans do and really its not so bad for them once they get used to it.
I think what circus acts should be about is showing people how absolutely marvellous these animals are. I mean they do amazing things some of them, when you think about it, I mean, jumping through rings and then managing to balance on amazing small little stools or leaping up here or down there. And you will say yes but that's not natural and it's bad to have animals doing not natural things. Well where is the line to be drawn between what is natural and what isn't natural because it's natural to learn, so why should we make a limit on what should be learnt. As long as they are not suffering while they are being taught. But like everywhere there is bad teachers and good teachers

Michaela PTC:
Here in America the circus is no less controversial. This is Madison Square Garden in New York where one of the biggest circuses in the world is performing. It travels all over North America with its performing tigers elephants, zebra and horses. It attracts a huge audience but it also attracts a lot criticism.

Michaela:
Joyce why is there anti the use of animals in circuses?

Joyce
Our group and other animal rights groups are opposed to the use of animals in circuses because there's no humane way to keep wild animals in a circus, they are deprived of freedom and violent training techniques are used on them to get them to perform tricks in the circus.

Michaela:
What's the feeling in America towards circuses?

Joyce:
Well the problem is these families aren't educated because they don't know that these animals are actually very mistreated. So we are out here to let the public know that if they love animals, they will not give money to animal circuses because they are supporting abusive animals.

Michaela:
A lot of peoples get very upset when they see elephants being trained and they see the hook being jabbed into the ear or the back of the leg.

Martin Lacey:
They are not being jabbed at all. This is emotive rhetoric.
The only way that health and safety will allow you to work an elephant in public in England if you have a hook. Now that's not something circuses invented, elephants have been trained with hooks just as horses have had bits, spurs and stirrups for thousands of years.

Michaela V/O:
I saw the Ringling Show for myself and it was a real spectacle. But with incredible trapeze and motorbike acts alongside the animal acts, I was interested to see what the audience would pick out as their favourite moments.

Michaela:
What did you like best?

Girl:
The elephants.

Girl:
The tigers.

Girl:
The elephants cos they were really cool they were making believe that they were sleeping.

Boy:
Tigers cos they were trying to stand on two feet and walk.

Boy:
I enjoyed seeing the elephants because they are my favourite animal.

Michaela:
Did you at any stage think that it might be cruel to the animals?

Girl:
I think it is a little cruel, 'cos I think that they hit them a little bit but, it still was really cool.

Girl:
..He was whipping them and he shouldn't do that.

Boy:
I think it isn't cruel because of the animals they get to show people how they get to interact with humans.

Michaela V/O:
Tom Rider has looked after elephants in circuses all over the world, including the Ringling Brothers circus here in New York. After witnessing what he claims were frequent acts of cruelty he now campaigns against the use of animals in circuses.

Michaela:
Tom how did you get involved in working with circuses?

Tom Rider:
I took care of some elephants back in 89, I thought this is what I like to do I would really like to work with elephants and I called the circus and they told me to come to Myrtle Beach South Carolina and they hired me immediately. Within 30 minutes of being hired by the circus I was standing there with 6 elephants by myself.

Michaela:
How did they train the elephants?

Tom:
Well they are taught from babies. They're stripped away from their mothers and they are literally beaten into submission.

Michaela:
Tom now you have worked for few years in many different circuses did you see abusive animals in all the circuses you worked in??

Tom:
Yes I have seen, I have never been in a circus that I haven't seen abused. If it has elephants I can promise you that their elephants are getting abused.

Michaela:
Do you think that people that train their animals just don't love animals or is it just part of the training that they can't avoid?

Tom:
They love the animals, but down through history they know that there is no way to control and elephant without the use of a bull hook.

Michaela:
Is there as much cruelty to other animals as there are to elephants??

Tom:
I was in Atlanta Georgia and my first night filming I saw a camel get hit 41 times. I have seen the tigers, every time they go into the arena they are poked by big sticks to make them go in. It's unfortunate but there's no animal in a circus that one way or another is abused.

Michaela:
What about the conditions the animals are kept in. I mean Madison Square Garden is behind us. Where are they kept for the two weeks that they are performing here?

Tom:
On the fifth floor...

Michaela:
..The fifth floor of that building??

Tom:
I would say right now there is probably 10 or 15 elephants on that fifth floor chained up swaying back and forth.

Michaela VO:
Ringling Brothers declined to be interviewed by the BBC, however they did give us the following statement.

"There are currently more than 200 animals under the care of Ringling Brothers, all of which are well cared for with good facilities, including the elephants on the fifth floor of Madison Square Garden.
Tom Rider has been trying to circulate his misinformation for almost three years. His claims are unsubstantiated, have been evaluated by the proper US authorities and are unfounded."

Michaela v/o:
As training methods are so controversial, Martin Lacey who claims that his methods are very fair and never cruel has invited me to watch one of his tiger training sessions. He has got several tigers all of different ages and abilities.

Martin:
Well training is certainly not cruel, in fact we train by positive reinforcement, that is to say we use lots of carrots and no big sticks, negative reinforcement can take the form of a sudden shout or a clack on something to make the animal to make notice. So it always the carrot and not the stick. We are infact animal communicators we have got to establish a language we have got to become the animal's friend.

All training is organised play which people don't seem to realise. We don't put a halter on a tiger and drag it towards us like horse trainers we have go to teach the animal to come towards us there is no pull and push with tigers, but anyone who thinks they can hit them, knock them about and stand toe to toe with a tiger and have a fight is an absolute lunatic, because they are the most perfectly designed killing machine on earth. They think of killing as you and I think about opening a can of beans, it is something they have got to do before they eat.
The reward for the animals if they get it right, let's have the rest of the day off.

Michaela ptc:
Well from what I have seen of Martins training methods certainly don't appear to be cruel or violent but from the evidence that we have got that is not always the case with some other circuses and that will interesting to hear what Martin has to say about some of the disturbing images that have been caught on film.

Michaela v/o:
As well as tigers, Martin Lacey has had years of experience in training many other animals from chimps and camels; to lions and elephants.

Michaela:
So Martin when you see this sort of footage what to do you think?

Martin:
Well I think it is absolutely disgusting. I think that the people on there are not proper animal trainers. I think we are probably looking at a guy there who perhaps is the keeper of them and is showing off by saying 'he does this' trying to be very macho, which is wrong and these people should be stopped because they are affecting our livelihood they are giving animal trainers a bad reputation they are a disgrace to a very respectable industry.

Man:
OK This is our most recent circus rescue this is Toto the chimpanzee who we discovered in Chile. Now Toto lived in this small crate for some 20 years with the circus. He would be taken out of there and kept on a chain and used in an act to smoke cigarettes and drink cups of coffee to amuse people.

jan:
His condition is very poor and he has got muscle wastage because he has never really had any real exercise. You see it takes him a long time to climb up to the top of the truck

Michaela:
Is this one of the worst cases of cruelty that you have seen in animal circuses?

tim:
It is a pretty classic example of the wretched deprived way in which circus animals are kept really sort of stripped of everything that is natural to them.

Michaela v/o:
Using the video evidence that they had collected, Animal Defenders successfully prosecuted the circus owner and were able to remove Toto and take him to a sanctuary in Northern Chile.

tim:
The extraordinary thing is you probably couldn't have done that in the UK, there are so little standards for animal circuses which seems absolutely extraordinary.

Michaela:
Well that will probably surprise a lot of people because I think we presume because we are a nation of animal lovers that we have a lot of protection over cruelty and you're saying over in Chile they have more protection than we do here.

Woman:
We certainly do there are no standards for the welfare of circus animals.

Michaela:
He is in such a state isn't he?

Michaela: V/O
Currently British circuses are covered by animal welfare laws dating as far back as 1911 and 1925. However, new laws are due to come into force in the near future - a move generally seen as a step in the right direction by all sides.

Jan:
We certainly would like to see legislation in this country on the use of animals in circuses and the most important thing would be a complete ban on the use of animals in circuses.

Martin:
Daily courts are full of pet owners up and down the country who have treated their animals badly; we are not asking people to stop keeping pets are we?

David:
I believe the role of animal welfare groups should be to assist circus people in making sure they are doing the best and the role of good legislation is to ensure that happens and that the guilty offenders who abuse animals are prosecuted.

Michaela ptc:
Once an animal has been trained for the circus can it ever adapt to living in a more natural environment? Or would it miss life in the limelight? Well I have come to Tennessee in America to meet someone who has given ex circus elephants the chance to find out.

Michaela v/o:
The sanctuary is home to elephants that were once in zoos or circuses and its owner Carol Buckley has first hand experience of what they have been through. She herself spent many years performing in circuses.

Michaela:
So Carol is this Tara the elephant you used to perform with?

Carole:
This is Tara; she is 29 years old now we have been together her whole life.

Michaela:
What was the act you used to do?

Carole:
Well we did a circus act just like any other elephant circus act and her claim to fame was that she was the only world roller skating elephant.

Michaela:
Carole when you were training Tara how many times did you have to beat her?

Carol:
You know it is a really hard subject for me to talk about but I think it is important, when I first started working with Tara I never hit her because it never entered my mind but then as I was trained by a professional elephant trainer I ended up hitting her continually.
See what I was told was, if you don't dominate your elephant, she will become aggressive and you will ruin her life.

Michaela:
And what made you realise that you weren't enjoying it any more?

Carol:
I would hit her and then I would cry. And so finally I said to myself that if this is the way that you have to manage elephants then I am not doing this anymore.

Michaela VO:
After hanging up her roller skates in 1995 Carole bought Tara to Tennessee where she and other elephants could enjoy a life of freedom.

Michaela:

Carole how has Tara adapted to being here?

Carol:
Well at the sanctuary she has adapted incredibly and I think the biggest thing for her is recognising that she is no longer dominated. I don't' think that she has ever held anything against me the way that I raised her trained her taught her because it is all she knew and I think that just like a battered child just assumed that all elephants that this is normal, that this is how elephant live. But when we got to the sanctuary the rules changed just like that overnight and they changed for me dominating her to me no longer dominating her and she recognised the difference.

Michaela:
With all the experiences that you have had, do you think that circuses with animals should be banned?

Carol:
I think that there should be no wild animals in circuses. Mainly because you cannot provide for the animal properly, they belong in the wild, and secondly by teaching a child by about exotic animals is not done by seeing them dressed up in tutus.

david:
The circus gives people the opportunity to get close to an animal like an elephant, so it is not some 6 inch blob on a television screen it is there in front of you and it is huge and you can smell it and feel it and to me that is what circus is all about.

tom:
You know those elephants don't wake up in the morning and go oh well lets go and do three shows today, it is Saturday.

jan:
Literally these animals are just commodities. They are there just to do their work and go back in their box and there is nothing more to their lives, we should not be doing this with the other species that share this planet.

martin:
I think I perhaps care more than the animal rights people, I think animals have the right to be properly housed properly fed properly transported the best vetinary attention should they need it and to be expertly and gently trained and if we do that with our animals then I think we are doing the best we possible can.

Michaela ptc:
So is the traditional circus still the greatest show on earth? Or the cruellest show on earth? We have heard a lot of very strong opinions on all sides of the circus debate. What a shame that animals can't speak for themselves. Only then would we really know the answer.

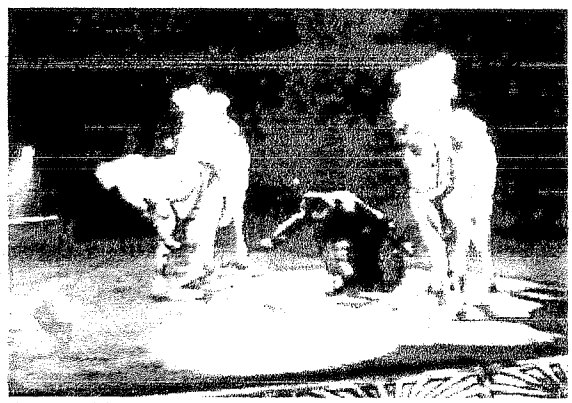
ORACLE

Behind the three rings

Protestors say there are two sides to the circus: a glitzy show and abusive training tactics.

By Selina Roman
News Editor

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Oracle/KIM KUNDA
Mark Oliver Gebel, son of wild animal trainer Gunther Gebel-Williams, finishes his act by bowing to the audience.

Leaping from a swing, a slender woman in a glittery costume flies through the air doing a somersault along the way, toward a long, white sheet meant to catch her fall. A fierce 500-pound tiger leaps through an illuminated hoop. Both acts get oohs and aahs from the audience, except for some children who kept silent as their mouths gape open in awe.

This is the circus scene the audience is familiar with, but behind the three rings, animal activists say animals live in inhumane conditions and learn their tricks through abusive training. Circus professionals, on the other hand, deny allegations, saying the animals are treated as well as humans.

The debate is as heated as the fire that enters the juggler's mouth. About 19 animal rights activists from People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals and Florida Voices for Animals stood across the street from the Bayfront Center in St. Petersburg shouting "Animal cruelty at the Bayfront Center today!" as families walked to the Bayfront Center to see the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus.

Ringlingis steadfast in its belief that its menagerie of more than 600 animals receives the best care.

"I've dedicated my life to these animals," said Peter Cimini, veterinary technician for the Red touring unit.

Cimini has been caring for the animals for 25 years.

Ringling has two units that tour the United States, red and blue. Each unit is separate and has its own performers and staff.

All aspects of Ringling's animal performers have been scrutinized, from the animals' living quarters to their training. For example, some say trainers beat elephants to teach them

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tricks.
Ex-elephant handler Tom Rider, of the blue unit, said he left his 22-year job with Ringling in late 1999 because he was tired of seeing the abuse.
"They control these elephants," he said. "The only way to make them do it is to beat them."
Cimini said the animals under his care never get abused.
"If this place isn't up to par, I get cited," he said.
The United States Department of Agriculture is the agency that hands out those citations in an effort to make sure Ringling is in-line with USDA standards.
Throughout the year, USDA inspectors make unannounced visits to the circus. They inspect everything from the animal's health to the quality of the food in the stalls.
Maiva Binkley, supervisory animal care specialist with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service of the USDA, said all factors in unannounced visits are important.
Binkley confirmed APHIS is conducting an investigation into Ringling Bros. compliance with APHIS guidelines. She said investigators will be looking at more detailed areas as compared to the unannounced inspections. She would not comment on the details of the investigation.
"We have specific things we look for," she said.
According to a May 2000 report, an elephant showed an open lesion that may have been attributed to "excessive use of an overly-sharp ankus hook." An ankus hook is a chain with small hooks at the end.
A follow-up to the May report found that none of the elephants exhibited any lesions.
While the red unit performed at the Ice Palace in December, inspectors visited the grounds. The report stated the red unit "complied with applicable regulations and standards at the time."
Besides training methods, animal activists also say elephants and other animals suffer from constant traveling in cramped quarters for long periods at a time and being chained.
Cimini said the caravan makes stops for the animals to get out and stretch.
But PETA and other animal rights groups call chaining the animals a new slave trade.

According to PETA literature, stressful situations are harmful to the animals and they result in such behaviors as swaying.
In the circus backlot, one of the elephants was swaying back and forth.
Cimini said the elephant was probably anticipating traveling to a new town and getting fed.
Mike Keele, assistant director for living collections at the Oregon Zoo, said swaying, while not well studied, could be a response to

boredom, anticipation or separation anxiety.
Keele said all animals encounter stress, even in the wild. He added that a little stress is healthy.
"Every animal is stressed when it needs to make choices about its environment," he said.
Activist Trevor Chin, a 10-year member of FVA, said he wants people to be aware of how the animals are treated.
"I want to make the public know that Ringling profits from animal slavery," he said holding his protest sign. "I want people to put themselves into the wild animals' position."



Oracle/KIM KUNDA
Freshman Kris Dotson stands outside the Bayfront Center, urging passersby to consider the life of a circus animal

On Sunday, the red unit had one more performance at the Bayfront Center and crews were already packing up to travel to their next venue, Orlando. Tents were taken down, and the enormous pachyderms stood in the warm afternoon sunshine.
On the ground several chains lay about, and had padding on them.
Cimini said the elephants are chained at night.
"We can't afford to have them walking through downtown St. Pete," he said.
As far as caring for the menagerie, Cimini said a crew of 35 people takes care of the 60 animals.
Rider said many of the animal handlers are not qualified to work with the animals because they have no prior animal experience. He said Ringling hired him and hires others "off the street."
Cimini, who interviews animal care job applicants, said while he had no prior animal care experience, Ringling paid for his education to become certified.
When Cimini interviews a candidate, he said he asks what kind of animal experience they have. If the applicant has no experience, then Cimini said he looks for dedication.
"If they want to travel and if they have that dedication and love, then the door's open," he said.
Back at the show, the elephants line up one behind the other with their front legs resting on the hindquarters of the one in front during the show's finale.
Some parents seemed to have mixed feelings about the show.
"I don't think animals naturally do that in the wild, but I'm here anyway, so what can I do?" said Clearwater resident Karen Klukow, looking at her 3-year old daughter on her hip.
The children's feelings, though, were more concrete. After the show, 11 year-old Kourtney Simmons and a group children stood outside, clutching the chain-link fence and gazing at the camels munching on tree branches.
Simmons, who has been to the circus three times, said this show

was the best, and that her favorite part was the finale when the elephants stood behind each other.
"That was crazy," she said with a smile.

Contact Selina Roman
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Carnival atmosphere at Plymouth circus animal debate

By Robert Knox, Globe Correspondent, 11/1/2001

PLYMOUTH - Faced with a speakers list of 26 names, how did Town Meeting keep last week's circus animal ban debate from turning into a circus? In part, by limiting debate.

The decision to cut off discussion placed practical limits on an issue that threatened to turn a long session into a rhetorical marathon, but several residents on the list did not get a chance to speak.

The meeting ultimately voted to reject a ban on exotic animal entertainment by a wide margin. Some of the people who were not heard said they will bring the issue back. Meeting representatives voted to halt debate last Wednesday after hearing ban proponents talk of elephants raging in the streets of Plymouth and opponents portraying themselves as educators and animal lovers.

Seven nonresidents did get the opportunity to address Town Meeting at Plymouth North High School.

Plymouth's representative Town Meeting faced the petitioned article at a time when the institution of Town Meeting itself is under attack from a charter reform commission. The commission probably will put a mayor/town council form of government before the voters next spring.

The debate on how to argue controversial issues with rafts of supporters on both sides also focused attention on Town Meeting's ongoing struggle to balance the right to be heard against time management. Steven Triffletti, town moderator, is famous for the egg timer he uses to enforce a five-minute per speaker limit. Some meeting representatives have complained that the limit prevents them from properly debating issues, even though the reps can vote to extend the debate time.

Town Meeting voted to take up the proposed ban on the display of "non-domesticated" animals out of order as the third night of the slow-paced meeting entered its final scheduled hour. Parties traveled from far away to address the meeting. Animal rights advocates prepared to testify that circus animals were abused and dangerous, and circus officials wanted to boast of high standards and spotless records.

By the time a proposed bylaw to ban dogs from local beaches during the summer came up for consideration Thursday night, reps had already suspended the usual 10:30 p.m. curfew in an effort to get through the rest of the agenda without having to meet again.

Representatives moved to limit the circus animal debate when Triffletti told them he had a speakers list of 26. Representatives sought ways to reduce the amount of time or the number of speakers, while being fair to nonresidents who had traveled long distances to make their points. The number decided on - four on each side - provided for the nonresidents in attendance.

Richard Farinato of the Humane Society asked the meeting to consider its liability if an uncontrollable elephant gets loose in the streets and "runs over a kid in a stroller." Tom Rider, a former circus employee, said he quit after watching trainers repeatedly beat elephants for not performing.

On the other side, Alexandra Burpee, of Burpee's Traveling Children's Zoo, said she had worked with animals for 20 years. She told representatives that working with circus animal is the "same as working

with a dog ... Don't throw the baby out with the bath water."

When the list of nonresidents speakers was exhausted, so was Town Meeting's attention. Meeting representative Parker rose to say "lions, tigers, bears" and the representatives replied, "Oh my!" It was closing in on 11 p.m. when the meeting voted to close debate and vote. Laura Kurjan stood up and objected. "I'm a resident," she said. "Why can't I voice my opinion?"

Kurjan said Friday she has worked with wild animals in Australia. "I think it's preposterous that we didn't get to speak," she said. "They wanted to go home. They had their minds made up."

After the final gavel, Triffletti explained to Kurjan and other residents the options for getting the vote reconsidered or the issue brought back to town meeting. He said Town Meeting is a process that goes on before and beyond the actual sessions. Proponents can testify when the finance and advisory committee considers articles or when the selectmen take them up at their meetings. They may also speak when the town's 13 precincts hold caucuses.

But the options were not much consolation to those who didn't get to speak. Gayle Fitzpatrick, president of the Friends of the Plymouth Pound, is a former Town Meeting member. She said she understands the process, but "when I stand up to speak you have to picture 500 people behind me."

"With all due respect to my fellow town meeting members, I though it was rude to limit presentations by the circus animal advocates," said Parker. "They had traveled thousands of miles to see us, waited days to talk to us and then we didn't give them a full hearing."

Representative Enzo Monti said supporters on both sides were "short-changed," even though he doesn't think the outcome would have changed. "I thought it was a graceless way for it to end."

This story ran on page 8 of the Boston Globe's South Weekly section on 11/1/2001.
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Circus acts or ax circus?

Animals mistreated, groups' report says

By April M. Washington, Rocky Mountain News
July 29, 2004



Rodolfo Gonzalez © News

Tom Rider, 53, of Illinois, a former Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus worker, speaks at a Fund for Animals news conference Wednesday at the Denver City and County Building. The group endorsed an Aug. 10 ballot initiative that would bar exotic animal acts in Denver.

A national animal-protection group accused Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus on Wednesday of systematically abusing animals and touted a 241-page report they say documents the mistreatment of endangered Asian elephants used in circus acts.

Members of the Fund for Animals, based in Washington, D.C., traveled to Denver on Wednesday to endorse an Aug. 10 ballot initiative aimed at banning circuses from using lions, tigers, elephants and other exotic animals in their acts.

Advertisement



Members of the group, along with about two dozen local supporters, rallied on the steps of the City and County Building, where they also assailed the U.S. Department of Agriculture for allegedly allowing Ringling Bros. to mistreat its animals.

"There is case after case of abuse," said Michael Markarian, president of the animal-protection group. "There are several cases where the USDA has investigated Ringling for abuses but have done nothing to stop it."

Ringling Bros. officials Wednesday denounced the allegations of animal cruelty as unfounded, contending the circus is the most frequently inspected operation in the country.

"There's no evidence to support what they say," said Tom Albert, vice president of government relations for Feld Entertainment, parent company of Ringling Bros. "If we do find problems, we work to correct them immediately. The fact is, we don't get in trouble because we take good care of our animals."

The national attention has raised the profile and stakes of what was once a little-known initiative. Denver has been thrust into a national debate surrounding the use of exotic animals in traveling circuses and shows.

The initiative was placed on the ballot after Heather Herman, 15, of Arvada, gathered enough signatures to place it there.

On Wednesday, the Fund for Animals shared a 241-page report titled, *Government Sanctioned Abuse*. The report was written and released last year by the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, the Fund for Animals and the Animal Welfare Institute. The report was culled from 10 USDA investigations and other documents.

To make its case of animal cruelty, the report cites a number of USDA investigations against Ringling Bros. including:

• A case where two 18-month- old baby elephants, Doc and Angelica, were taken from their mother, chained and roped, while still nursing. The USDA report found during an inspection that "large, visible lesions on the rear legs of the two elephants caused unnecessary trauma, stress and physical harm and discomfort, and the action was not in compliance with the Animal Welfare Act."

• A 1999 case in which a 4-year- old elephant that had been removed from his mother before she could teach him to swim drowned when he stepped into the deep end of a pond while the circus was traveling through Texas.

Maghen Thomas, a USDA spokeswoman, disputed the report's findings Wednesday and denied the group's assertions of a "cozy relationship with Ringling."

Ringling Bros. denounced the report as "inflammatory rhetoric."

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Circus elephant treatment targeted under bill
By SCOTT BAUER / The Associated Press

Marian Price remembers taking her children and grandchildren to the circus and letting them ride the elephants. She never thought twice about it. But when the self-professed animal lover was shown videotapes that she said contained evidence of elephants being mistreated, she was horrified.

That's what motivated Price, a state senator from Lincoln, to introduce a bill Tuesday that would prohibit the use of bullhooks, electrical prods, ax handles and other devices on elephants in Nebraska. The proposed penalty under the bill (LB1000), which would not ban the use of elephants in circuses or zoos, would be up to one year in prison and a $1,000 fine.

No state has passed such a law, but a handful of cities have specifically banned the use of the bullhook, a canelike device with a sharp hook on one end, said Nicole Paquette, general counsel for the Animal Protection Institute.

The animal rights group, through a series of television ads, billboards and other means, has for years accused circuses of animal cruelty.

Use of the bullhook is not cruel, said Tom Albert, vice president of governmental relations for Feld Entertainment, which produces the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus.

The bullhook, which he called a guide, is a tool that is used by circus animal handlers to control and direct elephants' movements in compliance with Ringling Bros. policies, Albert said.

"It's the equivalent of a leash and collar on a dog," he said. "If you can't use a guide with an elephant, you're effectively preventing people from being able to work with elephants. ... Any tool can be misused. But that doesn't make the tool wrong."

Bills such as the one Price introduced have a hidden political and philosophical agenda pushed by animal rights groups, Albert said.

"They don't want elephants in circuses and zoos," Albert said.

The bill is not about stopping circuses, said Tom Rider, who worked as an elephant handler with Ringling Bros. from 1997 to 1999 and now travels the country speaking out against how circus animals are trained.

What the bill would do is stop circus handlers from hitting or hurting elephants, Rider said.

Rider, who met with Price and bill co-sponsor Ernie Chambers last fall, said the top priority for those who care about elephants is banning the use of the bullhook.

"I saw the use the bullhook. They beat, hit and poked these animals every day," Rider said from Orlando, Fla., where he was following the circus protesting the use of the device. "The bullhook is a weapon. It's not a guide or a tool like the circus likes to say.

Peoria Journal Star
Circus elephants abused

5/20/2000

By ELAINE HOPKINS
of the Journal Star

Peoria native will trumpet pachyderm problem in hearings

PEORIA - A Peoria-area native hopes to tell Congress next month about the abuse of elephants he says he has seen at circuses.

He claims they are routinely beaten with bullhooks and kept chained most of the time.

"Elephants are very sensitive and have almost the same feelings as humans," said Tom Rider, 49. "When you strike an elephant and hear it whining, it's no different from hitting a little kid."

Rider has become a volunteer for the Performing Animal Welfare Society, a California- based group that wants elephants banned from circuses.

He decided to speak out about his experiences working with elephants for the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus and for other elephant handlers.

In June, he said, he expects to testify before a congressional committee on elephant abuse. The Captive Elephant Accident Prevention Act would ban elephants in traveling shows and also ban elephant rides.

The Ringling Bros. show opens in Peoria on Wednesday at the Civic Center.

Catherine Ort-Mabry, director of corporate communications for Feld Entertainment, the producers of Ringling Bros., said Rider is being used by the activist group and isn't telling the truth.

"We were surprised by these allegations. He never complained to his supervisor. We have ways to make anonymous comments because ultimately the care and treatment of animals is paramount. We want to know if something is amiss," she said.

"The types of allegations (Rider is making) would describe systemic abuse. If it existed, it would have been documented during 36 federal and state inspections that took place during his tenure with us," she said. "He could have taken his story to federal officials and didn't."

In a telephone interview, Rider, who grew up in Washington and lived and worked in Peoria, said he worked at various jobs throughout the United States before becoming a barn handler for elephants.

He worked for Ringling Bros. for 2½ years before quitting in November because of the alleged abuse. He then worked with elephants in Europe until March.

As a barn manager with Ringling Bros., he fed and cleaned up after the elephants eight hours daily. The elephant abuse varied depending on which men were in charge, he said. "It's a power thing."

His complaints to a supervisor about the beatings were ignored, or rationalized as "discipline," he said.

In one incident, he said, an elephant was so bloody that someone sprayed a product on the elephant's skin to turn the blood into a charcoal color. "It' s a pretty good disguise."

Elephants would be beaten on the back of their heels and around their ears, he said.

"Some have deep scarring from years of being hooked behind the ears." The scars can be visible to a person close enough to see them, he said.

Government inspections are announced in advance, he said, and they are cursory.

Kitty Yanko of the Peoria Humane Society was among those who protested the circus last year in Peoria.

"Even if there are no beatings, even if we can't substantiate outright abuse," the constant traveling, "chained in small areas" is abusive to elephants, she said.

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Circus elephants are main attraction at congressional inquiry

June 13, 2000
Web posted at: 2:22 PM EDT (1822 GMT)

WASHINGTON (CNN) -- Although they are considered the greatest draw to the "Greatest Show on Earth," pending legislation on Capitol Hill could very well ban elephants from circuses and outlaw elephant rides across the United States.

A collection of animal-rights activists, circus trainers, celebrities and elephant experts convened in Washington on Tuesday as members of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime heard testimony on the "Captive Elephant Accident Prevention Act." The bill, sponsored by Rep. Sam Farr (D-California), would outlaw the use of elephants in traveling shows or circuses, and for the purpose of offering elephant rides. Offenders would face stiff federal fines and up to one year in jail.

Although circus treatment of elephants is currently overseen by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), supporters of the Elephant Act said Tuesday that mistreatment and animal abuse is common even among the best-run circuses.



Game show host and animal rights activist Bob Barker testified Tuesday before a House Judiciary subcommittee hearing on the Captive Elephant

Among those who testified on behalf of the legislation was game show host Bob Barker, a well-known animal right activist. Actress Kim Basinger was also in Washington to offer support for the bill, but did not testify.

"In their natural habitat elephants graze up to 20 hours a day. A circus keeps an elephant in chains 90% of the time," Barker said. "They are deprived of water and deprived of food. They are shocked."

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Hearing on the Captive Elephant Accident Prevention Act.

Tom Rider, a former elephant trainer with Ringling Brothers and other travelling circus shows, said that elephants are routinely beaten with a large "bull hook" when they do not perform properly.

"It is the only way they think they can make the elephant do something. They will take the hook and hook them behind the ear and yank their head down. It is very painful to the elephant. They scream and try to get away," Rider said.

Animal rights groups such as People For the Ethical Treatment for Animals (PETA) say rampaging elephants have killed 23 people since 1983, although opponents say none of those killed were circus patrons, but handlers and trainers.

During his testimony, Rider highlighted a number of "elephant rampage" instances that he said commonly occur behind the scenes at many traveling shows. He also alleged that the continued mistreatment of the animals makes them a public safety risk.

"My experiences with the circus has convinced me that, because of the way they live and are trained, elephants are extremely dangerous and should not be around the public. I also know first hand that the circus keeps the danger and the public exposure well hidden and we were cautioned never to let the public know if anything goes wrong," he said.

But other circus trainers and owners challenged the bill as nothing more than special interest legislation sponsored by the animal rights activists.

David Rawls, a circus owner and representative of Outdoor Amusement Business Association (OABA), said a majority of trainers abide by comprehensive USDA guidelines and have taken further steps to care for their elephants.

"Studies by noted animal behavior specialists indicate that circus animals live longer, less stressful, more stimulating lives. To quote National Geographic, 'Animals that have no interaction with man are much more likely to become extinct,'" Rawls said.

He added that more than 10 million people have ridden elephants at circuses in this country in the past ten years without a serious injury or death. Statistics cited by animal-rights groups were "manipulated and inflated," he said.

CNN's Jeanne Meserve contributed to this report.

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CHARLES BERTRAM | STAFF

gling Bros. walks its animals through downtown Lexington last year. The circus returns Wednesday.

Circus elephants mistreated, obsolete

By Vance Lehmkuhl
PHILADELPHIA DAILY NEWS

Circus elephants bring an tmoded and problematic form entertainment to the city. ere's hoping that this is the st year such an antiquated ectacle is welcomed within ur city limits.

The standard line is that ehants are trained only with ood rewards and words of raise" and enjoy being circus rs. There's probably someone ho believes this, as Barnum bserved, born every minute.

Video documentation of abuive elephant-training practices uncture the "food and praise" heory, and now calls to re-exmine the issue of captive ephants are coming from people within circuses themselves.

Former Ringling Bros. employee Tom Rider has gone pubic about the beatings he says are routine in the training. "Whenever the USDA inspected the circus, the circus always knew in advance that they were coming," he testified before Congress. "We were always told to clean up, don't hit the elephants when they around."

Former U.S. Department of Agriculture inspector Peggy Larson has called the department's compliance for circuses "at best hopelessly ineffective." (Even so, with a string of deaths among its animals, Ringling has repeatedly faced citations for improper animal handling.)

But the elephant issue in particular became hotter last May when director Ron Kagan announced that the Detroit Zoo was shutting down its elephant exhibit and sending its two inhabitants to a sanctuary.

The San Francisco zoo soon followed suit, shipping off its elephants and committing to prohibitive space requirements that effectively end that exhibit.

This touched off a national debate among handlers about how much room elephants require. Unspoken was the agreement that the 240 square feet of a box stall does not qualify.

When circuses began using elephants, people had little grasp of the animal's intelligence, complex social networks and ability to suffer, and the notion of hauling these majestic beasts around for inane shows could be excused as shortsighted ignorance.

But, Kagan points out, "now we understand how much more is needed to be able to meet all the physical and psychological needs of elephants in captivity."

While fringe media have always loudly protested, mainstream sources are now chronicling this change. In 2001, Richard Corliss wrote in Time magazine that "the traditional circus seems uncomfortably out of place in today's entertainment market. It's the interspecies version of minstrel show."

While there are ample reasons to ban elephant acts simply on the basis of public safety — from rampaging animals to the spread of diseases such as tuberculosis — the fact is that public awareness is inexorably tipping against this injustice. Smaller cities across America, and some countries, have banned the acts. Cirque du Soleil and troupes like it prove that entertainment need not involve animal exploitation, and even Cole Brothers, Ringling's main competitor, has said it is phasing out elephants. Ringling should follow and continue to delight us with the considerable talents of its human cast. But if it doesn't, more cities should take a stand and ban elephant performances.

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caged and handled. But few circus workers have faced criminal charges.

Activists hope today's trial of animal trainer Mark Oliver Gebel, son of the legendary circus showman Gunther Gebel-Williams, will lend more credibility to their allegations against "The Greatest Show on Earth."

"This is going to be a very interesting trial, mainly because it is Ringling, which bills itself as the top-of-the-line circus, with the best record, best resources, best treatment of animals," said Richard Farinato of the Humane Society of the United States.

Gebel, 31, is charged with animal abuse for allegedly puncturing an elephant's hide. The offense carries up to six months in jail and a $1,000 fine.

His attorney, James McManis, calls the case preposterous. He said Gebel would never be anything but kind to animals, having grown up around them during the 21-year Ringling Bros. career of his animal-trainer father, who died in July at age 66.

In the circus program, Gebel says his bond with the elephants "is as powerful as between any friends."

"I think these animal rights people are making a big mistake if this is where they're going to make their stand on animals in the circus, because nothing happened here," McManis said. "This is going to be a big embarrassment."

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This frame of a video shot by an animal rights activist shows an unidentified Ringling Bros. keeper raising a bull hook toward an elephant last year in Daly City. *Pat Cuviello / Associated Press*

Humane Society officers and a San Jose police officer were monitoring the animals outside an arena here on Aug. 25 when they allegedly saw Gebel, wearing a flamboyant coat with a high collar and tails, lunge at two elephants and yell at them to move faster. They say an elephant named Asia quickly jolted forward.

The elephants went into the arena and performed, but after the show, the witnesses noticed "a nickel-sized red bloody spot" on Asia's left front leg.

The witnesses believe Gebel punctured Asia's hide with an ankus, a hooked metal stick

SEE **Elephant, A9**

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sembles a fireplace pok-gling Bros. says the an- bull hook, is used to elephants like a leash, ause pain.

Manis contends that red mark disappeared he was washed later that nd that a veterinarian no sign she had been . He said the witnesses anti-circus agenda and were too far away to clearly see what Gebel was doing.

Last year, the same witnesses said they found cuts and puncture wounds on seven Ringling elephants performing in San Jose. That time, prosecutors said there wasn't enough evidence to bring charges.

This time, the witnesses' reports were enough to persuade prosecutors to take the case. Prosecutor Carolyn Powell said she has gotten hundreds of supportive letters and e-mails from animal lovers around the world.

Among the supporters is Tom Rider, a former Ringling barn worker who travels the country protesting with animal rights activists at Ringling performances.

"They use the bull hook in an aggressive manner every day at Ringling," Rider said. "They hit them on the head, trunk, legs, shoulders — it's systematic, daily abuse."

In 1998, the U.S. Department of Agriculture accused Ringling of forcing an ill elephant to perform before it could be examined by a veterinarian. The animal died. Ringling's parent company, Feld Entertainment Inc., settled the complaint by agreeing to pay $20,000 to elephant-related causes.

"They use the bull hook in an aggressive manner every day at Ringling."

Tom Rider, a former Ringling barn worker

Since then, Agriculture Department investigators have looked into at least two complaints from the public about puncture wounds or lesions on Ringling elephants.

In both cases, the agency found no evidence of any wounds or abuse, although the inspections occurred 21 days after one complaint and four months after the other.

Pat Cuviello, 41, who has covertly videotaped workers at circuses in the San Francisco Bay Area for 14 years, showed The Associated Press footage of several Ringling Bros. workers — although not Gebel — poking or hitting elephants, in a few cases after looking apparently to see wheth one was watching.

Ringling spokes Catherine Ort-Mabry those workers were rep ed for "unprofessional ior" but did not harm phants.

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Circus Heads To Legislature Wednesday

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POSTED: 10:45 am CST January 25, 2006
UPDATED: 11:08 am CST January 25, 2006

LINCOLN, Neb. -- The circus is going to the state Capitol on Wednesday.

Representatives of the producers of Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Circus plan to speak out against a bill targeting elephant cruelty. The measure is one of the most talked about bills introduced this year. It would prohibit the use of bullhooks, electrical prods, ax handles and other devices on elephants in Nebraska.

The bill would not ban elephants at circuses and zoos in the state.

Sen. Marian Price of Lincoln introduced the bill. She said she is looking out for the safety of the animals.

Speaking in support of the bill before the Judiciary Committee Wednesday afternoon will be Tom Rider, a former Ringling Brothers worker, who said he has seen the elephants mistreated.

The circus denies his claims.

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API 1447

WESH.com

Activist Claims Inspectors Covered Up Circus Animal Abuse

POSTED: 9:36 am EST February 8, 2006
UPDATED: 11:01 am EST February 8, 2006

Related To Story



Video: Circus Elephant Investigation

ORLANDO, Fla. -- There are startling allegations of a cover-up by the Ringling Bros. Circus and the government agency assigned to police it.

For two months, the WESH 2 I-Team has been looking under the big top, trying to figure out if animals are being abused. Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey is the big game when it comes to the big top.

It's the circus Tom Rider dreamed of joining.

"They're Ringling Bros. I'm like everyone else in the world thinks of *Ringling is the greatest show on Earth*," Rider said.

Rider got a job taking care of elephants on a Ringling tour in 1997. He became a crusader for animal rights after he claims he saw scenes of elephants abused daily -- one for 23 minutes straight.

"He hooked her, stabbed her, beat her over the head," Rider said.

Ringling can boast it has never been found in violation of the U. S. Animal Welfare Act in regard to abuse, neglect or mistreatment of its animals. That's true. The closest it came was after Kenny the elephant died in Jacksonville, Fla., in 1998.

Government inspectors from the U.S. Department of Agriculture said, "after determining the elephant was ill and needed to be examined by a veterinarian, Ringling Bros. still had the elephant perform." Ringling settled with the Department of Agriculture and paid $20,000, keeping Ringling's record clean.

Animal rights activists looked at it and said that Ringling settled so they can still say they've never had an Animal Welfare Act violation.

At Ringling's Center for Elephant Conservation in Polk County, Ringling's Bruce Read said that money went to protect and study elephants.

"How would we want to hurt them in any manner if they were part of what we're doing, and we wish them to do over 900 shows a season?" Read said.

Ringling trainer Mike Hayward made a point to show he can command the elephants with a simple bribe, and a lot of love, at Ringling's winter headquarters in Tampa.

"They're what I wake up for every morning and they're the last thing I think about before I go to sleep. I spend more time with these animals than most people spend with their children," Hayward said.

We got him to show us the tool that generates much of the circus controversy. It's called a bull hook, ankus or guide,

depending which side is talking about it.

"It's basically a leash for a dog or like a bridle for a horse," Hayward said. "You can control the elephant just from its head."

The WESH 2 I-Team has learned excessive use of the ankus is one of three incidents for which the USDA is now investigating Ringling. Under open-records laws, we asked for all files pertaining to Ringling's investigations and inspections back to 1980. The Department of Agriculture sent a two-page letter basically saying they wouldn't release any records compiled for law enforcement purposes.

"The United States Department of Agriculture is covering up for Ringling Bros.," Rider said.

Rider made the explosive charge based on what happened to an elephant that was caught on tape playing in a Texas swimming hole in 1999. Eventually the 4-year-old elephant, Benjamin, stopped moving and died.

Rider provided a report from the Department of Agriculture inspector to the WESH 2 I-Team, and he claimed the inspector wrote, "The elephant seeing and/or being "touched" or "poked" by Mr. Harned with a ankus created behavioral stress and trauma, which precipitated in the physical harm and ultimate death of the animal."

But the final report from the Department of Agriculture made no mention of that. It stated the "most likely cause of death was a cardiac arrhythmia."

Case closed.

"That was a horrible lost to everybody here. You see how attached ... it chokes me up ... then to see it misrepresented and used against you, I don't know," Ringling Bros. representative Janice Aria said.

Until the WESH 2 I-Team can see all of Ringling's files from the Department of Agriculture, both side can keep pointing fingers, telling the public it's the greatest show on Earth or a show that needs to stop.

Ringling Bros. told the WESH 2 I-Team all of Rider's allegations were investigated and found to be without merit. The Department of Agriculture said it doesn't play favorites and stands by its reports.

The WESH 2 I-Team will be waiting to see the results of the three current investigations of Ringling.

To comment on this story, send an e-mail to Sally Schulze.

Previous Story:

- February 8, 2006: I-Team Investigates Circus Abuse Allegations

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have to sleep on this?" He answered, "No."

But Lourdes disagrees. Lourdes said, "I went through an ordeal of stress knowing I had an infested mattress." And the salesman may hve tipped his hand.

Polly asked, "You're gonna sell this?" He answered, "It's already sold."

Friday, March 30:
"CIRCUS SUIT"

Vicki, all 10,000 pounds of her, came ready for her close-up. The video shown, according to the ASPCA, was shot last September in California. The video appears to show a circus handler beating elephants with a bullhook, while another pinches an elephant with a leatherman tool. Asian elephants are the only species of elephant used by Ringling Brothers, Barnum & Bailey Circus. The elephants are an endangered species and federal law prevents killing, harming or harassing these animals. It is with this law the ASPCA hopes to ban elephants from circuses permanently. The ASPCA is suing Ringling Brothers, Barnum & Bailey Circus under the Endangered Species Act for regularly beating and chaining the 3 to 5 ton Asian elephants. Both sides- the animal rights activists with protests and signs in the subways and the circus PR blitz of its own claim to be the true protectors of the Pachyderm.

"What is really going on is love the animals. We would never harm them," said Catherine Orts-Mabry of Ringling Bros. The ASPCA gave us a sworn deposition by a former Ringling Brothers elephant handler. Tom Rider alleges witnessing 25 specific instances of cruelty while touring with the circus over the past two years. One involved an elephant named Karen, two hours before a show.

"He started in the front and went to her back beating her...beat like he was frustrated..hit her on the head...went on for 23 minutes before he went back in his trailer," said former Ringling Brothers employee Tom Rider in a deposition. Orts-Mabry said, "We will fight this lawsuit." Polly: With all due respect, would you even know about abuse in the field at your level?" Orts-Mabry answered, "Yes. I'm in the field all the time." He tells another story about a baby elephant named Benjamin. "You would hear his outrageous wails. The baby was getting it," said Rider's statement. The animal reportedly later died. The autopsy was inconclusive.

Thursday, February 2
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http://tech.jmwebdesigns.com/software/expert/reformat.html

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Circuit Trainer to Be Tried

By Brian Bergstein
Associated Press Writer
Friday, December 14, 2001; 7:36 PM

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SAN JOSE, Calif. — This is the moment animal activists have all been waiting for: One of the biggest stars of the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus is going on trial for allegedly abusing an elephant with a metal hook just before a show.

Protesters have complained for years that circus animals are trained with painful methods and inhumanely chained, caged and handled. But few circus workers have ever faced criminal charges.

Activists hope Monday's trial of animal trainer Mark Oliver Gebel, son of the legendary circus showman Gunther Gebel-Williams, will lend more credibility to their allegations against "The Greatest Show on Earth."

"This is going to be a very interesting trial, mainly because it is Ringling, which bills itself as the top-of-the-line circus, with the best record, best resources, best treatment of animals," said Richard Farinato of the Humane Society of the United States.

Gebel, 31, is charged with animal abuse for allegedly puncturing an elephant's hide. The offense carries up to six months in jail and a $1,000 fine.

His attorney, James McManis, calls the case preposterous. He said Gebel would never be anything but kind to animals, having grown up around them during the 21-year Ringling Bros. career of his animal-trainer father, who died in July at age 66.

In the circus program, Gebel says his bond with the elephants "is as powerful as between any friends."

"I think these animal rights people are making a big mistake if this is where they're going to make their stand on animals in the circus, because nothing happened here," McManis said. "This is going to be a big embarrassment"

Humane Society officers and a San Jose police officer were monitoring the animals outside an arena here on Aug. 25 when they allegedly saw Gebel, wearing a flamboyant coat with a high collar and tails, lunge at two elephants and yell at them to move faster. They say an elephant named Asia quickly jolted forward.

The elephants went into the arena and performed, but after the show, the witnesses noticed "a nickel-sized red bloody spot" on Asia's left front leg.

The witnesses believe Gebel punctured Asia's hide with an ankus, a hooked metal stick that resembles a fireplace poker. Ringling Bros. says the ankus, or bull hook, is used to guide elephants like a leash, not to cause pain.

guide elephants like a leash, not to cause pain.

McManis contends that Asia's red mark disappeared when she was washed later that day, and that a veterinarian found no sign she had been injured. He said the witnesses were too far away to clearly see what Gebel was doing and had an anti-circus agenda.

Last year, the same witnesses said they found cuts and puncture wounds on seven Ringling elephants performing in San Jose. Prosecutors said then that there was not enough evidence to bring charges.

This time, the witnesses' reports were enough to persuade prosecutors to take the case. Prosecutor Carolyn Powell said she has gotten hundreds of supportive letters and e-mails from animal lovers around the world.

Among the supporters is Tom Rider, a former Ringling barn worker who now travels the country protesting with animal rights activists at Ringling performances.

"They use the bull hook in an aggressive manner every day at Ringling," Rider said. "They hit them on the head, trunk, legs, shoulders – it's systematic, daily abuse."

In 1998, the U.S. Department of Agriculture accused Ringling of forcing an ill elephant to perform before it could be examined by a veterinarian. The animal died. Ringling's parent company, Feld Entertainment Inc., settled the complaint by agreeing to pay $20,000 to elephant-related causes.

Since then, Agriculture Department investigators have looked into at least two complaints from the public about puncture wounds or lesions on Ringling elephants.

In both cases, the agency found no evidence of any wounds or abuse, though the inspections occurred 21 days after one complaint and four months after the other.

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Ringling spokeswoman Catherine Ort-Mabry said those workers were reprimanded for "unprofessional behavior" but did not harm the elephants.

"If there is trauma to an animal, it shows up in the animal's behavior," she said. "You can see the obvious affection between the animals and the handlers. The animals are healthy, in good shape and they live great lives."

On the Net:

Ringling Bros.: http://www.ringling.com/AmazingAnimals/home.html

Humane Society: http://www.hsus.org/current/biglie-bigtop.html

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Ex circus worker discusses abuse

Former Ringling Bros. employee speaks out against animal cruelty

By Matthew Verrinder
Staff Reporter

DALY CITY — Before the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus packed up and left town yesterday, thousands of Bay Area families visited the Cow Palace over the six-day run and gazed in wonder at the many amazingly human-like tricks performed by the circus' elephants.

What no one who saw any of those nine shows knows is how cruelly those elephants are treated when the spotlight is not on them, according to an ex-worker at Ringling Bros.

Tom Rider was a "barn man" for Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey from 1997 to 1999, and in constant contact with the elephants because he had to "make sure that the animals got fed and cleaned up after."

He claims that the elephant handlers he worked alongside abused a technique called "hooking" — using a sharp metal hook to poke and strike the animals as part of their "training."

"I never took my eyes off the animals. I used to get yelled at for that," he said. "Being in that position gave me the opportunity to witness all of the abuse that went on at Ringling."

Rider charged, "In the two and a half years that I was employed with Ringling Bros. I saw at least 69 people hired to work with the elephants in the blue unit. Most of these individuals had no

CIRCUS, page 5A

CIRCUS: Animal cruelty alleged

Continued from 1A

prior experience working with elephants.

Rider is now closely affiliated with The Citizens for Cruelty-Free Circuses, a Bay Area animal rights organization that has been vehemently opposed to the use of animals in circuses for the past 14 years.

The citizen's group has a satellite office in Redwood City, where member Pat Cuviello has a wealth of information — in all forms of media — documenting what they believe to be the horrendous living conditions of animals in circuses.

Cuviello and his fellow organization members go to the Cow Palace every year and videotape, sometimes from secret locations, the backstage handling of the elephants.

The most disturbing segment of the tape was filmed last year at the Cow Palace. It shows the handlers hitting, hooking and threatening baby elephants with bull hooks, brooms and pliers.

What isn't shown on the videotape is the broken skin or wound the hook leaves behind, Rider and Cuviello say.

On more than one occasion, Rider said he was ordered to get "wonder dust," a powder used to cover up the wounds left by the puncture.

"The people who film us don't see two minutes before or two minutes after the alleged poking. They hang out there waiting. I know a lot of them by a first-name basis," said Pete Cimini, who is the national veterinary technician for Ringling Bros.

"The bull hook is used as a leash, as a lead. You have to use the poker to get them where you want them to go," he said.

However, according to Rider, at this year's tour stop in San Jose from Aug. 22 to the 26 — before the Daly City shows — Ringling Bros. was cited for two animal rights violations by the Humane Society of Santa Clara County. "One time they were cited for a yak getting loose in a parking lot and the other one was for a hook mark on an elephant which broke the skin, causing harm that was in violation of the Animal Regulatory Act," Rider said.

Veterinary officials from Ringling Bros. had a different version of the events two weeks ago in San Jose.

"We were cited, but upon our vision we saw no indication of a puncture wound," Cimini said. "However, I was cited for the yak getting loose for animal nuisance, but that will be decided in the courts. They have a job to do, we have a job to do."

"The worst thing we had last week in San Jose was one of the elephants had a toenail that had to be worked on," Cimini claimed.

Ringling Bros. has brought its show to the Cow Palace for more than 25 years, and during that time officials of the venue say they have seen no signs of abuse.

"The animals are housed underneath my office, they have more people taking care of them than I see some people taking care of their children," said Cow Palace CEO Michael Wegner. "They are bedded, groomed, exercised, washed, fed, basically pampered. I've been here 26 years and I've never seen them hit them or abuse them. It's their livelihood."

Rider doesn't falter or mince words about the abuse he saw while working as a traveling barn man.

In a sworn affidavit to USDA and Congressional tesitomony on June 13, 2000, Rider said: "Dateline [NBC] was coming to film the animals for animal abuse. Jeff Steele (unit manager) met with us about not abusing the animals while Dateline was here, we were instructed not to hit the animals while being filmed."

"I just wanted to get away from the abuse at Ringling," Rider added.

Matthew Verrinder can be reached via e-mail at mverrinder@smindependent.com or at 652-6729.

AWI 06054

Press & Dakotan

Circus Elephant Treatment Targeted Under New Bill

By: **By SCOTT BAUER**
Associated Press Writer

LINCOLN, Neb. -- Marian Price remembers taking her children and grandchildren to the circus and letting them ride the elephants.

She never thought twice about it.

But when the self-professed animal lover was shown videotapes that she said contained evidence of elephants being mistreated, she was horrified.

That's what motivated Price, a state senator from Lincoln, to introduce a bill Tuesday that would prohibit the use of bullhooks, electrical prods, ax handles and other devices on elephants in Nebraska. The proposed penalty under the bill (LB1000), which would not ban the use of elephants in circuses or zoos, would be up to one year in prison and a $1,000 fine.

No state has passed such a law, but a handful of cities have specifically banned the use of the bullhook, a canelike device with a sharp hook on one end, said Nicole Paquette, general counsel for the Animal Protection Institute.

The animal rights group, through a series of television ads, billboards and other means, has for years accused circuses of animal cruelty.

Use of the bullhook is not cruel, said Tom Albert, vice president of governmental relations for Feld Entertainment, which produces the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus.

The bullhook, which he called a guide, is a tool that is used by circus animal handlers to control and direct elephants' movements in compliance with Ringling Bros. policies, Albert said.

"It's the equivalent of a leash and collar on a dog," he said. "If you can't use a guide with an elephant, you're effectively preventing people from being able to work with elephants. ... Any tool can be misused. But that doesn't make the tool wrong."

Bills such as the one Price introduced have a hidden political and philosophical agenda pushed by animal rights groups, Albert said.

"They don't want elephants in circuses and zoos," Albert said.

The bill is not about stopping circuses, said Tom Rider, who worked as an

elephant handler with Ringling Bros. from 1997 to 1999 and now travels the country speaking out against how circus animals are trained.

What the bill would do is stop circus handlers from hitting or hurting elephants, Rider said.

Rider, who met with Price and bill co-sponsor Ernie Chambers last fall, said the top priority for those who care about elephants is banning the use of the bullhook.

"I saw the use the bullhook. They beat, hit and poked these animals every day," Rider said from Orlando, Fla., where he was following the circus protesting the use of the device. "The bullhook is a weapon. It's not a guide or a tool like the circus likes to say."

Click here to return to story:
http://www.yankton.net/stories/011106/news_20060111016.shtml

API 1419

Subject: Great News: Court Restores Tom's Lawsuit Against Ringling
To: deniz_b@yahoo.com

http://www.upi.com/print.cfm?StoryID=20030204-112311-5744r

Court restores Ringling Bros. abuse suit

By Michael Kirkland
UPI Legal Affairs Correspondent
From the Washington Politics & Policy Desk
Published 2/4/2003 12:15 PM

WASHINGTON, Feb. 4 (UPI) -- A federal appeals court in Washington Tuesday reinstated an animal abuse suit against Ringling Bros. and Barnum and Bailey Circus.

The suit complains that Asian elephants, an endangered species, were being maltreated.

Besides restoring the suit, Tuesday's ruling sets a precedent in one of the country's most important courts, and appears to make organizations more vulnerable to such animal abuse suits if the actions are brought in part by a former insider.

The suit against Ringling Bros. was filed by the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, the Animal Welfare Institute, the Fund for Animals and Thomas Rider, a former circus employee.

The plaintiffs alleged that the Asian elephants were being mistreated in violation of the federal Endangered Species Act.

Ringling personnel, the suit claimed, "beat the elephants with sharp bull hooks, kept the elephants in chains for long periods of time and forcibly removed baby elephants from their mothers at an earlier age than they could normally be weaned in the wild."

Because of this treatment, the elephants show stress whenever they are exhibited, according to the suit, and U.S. Agriculture Department inspectors have seen lesions and rope burns on the animals.

A federal judge earlier dismissed the suit, ruling that the group of plaintiffs does not have "standing" -- they could not show an injury to themselves that could be remedied by a court.

But a federal appeals court panel reversed the judge Tuesday in regard to Rider.

Rider worked for Ringling Bros. from 1997 to 1999 tending the elephant barns and working as an elephant "handler." He told the court he formed "a strong, personal attachment to these animals" as a result.

Rider also told the court he would like to "visit the elephants, but is unwilling to do so because he would suffer 'aesthetic and emotional injury' from seeing the animals unless they are placed in a different setting or are no longer mistreated."

The judges on the appeals court panel said that was good enough for them.

API 1606

"Based upon his desire to visit the elephants (which we must assume might include attending a performance of the circus), his experience with the elephants, his alleged ability to recognize the effects of mistreatment, and what an injunction would accomplish," the appeals court said, "Rider's allegations are sufficient to withstand a motion to dismiss for lack of standing."

Because the rest of the plaintiffs are "seeking relief identical to what Rider seeks," the panel said it did not have to rule on the organizations' standing.

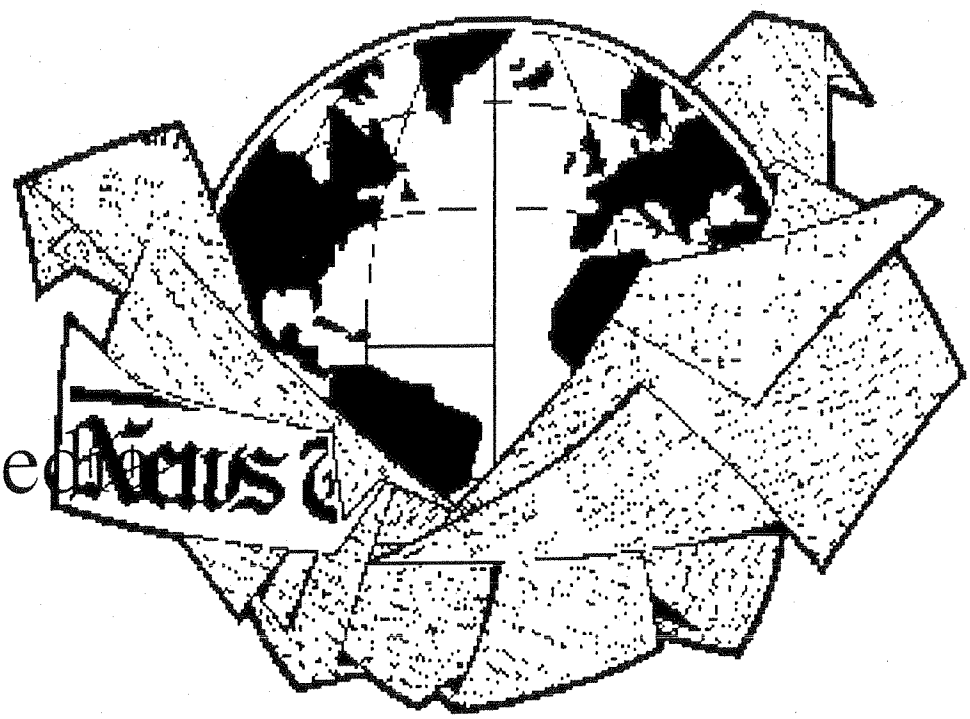
The appeals court panel then reversed the judge's order dismissing the lawsuit.

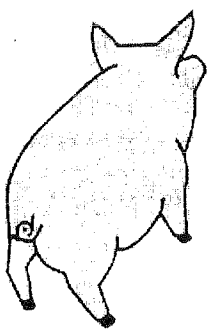
The panel is part of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, which hears regulatory cases from around the country and is generally considered the second most powerful court in the United States, below the Supreme Court itself.

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Dawn Animal World News/media WATCH





PLEASE READ THE INTRODUCTION TO DAWNWATCH, AND THE PAGE ON EMAIL ETIQUETTE, THEN TAKE A LOOK AT **RECENT MEDIA ALERTS** AND **SIGN UP** TO RECEIVE FREE UPDATES.

(Return to DawnWatch Homepage)

RECENT ANIMAL MEDIA STORIES AND ALERTS

HERE ARE THE HEADLINES (linked to full alerts):

ABC's The Practice airs graphic slaughterhouse footage and points to society's double standard - November 18

ELEPHANTS: INDEPENDENT front page story on partial lift of ivory ban, and CBS Early Show fluff piece on Ringling Brothers - Wednesday, November 13

NATIONAL ENQUIRER campaign against zoos dumping surplus animals - November 19 issue

NEW YORK TIMES MAGAZINE cover story slams factory farms but questions animal rights - Sunday, November 10

New Radio show starts Sunday, November 10 - Animal Concerns of Texas

Success of Animal Protection ballot initiatives - gestation crate ban, cockfighting ban, and spay/neuter license plates - USA TODAY, Thursday, November 7

USA TODAY front page and KPCC on hazards of fish consumption - Tuesday, November 5

THE INDEPENDENT (London) front page on P&G attempts to circumvent animal test ban - Monday, November 4

WASHINGTON POST has good news for whales - Saturday, November 2

Seattle station graphic three part series on the slaughter of "downers" - October 31 and Nov 1

ADBSUSTERS magazine big fat double issue on the modern "Appetite" - Nov/Dec 2002

NEW YORK TIMES rave review of Dominion - Sunday, October 27

CBS local Cleveland station does great story on animal rights protests and circus cruelty - Monday, October 21

PARADE MAGAZINE cover story encourages adoption of homeless dogs - Sunday, October 20

FORBES MAGAZINE cover story on company that "turns small mice into big bucks - October 28 issue.

Angier notes that Scully, a vegetarian, is likely to convert many reader's to his diet. However she tells us he suggests that eating meat from "small, independent organic farms, where the cattle are grass-fed and treated humanely" is an option that Scully calls "a decent compromise." Animals raised on those farms are not spared the horror of the slaughterhouse, described by Scully in more disgusting detail than the average person has ever read. Nor is their flesh nutritionally more healthful than plant-based foods. Moreover, the widespread destruction of natural habitat where farmers raise even "grass fed beef" is an environmental disaster. Thus, the DawnWatch position is not that eating such meat is a "decent compromise." Happily, I tend to agree with Angier, that many a reader will be moved, instead, to abandon meat.

You can read the full review at:

http://www.nytimes.com/2002/10/27/books/review/27ANGIERT.html

If you are interested in purchasing Dominion, (perhaps a nice holiday present for a reticent family member or other non animal person in your life), you can do so at:
www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0312261470/dawnwatch/102-2381385-6470539

As I wrote in an earlier review, since I feel the book drastically misrepresents Peter Singer's views on the matter of compassion to humans, I urge anyone buying it to buy, also, Singer's "Writings on an Ethical Life."
www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0060007443/dawnwatch

As a bonus of sorts, Writings on an Ethical Life also includes the preface to and first three chapters of Animal Liberation - the seminal work on that topic.

The prominent New York Times review of Dominion creates a terrific opportunity for letters to the editor with regard to the way non human animals are used and abused by humans. The Times is read more widely than any book, so far, on animal protection; do not underestimate the possible impact of your letters.

The New York Times takes letters at: letters@nytimes.com

Always include your full name, address, and telephone number when writing a letter to the editor.

CBS LOCAL CLEVELAND STATION DOES GREAT STORY ON ANIMAL RIGHTS PROTESTS AND CIRCUS CRUELTY

The Monday, 6pm local news on the CBS station in Cleveland included a terrific story on animal rights protests in the face of the imminent arrival of the Ringling Brothers circus. The

reporter used an almost naked PETA protestor in a cage as a jumping off point for a story not on the protestor but on circus animal cruelty, a story that included footage of the bullhooking and hitting of elephants. There are those in our movement who dislike PETA's use of female sexuality in attracting attention to animal issues. I understand their concerns. However, having heard from some of them that the sexual imagery brings attention only to the women and to PETA and not to the animals, I have to say that my monitoring of media coverage has taught me otherwise. I think the transcript I have made of the CBS circus story will disabuse my subscribers of that particular notion:

Anchor: "The Ringling Brothers circus is coming to town and not everyone is happy about that. An animal rights protestor stripped down almost to her birthday suit to protest. Tiffany Burns reports:

Burns: "In painted tiger stripes and not much else, a PETA protestor made eyes pop in Public Square during lunch hour today. The spectacle of a naked woman in a cage may have made a few people smile but her message is deadly serious.

Protestor: "I am certainly willing to do that if it means getting the message out that circus animals are beaten mercilessly behind the scenes."

Burns: "Tom Rider doesn't protest on street corners but he is equally passionate about animal rights. He used to be an elephant handler for the so called "Greatest Show on Earth."

Rider: "I was able to see what I call the systematic daily abuse. I was able to see the hitting of the elephants. I saw elephants hooked with the bullhook so much that they bled. I have seen scars behind the ears that you could stick your fingers into."

Burns: "He revealed undercover video of elephant trainers hitting and hooking the animals. However a spokesperson for Ringling Brothers says these pictures have been taken out of context.

Joanna Wibee: "What that came from is a series of over 70 hours of video tape including five seconds of something that was questionable, that did go to the USDA and was reviewed and there was no action taken."

Burns: "And so the debate over the use of animals in circuses rages on and most certainly will continue, on Thursday, when the elephants march into Cleveland. In Public Square, I'm Tiffany Burns.

You can view the story on line at:

http://www.hometeam19.com/global/video/popup/pop_index.asp?ClipID=100499&LiveURI=&ShowCC=0&TargetAdsTag=News&CurrentPosition=0

The station has a feedback area which is hard to get into but you can thank Ms Burns for covering the story by emailing her at: tburns@actionnewsnow.com.

Good feedback will encourage her and the station to follow ups or other animal friendly stories.

Thanks to Joyce from IDA for telling us about this terrific piece.

PARADE MAGAZINE COVER STORY ENCOURAGES ADOPTION OF HOMELESS DOGS

Parade Magazine, an insert in 330 Sunday newspapers across America, goes to about 36 million homes, an unparalleled circulation to the best of my knowledge. If you want to smile, take a look at the cover of the Sunday, October 20 issue - you can see it at:

http://www.parade.com/auth/entry.lasso It has snapshots of nine different dogs, purebreds and mixes, and the headline,

"Adopt Me! Millions of Abandoned Dogs wait for homes across America. You can help."

The story inside is by trainers Brian Kilcommons and Sarah Wilson. They tell us that as many as five million dogs and cats are euthanized in the US each year. We read a touching story about Goldie, starved and kept in a basement, who now has a new home where she is a loved and loving member of the family. The article offers tips for finding the perfect dog for you to adopt. It ends with,

"We can all do better for animals. Each of us has something to offer. By adopting, educating ourselves, supporting shelters and rescue groups and being good neighbors to those unable to speak for themselves, we can change lives - one Goldie at a time."

The website has training tips and information to help readers find rescue groups and reputable shelters.

Please take just a moment to thank Parade for focusing on this issue. Parade takes comments at:

www.parade.com/email/index.lasso

Choose "letter to the editor" from the pulldown menu.

You may have to register to post your comment - registration is simple and free.

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Don't believe Ringling's glossy pamphlets about circus animals

9259A

Slowly but surely, the image of animal circuses is crumbling as word leaks out about training methods, traveling conditions and living conditions for the animals. More and more state and local governments, as well as other countries, have banned or restricted circuses with animals.

Ringling hands out glossy pamphlets claiming how well they take care of their animals, but government inspection reports and ex-employees have a different story to tell. Ringling has bred 10 Asian elephants at its Center for Elephant Conservation, but two of those babies are dead. Kenny, who died after being forced to perform even though he was sick, resulted in Ringling being charged with violations of the Animal Welfare Act. Ringling settled the charges with the U.S. Department of Agriculture for $20,000 in 1998. Benjamin drowned in 1999 under suspicious circumstances. Two other babies were found by a USDA inspector to have "large visible lesions on [their] rear legs." Two trainers interviewed during the inspection stated that Doc and Angelica suffered from rope burns while being forcibly separated from their mothers. Ringling considered this method of separation to be "standard industry practice." After consulting with six elephant experts, the USDA told Ringling that "We consider the handling of these two elephants as reported on our inspection report of Feb. 9-10 to be noncompliant with the Animal Welfare Act regulations. ... We believe there is sufficient evidence that the handling of these animals caused unnecessary trauma, behavioral stress, physical harm and discomfort to these two elephants."

A complaint was filed on behalf of the Performing Animal Welfare Society with the USDA in April 2000. The complaint identifies Tom Rider, a former Ringling elephant handler, as a witness to abuse. The complaint charges that "Mr. Rider has identified several handlers and trainers by name who he personally witnessed repeatedly beat the elephants in the Blue Unit, including the babies. Mr. Rider also traveled with the elephants on tour, and said that they live on cramped stock cars, are chained for more than 23 hours per day, and exposed to extreme temperatures, and left to stand in their own waste for hours at a time." Another former Ringling employee executed an affidavit in which abuse was documented. He witnessed the beating of an elephant who had performed poorly. One handler beat Nicole on the head, on the trunk and behind the front feet until the handle of the bull hook shattered. Another handler was beating her at the same time on the lumbar and hindquarter area until the metal hook penetrated the skin and blood began to flow.

PAWS, the Fund for Animals, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, the Animal Welfare Institute and former Ringling employees have filed a civil suit against Ringling for violating the Endangered Species Act and the Animal Welfare Act.

When Ringling hands you a glossy pamphlet, ask them about the 11 animals that have died since 1992. For more info, check out www.circuses.com.

— Terri David
Asheville

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Circus

Asian circus elephants are subjects of civil suit

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From News Dispatches

NEW YORK— Asian elephants belonging to the Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Circus are the subject of a lawsuit .Three organizations — the Fund for Animals, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) and the Animal Welfare Institute — have filed a civil suit against the circus under the federal Endangered Species Act, said an item in *The New York Times*.

The law prohibits killing, harming or harassing endangered species, including Asian elephants, and the suit asks that the circus be forbidden to use elephants any more. Nancy Blaney of the ASPCA was quoted as saying that Ringling Brothers is "harming, harassing and killing elephants" as documented in affidavits.

Plaintiffs have a videotape that shows a circus employee furtively jabbing a long instrument into an elephant's neck. Former circus employees have filed affidavits in the suit.

HERALD-DISPATCH
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Be aware of treatment circus animals receive

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The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and other animal welfare organizations sued Ringling Brothers, and Barnum & Bailey circus, charging them with routinely chaining and beating performing elephants.

In support of these charges were video footage of employees hitting elephants, a recent Department of Agriculture report and sworn accounts by former Ringling employees.

These revealed that elephants are kept in chains for as long as 20 hours per day and from the time they are babies are beaten, hit and prodded with sharp bull hooks.

I was a lover of circus animals as a child, so I understand the desire to attend these seemingly harmless and fun-filled events.

However, a trip to the circus is NOT a way to teach children how to respect and love animals.

Everyone should be aware of the abuse of and cruelty to these innocent beings. As long as people continue to buy tickets, the circus will continue to torment elephants.

Please reconsider before you go.

Megan Williams
Marshall University
Student Contact
ASPCA

STATE JOURNAL-REGISTER
SPRINGFIELD, IL
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Animal activist plans nude, caged protest of circus

By DAVE BAKKE
STAFF WRITER

The Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus will be in Springfield next week, but the show will begin early.

On Thursday, a partially nude woman plans to paint herself in tiger stripes and sit in a cage on the Old Capitol Plaza as a protest against what she says is animal abuse by the circus.

Kristie Phelps, a 23-year-old campaign coordinator for People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, travels the country doing the same thing in other cities where the circus appears. Today, she will protest in Rockford, and Wednesday, she'll be in Peoria.

Phelps gets plenty of attention from passers-by, the media and the police, who have arrested her for public indecency. In October, she was arrested by Chicago police. She faces arrest in Springfield as well.

"If someone is exposing themselves like this in public, we'll probably have to arrest her," said Cmdr. Jim Burton of the Springfield Police Department. "People should know that we don't allow that type of activity. Irregardless of what the issue is, we still have to enforce the law.

"There are probably more appropriate places to be nude. There are other ways to do things properly."

Phelps said Monday that PETA protesters have disrobed and gotten into the cage numerous times. She has been arrested twice. In one instance, she said, the charges eventually were dropped. In Chicago, she had to pay a small fine.

"But whenever we do it, we get a chance to talk to people who were considering going to the circus and had no idea how they treat their animals," Phelps said. "To me, getting arrested is nothing compared to the suffering these animals endure."

> *"To me, getting arrested is nothing compared to the suffering these animals endure."*
>
> —KRISTIE PHELPS
> CAMPAIGN COORDINATOR
> PEOPLE FOR THE ETHICAL
> TREATMENT OF ANIMALS

Ringling Brothers is being sued by several animal-rights groups under the Endangered Species Act. The groups — the ASPCA, The Fund for Animals and the Animal Welfare Institute — charge that circus personnel keep elephants in chains and beat them with clubs with sharp metal hooks on the ends. A former Ringling Brothers animal trainer is cooperating with the accusers. The case is pending in federal court in Washington, D.C. PETA is not a party to that lawsuit.

While circus representatives would not discuss specific allegations due to the pending lawsuit, they did issue a statement saying that, overall, the case has no legal merit. The circus says this is part

See CIRCUS on page 10

CIRCUS

From page 9

of a campaign by animal activists to remove animals from all forms of entertainment.

"We believe allegations made by the activists to the media to be unsubstantiated," Ringling Brothers said in its statement, "and to be contradicted by findings from more than 40 inspections that federal, state and local officials have conducted in the last two years."

The circus distributes substantial information to back up its claim that its animals are treated humanely. It points out that the animals are inspected by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, are protected by law, receive around-the-clock veterinary care and live longer, healthier lives than do their counterparts in the wild.

> *"We believe allegations made by the activists to the media to be unsubstantiated."*
>
> —RINGLING BROTHERS

Circus representatives also say that a 1999 "Dateline NBC" broadcast on this subject included examinations of the elephants before and after performances by an animal behaviorist from Texas A&M University. He found that the animals were normal and, he said, "finding it very comfortable and tolerating it very well, and they probably perceive it as being a fine environment."

Dave Bakke can be reached at 788-1541 or dave.bakke@sj-r.com

PATRIOT-NEWS
HARRISBURG, PA
FRIDAY 102,060
JUN 1 2001

Burrelles

"I did complain to Ringling Bros. and they did nothing."
Thomas Rider, former elephant keeper for Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus



PROVIDED TO THE PATRIOT-NEWS

A trainer hits an elephant with a stick while he holds a whip in the other hand in this image taken from video.

Ex-employee alleges abuse of elephants

Ringling Bros. spokeswoman calls case 'meritless'

BY IRVIN KITTRELL III
OF THE PATRIOT-NEWS

92594

A former employee of Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus claims its handlers abuse performing elephants and has a tape showing the endangered Asian animals being struck.

Thomas Rider joined American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Animal Welfare Institute and the Fund for Animals to sue Ringling Bros. in July 2000 under the Endangered Species Act, which prohibits the harming of any animal that is listed as endangered.

The lawsuit, filed in federal court in Washington, D.C., contends Ringling Bros. routinely beats elephants to train them and chains them for long periods of time.

"This is about the elephants, this isn't about me," said Rider who worked for the circus as an elephant keeper from 1997 to 1999. "I want to see the abuse stopped. If we win this lawsuit, Ringling Bros. would have to get rid of the elephants."

Catherine Ort-Mabry, spokeswoman for the circus, called the lawsuit "meritless." She said Ringling Bros. moved to dismiss the lawsuit in late 2000. The motion is pending in court.

"We believe the allegations ... to be unsubstantiated and to be contradicted by the findings from more than 40 inspections that federal, state and local officials have conducted in the last two years," she said. "We are committed to working to save the Asian elephant for future generations and to providing people everywhere an opportunity to see these animals for themselves."

Rider's allegations come as the circus performs at Hershey Park Arena until Tuesday. Hershey Park spokesman Garrett Gallia said his company has heard of the lawsuit pending against Ringling Bros., but he was not aware of the specific allegation or the supporting facts of the complaint.

"Ringling Bros. has told us that the complaint is meritless," Gallia said. "Ringling Bros. has assured us that they have the highest standards for the care of all their animals."

Rider said he has witnessed some of the abuse.

Rider worked as an elephant keeper for about 22 months, Ort-Mabry said. Rider, who left the circus on amicable terms, said most of the cruelty to the elephants is done by the handlers.

"These elephants are beat on a daily basis," Rider said. "This is something the public needs to be made award of. If they do the slightest thing wrong, the get hit."

Ort-Mabry said Rider never told the circus about the abuse while he was employed, something that Rider denies.

"I did complain to Ringling Bros. and they did nothing," he said.

Rider also produced a videotape of elephants being struck by circus employees. Ort-Mabry said she has seen the tape and the handlers who did strike the elephants were reprimanded.

"We had our medical team go in and evaluate if the elephants were harmed physically or emotionally," she said. "The elephants are fine."

Irvin Kittrell III may be reached at 255-8412 or ikittrell@patriot-news.com.

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The Source for Brand New HOMES

Posted: 03:47 PM PST Monday, December 17, 2001.

Elephant Abuse Charge Puts Big Top on Trial

BY MICHAEL KAHN

SAN JOSE, Calif. (Reuters) - America's most famous circus -- described as ``the Cruelest Show on Earth" by animal rights activists -- faced its critics on Monday as a trial got underway over charges that an animal handler abused an elephant at a performance this year.

Defense lawyers say the case against Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey trainer Mark Oliver Gebel is a legal charade designed to bring down the Big Top that has thrilled generations of children.

But animal rights activists say the trial will prove allegations that circus elephants are often treated brutally in the name of entertainment.

``This is a chance for the courts to say we've seen blood, we've seen a mark," said Tom Rider, a former Ringling Brothers barn worker who now campaigns against the circus.

``Win or lose, it is about the elephants. This is about their treatment," he said.

Santa Clara Superior Court Judge Linda Condron on Monday declined a defense motion to dismiss the charges, saying there was enough evidence to proceed with what could be an explosive legal confrontation between the circus industry and its animal rights critics.

The Gebel trial marks the first time activists have been able to invoke a decade-old California state law prohibiting elephant abuse which was passed after five trainers brutally beat an elephant at the San Diego Zoo in 1989.

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CIRCUS ROYALTY

The case targets a member of circus royalty in a rare criminal complaint against the self-described ``Greatest Show on Earth.'' Gebel has been charged with allegedly gouging an elephant with a stick during a performance in San Jose in August. If convicted on the misdemeanor charge, the 31-year-old trainer could face six months in jail and a $1,000 fine.

Gebel, 31, is the son of the late Ringling Brothers animal trainer Gunther Gebel-Williams, who was dubbed ``the Lord of the Rings'' for his performances with elephants, tigers, lions and other animals over two decades as the circus' undisputed star.

The younger Gebel literally grew up in the circus, and his official biography says that he began playing with elephants at the age of 2.

According to the complaint, however, Gebel used a circus implement called an ankus -- a stick with a metal hook -- to repeatedly prod and poke an elephant named ``Asia'' in an effort to get her to enter the circus ring.

Several witnesses, among them a San Jose police sergeant and investigators for the Humane Society of Santa Clara Valley, reported that elephant suddenly rushed forward, and that they later found two small puncture wounds behind her left leg.

Ringling Brothers has been unstinting in its support of Gebel, who has strongly denied the abuse charge.

``This is an exemplary young man. He has spent his whole life with the circus and these animals. He lives with them and he plays with them,'' Ringling Brothers spokeswoman Catherine Ort-Mabry said Monday.

Gebel, dressed in a black suit, was in the courtroom Monday with his mother Sigrid, herself a former animal trainer, and Kenneth Feld, the chairman and CEO of Feld Entertainment, the private company which owns the Ringling Brothers circus. All declined to comment to reporters.

A NUISANCE SUIT?

But Gebel's lawyer, James McManis, argued forcefully that the charges represented nothing more than a ``nuisance case'' brought by hard-core activists opposed to any use of wild animals in live performances.

The elephant was fine, its alleged wound -- described as a coin-sized gouge -- was healed and the show should be allowed to go on, he said.

The Santa Clara Deputy District Attorney prosecuting the case, Carolyn Powell, has said her office received hundreds of letters

and e-mails supporting its decision to prosecute Gebel. She has said the case is going forward based on the evidence. "The police reports indicated he violated the law," she said Monday.

Jury selection was expected to start on Tuesday, with opening arguments later in the week.

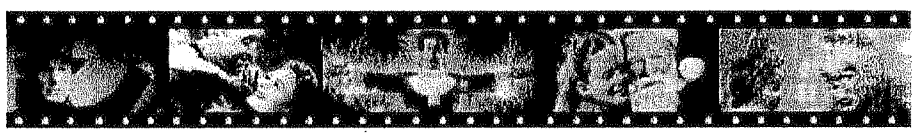
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Katherine Meyer

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To: <undisclosed-recipients:>
Sent: Tuesday, April 06, 2004 3:49 PM
Attach: news.nationalgeographic.com_news_2004_04_0406_040406_circuselephants.html
Subject: Elephant Abuse Charges Add Fuel to Circus Debate

http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2004/04/0406_040406_circuselephants.html

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Elephant Abuse Charges Add Fuel to Circus Debate

Maryann Mott
for National Geographic News
April 6, 2004

Should elephants perform in circuses?

It's a simple question that's caused a lot of controversy over the years.

At the heart of the matter are allegations by animal-welfare activists that brutal training methods are used to coerce elephants—which can weigh as much as 8,000 pounds (3,600 kilograms)—into performing tricks such as headstands.

Read the full story >>



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activists say circu
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force elephants to p
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Activists aren't the only ones concerned. Some three dozen communities in 15 U.S. states ban, restrict, or regulate animal performances. Localities that have banned circuses, rodeos, and other animal acts include Stamford, Connecticut; Hollywood, Florida; Boulder, Colorado; and Pasadena, California.

Denver may soon be added to the list. Residents there will vote in August on whether to ban circuses with animal acts from performing within the city limits. The city council was obliged to put the question on the ballot after a 15-year-old girl collected the required 6,000 signatures.

In Massachusetts citizens will vote on a statewide ban on circus animals later this year.

The use of elephants, the largest of the land mammals, for amusement draws particular umbrage from activists. About 300 Asian and African elephants are believed to be living in North America's zoos and circuses. Many of them are kept in conditions that are far removed from their natural habitat of large tracts of wilderness. Circuses particularly are under fire.

Dominique Jando, creative director of the Circus Center in San Francisco, says only a small, vocal group of people opposes circuses with performing animals. The nonprofit organization operates the San Francisco School of Circus Arts, the New Pickle Circus (a professional performing company), and a student-performing troupe, the San Francisco Youth Circus. The New Pickle Circus is one of about 20 circuses in the U.S. that does not use animals in its shows.

Circus operators frequently survey audiences, and the vast majority of people want to see animals, especially elephants, Jando said.

More Informa

Elephants and

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"Endangered" species is cons danger of extir throughout all significant por range. "Threat means a specie considered in c becoming enda

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"We are in a very urban civilization, which means people will complain about wild animals in captivity or complain about methods of training, which is completely ridiculous," he said. "It doesn't mean that there have not been people brutalizing animals. But it's not a rule—far from it."

Cruelty and Ignorance

Animal trainer Pat Derby has worked on the set of popular television shows like *Flipper, Gun Smoke,* and *Lassie.* What she discovered behind the glitz and glamour of Hollywood, she says, was a profession rampant with cruelty and ignorance.

In 1984 Derby founded the Performing Animal Welfare Society (PAWS), which operates three large sanctuaries in California for abused animal actors.

Currently five Asian elephants live at one of the sanctuaries.

Derby said she has developed a method of elephant handling that does not use chains or bull hooks—three-foot-long (one-meter-long) tools shaped like fireplace pokers.

Derby's facility was the first to use the "nondominance" technique successfully, she says, and it has been a model for elephant handlers around the country.

Unfortunately, the method won't work with circus elephants. Using force to bully and boss the giant creatures, Derby says, is the only way to quickly load them into a truck or trailer for transportation—or to have them perform on cue.

The constant traveling, up to 50 weeks a year, is also detrimental to the mental and physical well-being of circus animals, she said. Elephants are transported from one city to the next in railroad cars or truck semi-trailers. Trips can last from a few hours to several days.

"The release of elephants from traveling shows is critical," Derby said. "They really don't have the opportunity in a circus community for any kind of a good quality of life."

In the wild, elephants migrate over long distances and live in highly intelligent and well-structured social groups. But in circuses, Derby said, they don't have much opportunity to bond with other elephants. And if they do, those

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relationships are often severed when one is traded or sold.

Behavioral Studies

Ted Friend, a professor at Texas A&M University's Department of Animal Science in College Station, has conducted several behavioral studies on circus elephants, including one on the effects of transportation.

A time-lapse video camera was used to record the behavior of elephants while traveling in semi-trailers and railroad cars. The animals were owned by four circus operators: Clyde Beatty (now called Cole Brothers), Hawthorn Corporation, Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey, and Carson & Barnes.

Elephants were frequently observed weaving—a repetitive shifting of weight from side to side. While doing this, they also ate, threw hay on their backs, and looked out the window.

The 2001 study concluded that weaving during transport did not appear to be indicative of poor welfare, because the elephants were engaged in other activities and not in a trancelike state.

In a telephone interview Friend said the behavior is not an indication that the animals are psychotic or stressed.

Increased weaving has also been observed prior to elephants being given hay or water and before performing. Friend, who is a certified animal behaviorist, believes the elephants weave repetitively in anticipation, or excitement, of what is about to occur.

The study was funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), which conducts routine inspections of circuses to make sure they are in compliance with the Animal Welfare Act.

Elephants Impounded

The USDA is the only agency with authority to enforce the Animal Welfare Act.

On March 17, 2004, APHIS inspectors, for the first time in the history of the agency, ordered the removal of an entire heard of circus elephants from an Illinois company because of mistreatment and mishandling.

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John F. Cuneo, owner of Hawthorn Corporation, admitted guilt on 19 charges of violating the Animal Welfare Act, including failing to handle elephants in a manner that did not cause physical harm, behavioral stress, and trauma.

The 16 elephants, two of which tested positive for tuberculosis, must be placed in new homes by August 15. The company also agreed to pay a fine of U.S. $200,000.

While encouraged by the USDA's settlement with Hawthorn, animal rights activists claim federal investigators don't enforce the law when it comes to Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey, one of the biggest, and most famous, circuses in the country.

Michael Markarian, president of the Fund For Animals in Silver Spring, Maryland, says his organization has compiled a report containing hundreds of records obtained through the Freedom of Information Act. The report shows the USDA closed investigations prematurely and overrode its own inspectors' determinations of violation of the law—allowing Ringling Brothers to claim that there is no truth to any allegations that it abuses its elephants.

The Fund for Animals, the Animal Welfare Institute, and the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) filed a lawsuit against Ringling Brothers in 2000 for alleged mistreatment, including beating its Asian elephants with bull hooks, constant chaining, and forcible separation of babies from their mothers.

The lawsuit is the first of its kind and is expected to be heard early next year in the federal district court in Washington, D.C., says attorney Katherine Meyer, who represents the animal-welfare groups.

Spokespeople for the USDA and Ringling Brothers said they do not comment on pending litigation.

In a September 2003 press release, Ringling states, "The fact that our record is an admirable one is clearly upsetting to ASPCA. Unable to find evidence to support its wild accusations against Ringling Bros., ASPCA has turned on the USDA in an apparent attempt to intimidate this federal agency."

Ringling "Has an Excellent Record"

On its Web site, Ringling states that the display and care of elephants and other performing animals are subject to

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animal-welfare laws and regulations at the federal, state, and local levels. "Ringling Bros. has an excellent record of care for all our animals," the circus company says.

Tom Rider, a former Ringling Brothers employee, travels around the country speaking out against what he calls the "systematic daily abuse of circus elephants."

>From June 1997 to November 1999, Rider worked as an afternoon "barn man" whose job was to feed and clean up after the elephants.

He claims to have seen handlers hitting elephants with bull hooks behind their heads, legs, and ears. Afterward, he said, the elephants had large, bleeding wounds.

"Most of the time the hitting was done because they wouldn't do the command fast enough," Rider said. "One time, my boss was mad at his wife and came in and beat the elephants."

Rider said he also has videotapes showing harsh, abusive treatment by Ringling Brothers employees. The footage, he said, was taken between 1992 and 2003.

Ringling says its training methods are based on reinforcement in the form of food rewards and words of praise. The company says verbal or physical abuse and the withholding of food or water are strictly prohibited.

Rider is part of the lawsuit against Ringling. In the past his traveling expenses were paid for by the ASPCA and the Fund for Animals. Rider is currently being paid by a California woman, but he would not reveal her name or comment further on the relationship.

"I'm not in this for a living," Rider said. "I've devoted my life to these elephants, and until these elephants are out of the Ringling Brothers circus, this is what I'm going to do."

Endangered Species?

The controversy surrounding circus elephants and their treatment may be dying a natural death—not because of city bans or a truce between activists and circuses, but because the captive elephant population in North America's zoos and circuses is not reproducing fast enough to sustain itself.

Whereas there are an estimated 300 elephants currently in

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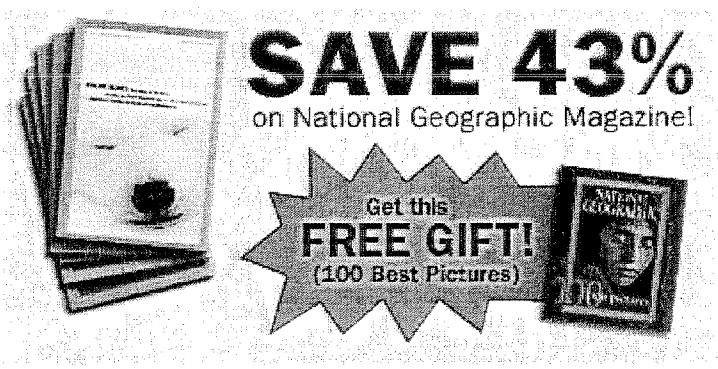
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captivity in North American zoos and circuses, one study predicts that in 50 years only 17 elephants will be left, and those will be too old to breed.

The Endangered Species Act currently prohibits the import of Asian elephants without a permit from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. To obtain a permit, requests must show that the activity would enhance the survival of the elephants in the wild and that the animals would not be used primarily for commercial purposes.

In October a change to the law was proposed that would allow zoos and circuses to import Asian elephants. The resulting public opposition caused the agency to review the proposed amendment. A final decision has not been made, according to a spokeswoman for the Fish and Wildlife Service.



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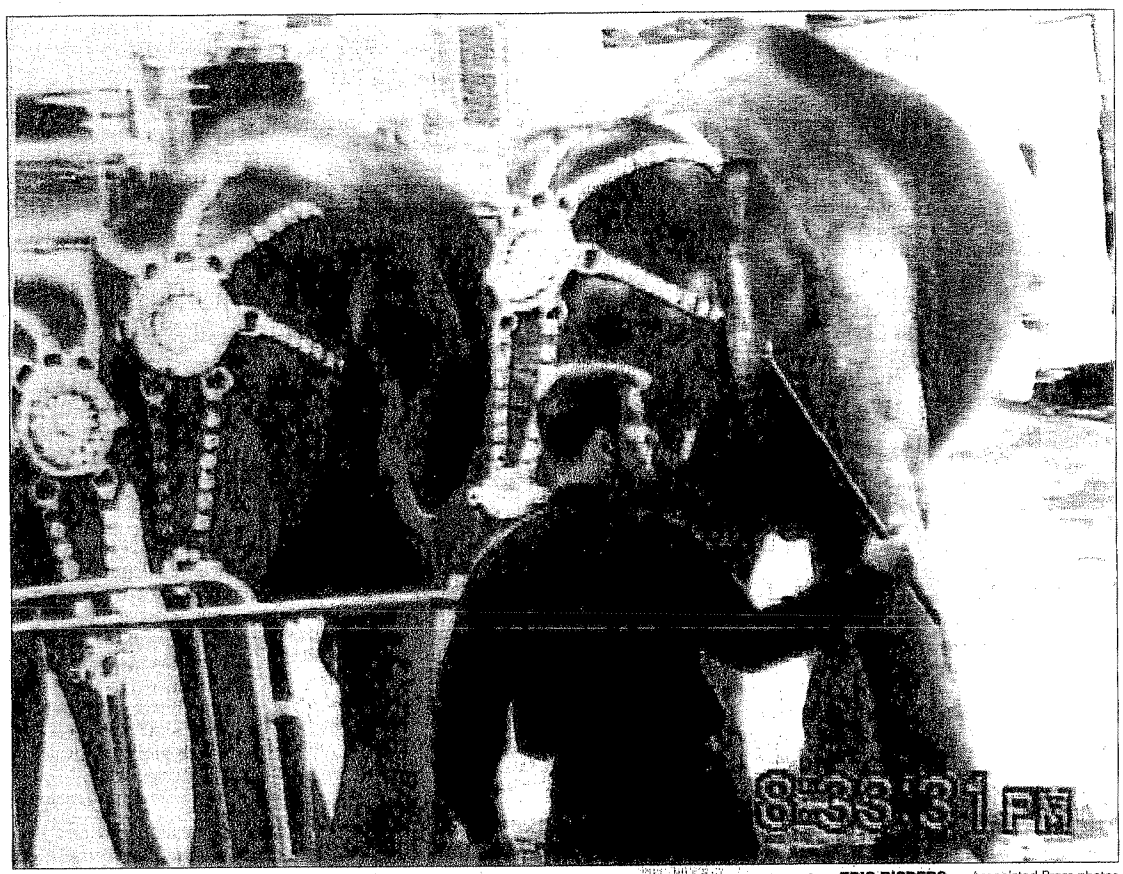
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SATURDAY
December 15, 2001
San Mateo County Times

ELEPHANT ABUSE?

Ringling Bros. performer faces animal cruelty charges



ERIC RISBERG — Associated Press photos

SHOWN IS A VIDEO frame of an unidentified Ringling Bros. elephant keeper raising a bull hook toward a group of elephants in Daly City, in September 2000. The video was shot by animal rights activist Pat Cuviello.

County activist leads charge against circus

FROM STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

THIS IS THE moment animal activists have all been waiting for: One of the biggest stars of the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus is going on trial for allegedly abusing an elephant with a metal hook just before a show.

Protesters have complained for years that circus animals are trained with painful methods and inhumanely chained, caged and handled. But few circus workers have ever faced criminal charges.

Activists hope Monday's trial of animal trainer Mark Oliver Gebel, son of the legendary circus showman Gunther Gebel-Williams, will lend more credibility to their allegations against "The Greatest Show on Earth."

"This is going to be a very interesting trial, mainly because it is Ringling, which bills itself as the top-of-the-line circus, with the best record, best resources, best treatment of animals," said Richard Farinato of the Humane Society of the United States.

Redwood City resident Pat Cuviello, an animal rights activist with Citizens for Cruelty Free Circuses,

Please see **Circus,** NEWS-20



PAT CUVIELLO USES his video Hi-8 camera to show images of Ringling Bros. trainer Mark Oliver Gebel (left) using a bull hook to hit an elephant, at his home in Redwood City.

PL 06078

Circus: Company stands behind its animal trainer

Continued from NEWS-1

hopes he can bolster the case against Gebel with a 15-minute videotape he has of alleged abuse by Ringling Bros. trainers during a three-week visit to the Bay Area in late August.

Gebel, 31, is seen for a few seconds reaching underneath an elephant for an ankus — a three-foot metal hook that resembles a fireplace poker. Gebel has been the focus of a pending criminal case involving an incident when he was allegedly seen using an ankus to puncture the skin of an elephant named Asia.

The incident occurred in San Jose on Aug. 25 after inspectors from the Santa Clara Humane Society saw Gebel allegedly use the ankus to prod the elephants before a show at the Compaq Center.

Humane Society officers then noticed what they believe were blood marks on Asia's leg. They filed a complaint against Gebel with the Santa Clara County District Attorney's Office, which has since charged Gebel with animal abuse.

Cuviello's tape shows Gebel allegedly using the ankus on an elephant near Daly City's Cow Palace a few days after the San Jose incident. Cuviello, 41, is hoping the Santa Clara County District Attorney's will use the videotape as evidence against Gebel.

Jury selection for the case begins Monday.

Catherine Ort-Mabry, a spokeswoman for Ringling Bros., said the company supports Gebel and that the charges are unwarranted and politically driven.

> *"(The humane society) monitored us constantly looking for something. We have a very strong animal care commitment. (Gebel) upholds the policies that animals should be cared for in a kind, humane way."*
>
> **Catherine Ort-Mabry**
> Ringling Bros. spokeswoman

"(The humane society) monitored us constantly looking for something," she said. "We have a very strong animal care commitment. (Gebel) upholds the policies that animals should be cared for in a kind, humane way."

The ankus, she said, has been a tool used by elephant handlers for years and is simply used as a guide to direct elephants.

But Tom Rider, a former Ringling Bros. animal caretaker, said the animal trainers use the ankus in a very aggressive manner, often piercing the elephant's skin to elicit a certain behavior.

To cover up any blood, Rider said animal trainers will use "wonder dust," a gray-colored substance patted onto the wound, dries the blood and is not visible to the circus audience.

"They have to beat an elephant into submission to make it do tricks," said Rider, who left Ringling Bros. because of its alleged mistreatment of animals.

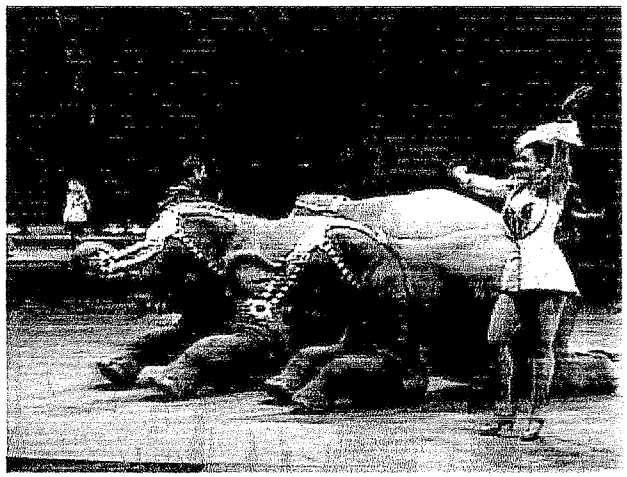
In a letter dated Sept. 25, Jim McManis, Gebel's attorney, requested the Santa Clara District Attorney's Office dismiss the case, calling the investigation by the humane society officers "incomplete."

McManis also said a veterinarian with Ringling Bros. examined Asia following the incident and found no skin puncture on the elephant.

He went on to suggest the humane officers acted with bias because of their affiliation with animal rights organizations that "affirmatively denounce the use of animals in circuses."

Leslie Baikie-Khavari, a spokeswoman for the Santa Clara Humane Society, defended the humane officers and said they simply reported an incident they felt was inappropriate.

Elephant Activist Follows Circus Into Town



Abused In Private?

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Elephant Activist Follows Circus Into Town

Story by Jeremy Finley Posted 6/13/01 9:30:00 AM

Is The Greatest Show On Earth mistreating its main attraction? A former Ringling Brothers employee says elephants are abused on a regular basis. When the circus rolled into town this week, Tom Ryder showed up as well. He's on a mission to expose what he says really happens beneath the big top.

An elephant enjoying a bath, others roaming without chains: the sights of a behind-the-scenes media tour given by Ringling Brothers. It's a far cry from video of a circus worker stabbing at an elephant— video captured by animal activists. It's something Ryder says he saw with his own eyes. "I saw this," he tells KARK News 4. "I mean, it's every day."

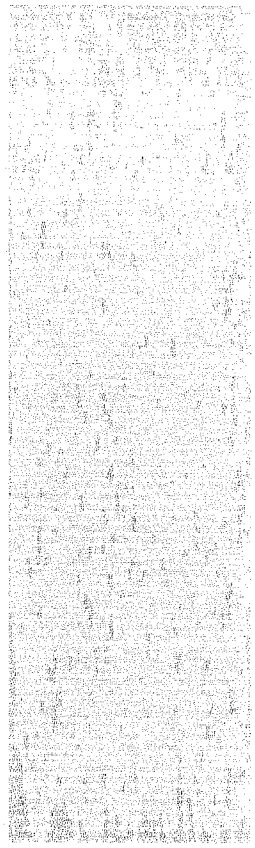
Ryder worked for Ringling Brothers as an elephant caretaker for two years and he says the tools used to train the animals are also used to abuse them. "They would take them like baseball bats, hit them on the legs, hit them in the ears— with big cuts and gashes," he says.

Once this video surfaced, the circus says it took action. According to a spokesperson, "The tape came to our attention. We addressed the issue and they were reprimanded. "What's important to remember is that our standards for care are very big."

Circus officials say great care is taken with the elephants and that they will not tolerate abuse. But Ryder disagrees, joining with the animal activists who finance his travels in filing a lawsuit against the circus. "I hope it wakes the public up to the fact of what Ringling is doing," he says.

Ringling Brothers has filed a motion to dismiss that lawsuit. Ryder has testified before Congress about his allegations of abuse— and he continues to follow the circus wherever it goes.

Watch KARK News 4 for more on this story!



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7TH STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

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Philadelphia Daily News

April 23, 2002 Tuesday

ECTION: FE

ENGTH: 598 words

EADLINE: Stu Bykofsky: 8 minutes of fun;
LEPHANTS PAY A PRICE FOR YOUR ENTERTAINMENT

ODY:
I DON'T want to see them hooked like they're hooked. I don't want to see them hained like they're chained. I don't want to see them jammed into railroad ars," says the Elephant Man. "For what? Eight minutes of the public's ntertainment?"

The Elephant Man, Tom Rider, pushes a hank of brown hair off his forehead, olls another cigarette and talks passionately about what he calls "my girls," he performing elephants he came to love as a "barn man" employed by the ingling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus from 1997 to 1999.

He hates the life his "girls" have. He travels the country, just as the ircus does (his expenses paid by the ASPCA), to speak for his "girls," who an't speak for themselves.

I used to like the circus. I was taken as a kid and, later, took my own kids. aybe you do, too.

My favorites were the animal acts, because I like animals so much.

It took a while for it to sink in that my desire to see animal acts resulted n misery, lifelong confinement and perhaps pain for the animals.

So I swore off circuses. Rodeos, too.

Not because they are unspeakably brutal on their face - although some ircuses are theaters of cruelty - but because they are inhumane by their ature. The hooks Rider, 51, refers to are bull hooks, short poles topped with urved steel hooks and sharp points that are used - the circus admits - to guide" the animals. The circus says they don't hurt the animal.

In gentle hands, that's correct, agrees Philadelphia Zoo elephant keeper lichael Seeley, who adds that "a person can take a tool and abuse it."

That's what was revealed in a blood-curdling hidden-camera videotape made by nimal rights activists earlier this year at another circus. In it, an elephant 'trainer" orders his staff to "sink that hook into 'em. When you hear that screaming, then you know you got their attention."

That "would not be tolerated," says Ringling public relations director Jennifer Maninger, who says animal activists often try to tar all circuses with he same brush.

But you don't have to beat a beast to harm it. You can deprive it of its atural environment and behavior.

When Rider talks about chains, he means the 22 hours a day elephants might be hained.

Not anymore, says Maninger. For the past three years, most Ringling elephants ave been kept in open pens, except for overnight, when they are chained for afety. She admits this policy is in part a response to complaints by animal ctivists.

This means Ringling is listening. That's a good thing.

When he was a Ringling "barn man," Rider later told the USDA in a sworn tatement, elephants were beaten, or at least physically abused, "six out of even days a week."

"That is simply not true," counters Maninger, who adds that Rider never omplained to management at the time.

"I reported all the time to Randy Peterson, the superintendent of animals," eplies Rider. "His response was, 'It's discipline.' That's the unit manager. ho should I go to, [circus owner] Kenneth Feld?"

Maninger repeats Rider did not complain to management.

I can't solve that, but I can tell you why I think circuses are inhumane by ature.

Elephants are highly social and intelligent. It's inhumane to tear them from heir family units, ship them around by rail on a two-year "work" schedule with nly a three-week break. It's inhumane to store them in parking lots, garages, asements, whatever's available. Nothing could be farther from their natural nvironment.

Are they happy?

Would you be?

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E-mail Stu Bykofsky at stubyko@phillynews.com.

OAD-DATE: April 23, 2002

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Published Wednesday
January 11, 2006

Elephants would get protection from bullhooks

BY MARTHA STODDARD
WORLD-HERALD BUREAU

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LINCOLN - State Sen. Marian Price of Lincoln balked at banning circuses from Nebraska, but the Big Top may not be the same if she succeeds with a bill she introduced Tuesday.

Legislative Bill 1000 would ban the use of bullhooks, electrical prods, baseball bats and various other techniques used to train and discipline elephants.

Her bill also would prohibit those who own, house or work with elephants from having the banned devices in an elephant's presence.

Price, who has introduced animal welfare bills previously, said she was approached by people concerned about the treatment of elephants in circuses. She said she was shocked by the information they presented, including hidden-camera videos from behind the scenes at circuses.

"I was horrified when I saw how they mistreated animals," Price said. "It was terrible, terrible cruelty to elephants."

That's why she agreed, along with State Sen. Ernie Chambers of Omaha, to introduce what would be the nation's first state ban on certain elephant handling techniques.

"It's a great day in Nebraska for the elephants," said Tom Rider, who cared for elephants for Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus from 1997 through 1999.

Rider now works to end what he calls cruelty to the giant animals. He is a plaintiff in a lawsuit brought under the Endangered Species Act alleging mistreatment of Asian elephants by Ringling Bros. and its parent company, Feld Entertainment.

He said bullhooks, about $3^1/_2$ feet long and shaped like fireplace pokers, are commonly used in training and disciplining circus elephants. He said the devices have been used to wound and beat animals.

"They're not a guide or a tool," Rider said. "They're weapons."

Tom Albert, vice president of governmental relations for Feld Entertainment, which produces the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus, said use of the bullhook is not cruel. He said it is a tool used by handlers to control and direct elephants' movements in compliance with Ringling Bros. policies.

"It's the equivalent of a leash and collar on a dog," he said. "If you can't use a guide with an elephant, you're effectively preventing people from being able to work with elephants. . . . Any tool can be misused. But that doesn't make the tool wrong."

Albert also said bills such as Price's are not necessary because existing animal cruelty laws already prevent elephants from being treated improperly.

Rider said banning use of bullhooks and similar techniques should not stop circuses from coming to Nebraska or stop them from bringing their elephants.

Jack Schram, circus chairman of the Tangier Shrine in Omaha, isn't so sure.

API 1420

He said he isn't an animal trainer and doesn't know if the groups contracted to bring elephant acts to the Shrine Circus use the techniques in Price's bill to train elephants. He said he does know that performers use the hooks only to guide elephants.

"These people love their animals, and the animals love them," Schram said. "Anything that restricts the showing of animals

would be detrimental."

The bill would not apply to accredited zoos.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

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API 1421

Elephants' wounds bring no charges

DA: Evidence lacking of abuse at circus

Associated Press

SAN JOSE – Investigators said they had evidence that Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus mistreated elephants during a stint here in August, but prosecutors said there wasn't enough proof to bring criminal charges, according to a report in Sunday's San Jose Mercury News.

Officers for the Humane Society of Santa Clara Valley and a San Jose police sergeant sought charges after documenting cuts and puncture wounds on seven Asian elephants. Santa Clara County Deputy District Attorney Robin Wakshull said too many questions could not be answered.

"We had no way to determine the circumstances under which (the injuries) occurred, and we were not able to identify a perpetrator," Wakshull said.

Catherine Ort-Mabry, spokeswoman for Feld Entertainment, Ringling's parent company, denied the accusations, saying handlers use positive reinforcement to build trust with the animals – making punishment unnecessary.

Ringling Bros. said in a written statement to the Mercury News that the circus is "committed to the highest standards in the care of all our animal performers, and we deliver exemplary, hands-on care 365 days a year."

According to a report filed with the district attorney's office by humane officer Christine Franco, seven of the 13 elephants examined during performances in August had injuries behind or on the back of their left ears. "Some of the elephants had scars behind their left ears. Almost all of the injuries appeared to be fresh, with bright red blood present at the wound sites," the report said.

Sgt. Lanette Williams, a former state humane officer who was asked to join the investigation, also noticed the wounds reported by Humane Society investigators.

Ort-Mabry said the circus' veterinarian, Dr. William Lindsay, "completely disagrees with (the) allegations." She said Lindsay told her "if blood were present, it was likely because he drew blood for testing behind the ears of a number of elephants that day."

Ort-Mabry also accused Williams of having an agenda, claiming that circus employees noticed her in a photograph of protesters in Oakland. Williams denied she was part of a protest.

Meanwhile, animal activist Tom Rider of Peoria, Ill., a former Ringling employee who quit voluntarily, said he saw the elephant handlers strike animals repeatedly with a bull hook or ankus. Ort-Mabry denied Rider's charges.

The Performing Animal Welfare Society, of Galt, recently filed an animal cruelty complaint based on Rider's allegations with the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Linda Blair, 'Malcolm's' Mom, Author Martha Grimes, Former Ringling Employee, And Animal Rights Group Join Forces to Expose Ringling Bros. Animal Cruelty

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LOS ANGELES, July 23 /PRNewswire/ -- Last Chance for Animals (LCA), a national, non-profit animal rights organization, will be hosting two events on Wednesday, July 25th, the opening night of Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus's Los Angeles shows. Actresses Linda Blair and Jane Kaczmarek and author Martha Grimes will be on hand to discuss alleged animal abuse on the part of the circus at a West Hollywood press conference. That evening, LCA will hold a peaceful protest outside of the L.A. Sports Arena along with neighborhood children holding a banner which reads: "Kids Against Ringling."

Actress Linda Blair, star of "The Exorcist" and a long-time animal rights activist, will join former Ringling Bros. employee Tom Rider, "Malcolm in the Middle" star Jane Kaczmarek, and best-selling author Martha Grimes for a press conference in Salon One of the Bel Age Hotel. At 1pm, the four will show never before seen footage of Ringling Bros. employees striking elephants and display the types of chains used to bind the circus's elephants. "After my years working with elephants in the circus, I can tell you that they live in confinement; they are beaten all the time when they don't perform properly," alleges Rider, who was employed by Ringling from June 1997 to November 1999.

From 6:30-7:45pm, members of Los Angeles-based Last Chance for Animals will join local children, ranging in age from two to sixteen, at the L.A. Sports Arena. The youngsters will hold a banner that reads "Kids Against Ringling" and speak about why they do not patronize the circus. "Children love animals," says Campaigns Director Lacey Levitt. "If more of them knew how the animals are treated, they would beg adults to stop the abuse." LCA asserts that circus animals are typically taken from their families in the wild, chained or kept in tiny enclosures most of the day, and beaten with bullhooks and other devices to force them to perform unnatural tricks. In 1999, the USDA stated that Ringling's treatment of baby elephants who were prematurely separated from their mothers caused the animals "trauma and physical harm."

EYEWITNESS NEWS at ELEVEN

Reporter: The Ringling Bros. Circus is in town tonight, and animal activists aren't to happy about it. They say the trainers beat and torture their elephants. The Circus says not so. News one Ann Yager has the story.

Ann: The Circus is in town (music). While it may be fun to kids, it may not be fun for the animals. Look at this video. It was taken a few years back showing trainers for Ringling Bros. beating and torturing their elephants and now there are new allegations saying these beatings still happen today. A former barn hands has come forward saying trainers here at Ringling Bros. use fear and torture to get these animals to do what they want to do.

Ann: Tom Rider worked near the elephants at Ringling Bros. for 2 ½ years.

[In studio interview]:

Tom: If they wouldn't do their commands or if they were very slow in performance, they'd be brought back to tent chained and literally beat about the head, the trunks. It was not just like once or twice a week, its on a period of like five to six days out of the week.

Ann: Rider says that the train cars the animals travel in are filthy .

Tom: the conditions inside those cars are basically no heat, no air conditioning, urine coming out of the bottom of the floor, which elephants had to stand in for longs periods of time theoretically.

[End of studio interview]

Ann: But now Ringling Bros. is fighting back. They invited cameras in on the first day of the Circus to say they don't beat their animals.

RB Employee [Brian French]: I've worked for Ringling Bros. for little over a year now and, in my experience here, nothing happens on this show that is not for the benefiting and care of these animals .

Ann: Trainers say they devote their lives to care for the animals.

RB Trainer [Troy Metzler]: I bath them everyday just so they're nice and clean, keep their skin healthy and keep's them happy.

Ann: And they say the animals won't perform if their being abused.

RB Trainer [Hans Suppmeier]: If I were to abuse them, they can jump over and say bye.

Ann: But this disturbing video is making waves.

Kim Bassinger: Hi, I'm Kim Bassinger.

Ann: Even celebrities are joining the fight to get elephants out of the circus, and it must be working. They've pushed it all the way to Congress. They're asking Congress to ban elephants from performing in circuses or even using the animals for rides. Ringling says they can't worry about that, they've got a job to do, to put on The Greatest Show On Earth. Ann Yager, News One.

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I=Interview; GR=Graphic; PC=Press Conference; R=Reader; SI=Studio Interview; T=Teaser; TZ=Teased Segment; V=Visual

Monitoring Report

FELD ENTERTAINMENT
07/25 to 07/26

1. **Eyewitness News At Four**
   KABC-TV CH 7 (ABC) Television Los Angeles
   07/25/2001 4:00 - 5:00 pm

   46.15 T V; Elephant coming out of **Ringling** Bros. train car; cats; Santa Clauses marching. 46.39

   49.05 TZ. **Animal** abuse? The **Ringling** Bros. **Barnum** & **Bailey Circus** , which bills itself as The Greatest Show On Earth, is being accused of **animal abuse** and they deny it. Last Chance For **Animals** says it has evidence of abuse. Gene Gleeson reporting live from the LA Sports Arena, where it is opening night for the circus. It will be here for 5 days. **Animal** rights activists will **protest** systematic **abuse** of the **animals** and they are asking LA Mayor James Hahn to shut the **circus** down. V; Elephant getting out of **Ringling** Bros. **Barnum** & **Bailey Circus** train car, **animals** walking on back legs on parade, videotape of alleged **animal abuse** and **elephant** killing trainer. V; Last Chance For **Animals** press conference being held. I; Jane Kaczmarek, actress, wild elephants do not stand on their back legs. **Ringling** Bros. has been hit with so many charges that they actually hand out a booklet to circus goers. They deny the charges that there is any brutality. 51.31

2. **9 News 2 O'Clock Report**
   KCAL-TV CH 9 (IND) Television Los Angeles
   07/25/2001 2:00 - 3:00 pm

   51.11 Tz; **Animal Abuse** There's allegations of **animal abuse** against the V; **Ringling** Bros and **Barnum** & **Bailey Circus** . V; Last Chance for **Animals** protest. V; undercover footage. PC; Tom Rider, former employee, I saw systematic daily abuse, it's against the law to be hitting elephants. 51.52

3. **News**
   KFWB-AM 980 (IND) Local Radio Los Angeles
   07/25/2001 5:00 - 6:00 pm

   13.00 Circus. Last Chance for **Animals** charges **Ringling** Brothers with abusing **animals** . I; Actress Jane Kasmeric(?), Malcolm In the Middle, says the **circus** tricks **animals** . Dirck Morgan Reporting.

   33.30 **Ringling** Brothers Circus. The **circus** is charged with **animal abuse** by Last Chance for **Animals** . I; Actress Linda Blair says she saw fear. Dirck Morgan Reporting.

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FELD ENTERTAINMENT
Continued....

4. **Noticias**
KMEX-TV CH 34 (UNI) Television Los Angeles
07/25/2001 11:00 - 11:30 pm

07.58 Tz; **Animal** Abuse. V; The **Ringling** Brothers **Barnum** And **Bailey Circus** is accused of **animal abuse** . The organization called, The Last Chance For An **Animal** , are making the accusations. I; with Eileen Mendizabal. She comments. I; with Catherine Ortmabry a spokesperson for the circus. She comments. Surveillance video shown. I; with Janet Freeman. She comments. Socorro Cruz reports. 10.19

5. **Noticias**
KVEA-TV CH 52 (TEL) Television Los Angeles
07/25/2001 6:00 - 6:30 pm

11.22 Tz; **Animal** Abuse. V; The **Ringling** Brothers and **Barnum** And **Bailey Circus** is accused of **animal abuse** . The organization called, Last Chance For **Animals** is accusing the **circus** . PC; I; with Jane Kasmarik an actress. She explains. Surveillance video shown. V; I; with Linda Blair an actress. She explains. 13.43

6. **WMAL's Early Morning W/Mark Weaver**
WMAL-AM 630 (ABC) Local Radio Washington
07/20/2001 4:30 - 5:00 am

05.11 Gunter Goebel Williams Dies. **Animal** trainer Gunter Goebel Williams has died after undergoing surgery for a brain tumor in Florida. He was a long time performer for **Ringling** Brothers **Barnum** & **Bailey** Circus. SB; **Kenneth Feld** , chairman and owner of the circus, says Williams could be in Madison Square Garden and command the attention of all 18,000 people there. 05.51

7. **The Midday Report**
WFLA-TV CH 8 (NBC) Television Tampa/St. Petersburg
07/25/2001 11:00 - 12:00 pm

34.45 Funeral for **Ringling** Bros. Circus star Gunther Gebel Williams was held. V; funeral, performance footage 35.15

8. **10 News At Noon**
WTSP-TV CH 10 (CBS) Television Tampa/St. Petersburg
07/25/2001 12:00 - 12:30 pm

08.08 Remembering Gunther. Yesterday in Venice was the funeral service for legendary **circus animal** trainer Gunther Gable Williams. V; File picture of the **circus animal** trainer. He died of brain cancer last week. He preformed before more than ten million people all over the world in his life time. 08.36

FELD ENTERTAINMENT
Continued....

9. **10 News At Nine**
KGTV15 Cable San Diego
07/25/2001 9:00 - 9:30 pm

10.11 TZ; **Animal** Abuse? **Ringling** Brothers **Circus** is being accused of **animal abuse** by an **animal** rights group who say they have proof. Gene Gleason reporting. V; of elephants taken off **Ringling** Brothers train and elephants performing. I; Tom Ritter, left **Ringling** Bros because of abuse. V; clip of video of **animal** abuse. SB; Jane Kaczmarek, with Last Chance for **Animals** . **Ringling** Bros will be in San Diego Aug. 8th-12th at the Sports Arena.11.44

10. **ABC 11 Eyewitness News**
WTVD-TV CH 11 (ABC) Television Raleigh/Durham
07/26/2001 5:00 - 6:00 am

46.29 **Circus Abuse** . Ringley Brothers **Barnum** & **Bailey Circus** which calls itself the Greatest Show on Earth is being accused of **animal abuse** . An **animal** rights group says it has proof. V; **Circus** trailers, **elephants** being trained. SB; Tom Riter, Ex **Circus** Worker, I saw systematic **abuse** . V; Caught on tape, Elephants chained up; Elephants being poked with an instrument called a bull hook by handlers. V; Caught on tape, footage of elephant that killed its handler in a rage several years ago. V; Actress Jane Kaczmarek, with Last Chance for **Animals** holding banner, "**Ringling** Bros **Circus** the Cruelest Show on Earth". SB; Kaczmarek, the **circus** features wild **animals** performing unnatural tricks. Gene Gleason reporting. 47.57

11. **News 2 At Noon**
WKRN-TV CH 2 (ABC) Television Nashville
07/26/2001 12:00 - 12:30 pm

06.04 T; Adopt A Pet. T; **Circus animal abuse** caught on tape. V; Portion of the tape. T; Pilot has a heart attack in midflight. V; Airport scene. 06.32

08.59 TZ; **Animal** Abuse. A former employee of Ringing Brothers **Circus** caught the **abuse** on tape. He joined a group called "Last Change For **Animals** " to make his accusation. V; **Elephants** unloading and performing in a **circus** parade. PC; The former employee says, in his 2 and a half years with the **circus** he saw daily **abuse** . V; Handlers using bullhooks. PC; Jane Kaczmarek says **animals** are presented in the **circus** doing unnatural tricks--tricks that confuse them and make them appear vicious or stupid. Jim Gleason, reporting. 10.37

12. **Eyewitness News Today**
WTTE-TV CH 28 (FOX) Television Columbus/Zanesville
07/26/2001 7:00 - 8:00 am

43.33 TZ: Show. **Ringling** Brothers **Circus** is being accused of **animal abuse** . V; circus scenes. PC; Actress says that the tricks confuse the **animals** . Gene Gleason (?) reporting. 45.08

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FELD ENTERTAINMENT
Continued....

13. **ABC 26 News At Ten**
WGNO-TV CH 26 (ABC) Television New Orleans
07/25/2001 10:00 - 10:30 pm

13.44 V; **Ringling** Brother and **Bailey** Circus members. The Greatest Show is accused of abusing **animals** and treats them like slaves when they are not performing. Former **circus** worker claims he saw trainers **abuse elephants** daily. V; **animal** trainer with **animals** . V; circus acts. V; elephant. **Ringling** Brothers denies charges. 14.04

14. **WHAS 11 News At Noon**
WHAS-TV CH 11 (ABC) Television Louisville
07/26/2001 12:00 - 1:00 pm

00.10.15 T; **Circus Abuse** . T; Plane Shot At. 00.10.32

00.14.30 TZ; **Circus Abuse** , A group called The Last Chance for **Animals** is accusing **Ringling** Brothers and **Barnum Bailey Circus** of abusing **animals** . They claim the elephants are especially beaten. Mistreatment can cause **animals** to lose control and injure others. The group is calling for parents not to take their children to the circus. 00.15.01

15. **Action 7 News Live This Morning**
KOAT-TV CH 7 (ABC) Television Albuquerque/Santa Fe
07/26/2001 5:00 - 6:00 am

46.02 V; National News. >**Ringling** Brother **Circus** being accused of **animal abuse** . V; Elephant coming out of **Ringling** Brothers trailer. **Animal** rights activist claiming abuse. V; Video of abuse. Last Chance for **Animals** Group protesting. SB; Jane Kaczmarek with Last Chance for **Animals** . >Chandra Levy's Parents attorney speaking out regarding Condit. V; Attorney. >Typhoon in Southern China. V; Scene. 48.14

16. **Good Morning Richmond**
WRIC-TV CH 8 (ABC) Television Richmond/Petersburg
07/26/2001 6:00 - 7:00 am

[Derived from Captioning] 06.32 But these students say the biggest pay-off is the experience. (Sot) "when you work with them and they finally start to understand..It`s the greatest feeling..It`s like yes you know what you`re doing." (Gwen) many of the students say this experience made them seriously consider teaching as a career. (John) governor gilmore wants to attract new teachers by giving across the board pay raises. Gilmore says he`d like to see those raises put into the 2001-budget..But just how much remains uncertain. The increases would in part be based on teacher salaries in other states...And the cost of living here in virgnia. Traffictraffictraffictraffic (gwen) have you ever had a tough time having an intelligent conversation with someone on the phone? (John) that was the problem in scotland when a monkey got a hold of a phone. That story is next in international news. 6 Some residents in jackson hole, wyoming are now feeling the effects of a wildfire that is burning out of control. The green knoll fire has now burned nearly 14 hundred acres of land, but is now threatening homes and causing mandatory evacuations. People who live in about 100 homes were told yesteday that they needed to evacuate because the fire was only about a mile from their home. **Ringling** brothers **circus** which calls itself the greatest show on earth is being accused of **animal abuse** . **Circus** officials deny it, however a group called last chance for **animals** says it has proof that the **animals** are treated like slaves. They say the elephants are chained for hours and proded and poked with instruments. 11.32

FELD ENTERTAINMENT
Continued....

17. **8 News At Noon**
WRIC-TV CH 8 (ABC) Television Richmond/Petersburg
07/26/2001 12:00 - 12:30 pm

[Derived from Captioning] 18.43 On friday, the front continues pushing southward and that means (hopefully-for pump it up friday`s sake) that the showers will be south of us tomorrow morning. The front doesn`t make a whole lot of progress into north carolina so with the daytime heating tomorrow there could be some more showers developing into the afternoon. Saturday will be dry and on sunday the front returns northward as a warm front and that turns the heat, humidity and the chance for rain back on. Have a great afternoon!!! Every year millions of americans go to see the circus and the biggest circus in the world is **ringling** brothers and **barnum** and **bailey** . (Gwen) but in recent years **animal** rights groups have targeted the greatest show on earth with charges of **animal** abuse. As reporter gene gleeson reports the **animal** rights activists say now they have proof. 66 (Gwen) now it`s time for the showbiz wrap.... (John) in this edition abc`s carla wohl gives you the latest on former beatle george harrison plus....N`sync`s justin timberlake and pop sensation britney 26.12

18. **Good Morning**
KETV-TV CH 7 (ABC) Television Omaha
07/26/2001 5:30 - 7:00 am

[Derived from Captioning] 46.56 Care costs could rise as much as "twenty" percent next year. "That`s" the headline. The "question"...Is why. Here`s abc`s john martin. Marc kramer is "back" now... With your super-doppler 7 "traveler`s forecast" for the day ahead. Here`s a live look at west dodge road on the k-e-t-v newswatch seven skycam network. More complete coverage, this is newswatch seven good morning. Welcome back to newswatch-7 "good morning". You`re looking at a "live" view of interstate-80.. From the newswatch-7 sky-cam network. It`s degrees. **Ringling** brothers circus....Which calls itself the greatest show on earth....Is being accused of **animal** abuse. Circus officials deny it. 51.48

[Derived from Captioning] 51.48 Circus officials deny it. But a group called "last chance for **animals** " says it has proof. Reporter gene gleeson has the story. Marc is "back"..With a look at this morning`s weather. This is a look at current temperatures across the region this is a look at the high temperatures expected across our area later today this is a look at the satellite loop showing any clouds and storm systems that are across the central plains this mornings radar loop indicates any precipitation that is falling in the central plains this is what our weather will look like today, tonight and tomorrow now.. It`s time to take a look at this morning`s art... We`re "back" in a moment... With your 6:30 "good morning" news briefing. Plus....We`ll see how avaya`s lay offs are impacting "one" omaha family. First... A check of last night`s lottery numbers. Good luck. More complete coverage- this is k-e-t-v, newswatch seven good morning an overnight accident in lincoln kills one and injures two others... And..."Another" **animal** "haul away" at an omaha home. 59.27

19. **First News At 11:30**
WAND-TV CH 17 (ABC) Television Champaign/Decatur/Springfield
07/26/2001 11:30 - 12:00 pm

03.20 World News. >Florida teen, Nathaniel Brazil, to soon learn his sentence. V; Brazil. SB; Phyllis Grunow, victim's mother, speaks of what the teen did. SB; unidentified woman, speaks of the loss of the man in her life. SB; Sgt. Gary Dial, Pal Beach deputy, speaks of Nathaniel mentioning shooting of jury members. V; school surveillance video. GR; victim's photo. Andrew Colton reporting. >**Ringling** Bros. **Circus** being accused of **animal abuse** . GR; Colleen Orsborn. Last Chance for **Animals** claims to have proof. V; elephants. 05.53

FELD ENTERTAINMENT
Continued....

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Former Ringling Employee Speaks Out

On Ringling Bros. Cover-Up



"When I was hired, I was told that if you complain to the USDA or the news media that we would lose our jobs."

"Dateline was coming to film the animals for animal abuse. Jeff Steele (unit manager) met with us about not abusing the animals while Dateline was here, we were instructed not to hit the animals while being filmed."

On Baby Benjamin

"Pat Harned was beating a young elephant named Benjamin because he was messing with the other elephant, Shirley. Another elephant named Karen started making noises (by rattling her chain) because Benjamin was getting hit—Pat came over and beat Karen for 23 minutes because she would not stop making noise. After Pat was done he asked me to get the 'wonder dust' so that he could cover up the bleeding on Karen."

"I found out that Benjamin had died. Pat was always beating on Benjamin because he was a young bull elephant and was full of play. I saw baby Benjamin systematically abused, 5 to 6 times a day, by Pat Harned; this included verbal abuse all the time."

On the Inadequacy of Care

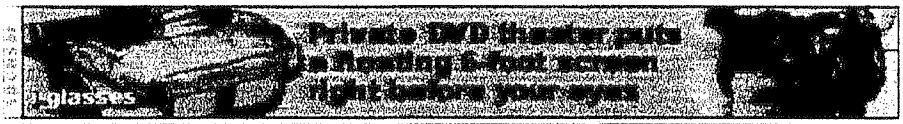
"The elephant Susan was sick (not eating, diarrhea), I reported it to Gary (veterinarian with Ringling Bros.). Gary and Graham came out to see Susan, looked at her from a distance, did no examination, and claimed the elephant looked fine."

"In the 2-1/2 years that I was employed at Ringling Bros., I saw at least 69 people hired to work with the elephants in the blue unit. Most of these individuals had no prior experience working with elephants."

Tom Rider, sworn affidavit to USDA and Congressional testimony (H.R. 2929), June 13, 2000. Ringling employee, Blue Unit, June 1997—November 1999.

Citizens for Cruelty-Free Circuses (CCFC) 650-654-9955

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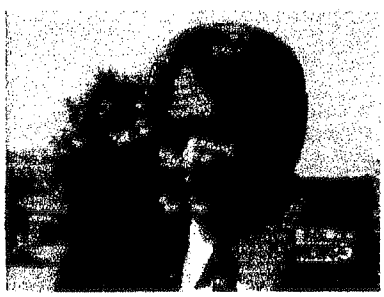
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Former Trainer Alleges Elephant Cuelty At Circus

MADISON, 12:56 p.m. CDT May 24, 2001 --A former Ringling Brothers' Circus is fending off a videotape and former worker that alleges the circus routinely abuses endangered Asian elephants in order to train and control them.

A lawsuit says that violates federal law. A former circus worker says, it's simply wrong, reported News 3's Linda Eggert.



"When people see the show, they see 8-10 minutes," Tom Rider (pictured), former Ringling Brothers' worker, "What happens the rest of the day is what the public doesn't see."

An undercover videotape by an animal rights group and a former elephant worker are now part of an ongoing campaign to get elephants out of the circus.

"I'm not against the circus," Rider said. "I'm against the abuse of the elephants."

For two-and-a-half years, Tom rider worked the elephant barn for Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey's Traveling Circus.

He says what you see on a videotape caught last year in San Francisco is not isolated, but routine.

Rider claims he witnessed excessive chaining in the barn and on the train and daily abuse by workers with poker shaped cue sticks, called bullhooks.

"They take these and they hook the elephants, they use them like

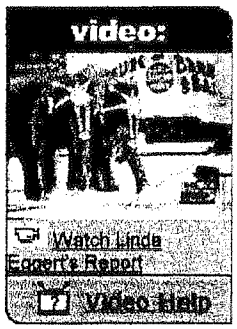


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baseball bats on their head," he said. "They beat them on their neck shoulder, legs."



One worker can be seen flipping around some kind of sharp pliers-type tool and apparently using it on an elephant before putting it away.

Later, a woman handles the tool, then hands it back, and the man puts it in a holster on his belt.

But Rider and three animal groups claim in a federal lawsuit that baby elephants suffer the worst abuse.

"The babies were beaten more," he said. "Benjamin, who died about year and half ago, he was beaten three, four, five times a day."

The circus dismisses Rider's accusations, saying they haven't been substantiated by investigations done by the federal USDA.

"What he is claiming is systemic abuse that simply could not go on here," Joanna Wilbee of Ringling's said.

Instead, Ringling's public relations officials say the elephants get top-notch care.

They showed us unchained elephants in clean outside pens, with water and dirt for mud.

Three young elephants ages 5, 7 and 8 were inside, but also unchained.

So how does the videotape compare to what public relations officials showed? One PR official called the tape, "A bit of a mistake," unprofessional, but not harmful.

"We are the leaders in the care and treatment of animals," Wilbee said. "Someone made an unprofessional decision, an inappropriate action but it is not the norm here."

The circus has been warned about various animal and record issues.

And in 1998 it paid $10,000 to an elephant sanctuary after the USDA charged it with forcing a sick elephant to perform.

In 1999, the USDA found lesions on the legs of 2-year-old baby elephants.

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Staff said they were rope burns from the process used to separate the babies from their mothers. That investigation is still open, Eggert reported.

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Highlights

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Published Sunday, May 7, 2000, in the San Jose Mercury News

Group claims elephant abuse

• **Circus investigation:** Evidence insufficient to file charges after Humane Society probe of 1999 show.

BY LINDA GOLDSTON
Mercury News

Investigators found evidence that Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus had mistreated its elephants during a weeklong run of the ``Greatest Show on Earth'' in San Jose last year, according to documents obtained by the Mercury News.

Officers for the Humane Society of Santa Clara Valley and a San Jose police sergeant sought criminal charges against the circus after documenting numerous lacerations and puncture wounds on seven of the circus's endangered Asian elephants. Prosecutors, however, decided in February not to file charges because there was insufficient evidence.

``The Humane Society did wonderful work in terms of their investigation,'' Santa Clara County Deputy District Attorney Robin Wakshull said. ``But they simply could not answer all of the questions that need to be answered before criminal charges are filed.

``We had no way to determine the circumstances under which (the injuries) occurred, and we were not able to identify a perpetrator.''

A Ringling spokeswoman said the Humane Society's accusations were not true.

Catherine Ort-Mabry, spokeswoman for Feld Entertainment Inc.,

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Ringling's parent company, said the circus uses only positive reinforcement with its elephants, building trust between animal and handler and making punishment unnecessary.

But a former Ringling employee described a far different sort of animal management in a recent interview with the Mercury News, including frequent beatings. The employee, who quit in November, is now working with an animal-rights group that has filed complaints against Ringling -- a fact the company has cited in discounting his story.

Ringling and other circuses are facing mounting pressure from numerous city councils, legislatures in Florida and Maryland and even Congress, which all are considering proposals that would either ban the use of elephants and exotic animals or the circuses themselves. Arguments for the measures range from abusive treatment of elephants to threats to public safety, and even some accredited zoos are caught in the critical glare for their elephant management practices.

But the most contentious debate is expected in Congress in June, when hearings are set for the Captive Elephant Accident Prevention Act proposed by Rep. Sam Farr, D-Salinas, that would ban elephants from circuses and prohibit elephant rides -- for the safety of the public and the pachyderms.

``This is not a popular battle to wage, but we believe this sort of abuse needs to be made known,'' said Christine Arnold, executive director of the private, non-profit Humane Society of Santa Clara Valley. ``These animals deserve respect just as we do.''

Many circus elephants are kept chained 16 to 18 hours a day and are on the road 49 or 50 weeks of the year, activists say.

A written statement to the Mercury News from Ringling Bros. said the circus is ``committed to the highest standards in the care of all our animal performers, and we deliver exemplary, hands-on care, 365 days a year.

``Training and handling of the animals are based on constant contact, daily routines and nurturing, which builds a rapport between the animals and the handlers that is based on mutual trust.''

State elephant law

It was alleged violations of a state elephant-abuse law that prompted the investigation of Ringling by the Humane Society of Santa Clara Valley. That law was passed after a scandal in 1988

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over the beating of a chained elephant named Dunda at the San Diego Wild Animal Park. The elephant was beaten two consecutive days.

Provisions of the statute include a prohibition against any discipline of an elephant ``resulting in damage, scarring or breakage of the skin."

Shortly after Ringling's animals were unloaded from the train in San Jose last Aug. 23 and walked to the arena, ``right away, one of my humane officers saw blood coming from behind one of the elephant's ears," said Marcia Mayeda, director of community outreach for the Humane Society.

``The elephant had been wounded behind the ear," she said. ``The blood was visible from about 20 feet. That raised it to a concern about animal abuse. We monitored the circus for the entire week."

Ort-Mabry denied any injuries to the elephants occurred during the August 1999 performances in San Jose. She said Dr. William Lindsay, the circus's head veterinarian, was in San Jose ``for the majority of the engagement" and ``he completely disagrees with (the Humane Society's) allegations."

San Jose police Sgt. Lanette Williams had been asked to assist the humane officers with their investigation last year. Williams said she documented that Ringling's elephants were kept in their railroad boxcars ``a total of over 16 hours" while being moved from Oakland to San Jose and observed all the injuries documented by investigators from the Humane Society. Williams was asked for assistance because she previously worked as a state humane officer.

Ort-Mabry accused Williams of having an agenda, however, and said Ringling employees had noticed her in a photograph the circus took of protesters in Oakland. Williams told the Mercury News she had gone to a Ringling circus performance in Oakland in plain clothes to ``see what kind of animals were performing and for how long" and had stopped to say hello to a friend from San Jose outside the Oakland Coliseum Arena.

According to a report filed with the district attorney's office by Humane officer Christine Franco, of the 13 Ringling elephants that were examined by investigators in San Jose, ``seven of the elephants had injuries behind or on the back of their left ears. Some of the elephants had scars behind their left ears. Almost all of the injuries appeared to be fresh, with bright red blood present at the wound sites."

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All the elephants were photographed and videotaped by the Humane Society.

Franco said she showed the photographs and videotape to elephant experts at the Oakland Zoo a few days later. Zoo executive director Joel Parrot, who also is a veterinarian, and general curator Colleen Kinzley ``stated they were confident the injuries were caused by ankuses," or bull hooks, the report states.

Ort-Mabry, however, said Ringling's veterinarian told her ``if blood were present, it was likely because he drew blood for testing behind the ears of a number of elephants that day.

``Sometimes when blood is drawn from an elephant, as with a human, a little leaks and stains the area where the blood was drawn," she said.

But the former Ringling employee interviewed by the Mercury News, Tom Rider of Peoria, Ill., said he saw the circus's elephant handlers strike elephants repeatedly with a bull hook or ankus. Rider did not travel to San Jose with the circus in 1999, when it was investigated by the Humane Society.

Rider, who was interviewed at the Performing Animal Welfare Society (PAWS), an exotic animal sanctuary in Galt, near Sacramento, said he was told by his supervisors at Ringling that ``the beatings were for discipline, that you had to let the elephants know who's in charge."

Ort-Mabry confirmed Rider quit the circus voluntarily.

An attorney for PAWS filed an animal cruelty complaint based on Rider's allegations with the U.S. Department of Agriculture three weeks ago. It was the second complaint filed with the USDA by PAWS involving a former Ringling employee. The first, filed in 1998, was investigated by the USDA but resulted in no action.

The new complaint states, in part, that Rider's ``eyewitness account" has disclosed ``that Ringling Brothers' trainers and elephant handlers routinely hit and beat elephants, including baby elephants, with bull hooks to make them walk at a certain pace and to perform in the circus."

USDA spokesman Jim Rogers said the agency had no comment on the complaint.

Ort-Mabry said dozens of other inspections of the circus by state

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and federal agencies had found nothing to substantiate Rider's or the Humane Society's claims, but she refused to make copies of any of those inspection reports available.

Previous investigations

Ringling, however, has faced USDA investigations into the deaths of two of its baby elephants.

Last year, the USDA took no action after investigating the drowning death of a 4-year-old elephant named Benjamin in a pond in Texas.

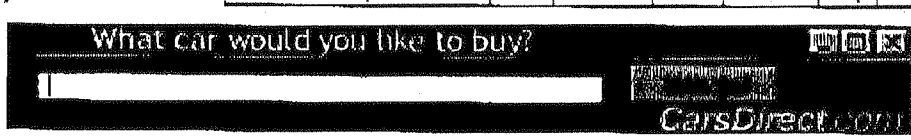
In 1998, the USDA reached an out-of-court settlement with Ringling after an investigation of the handling of a 3-year-old elephant named Kenny in Florida. The USDA alleged that Kenny was made to perform even though he was ill.

Under the agreement, Ringling neither admitted nor denied any violations of the federal Animal Welfare Act but agreed to donate $10,000 to an elephant sanctuary and another $10,000 to research on elephant diseases.

Ringling Bros. and its elephants are scheduled to appear at the San Jose Arena in August. Humane Society officials said they will be there.

``Authorized animal control officials are always welcome to see how well Ringling Bros. handlers care for our animals," Ort-Mabry said.

Contact Linda Goldston at lgoldston@sjmercury.com or (408) 920-5862.



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News

http://www.contracostatimes.com/community/voice/stories/ring24_20010824.htm

Published Friday, August 24, 2001

If you could talk to the animals...
Circus returns, and controversy
is close behind
By B. Roscoe
STAFF WRITER

The Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey circus is visiting the Bay Area.

With it comes amazing aerial feats, a hot new samba spirit, the perennial clowning component, exciting new pre-show events -- and the inevitable controversy.

In addition to the approximately 300 people who make up the performers, crew
and concessionaires, there are nearly 70 animals performing tricks at local
venues -- last weekend at the Oakland Arena, Aug. 22-26 at the San Jose Arena and Aug. 29-Sept. 3 at the San Francisco Cow Palace.

It is this part of the circus -- the bicycle-riding, instrument-playing animals -- that troubles people like Rockridge resident Victoria Vandenberg,
a member of the non-profit group, Citizens for Cruelty-Free Circuses.

For children and families alike, however, there are many exciting aspects of
the circus to enjoy. This year Ringling Brothers has introduced two new pre-show activities for ticket-holders: the three-ring adventure and the animal open house.

Up close and personal
Beginning 90 minutes before showtime, ticket-holders are welcome to see the
animals as they're kept when they're not on stage (and not traveling). Visitors can view the tigers, elephants, zebras, camels and llamas from just
a few feet away. Throughout the animal compound there are displays with information about what the different animals eat and how they behave.

On opening night at the Oakland Arena last Wednesday, Roger Shautt, senior
tiger groom, was preparing to move India, one of Ringling's Bengal tigers, to a larger fenced area, while other big cats continued to pace in their cages. Big Top music began blaring from nearby speakers in the direction of
the tigers. Shautt's protective reaction was loud and swift, "Turn that down!" he yelled.

Nearby, other grooms were moving 5-foot blocks of ice that contained watermelons, cantaloupes, bunches of bananas and apples into the elephant
paddock. It's called "enrichment," said Peter Cimini, the veterinary technician who oversees all 33 grooms on the staff. Freezing the fruit inside the ice is intended to give the elephants mental stimulation as well as to nourish them. The enrichment arrived just in time as a few of the elephants were apparently looking for something to do. They had reached out
over their paddock barrier (thick pieces of bright orange, reinforced plastic that ran between the posts that defined each group of elephants' space) and picked up pieces of bamboo with their trunks. The bamboo had not
been placed there for that purpose but Cimini indicated it was normal

behavior and part of the way they found stimulation. "They'll use it to scratch their backs," he said. He added that the pachyderms often "throw things at the grooms."

There are staff members working year-round, every day of the week to look
after the animals. "It's a special dedication to take care of these animals," said Cimini.

Part of the action
Sixty minutes before showtime the famous three rings on the floor of the circus are filled with performers, animals and children with their families.
This is the Three-Ring Adventure and children of all ages are invited to try
on glitzy, showy costumes; to perform with the clowns; to see some of the
animals performing up close; and to even volunteer to learn a few tricks from the contortionists.

Sarah Mages of Rockridge was kneeling with her two sons, Decklan, 5, and Liam, 2, while they watched the action in the center ring. Both boys were wide-eyed at the colorful, noisy spectacle. The biggest reaction came from
Decklan.

"You scared me," he said when a clown carrying a sign that read "Kisses -- 50 cents" approached them slowly from behind. The clown planted a kiss on
the Decklan's mother's cheek.

Behind the scenes
There is quite a bit of work that goes into creating "The Greatest Show On Earth." It is a mobile city, of sorts, constantly on the move. Cast and crew and menagerie all travel by rail on a train that's over a mile long. This production, the 131st edition, will tour for two years, performing 50 weeks

out of the year. "It's a hard life to be on the road like this," said associate production manager Courtney Adler. Despite the hardships, some of the performers have been with Ringling Brothers for over 20 years.

Many performers and crew workers are joined by their families on the road. Ringling maintains a traveling school with about 15 children and also a nursery. The most famous Ringling family is the Gebels, of course. Gunther Gebel Williams, who passed away last month after nearly 30 years in the ring, was the principle animal handler. His son, Mark Oliver Gebel, who entered the circus ring when he was 2, has been carrying on in his father's stead for several years now. Both men are famous for their showy style and rapport with the animals.

It's not that rapport but the backstage treatment of the animals that has created the controversy.

The humane question

Outside of the Arena, prior to showtime, are dozens of activists from different animal rights groups handing out information about the treatment of animals in circuses. Vandenberg was one of those activists on opening night.

"We don't think animals are made to endure the extremely stressful conditions they face in the circus," said Vandenberg, expressing the group's displeasure with how the animals are kept and treated. When asked if she was aware of the addition of the animal open house and what she thought of it, she said she was aware but had not been inside since she was not a ticket-holder. "To be honest, I don't think it's a big improvement of the animals' condition," she said.

The group's founder, Pat Cuviello, started CFCFC six years ago after he

was
repeatedly ignored by the media about the subject. In 1996, however, he got
his wish and appeared on KQED's Forum radio program hosted by Michael Krasne. He debated the treatment of the animals with a representative from
Ringling Brothers. "That went very well," said Cuviello. "And since then they won't debate us again."

Adler was asked what Ringling Brothers thought of the protesters.

"To us it's show as always," she said. "We're very proud of what we do here."

When asked if there was any truth to the protesters' claims, Adler noted that her work is primarily with the performers and that she doesn't get much
exposure to the animals. But, she said, "If I felt something was wrong I wouldn't be here."

John Kirtland, executive director of animal stewardship for Feld Entertainment (the company that produces RBBB and other shows such as Siegfried and Roy), briefly described the training process during the animal
open house on opening night.

"In the early stages we use the voice and hook," he said, referring to the three and a half-foot handle, also known as an ankus, with a rounded hook at
the end, "then we gradually phase out the hook." Kirtland said they use voice signals mostly, and also hand and touch signals. "We generally don't use (the bullhook) because these animals are training so well," said Kirtland.

Video footage
Cuviello disagrees with that statement. He shot video footage backstage at
the Cow Palace last year that captures handlers hitting and prodding baby

elephants with bullhooks and a broom. While the majority of the footage is less than scandalous, there are several shots of a particular handler who rather seems to enjoy exerting his power with a bullhook. In one shot he looks around quickly before rapping a baby elephant on the trunk with no provocation.

Tom Rider would also disagree with Kirtland's assessment. As a former Ringling employee, Rider, who testified before Congress to the daily abuse the elephants were subject to while he was employed there for three years,
said Ringling recently admitted to a news channel in San Diego to being responsible for the handler's behavior. A Ringling spokesperson, said Rider,
indicated the handler had been reprimanded.

Part of the problem may be finding grooms, or handlers, with the dedication
required to maintain these animals every day of the year. Rider asserts that
Ringling hires people off of the street with no previous experience with animals. According to Cimini, he asks applicants about their experience but,
like someone learning how to ride bicycle, he doesn't expect them to be able
to ride it on the first try. New grooms start working first with the horses. "Through the years you advance," said Cimini. The next step, he says, is working with the elephants.

"If they don't have any experience we're going to teach them," said Cimini, who then added, "I want to teach them. I want them to learn."

USDA investigation
The USDA has also found fault with RBBB treatment of their elephants.

In May of 1999 Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus's Center for Elephant Conservation in Polk City, Fla., was cited by the USDA for being in
violation of the Animal Welfare Act for the poor handling of two juvenile

elephants named "Doc" and "Angelica." While handlers at that facility protested that their method of separating the young elephants from their mothers was "industry standard," it caused large abrasions on the legs of the calves when they continually pulled against the restraints to reach their mothers.

Of note is that in its report, the USDA cites only the method used to separate calves from their mothers, not the practice itself. As Deputy Administrator Wm. Ron DeHaven wrote in the report, " ... there are other methods available to separate juvenile elephants from their mothers ... "

According to Colleen Kinzley, the general curator and elephant manager at the Oakland Zoo, it is "very" detrimental to separate calves from their mothers.

"We don't know how much damage it can do," she said in response to questions about general elephant behavior. She also stated that "if they're born in captivity (as was the case with Doc and Angelica) it may be less stressful" because they're used to people from the beginning. "It would still be traumatic," said Kinzley.

Female elephants in the wild stay with their mothers their whole lives, explained Kinzley. Juvenile males will eventually be separated from the herd by the females when they become too rambunctious and it's time for them to seek other males outside of the family to interact with. This happens anywhere from 10-15 years of age.

Bo, the 10,000 pound, 13-year-old pachyderm star of the animal show for RBBB was 5 years old when he was obtained by the Cardin circus, the outfit that owned him before Ringling. When Bo and the other elephants are not out for their one hour stroll in the morning or being rehearsed for the show, his day is spent "on chains" (chained by one front leg and one back leg) in a tent by himself. Cimini described Bo's accommodations by saying that he's

the star and so he has his own dressing room. The rest of the elephants are
on chains for most of the day and share an enclosure so there is some interaction between them.

"If these were the conditions in a zoo it wouldn't be tolerated. Why accept them in a traveling show?" asked Vandenberg, adding, "It's not humane."

Emotional connection

Kirtland maintained that the animals in the RBBB show, particularly in the context of the animal open house, provide a positive way for viewers "to make an emotional connection," which, in turn, would make people think differently about their environment and what they need to do to maintain it
for such animals. Moreover, said Kirtland, many of the 90 cities that RBBB travels to do not have zoos. "They don't have the opportunity to see these animals close up," he said.

During the open house the elephants were not chained and several of the tigers were moved inside the traveling perimeter fence which gives them a
larger space in which to move around. "There have been some improvements,"
admitted Vandenberg, but, she added, "That's mostly to appease the public."

Unnatural behavior

She may be right. Despite these public improvements, the RBBB elephants continue to display what is called stereotypic behavior. The behaviors include swaying from side to side and an exaggerated head bob. Other captive
animals express stereotypic behavior by pacing. There are dramatic examples
of these behaviors on Cuviello's tape. As Kinzley described it in relation to elephants, "at some point it developed under stressful conditions. It's a substitute for more active behaviors" like searching and processing food. (For example, pulling grass, stripping bark and interacting freely with

other elephants.) None of these are normal behaviors. "Actually," said Kinzley, "circus people do consider it normal." Researchers, like Cynthia Moss who's been studying elephants for 30 years, don't see these behaviors

in the wild, said Kinzley.

Public image
RBBB is extremely conscientious about its public image.

After strolling unaccompanied through the animal compound last Tuesday, a
few hours after the animals arrived in Oakland and while the elephants were
chained in their paddock, this reporter asked questions of Cimini, who repeatedly deferred to the public relations people. He then proceeded to walk this reporter quickly away from the animals. Instead of confirming the
spelling of his name, he deferred to the media people. The following day, however, during the animal open house, Cimini was affable and answered many
questions.

"They're constantly finessing, not only the media but government officials,"
said Vandenberg, referring to the Conservation Center employees who repeatedly questioned the validity of the USDA officials' investigation when
they discovered the lesions on Doc and Angelica and attempted to photograph
the evidence.

Despite the controversy, RBBB continues its efforts to live up to its moniker as "The Greatest Show On Earth."

For Vandenberg that would mean taking the animals out of the circus all together, so it's more like a Cirque du Soliel. Meanwhile, Rider continues to fight from the road.

"I speak out for the elephants. Wherever Ringling goes, I go," said Rider in a telephone interview from Colorado Springs where the blue unit was setting
up (the 130th edition of the show).

And sometimes he gets there first.

Rider, along with the Performing Animal Welfare Society (PAWS), the ASPCA,
and the Fund for Animals and Animal Welfare Institute (all out of Washington, D.C.), have brought a lawsuit against RBBB, the aim of which is
to force the circus outfit to forfeit the elephants. According to Rider, the lawsuit was originally dismissed but the case is currently under appeal.

There is also an open USDA investigation into RBBB's treatment of the animals. The investigator did not return calls by this story's deadline.

"I will be out here until Ringling gives up their elephants," said Rider.

Cuviello's goal is to inform the public about the animals' living conditions so people can make a more informed choice. "Our goal is mostly education. And hopefully when they're educated they won't support it," he said.

The ultimate win? "I would like to see the animals out of the circus," said Cuviello.

"The Ringling acts are OK, it's the treatment of the animals that is a problem," summed up Rider.

Barbara Roscoe can be reached by e-mail at broscoe@cctimes.com or by phone
at 510-339-4517.

LEHIGH VALLEY ANIMAL RIGHTS COALITION

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Allentown, PA 18106-0224
Phone 610-821-9552
FAX 610-821-0428

Ms. Katherine Meyer
% Meyer & Glitzenstein
1601 Connecticut Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20009

24 November 2003

Dear Ms. Meyer:

I just had to let you know how very pleased we all were with Mr. Rider when he spoke at our Harrisburg Capital on October 28th.

We took a chance, knowing very little about Tom, but Senator Greenleaf had introduced Senate Bill 453 (banning the bull hook) and we were able to coordinate a date.

We reserved the Capital Rotunda, arranged an appointment with Senator Greenleaf for Mr. Rider, brought a busload of people to Harrisburg and the Pennsylvania Cable Network was there to film activities. We made hotel reservations for our guest for one night only. We carried a very large, very beautiful painting of how elephants should be seen, for that touch of class. With all things go, we held our breath, but all the worry was for naught, Tom was anything but disappointing.

Our meeting with the Senator was at least twenty minutes long and Tom was terrific. I listened closely and was so impressed. Senator Greenleaf asked questions and Tom answered them all. Virginia Wolfe and I sat in on the meeting but had to say very little.

A podium setup in the Rotunda can be quite intimidating but Tom handled it well and after a talk and a video he fielded a barrage of questions from the audience.

Mr. Rider was punctual, well-dressed, polite, cordial and a gentleman. We were all very proud; he was a wealth of information.

Very Sincerely,

Gloria Senavitis

Gloria Senavitis,
Board Member Lehigh Valley Animal Rights Coalition

Nov 24 2003

Clerk Kathy Hagen
Kluger Kaitzenstein
1001 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Suite 700
Washington DC 20004

Dear Kim Clayton,

On Oct 28 I was one of approximately 40 people who traveled to Harrisburg PA to hear from Pres speak on animal cruelty.

No one could explain better the cruel lives the animals in circuses are forced to live than one who essentially has lived with them day in and day out. Tom did an outstanding job. He told the attitude of each and everyone of us. Some said they were "inspired" by him. His sincerity and caring came across and touched each and everyone of us.

I hope that Tom is able to convince his work for the animals that we all care so much about.

I truly believe that Tom is the best hope the animals have.

Very truly yours
Kathy Weinstein
PO 1224
William Penn PA 19090

F 01950

210 Lincoln Drive
Philadelphia, PA 19144
24 November 2003

Ms. Kathy Meyers
Meyers Glitzenstein
1601 Court Ave. NW
Suite 700
Washington, DC

Dear Ms. Meyers:

Last month I had the honor (and I emphasize the word honor) of meeting Mr. Tom Rider in Harrisburg at a rally at the Capitol. A large group of animal activists were meeting with their respective congresspeople in an attempt to persuade them to vote for the proposed legislation that would ban the use of the bull hook on elephants in circuses.

You are very familiar with Tom's work and his dedication of the rest of his life to informing the public about the horrid and cruel treatment of animals used in the circuses. Mr. Rider knows about these abuses firsthand as a result of his employment in circuses. He has been a witness to the injury and indignities being inflicted without mercy upon these innocent animals behind the scenes, and as a result of such observation, abhors the circus and is now devoted to speaking up for the elephants whenever and wherever he can, and indeed, travels extensively to do so.

I had the opportunity of not just listening to his talk, but of conversing with him at lunch. I learned of his lifestyle of traveling in his old dilapidated van to gain venues to talk to people, to spread the word, to teach people the reality of the painful and dispirited lives of circus animals at the hands of their malevolent owners. He has made it his life mission to do this as his attempt at saving future elephants from such hardship. To say that I was impressed by his taking on this project on his own initiative, motivated by the suffering and injustices that these animals endure, is the least of it. I was and still am astounded that such a man can exist, a simple man with no pretensions, no ulterior designs, without greed, and with such utter humility I've never seen before. He is the best illustration of a man who lives according to his beliefs, a man who is true to himself, a pure man. This man, Mr. Tom Rider, has commanded all the respect I can possibly give him. He asks for nothing. He just gets out there and does this work because he believes in it. He is one man, taking on the circus because he believes, because he saw, and because he is not content to allow the abuse and degradation of "his" animals for whom he cared, to continue, if there is anything he can do about it. He saw, and now he is doing something about it. Alone. Without Pay. He didn't even ask for money, but we see his plight, and his sincerity, and his commitment. This man epitomizes goodness, and needs help to continue his work, and anything he receives with be received with the most grateful heart.

Thank-you for your time.

Sincerely,

Rosemarie Allen

Rosemarie Allen

F 01949

Tom Rider

Tom Rider is a former circus employee who has more than three years of experience working with elephants in circuses. He worked for Clyde Beatty-Cole Bros. Circus in 1997 as an elephant keeper and for Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus in the elephant barn from June 1997 to November 1999. In June 2000, Rider testified before Congress in support of the Captive Elephant Accident Prevention Act. Rider was born in Chicago. He has a lawsuit pending against Ringling for violating the Endangered Species Act through its routine abuse of elephants.

1. Elephants in circuses live in extreme confinement and endure miserable, inhumane conditions. The elephants spend the majority of their time chained and cramped inside train cars, tents, or arenas and may stay chained for as much as 23 hours a day.

2. Bullhooks are frequently used in an abusive manner to force elephants to perform.

3. Bullhooks are used to hit, hook, poke, prod, jab, and pull elephants. Handlers hook elephants inside the ears or mouth, behind the ears, around the tail and feet, and on the head and trunk, often resulting in punctures and tears.

4. Bullhooks are not "guides"; bullhooks are weapons. A guide should not be a sharp steel-tipped device with a heavy handle that easily rips an elephant's sensitive skin.

5. Bullhook wounds are concealed with a powder called Wonder Dust that is grey in color to match elephants' skin.

6. Elephants are punished for not performing properly. In one instance, when an elephant named Pete did not perform her act properly in White Plains, N.Y., she was taken to the tent and laid down, and five Clyde Beatty trainers beat her with bullhooks. Ringling handlers beat elephants named Nicole and Sophie for not performing well, and the elephants' screams could be heard outside the tent. A beating inflicted on Ringling elephants Zina and Rebecca, who failed to respond to a command, left the elephants with more than 24 and 36 lesions, respectively.

7. Even baby elephants are subjected to extreme cruelty. Baby Benjamin was systematically abused in an effort to quash his natural rambunctiousness. Rider saw that Benjamin was beaten simply for trying to interact with another baby. Benjamin was killed in a pond at 4 years of age while trying to get away from a trainer who was prodding him with a bullhook.

"Bullhooks are not 'guides'; bullhooks are weapons. A guide should not be a sharp steel-tipped device with a heavy handle that easily rips an elephant's sensitive skin."

8. The mistreatment of elephants in circuses makes them a public safety risk. Even elephants who circuses acknowledged were dangerous were used in performances and for rides. At Clyde Beatty, Pete was considered a dangerous animal, and employees were cautioned not to go near her, yet she was used for rides—carrying as many as 10 children at a time on her back. Ringling's elephant Karen was extremely aggressive as a result of years of beatings and was nicknamed "Killer," but Ringling uses her in pre-shows during which she is paraded around dozens of children without any barriers.

9. Circuses keep the danger and abuse well hidden from the public and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Ringling took Nicole off tour and sent her to its Florida facility to prevent USDA inspectors from observing her many wounds and scars and her swollen legs. Employees were cautioned never to let the public know if anything went wrong, and anyone who complained, expressed concern, or threatened to report animal abuse would be fired.

10. USDA inspections of the circus were known in advance, and inspections were never conducted in the evening when abuse was most likely to occur. The USDA only inspected the animals Ringling allowed it to inspect and in a manner that Ringling allowed.

SPEAKERS AT THIS YEAR'S CONFERENCE

Mark Berman, Assistant Director for Earth Island Institute's International Marine Mammal Project, began working for the environment in 1990 when he heard the announcement of a planned theme park in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, which was to have five species of wild-caught cetaceans, as well as an assortment of other wild-caught species. He spoke out against the Park and formed the South Carolina Association for the Protection of Marine Mammals (SCAMMP). SCAMMP was successful in having legislation introduced and passed in South Carolina which bans the captivity of dolphins and whales. South Carolina is the first state in the United States to pass such landmark protection for cetaceans. Since joining Earth Island, Mark has coordinated efforts to stop the capture of marine mammals worldwide for theme parks and aquaria. He worked with the producers of "Free Willy" to stop the capture of dolphins in California and worked to successfully stop the capture and import of false killer whales in Japan for Marine World Africa USA. In 1997, Mark coordinated the successful effort to halt the capture of Amazon River dolphins for an aquarium in Dallas, Texas. In September, 1998, Mark traveled to Iceland as part of the team which took "Keiko" home to Iceland. Keiko is the first performing whale ever to be returned to the wild. Earth Island Institute has been responsible for maintaining the true "dolphin safe" standard for tuna through a series of meetings Mark Berman attended in Europe and Asia to convince companies to remain "dolphin safe." His work on captivity continues and he has worked to prevent a dolphinarium in Colombia and exposed the horrible slaughter of dolphins in Japan. This slaughter allowed for at least 20 dolphins to be kept alive and sold to aquariums in Japan.

Nancy Blaney has served since 1996 as the director of the National Legislative Office in Washington, DC, of the New York-headquartered American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, the nation's oldest humane society. In that capacity, she has been part of several legislative successes, including increased funding for Animal Welfare Act enforcement, improved treatment of animals traveling on airlines, and incorporation of language recognizing animal abuse as a risk factor for juvenile violence into the juvenile justice reform bill. She works with wonderful colleagues from many sister organizations and occasionally with groups that don't always share the goals of the animal protection community. Prior to joining the ASPCA, Nancy served as government relations director for PAWS and also worked in the Captive Wildlife Department of the Humane Society of the U.S. In between, she had a few other jobs before coming to her senses and coming back to the animals. Early in her career, she was a legislative assistant for a Member of Congress, where she met her husband (one of the more positive legacies of that particular MC!). Nancy was a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of the University of Maryland at College Park, with a degree in government and politics. (She also learned to fence there, which occasionally is more useful than the degree.) She has served on the Board of Directors of the Adult Health and Development Program and the Horizons Theater, and is currently a member of Women in Government Relations (and perhaps one or two animal groups.) She was born in Philadelphia and grew up in the suburbs, which were all the rage "back then," and survived an all-girl high school.

Brian Busta is a graduate of the University of Alabama where he obtained a degree in Marine Biology. He is currently the Associate Director of Shelter Operations at PAWS. On his days off, he volunteers at the Marine Mammal Center in Sausalito, California. He accompanied Mark Berman from Earth Island Institute to Iceland to visit the Keiko project.

Pat Derby and Ed Stewart are the co-founders and Directors of the Performing Animal Welfare Society (PAWS). PAWS was founded in 1985 when Derby and Stewart, former Hollywood animal trainers, saw the need for an organization that advocated on behalf of performing animals. Derby and Stewart have dedicated their lives to rescuing exotic and performing animals from cruel confinement and performances of pain. In June, 2000, they traveled to Washington, DC to lobby on behalf of the Captive Elephant Accident Prevention Act (HR 2929), introduced by Congressman Sam Farr (D-CA). They hope that someday no wild animals will be kept in captivity. But until that day arrives, PAWS has the experience and commitment to provide the very best sanctuary to performing and abused animals in need.

Blayne Doyle has been in police service for 31 years and a member of the Palm Bay Police Department for 19 years. He was awarded the Medal of Valor in 1992 after an elephant incident in Palm Bay, during which the elephant Janet rampaged with people on her back. Blayne was born and raised in Iowa, and moved to Florida in 1981 to join the Palm Bay Police Department. He is the father of two children and the grandfather of two wonderful grandchildren. Since the elephant incident, he has appeared on the Leeza Show, Hard Copy, Maury Povich and on a special for the Learning Channel, as well as in People Magazine and the Readers' Digest. Blayne testified before the House Sub-Committee on Crime on behalf of the Captive Elephant Accident Prevention Act (HR 2929). He has also assisted PAWS and other organizations whose goal is to stop the use of exotic animals in circuses.

Roger and Deborah Fouts are co-directors of the Chimpanzee and Human Communication Institute. In addition, Roger is a Professor of Psychology and Distinguished Research Professor at Central Washington University. The Foutses have been a part of Project Washoe since 1967. Project Washoe is the first and longest running project of its kind. Washoe was the very first nonhuman animal to acquire a human language, American Sign Language for the Deaf (ASL). The project now focuses on the signing of its five sign-language-using chimpanzees, who live together as a social group: Washoe, Moja, Tatu, Dar and Loulis. Just as humans do, the chimpanzees use the signs of ASL in their interactions with humans and with each other, to comment on their environment, to make requests, to answer questions, and to describe activities and objects. Loulis acquired his signs from his adoptive mother Washoe and the other chimpanzees, becoming the first chimpanzee to acquire a human language from chimpanzees, thus demonstrating the ability of the chimpanzee to culturally transmit a language across generations. Together the Foutses have more than 75 articles published in scientific journals and books. In 1981, they founded Friends of Washoe, a non-profit organization dedicated to the welfare of chimpanzees. They have resided in Ellensburg, Washington since 1980 and, with hundreds of students, they have conducted their research at Central Washington University. In 1992, they founded at CWU the Chimpanzee and Human Communication Institute (CHCI). The CHCI is dedicated to the education of students and the public alike. On weekends, the CHCI is available to the public for educational seminars (Chimposiums) on the chimpanzees and the

ground-breaking research project they represent. Recent research at the CHCI has focused on the private signing of the chimpanzees, imaginary play and signing, chimpanzee to chimpanzee conversations, conversation repair, representational drawing, and the symbolic representation of spatial relations with ASL signs, as well as a comparison of gestural dialects in both this population of captive chimpanzees and two populations of wild chimpanzees. The Foutses are very active in their efforts to improve the living conditions and treatment of chimpanzees in captivity by developing and promoting humane care techniques and programs. In addition, they were active in efforts to protect the free-living chimpanzees in Africa. The Foutses played a major role in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife's raising of the status of chimpanzees in Africa from "threatened" to "endangered." The Foutses are very active in the movement to provide sanctuary for chimpanzees used in and retired from the Air Force Space program and other biomedical research. They are active as well in promoting basic rights for Great Apes, as directors of the Great Ape Project. In 1997, Roger Fouts wrote a memoir of their lives with Washoe. The book, Next of Kin, was selected by the Los Angeles Times as one of the top 100 books of 1997.

David Hancocks has been Director of Victoria's Open Range Zoo in Werribee, Australia since 1998. He is a registered architect and made his first visit to a zoo in 1968 when he applied for a job in the design department at London Zoo, hoping that the work experience would help him better design for humans by learning how to design for animal behavioral needs. He quickly found that those needs are very much ignored by architects in zoos, as are human behavioral needs by other architects. Appalled by the insensitivity of zoo animal environments, he was at the same time intrigued by the potential that zoos have for shaping public attitudes to wildlife. Realizing that architects are hired to solve problems and that, at least in zoos, they are invariably given the wrong problems to solve, he shifted to zoo management, so that he could also become the definer of the problems. From 1974 to 1985, he was first design coordinator and then director of Seattle's Woodland Park Zoo, introducing the concept of landscape immersion, bioclimatic zoning, and a new level of naturalism for zoo exhibits. These innovations were initially rejected by professionals of the traditional zoo community, and even by traditional zoo-goers. He was executive director of the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum from 1989 to 1997, an institution that has greatly expanded the zoo paradigm. His motivation for sacrificing a career in architecture (and for never knowing whether he would have won contracts for designing museums in Bilbao, libraries in Philadelphia, or millennium projects in London) is based on an urgent desire to help create a metamorphosis in zoos and to make them more worthwhile and humane institutions.

Rob Laidlaw began his animal protection work in 1979 investigating killing methods in slaughterhouses and animal husbandry and housing conditions in "factory farms." Since 1984, he has been involved in wildlife issues, with an emphasis on the welfare of wildlife in captivity. His work has resulted in the closure of numerous substandard zoos, a general upgrading of zoo conditions across Canada, and numerous government policy changes. He currently serves as Executive Director of Zoocheck Canada, responsible for wildlife programs, public awareness initiatives and general operations.

Katherine A. Meyer, Esq., is a partner in the Washington, DC law firm of Meyer and Glitzenstein. Ms. Meyer has been practicing public interest law in Washington, DC for more than 20 years and is a founding partner of Meyer and Glitzenstein. She specializes in a wide variety of

federal and state court litigation, including animal and wildlife protection, endangered species law, environmental and wildlife protection, environmental law and open-government issues, including the Freedom of Information Act. Ms. Meyer represents a broad spectrum of both national and grassroots animal protection and environmental groups. She represented the Animal Legal Defense Fund in a landmark case establishing "standing" for individuals complaining about the treatment of animals in zoos and she represented the Pennsylvania Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in ending the infamous Hegins pigeon shoot. She is currently representing dozens of groups in several cases under the Endangered Species Act, and she is counsel to PAWS and several other groups in a challenge to Ringling Bros.' treatment of its endangered Asian elephants.

Tom Rider, a native of Peoria, Illinois, was employed as "barn man" for Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus for 2-1/2 years. In June, Tom testified before the House Sub-Committee on Crime in support of the Captive Elephant Accident Prevention Act (HR 2929).

David Sorensen is Director of the Amanda Blake Memorial Wildlife Refuge at Rancho Seco Park, PAWS' adjunct facility. Dave began working at the Milwaukee County Zoo in 1977 where he first began working with elephants. In 1988, Dave became the supervisor of the pachyderm area where he participated in the successful transition of the zoo's elephant program from free-contact to protected-contact. He also supervised the successful loading and transporting of two Asian elephants from Milwaukee to the PAWS sanctuary. With over 21 years at the Milwaukee County Zoo, Dave has had the opportunity to work with a variety of animals - from armadillos to zebras. He is a member of over eight different professional organizations, which include the American Association of Zookeepers, the American Zoo and Aquarium Association, the Elephant Managers Association and the Chicago Herpetological Society. Among his published works he has written about the history of elephant foot care and elephant management, the Genus Eryx, the Armadillo Lizard, and the Leopard Gecko. He also helped design a mechanical restraint device for giraffe that enabled footwork to be done without anesthesia. Dave began his work at Rancho Seco in late April of 1999. He and his wife Tricia are on-site caretakers of the facility 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Kelly Tansy graduated from Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey's Clown College in 1978. He was employed as a clown with the Blue Unit of Ringling Bros. for almost two seasons. He continued his career as a clown with other circuses, including Circus Gatti, Circus World Park, Tarzan Zerbini Circus, and Super Circus International until 1986. Since then, he has spoken out against the cruelty of using animals in show business. He still performs part-time as a clown and supports efforts to protect all animals from captivity and abuse.

Diane Westwood is the Executive Director of the Captive Animals Protection Society. Her particular interest is the plight of animals in zoos and circuses. In the early 80's, she worked at a UK zoo and that experience changed the direction of her life. Since then, she has monitored and campaigned against zoos in the UK and abroad. She regularly inspects and reports on circuses and zoos. A great deal of her time is spent exposing suffering in circuses and educating the public on circus issues. Earlier this year, she was taken to court by a UK circus proprietor who uses elephants, big cats and a Canadian black bear in his circus. She was accused of harassment and

torment because through the media she urged the public to boycott this circus. The circus owner lost the case. Westwood qualified as a veterinary nurse in 1989 and worked for many years in a small animal practice before having to give up veterinary nursing due to a back injury. She has worked for CAPS since 1997.

Tom Rider's Media/Grass-Roots Campaign
(Activities 2003)

7/16/03 - LA Media: Los Angeles - Fox News network, filmed at LA Coliseum - [circus in town] - KCAL (Channel 9); Telamundo (Spanish station) - all 3 did interviews;

7/17/03 - spoke to Long Beach City Council - [RB in Long Beach] - covered by local Long Beach paper

7/23/03 - San Diego - attended protest at Arena with activists from SD;

8/13/03 - Reno, Nevada - [with Campaign for Cruelty Free Circuses] filmed RB hooking the elephants; helped students with protest; filmed loading of elephants on trains;

8/22/03 - San Francisco - interviewed by CBS (Channel 5); attended protests at Oakland Arena and filmed RB; Interviewed by - Santa Meteo Times;

9/4/03 - Peoria, Ill. [circus there] - interviewed by Channel 25 (NBC); WRAU - Channel 19;

9/22 - 10/31 - New Haven, CT - (for next month - working Boston, Manchester NH, Harrisburg, Pa, Bridgeport Ct, Hartford, Ct):

Manchester, NH: Linda Dionne, "New Hampshire Animal Rights"
9/23/03 - did cable show ; aired repeatedly for next 30 days [local public access channel - sent to Derry, NH];

Bridgeport, Ct - one-hour live talk radio show - "Citizen Smith" - AMWICC (Ken Smith) - lots of call-ins ; worked with local group, Compassion In Entertainment;

10/27-28/03 - Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: working with the Lehigh Valley Animal Rights Coalition - featured speaker at Capital Rotunda for rally (copies of photos enclosed)

10/30/03 - Manchester, New Hampshire, Exclusive NBC Report (videotape enclosed).

11/21/03 - Huntsville, Alabama: ABC Television Report. [website]









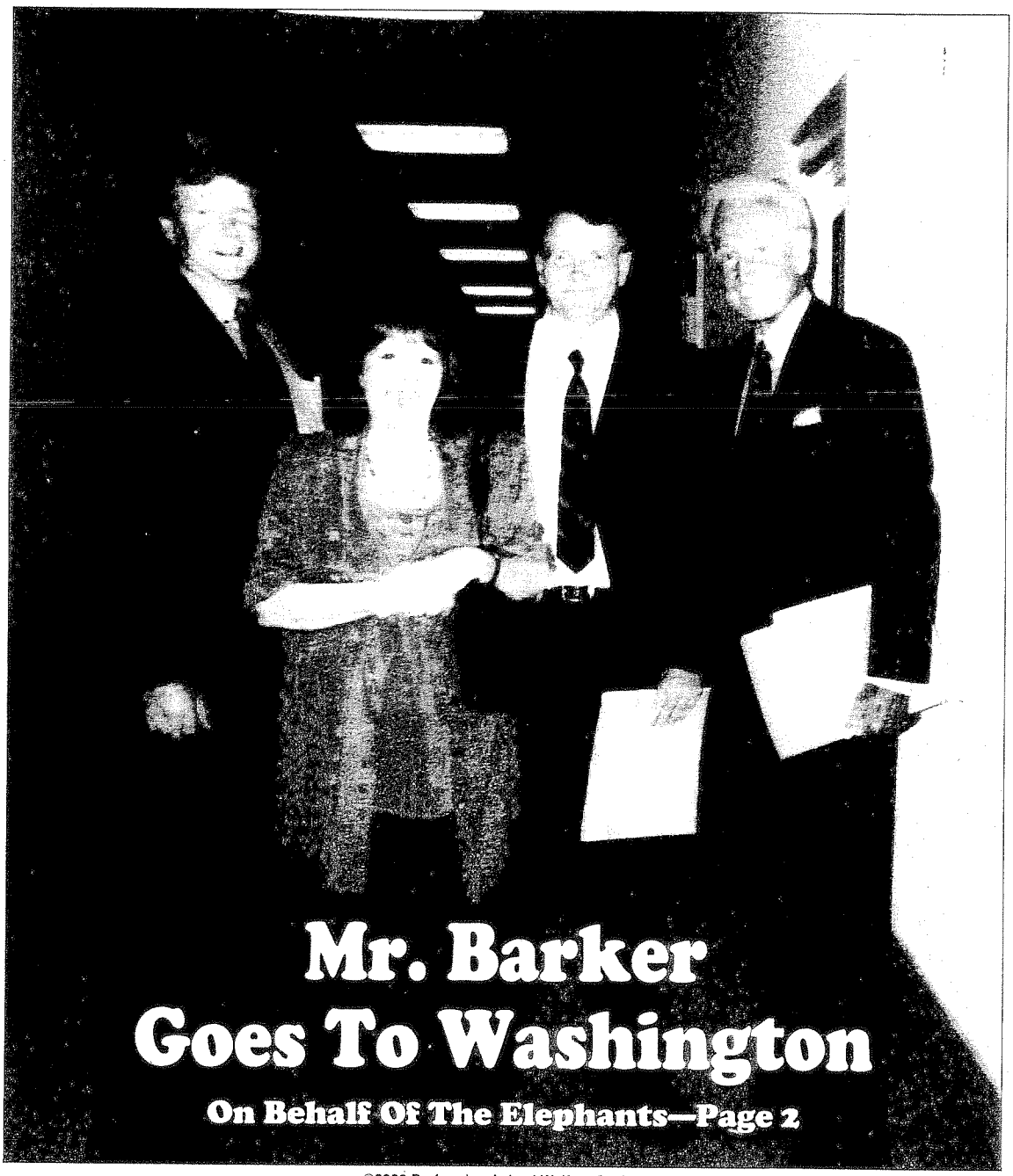




PHOTOS BY JANICE CLARK

PAWS
SUMMER 2000

SANCTUARY



Mr. Barker Goes To Washington

On Behalf Of The Elephants—Page 2

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PL 00013

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PERFORMING ANIMAL WELFARE SOCIETY



PHOTOS BY BETSY SWART

BOB BARKER and PAWS

Testify Before Congress. . . For The Elephants

Bob Barker, Pat Derby, Ed Stewart and a host of experts joined Congressman Sam Farr in support of HR 2929, The Captive Elephant Accident Prevention Act, when hearings were conducted before the Crime Sub-Committee early in June.

The day began early with appearances by Pat Derby on the *Today Show* and Bob Barker on *Good Morning America*. A press conference on Capitol Hill, hosted by Congressman Farr, followed the early morning shows.

The conference room was jammed with media who cornered Palm Bay policeman, Blayne Doyle, and New York housewife, Donna Marie and her two children, for interviews before the hearing. Palm Bay, Florida policeman, Blayne Doyle, was forced to shoot and kill Janet, an Asian elephant in the Great American Circus who had rampaged while doing elephant rides with children on her back. Donna Marie and her children were almost trampled by Luna, a circus elephant who rampaged during a performance in Poughkeepsie, New York. Both witnesses kept the media mesmerized with their accounts of rampaging elephants and their ultimate, tragic fate when they are out of control and the public is at risk.

Testifying in support of HR 2929 were Bob Barker, Pat Derby, Blayne Doyle, Tom Rider (an ex-Ringling Brothers Circus elephant barn man) and Joel Parrott, D.V.M., Director of the Oakland Zoo. The testimony of all witnesses is available on the Congressional® Website at *www.house.gov/judiciary/3.htm.*

The witnesses opposing the bill did not address the issue of public safety with the exception of David Rawls, the only circus representative, who kept stating that "no member of the public has ever been injured or killed by an elephant in the circus" although we had shown a video tape of numerous incidents which refuted his statement. He also contended



**Joel Parrott, D.V.M.
Director of the
Oakland Zoo**

PL 00014

that circus trainers treat their elephants like "family" or beloved pets.

Mr. Rawls' testimony came as no surprise, but we were all shocked to hear Dr. Dennis Schmitt, the veterinarian from Dickerson Park Zoo in Springfield, Missouri, speak on behalf of Ringling Brothers' Circus. Dr. Schmitt also showed a public relations video tape produced by Ringling Brothers Circus which elicited some scathing comments from Tom Rider who was the barn man for that circus for two and a half years. Tom informed the committee that the conditions which Dr. Schmitt described were not apparent when he traveled with the



The conference room was jammed with media.



Donna Marie spoke on behalf of herself & her children who were almost trampled by Luna, a circus elephant who rampaged during a performance in Poughkeepsie, New York.

circus and gave very detailed information about the daily beatings of the elephants and the extremes of heat and cold to which they were exposed during travel.

Another witness opposing the bill was Debbie Olson, an elephant keeper at the Indianapolis Zoo. Ms. Olson is a proponent of the "free contact" method of training elephants which involves discipline and dominance. She also attempted to justify elephant rides as educational and promoting conservation. Her testimony was particularly interesting since an Indianapolis Zoo elephant keeper has just recently sustained some very serious injuries from an elephant attack. Ms. Olson seems to feel that injuries and "accidents" are part of an elephant keeper's routine.

The fact that elephants who are not hooked, beaten, and dominated have a better quality of life and do not have the opportunity to injure their keepers or others seems to have escaped Ms. Olson, who feels that "elephant-human interaction is important to conservation of elephant species."

Ms. Olson forgets that elephant-human interaction has been common in Asia for thousands of years and the Asian elephant population in those countries is declining at an alarming rate. Most researchers agree that it is the intervention of man that has caused this decline which began with the capture of elephants for work in logging camps, circuses and other exhibitions and progressed with the use of elephant parts for various purposes to benefit or entertain the humans who were interacting with them.

Continued on page 4

Congressman Sam Farr shows an image of Tyke the elephant as she was gunned down on a street in Honolulu, Hawaii in 1994 after killing her trainer and injuring a groom in front of horrified spectators at the Blaisdell Arena.



Bob Barker and Paws Testify

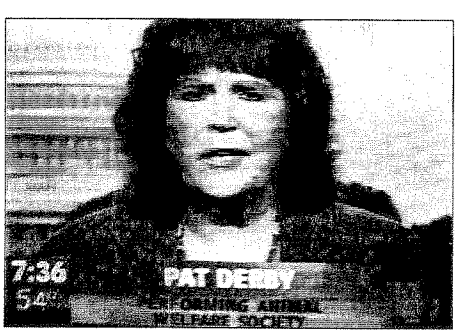
Continued from page 3

HR 2929 will be up for a vote of the Crime sub-committee members sometime in the fall. We are taking this opportunity to lobby all the members of the sub-committee to vote yes on this bill.

Please keep writing polite letters to the Crime sub-committee *(names and addresses right).*



Left: A public relations video tape produced by Ringling Brothers Circus elicited some scathing comments from Tom Rider (above) who was the barn man for that circus for two-and-a- half years.



The day began early with appearances by Pat Derby on the *Today Show* (above) and Bob Barker on *Good Morning America*.

H. R. 2929

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Rep. Sam Farr

CO-SPONSORS:

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Rep. Young, C.W., Bill (R-FL)

H. R. 2929

The Captive Elephant Accident Prevention Act, is currently in the Crime Sub-Committee of the House Judiciary Committee.

Congressman McCollum of Florida, is the chair of the committee.

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Anthony Weiner (D-NY) (501 Cannon)
Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX) (410 Cannon)

(Each address above is for Washington, DC 20515)

Congressman McCollum's support is crucial to this bill.
Please write to him today at:

2109 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

NEWS THREE at FIVE
KVBC-TV, Las Vegas
July 5, 2000
5-5:30 p.m.

Jim Synder: Today at news three at five "Gifted Performer or Two Ton Time Bomb?"

Rider: If a elephant does not do a command they would smack it on top of the head, smack it on the leg.

Nina Ratelidge: We'll tell you why some are concerned about the Big Tops main attraction.

Rider: For the eight minutes that they're in the ring, may look nice in the ring, but the rest of the day they're usually on chains, sometimes they put them in a little bitty fenced in area with an electric fence.

Jim Synder: The circus is in town, tickets are on sale now, but is it the animals that are really paying the price for your entertainment? This is News Three at Five, where news comes first Good Evening everyone, I am Jim Snyder and I am Nina Ratelidge.

Nina: They call it The Greatest Show On Earth, but can it be one of the cruelest, as well? Some activists say it is.

Reporter Bobby Castro: A group is protesting the Circus that just pulled into town earlier this morning. We're gonna show a live picture from Sky-3 and here at the Thomas & Mack in just 2 ½ hours the clowns, the animal acts will perform for the crowds inside there. But protesters claim that some of the animals are being abused, and they says it is just a matter of time before one of those animals goes on a dangerous rampage.

Jim: Reporter Bob Castro joins us live from the circus with more as you can see as we zoom in there, he's in the parking lot.

Jim: Bob some of these accusations are coming from former circus workers.

Bobby: That's right, we spoke to a man who walked through the same touring group that is inside of the Thomas & Mack right now Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus. He worked for them for 2 ½ years and while he says this is a fun and exciting place to work it may seem like that from the outside; he said it does have a dark side. He says he quit because he was disgusted with all the abuse he saw.

Bobby: This is the circus some say you never see, elephants dehydrated and dazed, bound and chained and beaten repeatedly for not obeying commands. A former elephant care taker who gave us this video says abuse like this is common. He says the circus just does a good job of covering it up.

Former RB employee, [Rider]: this is what they use to cover it up with , it's a charcoal base. You put that on an elephant's skin it covers up blood.

Bobby: So we took our own escorted tour of the circus, the elephants not only looked healthy, they seemed to like the way they were treated.

RB Employee [Troy Metzler]: You can just see it in them they feel just feel a lot better it like when you get out of the shower after a hard day's work or a hot day, they're refreshed.

Bobby: The elephants that weren't being bath were kept behind a low charged electric fence. Trainers say the animals are barely ever in chains.

RB Trainer [Troy Metzler]: They're like this all day long . The only time we put them out in chains is when we are feeding them, that's so they don't steal each other's food and at night when their at rest and like when were getting them ready for the show.

Bobby: Every animal we saw was remarkably well behaved. Trainers say it proves the animals are not subjected to pain.

RB Trainer [Hans Suppmeier]: When you abuse an animal you can't do what I am doing in the ring. These animals have to come to me, they have to like me.

Reporter: Animal activists say is just a matter of time before one of the animals snaps. The circus says they wish they did not have to defend themselves, but they do come quite prepared. They gave us the large folder with all this information inside about how they care for their animals. Now I asked them specifically about that video you just saw, they told me that footage was shot about 12 years ago and they said that simply does not happen here anymore. I am Bobby Castro reporting live. Back to you in the studio.

Jim: Bob, when you were talking to the trainers today did you get the feeling that they were doing anything differently because our cameras were there or was that their normal course of events for a day?

Bob: Not really. You know actually I thought that they were pretty forth coming with us, they showed us the facilities and nothing seemed like they were hiding anything. All right Bob, Castro. Thank you.

Jim: The former worker you saw in this story testified before a House Subcommittee about animal abuse in the circus. Right now that Committee is considering a law that would outlaw elephant rides and elephants in traveling shows.

Nina: Those protests may be happening locally, but just last month Capitol Hill received an earful about the circus animals and the way they're treated. Celebrities like Bob Barker joined others to support law makers who want to banned elephants rides and the interstate transport of elephants in circuses. Supporters of the proposal say that elephants have an aggressive tendencies. Now owners of elephant acts argue that a handful of incidents is no reason for a national ban. Animal rights advocates say out of control elephants have caused at least 28 deaths in this country. Circus owners dispute those numbers. They contend that in most cases the animals weren't at fault.

NEWS ONE
Lvone, Las Vegas
June 28, 2000
9-10 p.m.

News Anchor: Today before the Circus comes to Las Vegas, a former Ringling Bros. employee comes forward with claims that the Circus routinely beats and abuses elephants.

We are going to show you some pictures that animal activists say portray what really goes on behind the scenes of the Circus. They say animal abuse and neglect run rampant and those whose pay money to see shows, never see this kind of animal torture.

Well earlier this month several animal activists, including people from Las Vegas, testified before Congress. Game show host Bob Barker wants Congress to bar elephants from being used in shows and rides.

Bob Barker: Even if the Circus had the best intentions, authorities on elephant behavior charge that it is impossible for a circus to provide an acceptable existence for elephants.

Now, Ringling Bros. issued this statement today to News One. "The circus denies the abuse claims and says they're staff devote their lives to caring for animals."

Well, some worry that people here will be supporting that kind of animal abuse when the Ringling Brothers Circus comes to town a week from tonight. George Napp of Channel 8 Eye Witness News uncovered disturbing stories when he investigated the mistreatment of animals in 1995.

Unidentified male: "This is Jenny, pride and joy, she's a sweetheart."

Napp: Betty Hann's Animal Adoption has a new resident, a 27 year old Asian elephant given to her by a circus. Jenny has a sweet deposition and a healthy appetite, but was no longer a value to the circus because of her rear leg, swollen and misshapen. She's not in pain, she resting it.

George Napp: But it is still swollen , you can see it."

Hann: Well its been that way for years, she can put her weight on it , she can run like a race horse and I can attest to that."

Napp: When she accepted Jenny, Hann signed a statement agreeing that the injured leg was from natural causes and that she wouldn't cast aspersions on the circus industry. She doesn't, but many other people do!

Activist [Derby]: "There are a lot of elephants that I see traveling around the country with those same fused legs. We've seen the elephant at Betty Hann's place, that's a fused leg, that's an injury and I'll bet my life that it occurred when the elephant was younger and they were forcing her to do things she's not constructed to do."

Reporter: [Derby], a Veteran Hollywood animal trainer, says elephants simply aren't made to stand on their hind legs. The Humane Society Investigators have discovered how some trainers teach some tricks.

Trainer HSUS [Winikoff]: "the only way to get an elephant to learn how to do that is through inhumane training methods such as for example causing intense pain in the front legs of the elephants so that the elephant has to stand up, burning the bottoms of the front two legs of the elephant or providing electrical shocks."

Reporter: In five years of investigating performing elephants, Winikoff says he has yet to find a human operation. Partly it is the nature of the beast. These powerful pachyderms are gently and even social in the wild, but in captivity their strength and intelligence are kept to control, teaching tricks is even tougher.

Unidentified male on video identified as a "Circus Employee": They'll just walk into animal and start beating it, beating it and beating it and I know of several occasions were an elephant just died , because of the beatings...

Reporter: This home video was shot as the Ringling Bros. Circus pulled into Sacramento, CA after many hours of travel and cramped rails cars chained into piles of their own waste , the stiff legged elephants were herded into formation, but not fast enough for some of the trainers.

Video: Sounds of the trainers yelling and whipping the elephants, while an elephants' screech, then a person saying "hey good job, Betty".

Reporter: But there are worst examples. The leg of this elephant oozed blood and puss , but still it had to perform. This video was taken at a zoo where handlers spent 12 hours trying to teach the subject how to salute. After being sold to a Mexican Zoo for one dollar, Hanibel was drugged and stuffed into a packing crate, ten hours later he was dead on arrival.

Tumai was starved, shocked and beaten with baseball bates but wouldn't obeyed, so trainers rammed his head with a front end loader. He died.

News Anchor: Since that story aired, Betty Hann the women who started Animal Adoption in Henderson, has died, but her mission to adopt abused animals continues.

[In studio interview follows:]

Now, Tom Rider used to work for Ringling Bros. and Clyde-Beatty Cole Brothers Circus, he joins us tonight.

News Anchor: What did you see when you worked for Ringling Bros. and you worked with the elephants?

Tom: Well I worked there for two and half years. I was the barn man in the afternoon from 3:30 to 10:30 and my basic were to take care of the elephants and feed them and what I seen was a systematic pattern of beating, overly hook 'em with the bull hook and if they would not do there commands or they were very slow in the performance, they would be brought back chained and literally beat about the head, the trunk as you saw in the video in the back of the foot; that gets them moving faster. –Um- I saw this it was not just once or twice a week, it's on a period of like five to six days out of the week and traveling on the train with them, I was in their stock cars as you saw there in the video, and we traveled sometimes up to two and half days. The girls were never taken off of there and the conditions inside those cars are basically no heat, no air conditioning, a draining systems is very poor, we had urine coming out of the bottom of the floor, which elephants had to stand in for long periods of time, no way to get it out.

One time coming from Uma to Phoenix, it was a hundred and twenty five degrees inside the car, I could not give them water cause the water tank had gotten so hot, the water was too hot for them to drink. So in the two and half years, I saw a absolute systematic form of abuse to make these elephants go in and do their performance. What people are seeing are eight minutes in a performance. The rest of those days the elephants are just hit, they're hooked, their kept on chains the majority of the time. They do not have the right proper amount of exercise, and it's just to a point with this bill before Congress is not to closes circuses, its to take the elephants out of circus and put them into sanctuaries or zoos and stop them from giving elephant rides because of the public safety. There is a big public safety matter concerning elephants in the Circus. If one of them gets beats enough and he decides to charge and go into the crowd you could have death, injury and they're bringing in little kids right down at the ringside at Ringling Bros. an hour before the show to literally we stand there and look at an elephant named Karen who we call a killer. She is a very, very, dangerous elephant. Yet they have her right there by the kids with no means of any kind of measure to stop her if she does charge.

Reporter: Tom do you believe that it is possible to have elephants in the circus without abusing them?

Tom: I see no way, an elephant will not go into a ring and perform. It has to be the bull hook that they use they call it for control or discipline. An elephant by a natural act does not stand on back of each other's shoulder fifteen of them in a row. I've never seen that in the wild and yet to see on ride a tricycle in the wild, and the babies are beat as much as the big ones.

Reporter: A spokesman for Ringling Bros. says when you were a circus employee you never spoke out about these issues then, why didn't you?

Tom: I spoke out to my supervisor, who was Randy Peterson, I spoke to him. I was one of the ones there who complained the most, but if you took it past that you stand a chance of getting fired, not for that but they would find something immediately to get rid of you. I was threaten several times when I worked for Ringling that they were gonna get me out of the circus. I basically told them, I said, well, you know, what did I do, well they said cause your complaining and lot. This was Randy, says your causing problems and I said well I've got sixteen rolls of tapes that is what I used on him, but I didn't have it. That it was the only means I had to keep my job, I would have been fired had I went forth, and I, plus you're in a situation where you don't have the opportunity to go to somebody like Kenneth Feld and say, look Mr. Feld your animals are getting beat, why are you letting this happen when you say they're not doing that. and it's a problem.

News Anchor: And in terms of inspection because we got a statement today from Ringling Brothers saying that the USDA conducts inspection and its done on the state level and the local level.

Tom: I spoke to Mr. Mike Dunn who is the Under Secretary of Agriculture in DC when I was there for the hearing. I brought that up to Mr. Dunn and said my one question to him was why do you always call ahead to Ringling Bros. and he said Tom I have heard that before and I am going to get to the bottom of it. They call up and say okay I'm gonna be here tomorrow, I'm gonna be here in a week and when they show up they're taken to three elephants, and the three they take them to are Jewel, they take them to Zini, and Minnie or Mysore. And these elephants don't have the actual hook marks and the scarring that the other elephants have, so they walk in, they've seen it and their taken right out of there, they're escorted around. I have yet in my time of 2 ½ years of seeing all these USDA inspections, I have never seen them get down and go elephant to elephant, and I brought this to the attention of The Department of Agriculture and I also requested an administrative hearing with the Department concerning their inspection of the Ringling Bros.' elephants and other circuses in general.

Reporter of Agriculture: Tom, thank you for joining us this evening.

Tom: You're welcome.

Reporter: This story we will be following.

Tom: Your welcome.

10/25/01



Photograph by Eric Carlson

Notes From the Underbelly

Elephant Man

By Eric A. Carlson

"The abuse at Ringling Brothers is 6 out of 7 days a week."

-Tom Rider

CALL ME A TREE hugger, but after watching several hours of video of elephants being abused at various circus stops around the country, and the sad parade of animals being led down the dung-filled avenues of San

Jose to the San Jose Compaq Center/Hewlett Packard Arena (the site of this year's Ringling Brothers Circus), I am on board with Tom Rider and Kathleen Flynn in their fight against Ringling Brothers--the Cruelest Show on Earth. Seeing is believing.

The instrument of pain is the bull hook, or ankus, a 3-foot-long rod with a hooked tip. It is effective against elephants because they have extremely sensitive skin. A Ringling Brothers employee (in video Tom Rider provided) said that circus policy requires the ankus to be used only as a guide or a tool. Video taken over the last two years depicts otherwise--elephants were struck on the back of their legs to get them to move faster, and bull-hooked to encourage them to perform tricks or to move from place to place. I saw a young elephant whacked on the trunk for simply raising its trunk to a tether; the handler grinned broadly at the frightened animal's pained reaction.

Tom told me that when Ringling Brothers was presented evidence of elephant cruelty, they promised the abusers would be reprimanded. It might not have "taken," as the circus was cited at this year's San Jose performance for an alleged violation of California Penal Code 596.5--Cruelty to Elephants, against an elephant named Asia. The circus was also cited for allegedly allowing a Yak to run loose and for allegedly hosing raw animal waste down street drains that flow to the bay. Sorry about that, Alviso.

Tom Rider hired on with Ringling Brothers in 1997, as a "barn man," and for the next two-and-a-half years tended elephants. He grew fond of the tusked behemoths, and referred to them as "his girls." He still does. Tom witnessed a discouraging and systematic

mistreatment of his girls, and when he opted out of Ringling Brothers, he decided to follow the circus--wherever it went--to hound the malefactors and inform the local press of what lay behind the shadows.

According to Tom, Ringling Brothers hires men with little or no experience to care for the animals. Tom related that in his entire stay with the circus, he was unaware of a bona fide animal trainer ever being hired. When problems did occur, such as animals bolting, there were too few employees to control them.

Catherine Ort-Mabry, Director of Corporate Communications for Feld Entertainment/Ringling Bros., didn't want to go into detail about the allegations because of pending litigation. However, she called the charges "unwarranted." "Our animal care staff is composed of experts who have devoted their lives to caring for the animals at Ringling Bros.," she told us via email. She called the ankus "an elephant management tool that has been in use for thousands of years." The elephant's handler, she assures us, considers Asia his elephant "auntie" and would never take any action that would hurt her.

Kathleen Flynn showed me video of the Ringling Brothers Circus in San Jose. It showed animals being kept in the parking lot next to the Arena. At one point, in the street, a horse bolted free in the vicinity of children, before being corralled. The avenue between the Arena and the parking lot holding the animals was covered in dung--which was left in the street for hours. A tape of last year's circus showed two zebras--chained together--bolting from a lone handler. They ran on either side of a light pole--the chain caught, and they slammed to the ground,

stunned. Raucous laughter rang out in the night.

Final Note: On Kathleen's suggestion I examined Title 7 of the San Jose Municipal Code which deals with animals. These codes are just a bit convoluted, but even I could see that San Jose, the owner of the Arena, was stretching the definition of a few of the edicts concerning dangerous animals, to allow the circus to take place there. To say the least.

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For more information about the San Jose/Silicon Valley area, visit sanjose.com.

PAWS' 2000 CONFERENCE ON CAPTIVE WILDLIFE

SEPTEMBER 7-8



Friday, September 8:

9 -10:30 a.m.
Diane Westwood, *Director*
Captive Animal Protection Society (CAPS)
"Sad Eyes and Empty Lives: Zoo Campaigns in the U.K."

10:30 - 11:30 a.m.
Rob Laidlaw, *Director, Zoocheck Canada*
"Campaigns In Canada To Ban Circuses With Animals"

11:45 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.
Jan Creamer, *Director, Animal Defenders*
"Chipperfield Circus Update"

1-2 p.m.
LUNCH

2 - 3:30 p.m.
Dr. Roger Fouts & Debbie Fouts, *Directors*
Chimpanzee-Human Communication Institute

3:30 - 5:00 p.m.
Representative of Dreamworks Film Company
"Tusker: The Making Of A Movie"



Thursday, September 7:

9 - 10 a.m.
Pat Derby & Ed Stewart, *PAWS' Founders & Co-Directors*
Opening Remarks and Welcome
Update of PAWS Programs and ARK 2000

10 - 12 a.m.
Tom Rider, *Former Ringling Elephant Handler*
Kelly Tansy, *Former Ringling Clown*
Sharon Simms, *PAWS General Counsel*
Katherine Meyer, *Meyer and Glitzenstein Law Firm*
"The Show Must Not Go On: Ringling Brothers Circus"

12 Noon - 1:30 p.m.
LUNCH

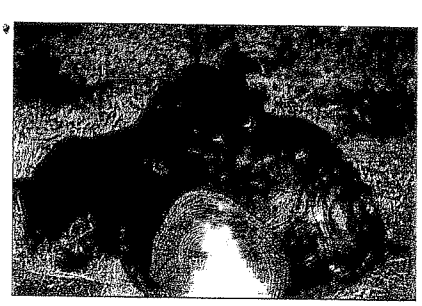
1:30 - 3:30 p.m.
Pat Derby, *Director, PAWS*
Nancy Blaney, *Legislative Director, ASPCA*
Lisa Wooninck, *Office of Congressman Sam Farr*
Dave Sorensen, *Director,*
Amanda Blake Memorial Wildlife Refuge, PAWS
Blayne Doyle, *Palm Bay Police Department*
"HR 2929: The Captive Elephant Accident Prevention Act"

3:30-5:00 p.m.
Mark Berman, *Earth Island Institute*
Brian Busta, *PAWS*
"Keiko: Home At Last"

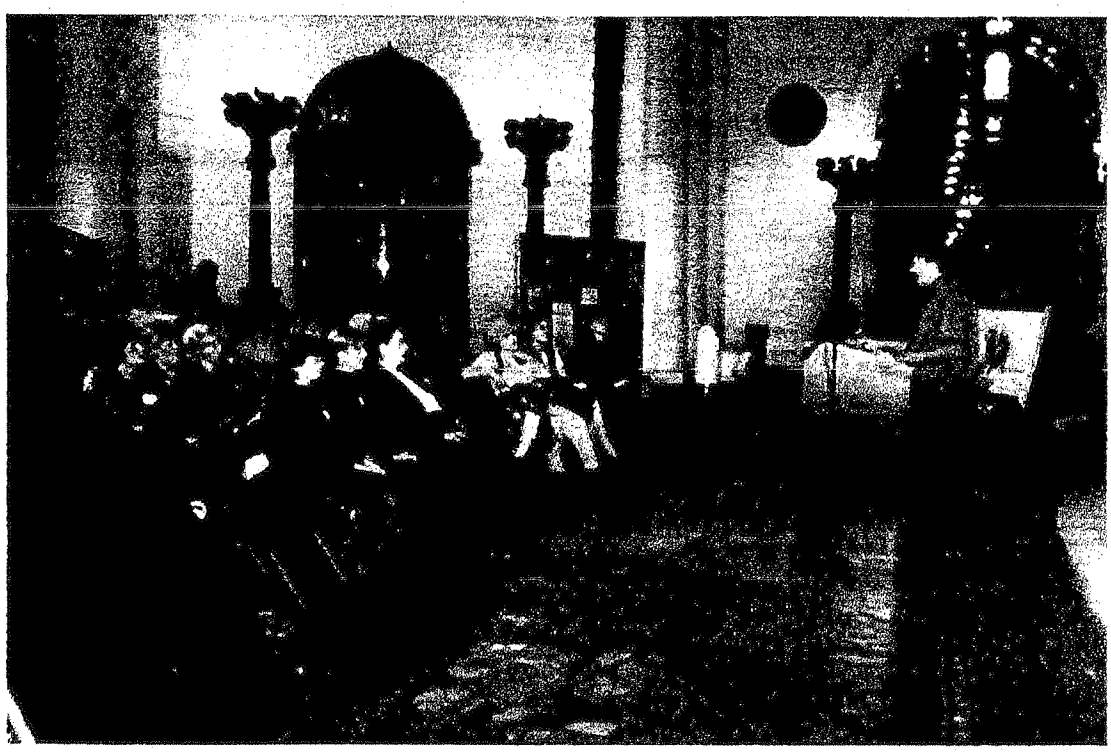
Dinner On Your Own

EVENING SESSION

7:30 p.m.
David Hancocks, *Director, Victoria's Open Range Zoo, Australia*
Author—"A Different Nature: The Paradoxical
World and Uncertain Future of Zoos"
"Can Zoos Help Save Us From Ourselves?"







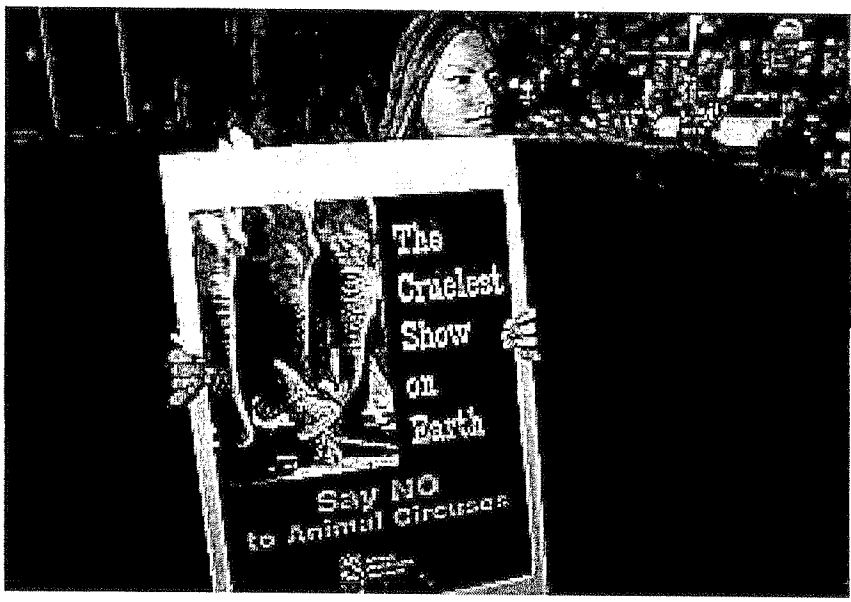


Photo by: JASON BEHNKEN

Protesters outside St. Pete Times Forum included Myra Ortiz, of Florida Voices for Animals, as the circus began its five-day run.

Ringling Bros. Applauded, Protested

By KATHY STEELE ksteele@tampatrib.com

Published: **Jan 11, 2004**

TAMPA - For the better part of a week, eager circus fans have been lining up for a close encounter with the Ringling Bros. stable of lions, alpacas, ponies and the circus's signature exotic - Asian elephants.

``I'm a 9-year-old in a 24-year-old body," said Clearwater resident Heather LoCoco, who stood near the front of the line with her companion from the Big Brothers Big Sisters program, Domenique, age 9.

``I've been driving everybody at work crazy talking about this," LoCoco said.

But nowadays, where circuses go, animal activists follow. So when Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus began its five-day run Wednesday at St. Pete Times Forum, a handful of protesters staged their own show.

One activist in a tiger costume used a bullhorn to blare an anticircus message to passing cars and patrons walking to the arena.

Next to that activist stood two people dressed as an elephant and draped in a sign that read ``Save Me." A half dozen other protesters displayed posters billing the circus, ``The Cruelest Show on Earth."

Three animal rights groups and a former Ringling ``barn man" filed a federal lawsuit in July 2000 against Feld Entertainment and Ringling. It accuses the circus of abusing and mistreating its animals - including the Asian elephants.

Plaintiffs include The Fund for Animals, the Animal Welfare Institute, the American Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and Tom Rider, who worked for Ringling for two years.

A trial date is at least a year away.

``I have never seen anybody beat the elephants. We have a zero-tolerance policy," said John Kirtland, head of animal training and care for Ringling. ``Those allegations have been refuted. Our records show we provide the best animal care."

Cross-Country Protest

Rider, with no permanent address, travels across the country in a van protesting Ringling at every opportunity. The 53-year-old Illinois native said he has worked a variety of jobs, including a stint as a truck driver. He was introduced to elephants while working briefly for a Disney show.

From 1997 to 1999 he was a barn man for Ringling, watching after the elephants and cleaning their stalls. He said he witnessed repeated beatings of what he calls ``his girls" with ``bull hooks," curved steel points with short poles for handles.

Circuses say the hooks are used as gentle prods to guide the elephants. Kirtland said Ringling trains its elephants with praise and rewards.

But Rider asked, ``Why do they carry a weapon if they say they use positive re-enforcement?"

Kirtland dismissed Rider's charges and said Rider never raised complaints while in Ringling's employ. Rider said he reported abuse of the elephants to other Ringling employees but was ignored.

``He's making a living parroting animal rights' rhetoric," Kirtland said.

Rider said he doesn't belong to any group and doesn't approve of what he calls the gimmicky and extreme tactics of activists. He said he doesn't receive money at this time from animal groups but does receive money from a private individual in California, whom he declined to name.

Rider said he stands by his accounts. He said he saw beatings inflicted on elephants in his care, including Doc, Angelica and Karen.

Allegations And Investigations

The lawsuit also cites the death of Kenny, a 3-year-old elephant that was not part of the touring circus unit in which Rider worked.

An investigation by the U.S. Department of Agriculture ended with a $20,000 settlement.

The elephant died after performing two shows in Jacksonville in 1998. Animal activists accused Ringling of forcing the elephant to perform while ill.

Circus veterinarians said the elephant died from a gastrointestinal infection, cause unknown.

According to the settlement, Feld Entertainment, which owns Ringling Bros., agreed to give $10,000 each to a research facility studying elephant diseases and an elephant sanctuary.

``It was not a fine. It was a settlement rather than a litigation," Kirtland said, adding that in 30 years, Ringling has never been found guilty of violating animal welfare laws.

USDA records show the circus has been investigated 16 times since 1990. In 11 cases, complaints of mistreatment or abuse were deemed unfounded.

Two cases involving the death of the 3-year-old elephant were combined and resulted in the settlement. In three other cases, warning letters were issued. One involved the death of a tiger in St. Petersburg in 1999. In that case, a distraught trainer shot the big cat in his cage after the animal had mauled the man's brother.

That's not an accepted form of euthanasia, said Jim Rogers, USDA spokesman.

But Kirtland is correct to say Ringling has no violations, Rogers said.

Out-of-court settlements are the likely outcome of investigations in cases where there is mistreatment of animals or improper animal care, Rogers said. In such cases, the agency doesn't make findings of violations, he said.

Although settlements can include admissions of guilt, that rarely happens, he said.

``Settlements allow us a wider latitude,'' Rogers said.

Ringling, the largest of the major touring circuses, isn't the only circus to be investigated.

The USDA, with just fewer than 100 inspectors, pays unannounced visits about once a year to circuses and other animal exhibitions. Agents go more often when public complaints are made, Rogers said.

On average there are 10,000 to 12,000 inspections, a number that has been consistent for many years, he said.

``I get calls all the time,'' Rogers said.

Some calls are from the public. There are also calls from the media, contacted by various animal groups, he said.

Smaller circuses, such as Clyde Beatty-Cole Bros., and Carson & Barnes, also have been investigated. USDA records from 1995 show the following outcomes:

* Clyde Beatty-Cole Bros. - One case closed with no findings of mistreatment; one warning letter; a $2,750 payment related to bull hook injuries to elephants; a suspended $10,000 settlement, also based on bull hook injuries to elephants, with the provision that the circus hire a USDA- approved animal consultant for two years; an open investigation. Rogers said USDA policy is not to comment on open cases.

* Carson & Barnes - Two cases closed with no findings of mistreatment, a $400 payment related to an accident while transporting an elephant and an open investigation.

Animal activists complain that the relationship between the USDA and Ringling is too cozy.

Seminars to train inspectors often rely on Ringling employees, Rider said. While he was with the circus, Ringling always knew when inspectors were coming, he said.

Kirtland said Ringling provides training assistance to various animal agencies and zoos, but that's because circus animal handlers have the knowledge and experience in dealing with exotic animals.

``It's delusional to think we can buy off a branch of the federal government,'' Kirtland said.

Ringling Bros.' reputation was evident among Tampa circus fans.

``I think Ringling would be the only respectable one,'' LoCoco said. ``It's the only one that cares.''

`Good For Business'

Inside the forum, the audience was captivated by the traditional trappings.

Khalil Almutasim's mouth dropped open as a trapeze artist twirled high above, looking like some spidery creature glittering in gold and pink.

His mother, Kathy Boulden, and father, Bilal Almutasim, are circus fans. But Boulden remembers a circus a few years ago in New Jersey where the animals looked to be in poor health.

``We didn't go back,'' Boulden said. But their view of Ringling's animals Wednesday was favorable.

``They are looking better, healthier,'' Boulden said.

Valrico resident Melissa Gross and her sons, Nathan, 3, and Jared, 7, walked through Ringling's Animal Open House before Wednesday's performance. Elephants were among Nathan's favorites, as was Bella the clown.

``I like it when the clowns act funny,'' Nathan said. And when elephants raise their trunks and make noises, he added.

The protest ``doesn't discourage me at all,'' their mother said.

Kirtland said: ``It's good for business. They are alienating people because of their tactics.''

But Tampa resident Myra Ortiz, a member of Florida Voices for Animals, said she has seen videotapes - widely circulated by animal rights groups - that convinced her that circuses abuse elephants.

``It's the reason I'm here,'' Ortiz said.

The Tampa Tribune is one of Ringling's media sponsors.

Reporter Kathy Steele can be reached at (813) 259-7920.

Ringling sued over alleged elephant abuse

BY LINDA GOLDSTON
Mercury News

Stepping up their campaign against Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus, animal activists have filed suit against "The Greatest Show on Earth," claiming the circus mistreats its elephants and violates the federal Endangered Species Act.

The lawsuit, the second from the California-based Performing Animal Welfare Society, was announced at a press conference Thursday morning at the Oakland Zoo by Pat Derby, co-founder and director of PAWS. The circus began its Bay Area run in Oakland Wednesday.

In the suit, Ringling is accused of "harming, harassing and wounding endangered elephants" and "routinely beating elephants to 'train' them and keep them under control, chaining them for long periods of time, hitting them with sharp bull hooks, 'breaking' baby elephants with force, and forcibly removing baby elephants from their mothers, before they are weaned, with the use of ropes and chains."

Ringling, which is due in San Jose on Aug. 23, denies the allegations.

In a statement from Feld Entertainment, the circus's corporate parent, Ringling said it provides "the highest standards in hands-on care of all our animals, including the Asian elephants." The statement also said Ringling "will aggressively defend our good name and our reputation."

"Because of our professional and personal commitment to the well-being of our animals, Ringling Bros. is outraged by the allegations contained in two lawsuits brought against the company by the Performing Animal Welfare Society (PAWS)," the statement said in part. "We consider them nuisance lawsuits that are additions to a list of tactics PAWS is using in its political campaign to eliminate animals from performing circuses."

Joining in the suit against Ringling are the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, the Animal Welfare Institute, based in Washington, D.C.; the Fund for Animals, based in Silver Spring, Md., and two former employees of the circus. The suit was

See ELEPHANTS, Page 7B

The Mercury News

Lawsuit claims

Ringling abuse

■ ELEPHANTS

from Page 1B

filed in U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C.

A separate suit filed against Ringling by PAWS in June accuses the circus and its parent company of corporate espionage and trying to put the Galt-based, private, nonprofit organization out of business.

Derby said the most recent suit was based on personal observations of animal activists, federal inspection reports and the accounts of former employees Tom Rider and Glenn Ewell. Ringling has said only positive reinforcement is used in the handling and management of the elephants, that numerous inspections have found no wrongdoing or animal mistreatment by the circus and that the employees' claims are unsubstantiated.

When Ringling was in San Jose for a weeklong run last August, investigators for the Humane Society of the Santa Clara Valley found evidence that the circus had mistreated its endangered Asian elephants.

Officers for the humane society and San Jose police Sgt. Lanette Williams sought criminal charges against the circus after documenting numerous lacerations and puncture wounds on seven of the circus's endangered Asian elephants. Prosecutors decided in February not to file charges because there was insufficient evidence.

According to documents released at the press conference, the circus's treatment of its baby elephants was questioned by inspectors for the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

During a routine review of the circus's Center for Elephant Conservation in Polk City, Fla. on Feb. 9, 1999, the inspectors found visible scars on the two baby elephants, named Angelica and Doc, according to a copy of the report.

Noting that both elephants were chained, the report states "visible scars were readily observable," including a 6-inch-by-1-inch linear scar on Angelica.

According to the report, the USDA veterinarian "immediately upon observation of these scars asked Mr. Jim Williams and Gary Jacobson as to the origin of them, and why these elephants were tied up this way. Both men said that they were caused by rope burns due to the elephants' movements when tied and that this type of restraint was done routinely during the separation process from their mothers."

After obtaining copies of the inspection report through the federal Freedom of Information Act, Derby of PAWS complained to the USDA. Michael V. Dunn, under secretary for marketing and regulatory programs for the USDA, responded in a Dec. 23, 1999, letter that "there was sufficient evidence to confirm that the handling of the two elephants was not in compliance" with the Animal Welfare Act, and that "the elephants had experienced unnecessary trauma, behavioral stress, and physical harm and discomfort."

Dunn said in the letter that the USDA asked "independent elephant" experts to review photographs of the two juveniles and their lesions, which were acquired during the calves' separation from their mothers. Several expert reviewers commented that the method of separation implemented by the center was outdated and unnecessary."

No charges have been filed in the handling of the baby elephants.

A bill that would ban the use of elephants in traveling shows and rides — the Captive Elephant Accident Prevention Act — is before a Congressional subcommittee.

Contact Linda Goldston at lgoldston@sjmercury.com or (408) 920-5862.

AWI 01765

CIRCUS REPORT
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RULING OVERTURNED

The U. S. Court of Appeals overturned a lower court decision that dismissed a case on procedural grounds charging Ringling-Barnum with violating the Endangered Species Act. The information was provided by a PRNewswire service on Feb. 6th.

The ruling clears the way for the case brought by a former Ringling Bros. employee, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA), the Animal Welfare Institute (AWI) and The Fund for Animals to present their case that Ringling Bros. routinely beats its elephants with bull hooks to perform.

The decision by the court which grants the plaintiffs standing was based strongly upon statements of former Ringling Bros. elephant trainer and co-plaintiff in the case, Tom Rider, who while employed by Ringling Bros., witnessed routine beatings of the circus elephants with bull hooks.

Consequently the U. S. Court of Appeals unanimously found that Tom Rider suffers "aesthetic and emotional injury" from seeing the elephants perform in the circus. The court found that Rider developed "a strong, personal attachment to these animals" while working with the elephants at Ringling Bros. for two years. Rider left Ringling Bros. because of the mistreatment of the elephants.

Court restores Ringling Bros. abuse suit

By Michael Kirkland
UPI Legal Affairs Correspondent
From the Washington Politics & Policy Desk
Published 2/4/2003 12:15 PM

WASHINGTON, Feb. 4 (UPI) -- A federal appeals court in Washington Tuesday reinstated an animal abuse suit against Ringling Bros. and Barnum and Bailey Circus.

The suit complains that Asian elephants, an endangered species, were being maltreated.

Besides restoring the suit, Tuesday's ruling sets a precedent in one of the country's most important courts, and appears to make organizations more vulnerable to such animal abuse suits if the actions are brought in part by a former insider.

The suit against Ringling Bros. was filed by the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, the Animal Welfare Institute, the Fund for Animals and Thomas Rider, a former circus employee.

The plaintiffs alleged that the Asian elephants were being mistreated in violation of the federal Endangered Species Act.

Ringling personnel, the suit claimed, "beat the elephants with sharp bull hooks, kept the elephants in chains for long periods of time and forcibly removed baby elephants from their mothers at an earlier age than they could normally be weaned in the wild."

Because of this treatment, the elephants show stress whenever they are exhibited, according to the suit, and U.S. Agriculture Department inspectors have seen lesions and rope burns on the animals.

A federal judge earlier dismissed the suit, ruling that the group of plaintiffs does not have "standing" -- they could not show an injury to themselves that could be remedied by a court.

But a federal appeals court panel reversed the judge Tuesday in regard to Rider.

Rider worked for Ringling Bros. from 1997 to 1999 tending the elephant barns and working as an elephant "handler." He told the court he formed "a strong, personal attachment to these animals" as a result.

Rider also told the court he would like to "visit the elephants, but is unwilling to do so because he would suffer 'aesthetic and emotional injury' from seeing the animals unless they are placed in a different setting or are no longer mistreated."

The judges on the appeals court panel said that was good enough for them.

"Based upon his desire to visit the elephants (which we must assume might include attending a performance of the circus), his experience with the elephants, his alleged ability to recognize the effects of mistreatment, and what an injunction would accomplish," the appeals court said, "Rider's allegations are sufficient to withstand a motion to dismiss for lack of standing."

Because the rest of the plaintiffs are "seeking relief identical to what Rider seeks," the panel said it did not have to rule on the organizations' standing.

The appeals court panel then reversed the judge's order dismissing the lawsuit.

The panel is part of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, which hears regulatory cases from around the country and is generally considered the second most powerful court in the United States, below the Supreme Court itself.

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Print this story

F 00864

Subject: please print for field offices and Mike's file Ringling Bros. Lawsuit
From: Michael Markarian <mmarkarian@fund.org>
Date: Thu, 11 Sep 2003 09:25:59 -0400
To: Tashee Meadows <tmeadows@fund.org>

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HEADLINE: Animal abuse accusations follow Ringling to KC

BYLINE: ROBERT TRUSSELL; The Kansas City Star

BODY:

When the circus comes to town you can bet on one thing: Allegations of animal abuse come with it.

Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey employs 70 animals in its Blue Unit, which opens a five-day stand today at Kemper Arena. The menagerie includes 11 elephants and nine tigers, and circus officials insist the trained animal performers are so well-cared-for that they will most likely outlive their counterparts in the wild.

But a Saturday protest at Kemper planned by Animal Outreach of Kansas will argue otherwise. Advocates from the Lawrence group plan to hand out literature and screen video footage of elephants being beaten, which animal-rights groups say is typical of training methods.

And a pending lawsuit filed by animal-rights organizations contends that the circus abuses its Asian elephants. A motion by circus owner Feld Entertainment to dismiss the suit was denied in July by a federal judge in Washington, D.C.

The suit was brought by the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals; the Fund for Animals; the Animal Welfare Institute; and former Ringling elephant handler Thomas Rider. They allege that the Ringling circus violates the Endangered Species Act.

"These animals are chained up. They're in railroad cars 50 weeks out of the year," said Lisa Weisberg, ASPCA senior vice president for government affairs, in a telephone interview. "You cannot provide for their emotional needs. So for that reason we're against the use of exotic animals in entertainment."

Ringling argues that training is "based on positive reinforcement in the form of food rewards and words of praise ... .Verbal or physical abuse and the withholding of food and water are strictly prohibited. ... "

Mark Riddell, national director of public relations for Feld Entertainment, said animal-rights groups single out the Ringling show as a way of drawing public attention to their cause.

"This suit is clearly part of their political campaign to remove

F 00945

animals from circuses and their continuing attempt to use the courts to further their agenda," Riddell said from Feld headquarters in Vienna, Va.

The circus, Riddell said, is subject to federal, state and local inspections at any time. As it will in Kansas City, the circus frequently has "animal open houses" before each performance that allow ticket-holders a close-up view of the animals and how they interact with their trainers and handlers.

"No organization knows more about living with and caring for these animals than we do," Riddell said. "And no matter how these extremist groups try to mischaracterize procedural rulings in the case and mislead the public, their allegations run exactly counter to what millions of families see each year when they come to Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey."

But the ASPCA does not see itself as an extremist group. Founded in 1866, the ASPCA is one of the country's oldest animal-rights organizations. Unlike People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, or PETA, known for its theatrical public protests and aggressive tactics, the ASPCA pursues its agenda largely through lobbying.

"We don't go around suing people," Weisberg said. "This was a very serious decision on our part. They (Ringling) are an institution. We're going out on a limb here, but we're for the prevention of cruelty to all animals."

Animal Welfare Act

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is responsible for inspecting circuses to ensure compliance with the Animal Welfare Act through its Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. According to USDA spokesman Jim Rogers, federal inspectors can visit circuses at any point on their tour routes. Inspections also can be triggered by complaints from the public.

"Our inspections are a comprehensive look at how a facility is doing on any particular day," Rogers said. "When we do an inspection we look at everything. The Animal Welfare Act is extremely comprehensive."

Possible outcomes of an investigation include a finding of no violation, a letter of warning, a fine or formal charges. The maximum penalty is $2,750 per count per animal per day.

Ringling has been investigated 16 times since 1990, according to Rogers. No violations were found in 11 cases, and letters of warning were issued in three others - one for failing to provide sufficient cage space for dogs in 1992; and another in 1998 for "failure to euthanize ... in accordance with a program of veterinary care" when a trainer killed a tiger with a shotgun after the cat mauled the trainer's brother.

Two cases involving an ill elephant that was required to perform twice before a veterinarian could examine the animal were combined, Rogers said. As a result, Feld Entertainment agreed in 1998 to contribute $10,000 to elephant conservation and another $10,000 to animal research in lieu of a fine. The ASPCA contends that the elephant was a baby that was forced to perform three times in one day.

There have been no investigations in 2003, Rogers said. Copies of almost 20 inspection reports from 2001 through this year provided by the USDA reflected no evidence of animal abuse.

However, the ASPCA, along with the Fund for Animals and the Animal Welfare Institute, argue that the USDA has a "cozy"

F 00946

relationship with Ringling and that investigators are often overruled by their supervisors. In a just-issued report based on USDA documents obtained through the Freedom of Information Act, the groups depict a grim picture inside the circus.

The "USDA purposely ignored crucial evidence, closed investigations prematurely and overrode its own inspectors' and investigators' determination," the report states.

The report includes accounts of the drowning death of a 4-year-old elephant in Texas in 1999; cases of elephants with unreported cases of tuberculosis at Feld Entertainment's breeding facility in Florida; elephant performers, including juveniles, receiving frequent beatings; and baby elephants being separated from their mothers prematurely. In each case, the report alleges, the USDA found no violation despite physical evidence and eyewitness testimony to the contrary.

Rogers, the USDA spokesman, said many of the regulations require subjective judgments by inspectors and investigators.

"Sometimes people may see something they think is out of line which actually may not be," Rogers said. "We've had incidents in the past where people have sent us videotapes showing what was described as animal beatings, and it turned out to be something else."

In the view of animal-rights advocates, however, training animals to perform in circuses is wrong, regardless of how humanely they are treated.

"There's no dissent within the humane community that circuses are cruel," said Michael Markarian, president of the Fund for Animals. "Elephants are highly intelligent, socially complex animals. To do silly tricks just for our amusement is demeaning and inhumane."

But director Philip Wm. McKinley, who stages the shows for Ringling, said he has never witnessed animal abuse in seven years of working for the circus.

"The animals at Ringling are highly regarded, not as props, not as inanimate objects," McKinley said. "They are fellow performers. Much the same way anybody feels about their pet dog or their pet cat is exactly the way these performers feel about their animal partners

"I have not seen that, when people say that there's the abuse and the whipping and all that. Does it happen in circuses? It may. I personally have never witnessed it. Has it happened in Ringling? No."

- To reach Robert Trussell, who covers theater and other performing arts, call (816) 234-4765 or send e-mail to rtrussell@kcstar.com.

GRAPHIC: Photo, Ringling says cries of animal abuse on its circus tours are false.; Courtesy Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus

LOAD-DATE: September 10, 2003

F 00947

Walter E. SMITHE
50 Years

Tamed or Tortured

ABC7 I-Team investigates elephant training

By Chuck Goudie

November 22, 2002 — The circus is in town tonight and so is the controversy about how circus elephants are trained to perform. The AB7 I-Team reports that what happens away from the big top is not always the greatest show on earth, and what you are about to see may be disturbing. It has been almost eight years since the I-Team first exposed how pain and punishment are used to train performing elephants in an investigation called "Tamed or Tortured."

Since then, there have been congressional hearings, demands for tighter animal inspections, even calls for the banning of elephants in circuses. As the Ringling Brothers' Circus debuts weekend shows in Chicago, the controversy has not gone away.

This is a snapshot of obedience– elephants lumbering down Damen Avenue this week and into the United Center, where the Ringling Brothers' Circus is on for 21 shows.

For many fans, the elephants make it the greatest show on earth. But to Tom Rider, a former barn hand at Ringling Brothers', elephants represent the cruelest show on earth.

"They are beaten into submission. The only way to keep an elephant under your control is to beat it," said Rider, former Ringling employee.

Rider tended elephants at Ringling for two and a half years, but says in 1999 he quit after witnessing this kind of treatment by trainers...what he claims is torture administered with an ankus or metal bull hook.

"We had a standing rule that if you could put a bull hook on your finger and hold it, it wasn't sharp enough, you have to sharpen it. It would literally penetrate the skin of an elephant," said Rider.

"Tom Rider worked for Ringling Brothers for two years and never once did he make a complaint about what he says he witnessed if what he saw was so bad. Today he works for an extremist hate organization and he gets paid to do it. He shoveled manure for us then and he shovels manure today," said John Kirtland, Ringling animal stewardship director.

John Kirtland manages animal care and training at Ringling's elephant farm in central Florida.

Kirtland admits elephant trainers carry bullhooks but claims they are used primarily to "guide" the pachyderms.

He says videotape like this shot by animal rights groups is out of context and he vigorously disputes charges of elephant torture, saying Ringling consistently passes government animal inspections.

Kirtland says radicals just don't want animals in captivity.

"They don't want people to enjoy relationships with animals. They want to take the dog out of your house and the horse out of your barn," said John Kirtland, Ringling animal stewardship director.

Ringling has even prepared a videotape featuring veteran trainer Troy Metzler explaining the intended use of a bull hook or "guide" as he calls it.

"Anytime they do something that is right, you always reward them with a pat or a carrot or apple...if a verbal command doesn't work you can use the guide to guide them where you want them to go," said Troy Metzler, Ringling animal trainer.

PL 05947

But this same man Ringling puts forth touting animal care, also appears on another tape shot two years ago by animals rights advocates.

Metzler is seen backstage cracking a baby elephant across the trunk and then performing a faux-karate chop for some bystanders. Metzler tells the I-team he was reprimanded– not for clubbing the elephant, but for doing so on camera.

"The animal was going to pull down a fence onto himself and other elephants and hurt himself. The procedure was correct but the way it was carried out was unprofessional...The mistake was in the way he acted, showing off. He pretty much knew he was on tape and was showing off for the people who are adversarial," said Kirkland.

Then, a few minutes later Metzler is seen on tape issuing a pair of uppercuts with the bull hook to an elephant's jaw.

"I want you to hear the sound on this, that's from about 75 yards away and you can hear how hard he's hit that baby and why, because that baby wouldn't raise its trunk. Wouldn't get her head up," said Rider.

Metzler– now performing in Chicago– admits that on seldom occasions elephants need to be hit. But he contends that 95 percent of the time elephants respond to verbal commands.

"They like to say that they don't do it, that it doesn't happen, that we're the greatest show on earth...we take such good care of our animals. But you can see on the video that doesn't happen. They are all about show," said Rider.

Last Updated: Nov 22, 2002

BACK TO TOP HOME

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The image of the circus as a vestige of an honorable American entertainment tradition is falling to shreds. Through the work of dedicated activists, as well as individuals who have worked in the circus industry, the inherent cruelty of animal-based circuses is not only being criticized, but is increasingly no longer being tolerated.

By Marianne R. Martin

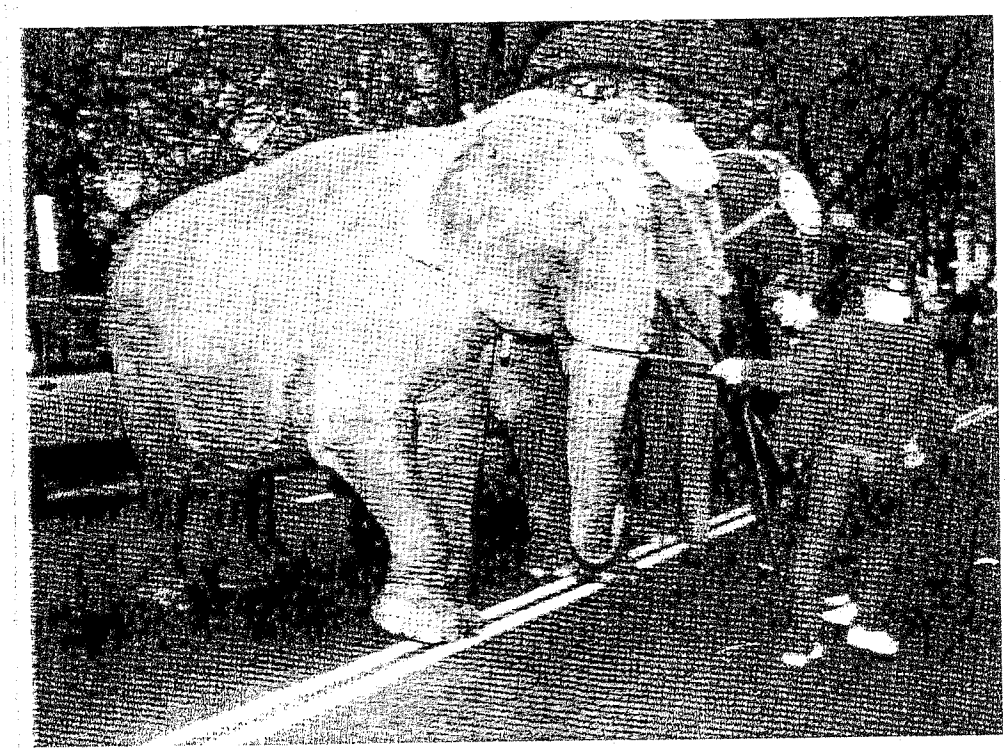
Tatters in The Big Top

The Crumbling Image of Animal Circuses

Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus touts itself as "The Greatest Show on Earth," but its show, and others of its ilk, have been under growing attack by animal advocates, local legislators, and even members of Congress. Legislative initiatives and grassroots activities challenging the use of exotic animals in circuses are proliferating.

Animals in circuses suffer horribly under deplorable conditions. They are forced to live in dirty, crowded quarters; are not provided with consistent veterinary care (many circuses don't travel with veterinarians); and are trained and kept under control through the use of such devices as bullhooks (sticks with sharpened hooks at one end), clubs, whips, chains, electric "hotshot" prods, food and water deprivation, and other forms of what is unemotionally labeled "negative reinforcement." Elephants are kept in chains up to 95 percent of the time, and exotic cats and other animals are housed in small cages where they are barely given room to stand up, move around, or stretch. Baby elephants are torn from their mothers at unnaturally young ages to be trained. One (literally) shocking training method entails hosing down elephants prior to applying a hotshot, thereby making their sensitive skin even more vulnerable to pain.

Performing animals are hauled from town to town, day in and day out, in boxcars or trucks, without any ability to exercise the full range of their natural behaviors or to otherwise be left alone for any substantial period of time without being poked, prodded, and trotted out before the masses. Once they outlive their commercial usefulness, they are frequently sold to captive hunting ranches, sent to roadside zoos, auctioned off to private animal collectors, or otherwise meet dismal fates. A lucky few animals find homes at sanctuaries such as those operated by the Fund for Animals, the Performing Animal Welfare Society (PAWS), and The Elephant Sanctuary in Hohenwald (Tennessee).



PETA

This 1990 photo shows longtime Ringling Bros. trainer Gunther Gabel Williams using a bullhook on an elephant.

Activists all over the world have taken steps to expose and prevent the abuses that occur regularly in circuses. Many U.S. animal protection groups have extensive anti-circus campaigns, and more and more state and local governments have passed or considered banning circuses with exotic animals.

To counter these measures, Ringling Bros. and other circuses have launched well-financed public-relations counterstrikes. Feld Entertainment, Ringling's parent company, was estimated by *Fortune* magazine in 1999 to have generated more than $500 million that year from its various business ventures. A 1995 *New York Times* article estimated

API 5926

Ringling's advertising budget at $25 million, a figure that has likely grown in the face of court challenges and legislative hearings aimed at restricting circus activity.

A Record of Mistreatment

Ringling Bros., with its formidable pocketbook and impetus to protect its profit margin and reputation, has formed a defense based on offense. For example, it has resorted to passing out glossy pamphlets to circus patrons, claiming that its relationship with its animals is "based on constant contact, daily routines and nurturing, which foster trust and affection. Training involves a system of repetition and reward that build on respect and reinforces the trust between animal and trainer." However, documentation provided by government inspection reports and by individuals who have worked at Ringling Bros. reveals a far grimmer picture.

For example, Ringling touts its purported success at its Center for Elephant Conservation (CEC), where it has bred ten Asian elephants. Of those offspring, however, two babies are dead: Kenny, whose death resulted in the imposition of Animal Welfare Act charges that Ringling settled in 1998 for $20,000; and Benjamin, who drowned in 1999 under suspicious circumstances and who reportedly was beaten by his handlers. Of the remaining eight, two were found during a 1999 U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) inspection to have "large visible lesions on [their] rear legs." According to two trainers interviewed during the routine inspection, the young elephants—Doc and Angelica—suffered rope burns while being forcibly separated from their mothers. One inspection memo noted that Bill Lindsay, Ringling's chief veterinarian, attempted to downplay the seriousness of the lesions found on the babies: "Dr. Lindsay was very upset and asked repeatedly why we could not be more collegial and call him before we came. I explained to him that all our inspections are unannounced. We also asked at that time to take pictures of Doc and Angelica. All Ringling personnel were very reluctant to let us take pictures..." The inspectors returned to the CEC the next day to take photographs, and it was noted that the babies "appeared 'cleaned up.'" The inspectors also noticed that there were additional scars on the babies' front legs. The memo notes that Lindsay "was upset that we had even written a note about the scars and stated that we were 'silly' for making such a big issue over a little thing." Ringling Bros. called the separation method "standard industry practice," but the USDA consulted with six elephant experts about the inspection and thereafter communicated to Feld Entertainment that "we consider the handling of these two elephants as reported on our inspection report of February 9-10 to be noncompliant with the Animal Welfare Act regulations....we believe there is sufficient evidence that the handling of these animals caused unnecessary trauma, behavioral stress, physical harm and discomfort to these two elephants..."

Ringling touts its purported success at its Center for Elephant Conservation, where it has bred ten Asian elephants. Of those offspring, however, two babies are dead.

In addition to information from government inspections, more has been learned from three former Ringling employees who have come forward with stories about the company's animal-handling practices. A complaint filed on behalf of PAWS with the USDA in April identifies Tom Rider, a former Ringling elephant handler, as an eyewitness to abuse. The complaint charges that "Mr. Rider has identified several handlers and trainers by name who he personally witnessed repeatedly beat the elephants in the Blue Unit, including the babies. Mr. Rider also traveled with the elephants on tour, and said that they live on cramped stock cars, are chained for more than 23 hours per day, and exposed to extreme temperatures, and left to stand in their own waste for hours at a time."

In January 1999, another former Ringling employee, Glenn Ewell, executed an affidavit in which horrendous treatment of elephants was documented. One incident was described as follows:

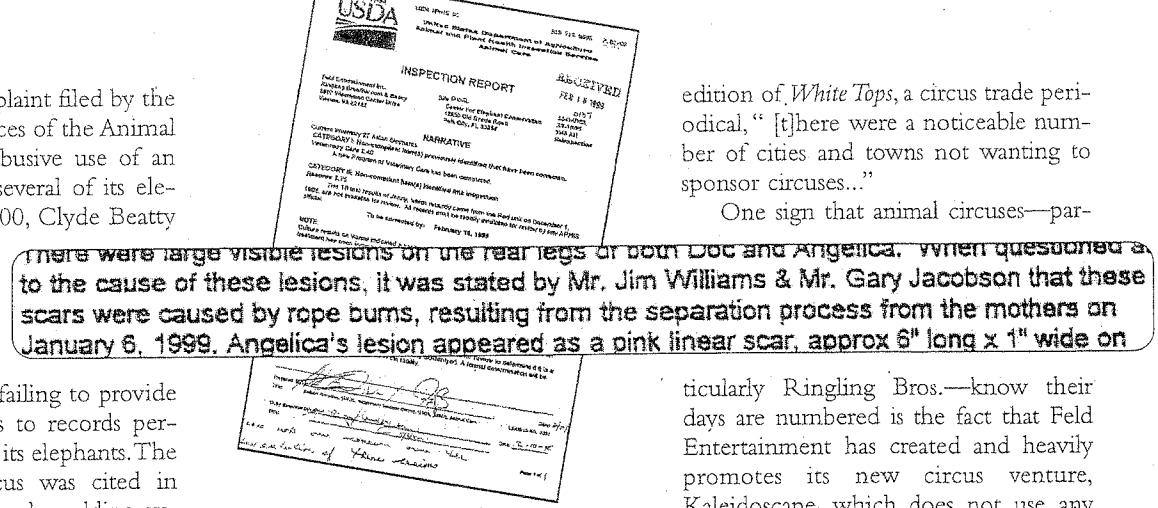
> "[A]fter one of the performances in Denver, one of the adult females by the name of Nicole was severely beaten by Randy and Adam because she performed poorly. The elephants were taken back to the holding area and after the other elephants were chained in place, Randy took Nicole and tried to get her to do the routine she refused to do during the performance. When Nicole refused to do the movements as instructed Randy took a bull hook and began beating Nicole in the head, on the trunk and behind the front feet. The beating continued until the handle of the bull hook shattered. While Randy was beating Nicole in the head and trunk area, Adam began beating her on the lumbar and hindquarter area on the right hand side. One of the strikes by Adam to the lumbar area resulted in the metal hook penetrating the skin and causing an open wound from which blood began flowing. After the beating was over a person by the name of Sonny doctored the wound with some type of powder to stop the bleeding. No other veterinary care was provided to my knowledge. All of the animal crew previously identified were present and witnessed the beating."

PAWS—joined by the Fund, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, the Animal Welfare Institute, and two former Ringling employees—has now filed a civil suit against Ringling Bros. for allegedly violating both the Endangered Species Act and the Animal Welfare Act in its treatment of Asian elephants.

Since 1992, 11 Ringling Bros. elephants have died in all, and other animals in the circus haven't fared much better. In February 1999, a 15-year-old horse who performed for Ringling collapsed and died shortly after being unloaded from his train car. In January 1998, a tiger confined to his cage was shot to death by a Ringling employee, apparently as payback shortly after the tiger mauled the employee's brother, the cat's trainer. The USDA issued a "serious warning" to Ringling about the incident.

Other circuses have similarly dismal track records. In 1999, the Clyde Beatty-Cole Brothers Circus was charged with,

and later settled, a complaint filed by the USDA under the auspices of the Animal Welfare Act for the "abusive use of an ankus" [bullhook] on several of its elephants. In February 2000, Clyde Beatty again was cited by the USDA for bullhook scars on two of its elephants. Indeed, the circus had been cited in January 1999 for even failing to provide the USDA with access to records pertaining to the health of its elephants. The Sterling & Reid Circus was cited in April 1999 for poking and prodding exotic cats with poles and for striking a lion across the face, as well as for leaving camels tethered in direct sunlight for a lengthy period without any shelter. The same circus, while under investigation by the USDA, turned over three of its tigers to the Oakland Zoo in 1999. Sterling & Reid also featured in its acts a trainer named Brian Franzen, who was convicted of animal cruelty charges after eight ponies in his care were seized from Sterling & Reid after being found dehydrated, malnourished, and living in substandard conditions. In 1997 in Britain, Mary Chipperfield—once considered a grand dame of the circus industry—was convicted of beating a chimpanzee with a riding crop. This is just a sampling of the recently documented abuses occurring behind the scenes.


USDA

INSPECTION REPORT

RECEIVED
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NARRATIVE

There were large visible lesions on the rear legs of both Doc and Angelica. When questioned as to the cause of these lesions, it was stated by Mr. Jim Williams & Mr. Gary Jacobson that these scars were caused by rope burns, resulting from the separation process from the mothers on January 6, 1999. Angelica's lesion appeared as a pink linear scar, approx 6" long x 1" wide on

A 1999 government inspection found two Ringling Bros. elephants with lesions and another afflicted with tuberculosis.

Recent Legislative Initiatives

Because of animal abuse and the inherent dangers of bringing wild animals in close contact with the public, many jurisdictions and lawmakers are working to get rid of animal-based circus "entertainment" once and for all. Initiatives have come before city councils on up to the U.S. Congress.

At the national level, the most recent congressional action has been the introduction of the Captive Elephant Accident Prevention Act (H.R. 2929), which would criminalize the use of elephants in traveling shows or for riding purposes. As noted by the bill's sponsor, Rep. Sam Farr (D-CA), "Since 1983, at least 28 people have been killed by captive elephants performing in circuses and elephant ride exhibits. More than 70 others have been seriously injured, including at least 50 members of the general public who were spectators at circuses and other elephant exhibits. More than a dozen children have been injured, many of them hospitalized, due to elephant ride accidents." Although hearings were held on the bill in July—prompting strong debates between animal advocates and circus promoters—the bill is not expected to pass this session, but Farr vows to reintroduce it in the next Congress.

At the state level, the Rhode Island House of Representatives passed a bill in June that would prohibit elephants, bears, tigers, and lions from being used in circuses, carnivals, and parades that perform in the state. This is the first time such a bill has been passed by a component of a state legislature, and approved despite heavy lobbying by the circus industry. The bill was not introduced into the state Senate before it recessed, but likely will be in the future. In Maryland, a bill that would have restricted the use of elephants in performances narrowly failed to pass a committee vote, but it too will probably be re-introduced.

Elsewhere, thanks to local ordinances, exotic animal acts are currently banned or tightly restricted in Corona, California; Redmond, Washington; Stamford, Connecticut; Takoma Park, Maryland; Quincy and Revere, Massachusetts; Estes Park, Colorado; Pompano Beach, Hollywood, and Lauderdale Lakes, Florida; and Collinsville, Illinois. In one of the most hotly contested debates, and one that received national media coverage, the Seattle city council nearly passed an ordinance that would have made it illegal to use exotic animals for entertainment. The circus industry lobbied heavily against the ban, and the measure failed by only one vote. However, such anti-circus activism occurring all over the country has been taking its toll on the industry. As noted in the May/June 2000 edition of *White Tops*, a circus trade periodical, " [t]here were a noticeable number of cities and towns not wanting to sponsor circuses..."

One sign that animal circuses—particularly Ringling Bros.—know their days are numbered is the fact that Feld Entertainment has created and heavily promotes its new circus venture, Kaleidoscape, which does not use any exotic animals. As reported in a 1997 edition of *Circus Report*, another trade publication, "Times are changing, and people are changing, and maybe we need to change also; maybe animals aren't going to be in circuses because people don't want them to be. The majority will rule someday, and maybe that time is here."

Marianne R. Merritt is an attorney with the firm of Hirschkop & Associates, P.C., which practices in Virginia and Washington, D.C. She specializes in animal law and works on matters involving the use of animals in entertainment.

Your agenda

When animal acts come to your town, contact the corporate and/or local sponsors and give them detailed information about what animals in circuses endure. Remind them that the informed public will link their businesses with cruelty for supporting such acts. Performance schedules can be found at www.circuses.com.

Work with local governments to get exotic animal acts banned. Contact the Animal Protection Institute for sample model legislation. Many additional organizations, such as People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, the Performing Animal Welfare Society, The Humane Society of the United States, and the Elephant Alliance, can provide activists with tips and materials for organizing against circuses (see "Organizations," p. 57).

API 5928

ThePittsburghChannel.com

Team 4 Investigates Circus Wars

Jim Parsons Reports

POSTED: 8:54 p.m. EST November 8, 2001

PITTSBURGH -- Going to the circus is one of America's oldest traditions.

The world's largest circus, Ringling Brothers, is playing in Pittsburgh this week. But a Team 4 investigation has uncovered a secret side to the circus.

It's a story of spy vs. spy.

The following is Team 4 investigator Jim Parsons' report:

BIG TOP DEBATE
Should Circuses Stop Animal Acts?
Comment On Circus Animal Treatment

We already know that animal rights groups will go to great lengths to get evidence showing circuses abusing animals.

Video



Team 4: Circus Investigation, Part 1
Circus Investigation, Part 2
Circus Investigation, Part 3

But only now is it becoming clear how far the circus will go in a counterattack.

Circus employees beating, chaining and teasing one of the most majestic creatures on Earth -- the elephant -- are painful images to watch.

And they are images that are routinely supplied to the media by animal rights activists, such as groups like the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals.

"Here you have the most despicable form of animal cruelty going on for no other reason than to turn a buck, make a profit -- that's what the circus is. And we're devoted to stopping it," said Joe Taksel of PETA.

One of the ways they try to stop it is to cultivate sympathetic circus employees who agree to get video in places you wouldn't normally see -- like inside a cramped train car or the basement of an arena.

They are circus spies. And Team 4 has discovered that the trend cuts both ways.

"I tried to make it look like I was friendly with some of them at some point, but at the same time, I was gathering information," former circus spy Steve Kendall said.

For 10 years, Steve Kendall of Scott Township, Pa., spied on animal rights groups for Ringling Brothers and other circuses.

API 1413

He is now writing a tell-all book.

Kendall: "I have a number of individuals who are directly inside animal rights groups. They may be out there protesting."

Parsons: "You're talking about double agents?"

Kendall: "Uh, they are people I obviously have to pay to gather information from."

Parsons: "Wait a minute, you pay people to infiltrate animal activist groups?"

Kendall: "Yes, I have."

Kendall claims Ringling Brothers circus actually created an espionage unit. He's not exaggerating. An overseer of that unit was Clair E. George, an ex-CIA spymaster who was convicted in the Iran-Contra scandal of the 1980s.

A sworn affadavit from George appears in a lawsuit against Ringling filed by a former company executive vice president. George testifies that one of his jobs at Ringling was "to review ... surveillance of, and efforts to counter, the activities of various animal rights groups."

One of those animal rights groups is the ASPCA, which recently filed a lawsuit against Ringling, alleging that the circus abuses its elephants.

Former Ringling elephant caretaker Tom Rider joined in filing that lawsuit.

"I would still be at Ringling today if it wasn't for the way they treated their elephants," Rider said.

Rider said he quit the circus in 1999 because he saw abuse every day, such as a handler hitting an elephant with a bullhook in San Francisco's Cow Palace.

The bullhook is a pole with a hook on the end of it. The circus industry says that it's used only as a tool to guide elephants. But Rider said he witnessed more than guiding.

"And they take these hooks and they give them to somebody with no experience, they start dominating," Rider said. "They think, 'Oh, this is a 10,000-pound animal, I'm gonna hit it, I'm gonna hook it.'"

Rider said he was not an animal rights spy when he worked in the circus, but now that he's out, he follows Ringling around the country to speak out against elephant abuse. He said his expenses are paid for by the ASPCA.

Rider came to Pittsburgh armed with a document -- a criminal summons filed in California last summer against famed Ringling elephant handler Mark Oliver Gaebel. The charge: elephant abuse.

Rider urged Team 4 to watch the Ringling Brothers train arrive in Pittsburgh earlier this week. We did. Sure enough, we saw a handler using his bullhook aggressively, hitting an elephant in the trunk, then the leg.

He's the same handler who got a bullhook caught in an elephant's mouth in Tulsa, Okla., last June.

API 1414

"That aggressiveness of taking the bullhook and jerking it real hard, that sinks the bullhook into the skin, which causes pain to an elephant," Rider said.

Team 4 asked Ringling about this. They said what Team 4 investigators saw doesn't happen.

"We don't do that. It's not part of our practice. Our practice is to just use it as a positive reinforcement to show tham and to help guide them to do the activities that we need them to do," Ringling elephant trainer Brian Cristiani said.

It's a public-relations war for the hearts and minds of circus-goers. And with Ringling alone taking in more than $200 million a year, the stakes are high.

Parsons: "Why do the circuses care about their protests? Why pay any attention at all? Why do they hire a guy like you to spy on them and inflitrate them?"

Kendall: "Well, because of the fact that they're a threat. It does cut into their pockets."

So who is winning the circus war? Ringling said business is booming. But Team 4 learned the company had to cancel its stop in Wichita, Kan., last summer because of a two-year decline in attendance.

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U.S. Newswire

National Newswire

The Circus, and Whistleblower Tom Rider, Come to Town; Former Circus Employee Speaks Out Against Animal Cruelty

To: National Desk

Contact: Animal Welfare Institute, 703-836-4300

ALEXANDRIA, Va., Feb. 15 /U.S. Newswire/ -- Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus is charged with abusing endangered Asian elephants, and former employee Tom Rider has new videotape evidence -- obtained from Ringl Bros. itself -- to prove his case. Rider, who quit the circus in 1999 to speak out against its cruelty, is protesting the circus's Feb. 17 opening in Atlanta.

Some of the gruesome footage shows the birth of Riccardo, an elephant who died at the age of 8-months last Aug after he fractured both hind legs when he fell off a circus pedestal. Riccardo's mother, Shirley, was only 6-years-ol less than half the age at which elephants normally begin to breed -- and was not able to care for him properly.

"Ringling Bros. said the mother rejected him," Rider said, describing how animal handlers pulled Riccardo away fr Shirley shortly after his birth. "Ringling tortures a baby elephant from the second it's born."

Sadly, there have been several casualties in recent years. One baby elephant drowned after disavowing his handl commands, and another died after being forced to perform, despite obvious illness and rectal bleeding.

Elephants, hauled around the country by Ringling Bros., are beaten with sharp metal bullhooks. A majority of these social, loving, intelligent animals were captured in the wild and now suffer from being mistreated in captivity and confined in chains; many exhibit stereotypic behavior such as chronic swaying. Tom Rider, the Animal Welfare Institute (AWI), the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and the Fund for Animals are suing Ringling Bros. because its appalling treatment of elephants is a violation of the Endangered Species Act.

To speak with Tom Rider or view the footage, please call 202- 374-1503 or contact AWI at 703-836-4300. Rider wi available for interviews at the opening night demonstration.

http://www.usnewswire.com/

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The Mirror

March 21, 2000, Tuesday

SECTION: FEATURES; Pg. 17

LENGTH: 536 words

HEADLINE: THEY TREAT ELEPHANTS FAR WORSE IN INDIA ..;
CORNERED CIRCUS BOSS' CLAIM

BYLINE: Christian Fraser In Warsaw, Poland And Jeremy Armstrong

BODY:

CIRCUS boss Dickie Chipperfield was yesterday faced with the truth about the cruelty his animals suffer, then spoke of his shock and sorrow.

The big-top impresario at first tried to dismiss Mirror revelations about the brutality meted out to his elephants and tigers.

He suggested: "There are elephants treated worse in India, you know."

But shown pictures of Indian elephants Leila, Mina and Camilla shackled together on wooden boards without bedding, clean hay or fresh water, Chipperfield's tone became more apologetic.

Tracked down to a hotel on the outskirts of Polish capital Warsaw, he shook his head and said: "You are having a go at me and I can see you are entitled to it.

"Obviously, I need to go and remedy the situation.

"You see you've put me on the spot here."

"I want to know a lot of answers to a lot of questions."

Chipperfield, 57, suggested he was ready to give the three elephants a "happy retirement". They have been with Germany's Barelli circus, which has a contract with Chipperfield earning him pounds 4,000 a month.

Yesterday morning, we told how the elephants and 13 tigers were kept in primitive conditions on a four-month trek across Europe from the US.

Handler Tom Rider told how they were ferried through Spain, Holland, France and Germany in tiny, stinking cages.

He also accused Chipperfield of using bull hooks and electric prongs to control the animals at rehearsals, leaving bloody marks on their legs.

Dickie - cousin of Mary Chipperfield, fined last year for beating a chimp - is in Poland after one of his tigers escaped there. A vet was accidentally killed in the drama.

Yesterday he saw pictures of the conditions Leila, Mina and Camilla endured for a Barelli show at Aschaffenburg, near Frankfurt.

The miserable trio were kept in a dark, cold tent - bound to a post by front and back leg irons.

Movement was restricted to to a half-turn on their wooden boards.

Leila, who has arthritis, was chained to the same post for three days. All three drank only rain-water.

At first Chipperfield, owner of Oxfordshire-based Chipperfield Enterprises, said: "What is wrong with an animal being tethered anyway? And what is wrong with puddle water? You see dogs drinking out of muddy puddles all the time."

Then he backed down. Looking at our pictures, he said: "I am shocked Leila was tied up. I will not condone that.

"They are on boards. There is no sawdust in there - there should be."

"They should have good light, hay, straw, sawdust, water, heat, carrots and apples."

Chipperfield admitted he might retire the elephants to a zoo or wildlife park.

He said: "I want to find a way for them to be happy and to finally bow out of circus life. But I feel that by just giving them away, I'm depriving my son of his inheritance and a chance for a better life."

Richard Chipperfield was badly mauled by a tiger two years ago.

Dickie added: "The Barelli circus in Germany knows The Mirror have seen conditions there.

"I will be seeking an urgent meeting with them to enable me to be released from my contract."

Voice of Mirror - Page 6

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GRAPHIC: ON SPOT: Mirror with Dickie; ORDEAL: The elephants in irons in; Germany. Picture: IAN VOGLER. Right, Dickie Chipperfield

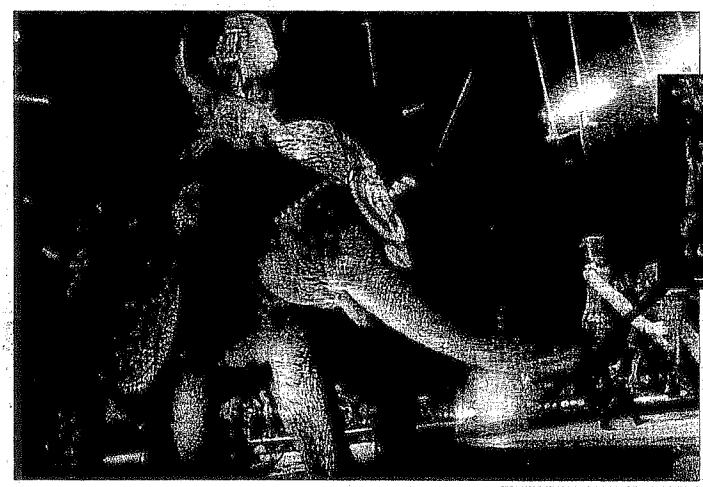
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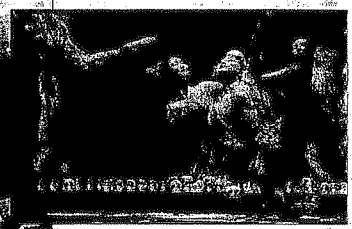
LOAD-DATE: March 21, 2000

KidsPost

What kind of butterfly is this? (See answer below Today's News.)







FILE PHOTO/BY PATRICIA MCDONNELL—ASSOCIATED PRESS

Elephants and other animals are a big part of many circuses, including Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey (left). Some animal rights activists say elephants don't belong in circuses and prefer the animal-free shows of groups like the Cirque du Soleil (above).

FILE PHOTO/BY TRACY A. WOODWARD—THE WASHINGTON POST

Three-Ring Bind

Some Say Circuses and Animals Don't Mix

With Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus in town this month, lots of kids are enjoying "The Greatest Show on Earth." But some people believe that circuses aren't great at all—at least, not for the animals that perform in them.

To animal rights activists, teaching a 9,000-pound elephant to rear up on its back legs like a beagle or making a tiger jump through a fiery hoop just isn't right. The activists say circus trainers use cruel methods to frighten animals into doing things they would *never* do naturally. And, these critics say, because circuses travel from city to city the animals are sometimes squeezed into tiny cages or kept on short chains for hours.

Circus owners disagree. They say their trainers use gentle methods to teach the animals behaviors that resemble things they do in the wild. Ringling Bros., which has about 70 elephants, says its animals perform only an hour or two a day, and travel in roomy train cars, with frequent stops for exercise. Trainers, they say, teach tricks using food and encouraging words as rewards.

Most of the people opposing circuses are adults. But some are kids.

Grace Marston's mom works for an animal rights organization, but the Silver Spring fifth-grader says she decided she disapproved of the circus after seeing it for herself.

"The animals just didn't seem happy," said Grace, 10. "There were a lot of dogs having to do the same thing over and over. . . . People standing on animals' backs. Or animals standing on top of balls."

There have been circuses since Roman times and animal welfare organizations for more than a century, but in recent years a new kind of animal rights activist has come along. These activists believe that a lot of old traditions are cruel to animals: rodeos, bullfights—and circuses. Some of them, like Grace, choose not to eat meat.

The activists are "a small number of people with extreme views. Most people love the circus," said Catherine Ort-Mabry, a spokeswoman for Ringling Bros., America's largest circus. "They can see how much we care for our animals."

But animal advocates say they have eyewitness stories to prove cruel treatment. Some ex-circus employees now work to end animal acts. Tom Rider worked at Ringling Bros. for two years as a "barn man" and said he saw some terrible things.

"In New Haven, I saw a mother elephant beaten for 23 minutes straight. I timed it. She was made to stand on one foot and beaten," said Rider, who now works with the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

Ringling Bros. says this and other incidents Rider describes never happened. Circuses are inspected every few weeks by several government agencies, the circus points out, and none of the inspectors during Rider's time at Ringling ever found the problems he described.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has the job of making sure circuses obey the Animal Welfare Act, which says animals must be treated humanely. The USDA investigates reports of circus animal abuse, sometimes charging that it occurred, sometimes finding it did not.

The King Royal Circus from Texas paid a $200,000 fine after one of its elephants was found dead in a hot trailer in 1997. Last year in California a jury found a Ringling Bros. trainer not guilty of charges that he gouged an elephant's leg. In a 1998 case, Ringling Bros. made a sick baby elephant named Kenny perform "after determining that the elephant was ill and needed to be examined by a veterinarian," according to the USDA. After the show, Kenny died. Ringling Bros. paid a civil penalty of $20,000. It was the only time the agency charged the circus with violating the act.

Ort-Mabry of Ringling Bros. says Kenny was not overworked, that he had good vet care and that he died of a fast-acting virus. Although the circus does not believe it broke the law, Ort-Mabry said, Ringling Bros. paid to settle the matter because "we didn't want the case to drag on."

The controversy has reached the point where some cities (including Pasadena, California, and Takoma Park) ban the use of performing animals. So do a few countries. Sweden, for example, prohibits the use of most wild animals in circuses.

And some circuses have designed shows without exotic creatures such as elephants and tigers. The Big Apple Circus, for example, doesn't use wild animals, sticking with dogs, horses and other animals that have traditionally lived with people. Cirque du Soleil has acrobats and clowns—but no animals.

—Fern Shen

The Zoo Life

Zoos might not have elephants parade around with people on their backs, but they do need to get the big critters to do what the trainers want, from going in and out of their homes to letting humans trim their toenails.

How do they do it at zoos?

Some of them use a method that includes something called an ankus, a hooked tool that circus critics don't like. National Zoo elephant manager Marie Galloway demonstrated her methods recently. She tapped the hook lightly on the back of elephant Shanthi's left, front foot and said, "Shanthi, foot." Shanthi lifted the foot (which lets humans trim her nails).

Galloway describes the tap as "uncomfortable" for Shanthi, but not painful. Does she ever have to strike harder than a tap? Galloway said, "It just doesn't happen."

The zoo keepers get the elephants to do what they need with a combination of rewards and punishments (or "stimulants" as National Zoo folks call them). The ankus is one of them.

To get the 9,400-pound Shanthi to move to the side, Galloway faced her and, holding the hook in her left hand, waved it slightly to the right and said, "Shanthi, over." The huge animal did a little side-step away from the ankus, and the hook never even came close to its skin.

Galloway rewarded Shanthi with an apple-fiber treat. "Good girl! Good girl!" she said, rubbing the elephant's side.



FILE PHOTO/BY CRAIG HERNDON—THE WASHINGTON POST

Marie Galloway, with ankus, says zoo elephants never get more than a tap.

PL 05851

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PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

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Ringling Brothers And Barnum & Bailey Circus
B-ROLL SOUNDBITE VERBATIMS

1. Amateur Videotape of Ringling Brothers Employees

2. Tom Rider Soundbites
Chyron: Tom Rider, Former Ringling Bros. Employee

It was in early 1997 when the abuse started happening. It was systematic daily abuse. Yelling, beating them on the heads, legs, hooking behind the ears…just every day.

I call it systematic daily abuse, because it was a pattern. When I came to work, I knew the elephants were going to get hit, going to get hooked excessively, were going to get screamed and yelled at.

Ringling says, 'oh we treat our animals like part of our family.' Well, you don't treat them like your family because you beat them everyday…unless you beat your family.

The elephants will scream out in pain when they are hit with a bullhook.

They hire people off the street with no experience with elephants. They bring them in there they give them this bullhook, you've got a 10,000 pound elephant the first thing the person does is start hitting that elephant to show dominance over that elephant.

Ringling says that we use positive reinforcement. I never once seen anyone take a bag of food and try to make an elephant do tricks. Not once. I've seen them take bullhooks and beat them until they raise their foot, they weren't fast enough they would get hit. They come back from a performance and someone did something wrong, they got hit over the head with a bullhook.

The elephants, as Ringling says, are their main draw. The little kids like the elephants. These little kids don't know what goes on. Would these little kids like to go see an elephant beat? Oh no, these little kids go to see an elephant in the circus they are not looking at the guys around the

3. Lisa Weisberg Soundbites
Chyron: Lisa Weisberg, ASPCA Senior Vice President, Government Affairs & Public Policy

The ASPCA is suing Ringling Brothers based on a violation of the Endangered Species Act which prohibits harming endangered species which is what the Asian elephants are. The ASPCA is also suing the United States Department of Agriculture under the Freedom of Information Act for failure to provide us with the documents of the USDA inspectors who have cited ring for violating the Animal Welfare Act.

USDA inspectors have cited Ringling Brothers for violating the Animal Welfare Act.
Now, those charges were never adjudicated. What happens usually is the charges are dismissed or there is a settlement agreement that is entered into. With Ringling Brothers donating x number of dollars towards research into animal behavior or elephant conservation or something of the sort, so Ringling Brothers will

tell you that they have not violated the aw act because of those settlement agreements where if they were not settled we believe they in fact would be found in violation.

The ASPCA's mission is to prevent cruelty to animals. We believe this is a perfect instance of where Ringling Brothers' actions towards the elephants clearly constitutes cruelty.

4. Additional b-roll
Tom Rider looking at videotape of Ringling employees using bullhooks on elephants
Shot of Tom Rider walking into ASPCA Headquarters
Tom Rider with Lisa Weisberg screening videotape

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WITNESS LIST

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CRIME

LEGISLATIVE HEARING
ON
H.R. 2929, THE "CAPTIVE ELEPHANT ACCIDENT PREVENTION ACT OF 1999"

TUESDAY, JUNE 13, 2000
2237 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
9:30 A.M.

WITNESSES

Bob Barker, Hollywood, California

Dr. Joel Parrott, Office of the Director, Oakland Zoo, Oakland, California

Mr. Tom Rider, formerly of Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus
West Boxford, Massachusetts

Mr. Blayne Doyle, Palm Bay Police Department, Palm Bay, Florida

Ms. Pat Derby, President, Performing Animal Welfare Society, Galt, California

Ms. Debbie Olson, Director of Conservation and Science Programs, Indianapolis Zoo
Azle, Texas

Dennis Schmitt DVM, PhD, Associate Professor, Agriculture Department
Southwest Missouri State University, Springfield, Missouri

Mr. David Blasko, Elephant Encounter Supervisor, Six Flags, Marine World,
Vallejo, California

Ms. Kari Johnson, Have Trunk Will Travel, Perris, California

Mr. David Rawls, President, Kelly Miller Circus, Hugo, Oklahoma

Testimony of Tom Rider
600 East Holland
Washington, IL. 61571

Good morning Mr.. Chairman and members of the committee. I am Tom Rider, a former circus employee. I worked with Clyde Beatty Cole Brothers Circus in 1997 as an elephant keeper and I loaded the children for the elephant ride. The elephant which we used, Pete or Petunia, was considered to be a dangerous animal and we were cautioned not to go near her. Despite this, she was used for rides before the show and during intermission carrying as many as ten children at a time on her back. She was surrounded by people waiting to ride. The only barrier between her and the public was a plastic net fence.

Typically during elephant rides, the handler walks in front of the elephant as she carries the riders on her back. If the elephant decides to wander off, it would take at least a few minutes for any handler to regain control. Since the elephant is surrounded by people,.literally, there would be no way to prevent serious injuries if she decided to take off like the elephant in Florida. It never ceased to amaze me that the circus would tell people to put their children on an elephant's back when they knew how dangerous the elephant was.

I left Beatty Cole because in White Plains New York, when Pete did not perform her act properly, she was taken to the tent, laid down and five trainers beat her with bullhooks. Pete is now dead.

After I left Beatty Cole, I went to work for Ringling Brothers Circus in Austin, Texas. I was hired as a barn man's assistant and two months later, I became the afternoon barn man. In that capacity, I was present during the majority of the performances.

During my two and a half year's employment with the circus, I was slammed between two elephants while I was working in the stock cars. Even though the chained, they were capable of doing incredible damage and most of the staff had similar incidents. It was very common to be stepped on, hit by the tail or injured in other ways just because of the sheer size and power of the elephant. My experiences have left me with a considerable respect for the damage that elephants can do even unintentionally.

We had an elephant named Karen who was labeled "killer" yet she was kept on the road performing because she was a good performing elephant. Although she was the most dangerous elephant in the group, she is the one they used in the three ring adventure where the public is allowed to stand around the elephant with no safety net or other protection around her. Karen had a habit of knocking anyone who came into range, slamming them into the ground yet they allowed her to have contact with the audience.

While I worked for Ringling Brothers, I heard stories all the time about dangerous elephants and how they could kill you if you got too close. One of the top trainers for the circus had been killed by one of his elephants and a lot of the handlers were hit while they were working around them.

I was injured in the eye when an elephant slammed me with her tail and I have been slammed a few times while working around them.

After my three years working with elephants in the circus, I can tell you that they live in confinement, they are beaten all the time when they don't perform properly. That makes them dangerous and they want to get away.

My first experience with an elephant running was in Tupelo, Mississippi when we were on the elephant walk returning to the train and a cattle truck stopped to let us pass. Karen, who was in the front, was startled by the cattle and she, Minnie and Mysore took off running straight down the road. Luckily, it was at night and there were some police cars in their path which stopped them and the trainer was able to catch them. If this had occurred during the day, with a lot of public around, it would have caused a lot of injury to innocent people.

Another time, in Ottawa, Canada, in the afternoon, I was alone and the elephants were contained behind their electric fence. I was approximately 75 yards away cleaning when I heard an elephant scream. When I turned around, I saw three elephants fighting and two others were heading for the horse tent, having broken through the fence. Since I was alone, I was unable to control the situation. It took about five minutes before I could get help and another five minutes before we could begin to regain control. During this time, if the elephants had run in a different direction and had not moved toward the horses, they would have been right in the middle of the public.

My experiences with the circus convince me that, because of the way they live and are trained, elephants are extremely dangerous and should not be around the public. I also know first hand that the circus keeps the danger and the public exposure well hidden and we were cautioned never to let the public know if anything goes wrong. We could have lost our jobs if we had ever reported to the USDA or others any incidents that put the public at risk.

When I became disturbed about the treatment of the elephants, the continual beatings, including the baby Benjamin, I was told "that's discipline". On another occasion, I was confronted by my supervisor that I was overheard on the train saying I was going to report the beatings of the baby Benjamin to the USDA. It was common knowledge that I was the one who complained about the treatment of the elephants.

Whenever the USDA inspected the circus, the circus always knew in advance that they were coming. We were always told to clean up, don't hit the elephants when they come around. I know for a fact that any attempt by the USDA to regulate the circus or to enforce laws is a joke. I was present at many inspections where the inspectors never saw the marks on the elephants from the bull hooks and the beatings. Obviously, they would not be able to regulate a situation that they see two or three times a year.

Thank you for your

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY
January 25, 2006
LB 1000
ROUGH DRAFT

SENATOR BOURNE: ...Get started, or restarted. Senator Price to open on Legislative Bill1,000. As Senator Price makes her way forward, can I have a show of hands here of those here wishing to testify in support of this next bill? I see three or four, five, six. Those in opposition? It's okay. I see a number of hands in opposition as well. I know some of you are here for the last hearing. I want to articulate again that, in my mind, anyway, the Legislature is an exchange of ideas, so we won't have any demonstrations from the audience. No cheering, jeering, cat calling, we're just not going to do that today. And again, we're going to make use of the on-deck area. We'll take the introducer first, of course, proponents, opponents, and then neutral testifiers. We're going to ask that you sign in in the on-deck area, then when you come forward, where the senator is, to clearly state and spell your name for the record. With that, Senator Price to open on Legislative Bill 1000. Welcome.

SENATOR PRICE: Good afternoon, Senator Bourne and members of the Judiciary Committee. I am Marian Price and I represent the 26th Legislative District, and I am here to introduce LB 1000. I think that's rather significant that this bill is number 1000. This bill, LB 1000, has created quite an uproar in my office, as well as it should. I'm going to emphasize this bill will not ban circuses in Nebraska. LB 1000 will ban the use of certain devices and training or disciplinary methods often used on elephants in circuses and other traveling shows. The most common of these devices is the bullhook, or the ankus, which is a handle with a pointed, often sharpened steel hook at one end. The sharp point is often used to puncture the elephant's skin, causing pain and sometimes infection and scarring. The handle end can also be used to inflict pain or injury when swung like a baseball bat. Proponents here today have an ankus to show you this afternoon. Proponents today will also tell you that there are other ways to control and train elephants without devices such as the bullhook. Voice commands and devices with soft, rounded ends are much more modern as far as use and techniques. One

Nebraska zoo, which is the Henry Doorly Zoo, is exempt from the bill. It is exempt due to the fact that they adhere to the American Zoo and Aquarium Association standards that prohibit the traditional use of the bullhook. Based on opposition that I have received this week and in preparation for this, I would be willing to work with the committee staff to develop some language to eliminate this exemption as the device they use is not an industry standard bullhook. LB 1000 states that a person who violates the provisions of the bill shall be guilty of a class I offense, and each day of the violation shall be considered a separate offense. A class I offense has a maximum sentence of one year in prison, $1,000 fine, or both with no minimum. The bill also sets out certain exemptions as a long as such care or treatment of animals does not conflict with the prohibited acts. As you can see in the room, there's a large contingent of testifiers here, including school children. It always pleases me to see students who are interested in the political process and the legislative process. I'm confident all testifiers will be professional in their intent as they give their information to the committee. I will be happy to answer your questions, and appreciate your

attention to LB 1000. Are there questions at this point, sir?

SENATOR BOURNE: Thank you, Senator Price. Are there questions? Senator Aguilar.

SENATOR AGUILAR: Thank you, Senator Bourne. Senator Price, you said that zoos are exempt from this bill, but then you follow that by saying because they do not use the bullhook. Is that correct?

SENATOR PRICE: I have been told that they use a tool which has rounded edges, or rounded. It does not have a sharp point. It has rounded edges.

SENATOR AGUILAR: What if we had the same standards for circuses that we did for zoos?

SENATOR PRICE: You will have to ask, sir, the people that are actively working in circuses. Again, that would lead to more humane treatment.

SENATOR AGUILAR: Thank you.

SENATOR BOURNE: Thank you. Further questions for Senator Price? Senator Price, thank you for bringing the bill. I don't know if I agree with the bill or not, but I absolutely agree with your ability to express your thoughts and bring it. I know you've been maligned in the newspapers, and there's not a lot we can do with that, but what particularly disturbs me about this bill is some of the criticism and jokes and mockery by the lobby. And I'm really offended by that. I've some of my colleagues tell about, and I don't want to offend you at all, but say things that in my mind that are totally inappropriate regarding the introduction of this bill. So I just wanted to extend to you my support for you doing this. You absolutely have the right to do it, and I'm very offended by some of the members of the lobby that have made a joke out of this.

SENATOR PRICE: Thank you for your words. But when we came into the Legislature, we knew that it was going to be a nice little walk in the park, that we would also take our slings and our arrows as well as a few compliments along the way.

And what doesn't kill us or injure us will make us stronger people.

SENATOR BOURNE: Well, there's not a lot we can do about the public's perception, but I think there are things we can do about the lobbyist conduct. I'm very upset. Further questions for Senator Price? Seeing none, thank you.

SENATOR PRICE: I have asked that Tom Rider follow me as the first proponent, if you would permit that, sir.

SENATOR BOURNE: Absolutely, as a courtesy to you, Senator.

SENATOR PRICE: And I will stay to close.

SENATOR BOURNE: Thank you.

SENATOR PRICE: And I welcome questions or comments.

SENATOR BOURNE: Thank you.

SENATOR PRICE: Thank you.

SENATOR BOURNE: First testifier in support. Welcome.

TOM RIDER: Thank you, Senator. Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen of the hearing. My name is Tom Rider, T-o-m R-i-d-e-r. I am from California, that's my home base. I travel around the United States trying to help these elephants. This bill before you today is two-folded. One, a baby elephant named Benjamin, I worked at a circus for Ringling Brothers from 1997 to 1999. I saw this baby elephant literally beaten every day with what the circus calls an ankus or a bullhook. This is the item right here. This poor baby at four years old was beaten every day with this, and the USDA decided when it died, it died from poking and touching of a bullhook. That's one elephant at Ringling that has died from the use of a bullhook. There has been four baby elephants die at Ringling in the past, well, since 1997. I am here to tell you this is a very important bill. The one thing that makes this bill so important is that when a baby elephant at the age of four, at eight years old was giving birth to a baby elephant named Ricardo, this elephant was chained by three legs. One in the front and two, or two

in the back and one in the front, her three legs were chained. My point is, when they got done, this elephant was actually, Ricardo was coming out of the womb and they were sitting here with this bullhook in its trunk doing this. There is video available of this given to us from Ringling Brothers. Now this is not just about Ringling Brothers. It's about every circus in the United States that uses a bullhook. These are not a tool or an extension of your arm, you know. Here's my arm, piece of paper, that makes an extension. This is a weapon. It should be classified as a weapon the same as the state of Connecticut. And their hearing described that as a weapon. I come before you today speaking for the elephants, not for myself, for the citizens of this state, you need to be the first state to stand up and say, we're going to put a stop to this. I would ask you to think in your hearts about these elephants, these creatures that are getting poked, hit with these things every day. This is actually dull. By Ringling standards, we do this, we would have to sharpen it. Now I'm lucky. You see me with that bullhook in my hand here. I didn't use a bullhook at Ringling. I walked around those elephants every day with no bullhook. Now if Ringling will say they

use positive reenforcements, which is food and verbal commands, then why are they going to oppose us getting rid of this weapon? So think about this, think about the children, think about the future of these elephants. If we want the endangered species to stay around, then we've got to treat them more humanely. Thank you. Is there any questions?

SENATOR BOURNE: Thank you. Questions for Mr. Rider? Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: When this device is used, by whatever name it's called, what are the types of injuries that might be inflicted and what are the results of some of these injuries that you may have observed or be aware of?

TOM RIDER: Well, what I observed in my two-and-a-half years at Ringling was, most of the time, it was behind the ankles; under the chin is another good spot, they hook them under here; and behind the ears, I've actually stuck my little finger that far into scars left from putting the bullhook behind their ear and ripping down so they could get their

head down. They come in the front, rip it down, they do it in the back. Down in Richmond, Virginia, we actually had to cover up 30-plus hook marks on one elephant and 20-plus hook marks on another elephant.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: When you say cover them up, what do you mean?

TOM RIDER: We had a product that's called Wonder Dust. It was a charcoal colored substance that coagulates the blood, and we would just sow it on there, and it turns a kind of a gray color so that they could go in and perform, stuff like that.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Were there instances where infections would result from the injuries?

TOM RIDER: I've seen numerous what our so-called vet tech, he would call them hook boils. They're just, they get round and it's from hooking. They like to call them mosquito bites or ingrown hairs. That's not what they are. They're actually hook boils, and they'll get lumps on them. There's

actually in Sacramento, California, the USDA was investigating, I called the investigator and said, do you know we have video of one of the handlers at Ringling taking and stabbing the elephant with a pair of leatherman pliers that open up like a butterfly. And the next day, they went and checked and found a golf ball-size knot on that baby. And when she called me, I told her exactly where it was, and she goes, yeah, we found that.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: When you were working with Ringling Brothers for the period of time you were there, you said you walk around these elephants. Exactly what was it that you did?

TOM RIDER: I was the afternoon barn man. My job was to take care of the elephants, clean up after them, feed them at night, make sure, you know, that no strangers got around them and stuff like that, and a memo from Ringling to never take my eyes off the elephants. So I was there, I saw it all. And I spoke out, actually got threatened with my job in Greensboro, North Carolina. I had to go the union to save my job. I've been wrote up three times at Ringling

because I was complaining about people doing stuff with elephants, hitting the animals. When Dateline came to Denver, Colorado, they said, watch out, there's TV cameras here. Don't get caught hitting the elephants. And that's unacceptable.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Thank you.

SENATOR BOURNE: Further questions? Mr. Rider, what does one of these elephants cost?

TOM RIDER: Oh...

SENATOR BOURNE: And the reason I'm asking that is, I mean, it just, you know, you don't, I mean, assets, you tend to take care of. You know, just...

TOM RIDER: Well, I'm looking at...a, White Top, it was a magazine. When I first started in the circus, I happened to glance at, and I could see in there where, I saw some small elephants for like $10,000 in there, and up.

SENATOR BOURNE: Is it...

TOM RIDER: I never bought any elephants and I, you know, a lot of circuses lease them around and stuff.

SENATOR BOURNE: The reason I'm asking, it just, it doesn't make a lot of sense that you'd spend money on something and then abuse it. And I'm just, are there...

TOM RIDER: Well, it's the only way, you see, they're going to tell you they have to have this to control the elephant, or to guide it, or to a...this is strictly, it's not a guide or a tool. If you have to make this elephant perform those tricks, you have to abuse it. You have to use a bullhook on it. If they say that they're going to use a pat on the hands or a bag of carrots, then do it. If this elephant is so expensive, then why would they harm it, is that's what they would love for you to think. But honestly, for two-and-a-half years, and even today, and since we have this on video, we have all kinds of video, of not guiding an elephant, I mean, how is guiding an elephant when it's giving birth, the baby's actually coming out of the womb,

and they're setting there with a bullhook ripping it in the trunk, come on, do you think that elephant isn't in pain? You cannot inflict pain. That's against the USDA, although the governing agent of the USDA, all the inspectors, were trained by the circus industry. They do absolutely nothing as far as, you know, investigating. They haven't done anything against any, they didn't do anything on the death of Benjamin, even though their only inspector said the cause of death was this ankus, or bullhook.

SENATOR BOURNE: Further questions? Senator Aguilar.

SENATOR AGUILAR: Thank you, Senator Bourne. As we all know, there are good trainers and bad trainers in everything. I guess my question is, is there a use for that instrument where it doesn't cause harm or extensive pain to the animal?

TOM RIDER: I would have to say absolutely none. There's no way you can use that it ain't going to inflict pain. Now, if you're going to do this, say, "Come here, elephant," and hold it right here, well that's not touching the elephant.

But if the elephant doesn't move and you have to hook it, as we call hooking it, then yeah, that's causing pain to an elephant. You can't cause this kind of pain. I don't care what anybody says in the industry.

SENATOR AGUILAR: When they're manufactured, are the points on them at that time, when they're manufactured?

TOM RIDER: Actually, a guy at Ringling made all of ours. They had a mill, he used to buy the blanks and make them. I don't know if you could buy one. I suspect you could somewhere, but...

SENATOR AGUILAR: My only concern is if an elephant in a circus situation were totally out of control, what would be the method of stopping that elephant?

TOM RIDER: If an elephant is out of control? About the same thing that happened to Tyke or to, one of our other speakers will be telling you about an incident that happened in Florida. They're going to get shot. This is not going to stop a rampaging...have you ever seen When Animals Attack

on TV and you seen Tyke down in Hawaii? Would this stop that elephant? Absolutely not. What that does is it instills fear in them because they've been hit with that since they were babies. You see, babies are stripped away when they're born. And this is the weapon that they're scared of their whole life, so just by holding it...

SENATOR AGUILAR: Should we even have performing elephants?

TOM RIDER: Well, do I believe there should be elephants in the circus? No, I don't think they belong in the circus because, if they're getting abused, they're riding in train cars. Is there a humane way to have elephants in the circus? I have not found any humane way yet unless you're letting them walk 25 miles a day and letting them do what they do in the wild, which is not tricks.

SENATOR AGUILAR: Thank you.

TOM RIDER: So I don't see any way.

SENATOR AGUILAR: Thank you.

SENATOR BOURNE: Senator Flood.

SENATOR FLOOD: Thank you, Chairman Bourne.

TOM RIDER: Thank you, Senator.

SENATOR FLOOD: Thank you for your testimony. I guess, just for purposes of the record, let's make sure the record reflects that you brought a bullhook to the hearing today. Because I heard you testifying earlier, you know, using it nonverbally, and I want to make sure that anyone that reads the record understands you have a bullhook with you.

TOM RIDER: Okay.

SENATOR FLOOD: Actually, I got a letter from a constituent of mine in Madison County that has been working, that has worked for years with the circus. And short of giving you a copy of it, I guess I just want to ask you to respond to some of his allegations, or some of his comments here. He's very much in favor of using a bullhook, and his contention

here, and I'm not telling you, you know, I take a position one way or the other as I'm learning with the rest of us here...

TOM RIDER: Right.

SENATOR FLOOD: ...is that these are not domestic animals. They are huge and powerful. A whack with the trunk can kill a man. And they're very intelligent and they can be strong-willed. Mr. Ballard suggests to me that short of...you know, if you're not using a bullhook or some way to modify immediately the behavior of one of these very strong, capable elephants, that they threaten the public and those watching the performance and those in the immediate vicinity of the elephant. Would you respond to that? are trained by the circus industry. They do absolutely nothing.

TOM RIDER: Well, if he thinks that way, then I suggest that he approaches his senator and has them put a ban in to ban the elephants in Nebraska. Because if you're going to do that, I mean, that's...he's sitting there saying he likes the bullhook, and I'm saying, no, you can't...that...

SENATOR FLOOD: I think what he's saying is the bullhook is a necessary tool.

TOM RIDER: It's not going to stop a rampaging elephant. But why, in two-and-a-half years, if that's the case, I was around elephants, 14 of them and sometimes 11, you know, walking them...

SENATOR FLOOD: I guess...

TOM RIDER: ...and never had a bullhook.

SENATOR FLOOD: That begs the question, how do you stop a rampaging elephant?

TOM RIDER: Like I said, with a gun. If they rampage, I only know of, you know, I mean some of them, like the ones that went through the windows up in, here in the United States, they crashed through a couple of windows, I believe those two stopped on their own. I know the one that went into the church, it was Debbie, and the other one was blind,

Judy, they both stopped. But unfortunately, you get an elephant like Tyke or an elephant like, I believe it's name was Janet or Janice, that have to be shot, that's the unfortunate end of an elephant is...if the bullhook doesn't work, they have to shoot it.

SENATOR FLOOD: See...but now...

TOM RIDER: But now he supports the bull.

SENATOR FLOOD: My constituent says the bullhook is a necessary tool to modify or control the behavior of an elephant so that it, elephants can entertain audiences and so that elephants can participate in the circus. And then, they receive good care. It would seem to me that if the bullhook is a reasonable tool to be used to ride elephants, that's a much better way to handle the elephant than ever having to resort to shooting the elephant, which will hopefully...

TOM RIDER: Well...

SENATOR FLOOD: ...which would be done to cause lethal, which would end the elephant's life...

TOM RIDER: Um-hum.

SENATOR FLOOD: ...in the event...and trust me, I'm from northeast Nebraska. We're aware of incidents like this following the Royal zoo situation.

TOM RIDER: Oh, okay. Well, where he says you have to modify the behavior of the elephant...

SENATOR FLOOD: Yeah.

TOM RIDER: ...that means hitting the elephant...

SENATOR FLOOD: How else do you get the elephant...

TOM RIDER: ...to modify it.

SENATOR FLOOD: ...not to, how else do you get the elephant to comply with your orders? Do they respond to verbal

commands?

TOM RIDER: Well, they, some, they could. They may not. It's, you know, once you have an elephant rampaging, who's to say what it's going to do? It can go crashing out of a gate, it could kill somebody, but the bullhook is not going to stop them. But the only way you're going to modify the behavior, if he's supporting a bullhook, means he's going to use the bullhook to either hit that elephant, poke it, or jab it with something. They're not going to use this to say, stop! What I would do is I would walk away. If the elephant is going to rampage, it's going to rampage. You just as well get out of the way because it's a lot bigger than us. But, you know, you could just really stop all that if the circuses just decide, oh, well, you know, if that's such a public danger of having these elephants, if we, if they think that's going to stop an elephant, and the, you know, truth of it is the only way we can stop it is by shooting it with a gun, then I think we should put legislation before every state in the United States and say, let's just get rid of the elephants. Put them back where they came from, or put them in sanctuaries. Put them in

accredited zoos. Why do we have them out here doing...

SENATOR FLOOD: Thank you very much for testifying.

TOM RIDER: Okay.

SENATOR FLOOD: I appreciate that.

SENATOR BOURNE: Senator Aguilar.

SENATOR AGUILAR: Yeah. You keep using the term, rampaging elephant. Let's use another scenario here where an elephant just gets confused and maybe even loses his sight of vision, and starts walking to where the audience is. What happens in that case? What could happen?

TOM RIDER: Well, in that case, the trainer should be able to walk up and give a verbal command...

SENATOR AGUILAR: What if he couldn't?

TOM RIDER: ...and have the elephant...then, that's the

handler's problem at that point, if he can't do it.

SENATOR AGUILAR: I think it's the audience's problem as well.

TOM RIDER: Well, that's...it's more the handler because the handler is supposed to have control of that elephant. That's the USDA says you have to have control of that animal. If they ain't got control of it and it goes rampaging towards the audience, my suggestion is the audience better get out of the way just like they tried to do in Hawaii, and it didn't work.

SENATOR AGUILAR: Thank you.

SENATOR BOURNE: Further questions? Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: I've heard arguments and read letters where if an animal is worth a lot of money, people won't abuse it. People in this society don't know anything about slavery. They look at something like that movie with Clark Gable and these people where all the slaves are happy and

they're dressed well and they're fed well. An argument is made that because slaves are so expensive they wouldn't be abused. The records of these so-called good masters show where they clipped the noses of slaves, clipped their ears, blinded them in one eye, branded them, cut them, poured salt in the wounds, crippled them, maimed them, and that did away that argument that because money is involved, they're not going to hurt their property. We were owned as property, and if anybody is interested in the records that were written contemporaneously, not by black people, they can see it. But there's not that interest in this society, so when these people come up here and try to convince me that because the animal costs money they're not going to abuse it, they're going to have to do more than just state it. And the reason I'm saying that they need an argument better than saying, well, if I spent this money, I'm not going to do anything wrong. No, it's going to take more than that to convince me. And the point that I want to get to in terms of a question, if I understood you correctly, you say that the circus people or industry make these bullhooks. If they're not designed to inflict pain and injury, why would they be made in the way in the way that they are? They're

made for the purpose of inflicting pain and injury. The design is such, I saw one up close, and I held it, and even though you could support the hook, you could let the hook part be on your palm, and the weight of it, or handle be hanging below your hand, there still is enough sharpness in the hook for your to see that if somebody jerked on it at that point, they might could penetrate the palm of your hand. If they are sharpened, in addition to having the amount of, what I'm going to say the same word, sharpness that they have already, the only purpose that I can see is to inflict pain. But I won't have you answer for the people in the...circus people come up here, I will ask them the kinds of questions that are swirling in my mind now. But the mere fact that something costs a lot of money doesn't mean they won't abuse it. People can pay a lot of money for a car and take it out on the road and wreck it.

TOM RIDER: Um-hum.

SENATOR BOURNE: Further questions? Further questions? Seeing none, thank you, appreciate it.

TOM RIDER: Thank you very much. Thank you.

SENATOR BOURNE: Appreciate your testimony. Next testifier in support.

BLAINE DOYLE: Good afternoon, gentlemen, ladies. My name is Blaine Doyle, D-o-y-l-e, and I'm a retired police officer from the state of Florida. I started my career here in Nebraska and worked nine years in law enforcement in the Omaha area, and light came on one day, and said that I needed to move to a warmer climate, so I've enjoyed 24 years with the Palm Bay Police Department. During my tenure as a policeman, I was assigned to work a traveling circus that came to our community, and they had four elephants, two babies and two adult Asian females. One of the elephants was a 9,000 pound Asian elephant named Janet. And during the interlude between two performances, they were using Janet to give rides to our community. With a lady and five children on Janet's back, she decided it was time to leave the circus and started to revolt and try and get out of her confinement. Her trainer at the time, Tim Frisco, was a gentleman by the name of, a gentleman by the name of Tim

Frisco, used his bullhook to no avail in trying to control Janet. Ultimately, she ran outside the tent area and after we rescued the lady and children off her back, at the request of her trainer and due to the fact she was running back into a circus tent full of 2,500 of our citizens, myself and other officers were forced to shoot Janet. It took 56 rounds of nine millimeter ammunition shot from several police officers over a ten-minute period to get Janet to fall to the ground. After about another ten minutes of her lying on the ground, it took two rounds of .308 armor piercing ammunition from our S.W.A.T. team in order to kill Janet. Now, I'm not here to say that bullhooks are good or bad. I am just here to relate to you the information that happened at our city and has happened in other places and will probably happen again. I am not an animal trainer. I don't know if a bullhook is a viable tool. I'm just going to tell you that in the instance in Palm Bay, the bullhook did not work. It was not a controlling instrument for her trainer to use, and it solved no problems there. And that's about all I have to say.

SENATOR BOURNE: Thank you. Are there questions for mister,

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Trainer on Trial in Elephant Abuse

By BRIAN BERGSTEIN
.c The Associated Press

SAN JOSE, Calif. (AP) - This is the moment animal activists have all been waiting for: One of the biggest stars of the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus is going on trial for allegedly abusing an elephant with a metal hook during a show.

Protesters have complained for years that circus animals are trained with painful methods and inhumanely chained, caged and handled. But few circus workers have ever faced criminal charges.

AWI 09027

Activists hope Monday's trial of animal trainer Mark Oliver

Gebel, son of the legendary circus showman Gunther Gebel-Williams, will lend more credibility to their allegations against ``The Greatest Show on Earth.''

``This is going to be a very interesting trial, mainly because it is Ringling, which bills itself as the top-of-the-line circus, with the best record, best resources, best treatment of animals,'' said Richard Farinato of the Humane Society of the United States.

Gebel, 31, is charged with animal abuse for allegedly puncturing an elephant's hide. The offense carries up to six months in jail and a $1,000 fine.

His attorney, James McManis, calls the case preposterous. He said Gebel would never be anything but kind to animals, having grown up around them during the 21-year Ringling Bros. career of his animal-trainer father, who died in July at age 66.

In the circus program, Gebel says his bond with the elephants ``is as powerful as between any friends.''

``I think these animal rights people are making a big mistake if this is where they're going to make their stand on animals in the circus, because nothing happened here,'' McManis said. ``This is going to be a big embarrassment''

Humane Society officers and a San Jose police sergeant were monitoring the animals at a show here on Aug. 25 when they allegedly saw Gebel, wearing a flamboyant coat with a high collar and tails, lunge at two elephants and yell at them to move faster. They say an elephant named Asia quickly jolted forward.

The elephants went into the arena and performed, but after the show, the witnesses noticed ``a nickel-sized red bloody spot'' on Asia's left front leg.

The witnesses believe Gebel punctured Asia's hide with an ankus, a hooked metal stick that resembles a fireplace poker. Ringling Bros. says the ankus, or bull hook, is used to guide elephants like a leash, not to cause pain.

McManis contends that Asia's red mark disappeared when she was washed later that day, and that a veterinarian found no sign she had been injured. He said the witnesses were too far away to clearly see what Gebel was doing and had an anti-circus agenda.

Last year, the same witnesses said they found cuts and puncture wounds on seven Ringling elephants performing in San Jose. Prosecutors said then that there was not enough evidence to bring charges.

This time, the witnesses' reports were enough to persuade prosecutors to take the case. Prosecutor Carolyn Powell said she has gotten hundreds of supportive letters and e-mails from animal lovers around the world.

Among the supporters is Tom Rider, a former Ringling barn worker who now travels the country protesting with animal rights activists at Ringling performances.

``They use the bull hook in an aggressive manner every day at Ringling,'' Rider said. ``They hit them on the head, trunk, legs, shoulders - it's systematic, daily abuse.''

In 1998, Ringling's parent company, Feld Entertainment, settled a complaint from the U.S. Department of Agriculture by agreeing to pay $20,000 to elephant-related causes after an ill elephant was forced to perform before it could be examined by a veterinarian. The animal died.

AWI 09029

Since then, Agriculture Department investigators have looked into at least two complaints from the public about puncture

wounds or lesions on Ringling elephants.

In both cases, the agency found no evidence of any wounds or abuse, though the inspections occurred 21 days after one complaint and four months after the other.

Pat Cuviello, 41, who has covertly videotaped workers at circuses in the San Francisco Bay Area for 14 years, showed The Associated Press footage of several Ringling Bros. workers - though not Gebel - poking or hitting elephants, in a few cases after looking around, apparently to see if anyone was watching.

Ringling spokeswoman Catherine Ort-Mabry said those workers were reprimanded for ``unprofessional behavior'' but did not harm the elephants.

``If there is trauma to an animal, it shows up in the animal's behavior," she said. ``You can see the obvious affection between the animals and the handlers. The animals are healthy, in good shape and they live great lives."

On the Net:

Ringling Bros.:
http://www.ringling.com/AmazingAnimals/home.html

Humane Society:
http://www.hsus.org/current/biglie-bigtop.html

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Trial of circus trainer is big moment for animal activists

By Brian Bergstein The Associated Press(12-15-01)

Years of protesting, complaining come to a head as one prominent performer opens a bloody wound on an elephant

SAN JOSE — This is the moment animal activists have all been waiting for: One of the most prominent performers in the**Ringling** Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus is going on trial Monday for allegedly using a hooked stick to open up a bloody wound on an elephant's side.

Protesters have complained for years that circus animals are consigned to miserable lives, trained with painful methods and inhumanely chained, caged and handled. But few circus workers have ever faced criminal charges.

Now activists hope the trial of Mark Oliver Gebel, son of the legendary animal trainer Gunther Gebel-Williams, lends more credibility to their claims against "The Greatest Show on Earth."

"This is going to be a very interesting trial, mainly because it is **Ringling** which bills itself as the top-of-the-line circus, with the best record, best resources, best treatment of animals," said Richard Farinato, director of captive wildlife protection at the Humane Society of the United States. "This is pretty high-profile in the battle over whether circuses should use wild animals."

Gebel, 31, is charged with elephant abuse, a misdemeanor that carries up to six months in jail and a $1,000 fine.

His attorney, James McManis, calls the case preposterous. He said Gebel would never be anything but kind to animals, having grown up around them during the 21-year **Ringling** Bros. career of his father, who died in July at age 66.

"I think these animal rights people are making a big mistake if this is where they're going to make their stand on animals in the circus, because nothing happened here," McManis said. "This is going to be a big embarassment."

In this year's circus program, Gebel says he's "grown up with many of the

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elephants here."

"And the bond we have is as powerful as between any friends. These **elephants** are always there for us. In return, they know that we'll always be there for them."

Humane Society officers and a San Jose police sergeant were monitoring the animals outside a show here on Aug. 25 when they allegedly saw Gebel, wearing a flamboyant coat with a high collar and tails, lunge at two **elephants** and yell at them to move faster. They say an elephant named Asia quickly jolted forward.

The **elephants** went into the arena and performed, but after the show, the witnesses noticed "a nickel-sized red bloody spot" on Asia's left front leg.

The witnesses believe Gebel punctured Asia's skin with an ankus, a metal stick with a hook at the end that resembles a fireplace poker. **Ringling** Bros. says the ankus, or bull hook, is used to guide **elephants** like a leash or a set of reins, not to cause pain or discomfort as activists insist.

McManis contends that the red mark on Asia disappeared when she was washed later that day, and that a veterinarian found no sign she had been injured. He said the witnesses were too far away to clearly see what Gebel was doing and were motivated by an anti-circus agenda.

Last year, the same witnesses said they found cuts and puncture wounds on seven **Ringling elephants** performing in San Jose. Prosecutors said then that there was not enough evidence to bring charges.

This time, the witnesses' reports were enough to persuade the Santa Clara County District Attorney's Office to take the case. Prosecutor Carolyn Powell said she has gotten hundreds of supportive letters and e-mails from animal lovers around the world.

Among the supporters is Tom Rider, a former **Ringling** barn worker who now travels the country protesting with animal rights activists at **Ringling** performances.

"They use the bull hook in an aggressive manner every day at **Ringling**," Rider said. "They hit them on the head, trunk, legs, shoulders— it's systematic daily abuse."

In 1998, the U.S. Department of Agriculture accused **Ringling** of forcing an ill elephant named Kenny to perform before he could be examined by a veterinarian. Kenny died, and **Ringling**'s parent company, Feld Entertainment Inc., settled the complaint by agreeing to pay $20,000 to elephant-related causes.

Since then, USDA investigators have looked into at least two complaints from the public about puncture wounds or lesions on **Ringling elephants**, including one "possibly secondary to excessive use of an overly sharp ankus hook."

In both cases, the agency found no evidence of any wounds or abuse, though the inspections occurred 21 days after one complaint and four months after the other.

Pat Cuviello, 41, who has covertly videotaped workers at circuses in the San Francisco Bay Area for 14 years, showed The Associated Press **footage** of several **Ringling** Bros. workers — though not Gebel — poking or hitting **elephants**, in a few cases after looking around first, apparently to see if anyone was watching.

In one clip that activists hope will provide compelling evidence at the trial, Gebel can be seen briefly reaching with a stick, possibly an ankus, under an elephant before a show the next day near San Francisco.

However, Gebel appears to use the stick rather casually, while talking to a man next to him, and McManis said the tape in no way depicts abuse by Gebel.

Ringling spokeswoman Catherine Ort-Mabry said the other workers filmed by Cuviello were reprimanded for "unprofessional behavior" but did not harm the **elephants**. She said those incidents — and other complaints against the circus — are extremely isolated.

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"If there is trauma to an animal, it shows up in the animal's behavior," she said. "You can see the obvious affection between the animals and the handlers. The animals are healthy, in good shape and they live great lives."

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The Mirror

March 21, 2000, Tuesday

SECTION: FEATURES; Pg. 17

LENGTH: 111 words

HEADLINE: WE'LL USE LAW

BYLINE: Nathan Yates

BODY:

WELFARE group Animal Defenders last night made a legal move to save the elephants.

Director Jan Creamer said: "We are taking advice in Germany with a view to pursuing court action there.

"Under German law the animals could be confiscated.

"We would like to see them spend their final years in a retirement sanctuary. We do not believe Mr Chipperfield should be allowed to keep them." The Mirror's pictures and evidence from handler Tom Rider would be crucial.

The RSPCA and America's People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (Peta) also condemned Chipperfield.

His cousin Mary was exposed last year by Animal Defenders investigators.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: March 21, 2000

When the Circus Comes to Town

It's Not All Fun and Games

By Audra Carbone

Approximately 15 animal rights protestors stood on the sidewalk directly outside of the main entrance to the Arena at Harbor Yard in Bridgeport on the evening of October 29.

Some stood holding a screen, which had graphic images of animal abuses projected onto it. The impact on some was evident as it caused them to turn away. Others stood holding signs that read "The Slave Trade is Alive and Kicking, Elephants in Circuses – You Choose. They Can't."

The opening night of the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus was festive for the most part. Many local residents brought their children to the event, some even dressing their kids up as clowns, expecting to experience a fun evening of entertainment, but there was no escaping the looming controversy that hung in the air.

Nancy Mathews of Fairfield was one of the protestors. She felt that the reception to their cause was good for the most part, but she added that some people get abusive when making such comments as "Get a job," "Get a life," and "Do something for people."

"As if they know us, when they don't, and it has nothing to do with that," she said. She also said that they're "definitely affecting people" because she has actually had strangers tell her that after seeing their

Tom Rider, an ex-employee of Ringling Brothers, which is owned by Feld Entertainment, is another individual who claims that in the beginning he was unaware of Ringling Brothers' abuse of their animals. Rider worked for them from June 3, 1997 to November 25, 1999. He held the position of Barn Man, which entailed taking care of the elephants, cleaning up after them, and feeding them.

"I was under the same impression as everyone else – it's the greatest show on

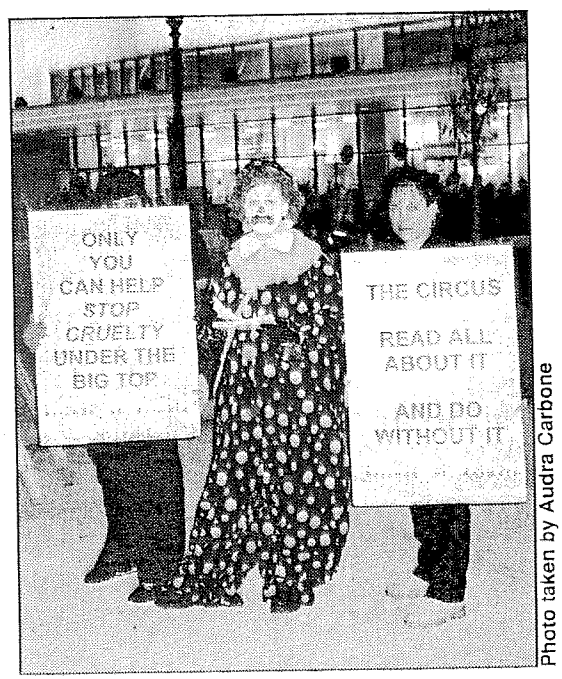


Photo taken by Audra Carbone

"Sad" Clown and other animal rights protestors at the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus at the Arena at Harbor Yard.

with a metal head and a two- or three-foot handle. Although the specific designs can vary as far as size goes, generally the handle is wood, fiberglass, or metal and the tip, which is similar to that of a fireplace poker, has two metal points. This tool is used to "train" the elephant, but the skin on an elephant, contrary to popular belief, is very sensitive.

"Obviously when the tip is used, actual holes are put in these animals. Some of these will become infected and fill with pus," states the web site. "We believe that the high incidence of attacks and deaths of elephant handlers is a direct result of this type of training, and had resulted in OSHA in 1988 classifying elephant handlers as being in the most dangerous profession, followed by coal miners and law enforcement officials."

Ringling Brothers' spokesperson Jenifer Maninger, described how the ankus is used.

"You'll see the caretaker give a voice command and also tap the top of their back [with the bullhook]," explained Maninger, just as you would see one elephant tap another on the back with his trunk. She said that the bullhook is basically used as an extension of the trainer's arm, and that the elephant is guided through voice commands in conjunction with the use of the ankus.

However, according to Rider, at a recent show in Manchester, New Hampshire, a customer complained that

animals are under 24-hour care.

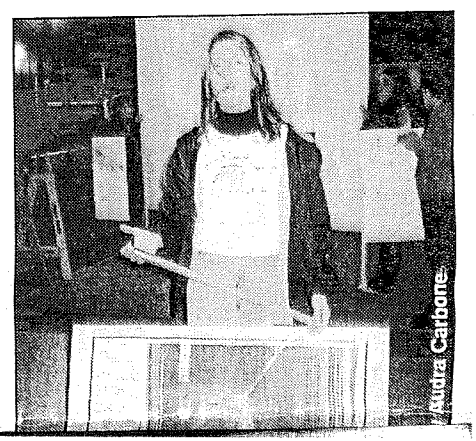
"They are always made the priority," she added.

But Rider claims, "The USDA is sanctioning the abuse of [animals by] Ringling Brothers." He says that the USDA calls prior to an inspection, sometimes even a week beforehand.

"I don't ever recall them just showing up," he said.

In fact, Rider also claims that in 1998 when he was in Las Vegas he was warned about an upcoming inspection by a superintendent.

Maninger stated though that during the time that Rider was with Ringling Brothers, there were over 30 inspections by not only the USDA, but by local humane societies as well as the state. All were random, and Maninger said that no findings of the allegations Rider made after he left were found. She also added that the allegations that Rider is making never came up during the 22 months in



PL 05958

never see a circus again.

Approximately 17 years ago, Mathews said she attended a circus herself, and although she was uncomfortable seeing the tigers performing, she didn't think about it any further. Then, five years ago, her son attended a circus himself and returned home with a flier from one of the protestors, which led both mother and son to do research on the subject.

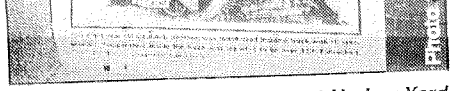
"After I found out the truth, that's when I realized I need to do something about this," said Mathews, who is a member of Compassion in Entertainment, a grassroots animal rights organization.

abuses toward the animals, but once handler Richard Chipperfield had been attacked by a tiger in 1997, a new superintendent of animals took over and things started to change. Not only did they begin hitting the elephants more often, Rider said, but they also started increasing the use of what are called bullhooks as well. Then, explained Rider, what he calls the "systematic daily abuse" began.

A bullhook or ankus, according to the Performing Animal Welfare Society's web page (www.pawsweb.org), is a tool

Rider called the USDA, but was not pleased when they told him to contact Ringling's own investigator in Raleigh, North Carolina. Prior to that, the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) would send someone locally to check out the situation, but that isn't the policy any longer.

Maninger, who has spent time on the road with Ringling Brothers, insisted that she has seen first hand how the animals are cared for. She said that there are enrichment activities for the animals, that they eat a healthy diet, and that the



Nancy Mathews at the Arena at Harbor Yard on the opening night of the Ringling Brothers Circus, with a bullhook and an elephant from another circus.

which he was employed by Ringling Brothers.

But a few years ago, she explained, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, along with Rider,

continued on page 3

Another Tuition Increase Planned

By Rich Thompson

The cost of attending HCC is increasing. Due to state budget constraints, the Board of Trustees approved the tuition increase to cover expenses for faculty, staff, operation, and maintenance costs.

The tuition increases were announced in a letter from Marc Herzog, the Chancellor of Connecticut Community Colleges last January. According to this letter, a tuition increase of 4.1% was approved for this school year, and a 4.6% increase was approved for the next year (2004-2005). This increase translates to approximately $3.46 per credit and $3.89 per credit, respectively.

Additional Mandatory Usage Fees have been added to the cost of tuition, according to the HCC handbook. For laboratory courses, an additional fee of $50 has been added, and for studio courses, a $56 fee has been added,

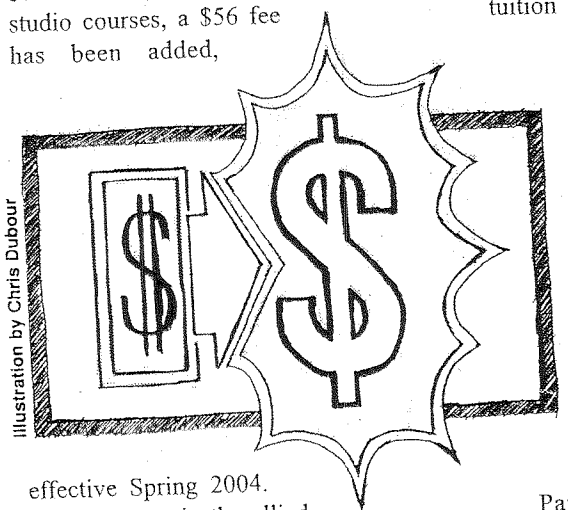


Illustration by Chris Dubour

effective Spring 2004.
For programs in the allied health programs, a fee of up to $175 will be added.

For many students here at HCC, this tuition increase and fee additions, slight as they may seem, may be the difference between attending and not attending the college. Tuition has increased since the spring semester of 2002 by just over $20 per credit. Total tuition to attend both fall and spring semesters full-time has increased over $500 over the last two years

Despite the increasing cost of attending, the attendance of both full-time and part-time students at HCC has continued to increase, as reported by the Chancellor's Office.

Paul McNamara, Dean of Administration, could not be reached for comment by press time.

The total number of students at all twelve community college campuses around Connecticut has grown to over 45,000 students. Of those, over 24,000 students are registered as full-time status, according to the Chancellor's letter.

The largest enrollment increase occurred here at HCC this past year, according to the Chancellor's Office. An increase of just over eight percent was reported. The letter, released by the Chancellor's Office, relates this increase to growing cost in tuition at four-year institutions and the increased value of post-secondary education in the workforce.

"In general, I would say that even minimal tuition increases significantly impact our students' ability to complet

continued on page

PL 05959

Non-traditional Opportunities

Mount Holyoke and Smith College visit HCC's campus

By Stephanie Janucik

On Tuesday, October 28, representatives from Smith College and Mount Holyoke College in Massachusetts hosted a luncheon in Housatonic's Art Gallery in an effort to recruit non-traditional students from community colleges. Twelve students and various faculty members attended this "by invitation only" luncheon to learn more about these colleges.

"We are thrilled to be here," said Sidonia Dalby, Associate Director of Admissions at Smith College. Dalby defined a non-traditional student as one who is at least 24 years old, a veteran, and/or one who has dependents. These students, she said, take the same classes and have the same resources and benefits as traditional students, but they are allowed to live off campus and attend the college part time if they choose.

"We really do want to link forces," said Carolyn Dietel, Coordinator of Transfer Affairs and Associate Director of the Francis Perkins Program at Mount Holyoke College.

"But you have to be willing to take a chance if you're going to be a student in one of our programs," she noted.

Smith College and Mount Holyoke College are part of Five Colleges, Inc., an association linking their schools with Amherst, Hampshire College, and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

According to *Mount Holyoke College at a Glance*, the consortium links students to 30,000 other students and the immense educational and communal resources of four renowned colleges. This allows students to choose from over 5,000 courses any given semester.



Photo taken by Pat Salerno

"People should never underestimate what's available," Dietel said. "Our five schools offer a richness of educational opportunity."

Smith College, a liberal arts college, is the largest women's college in the United States. It is also the only women's college to offer engineering. According to Dalby, there are currently 2,600 undergraduates enrolled at Smith College. Each year, Smith accepts 625 first-year students, 125 transfer students, and 65-70 non-traditional adult students. Approximately 65 countries are represented on campus at Smith.

Smith College accepts non-traditional students in January only. These students are required to transfer with 32 credits minimally and a maximum of 64 credits. The same classes taken at Housatonic should transfer to Smith, especially if they are liberal arts courses.

Students who qualify are guaranteed financial aid. However, Dalby said that financial aid is a competitive situation. She recommends that students apply for as many outside scholarships as possible. Smith also offers an internship program for their students. Every junior and senior is guaranteed a paid internship.

"That's a real perk of going to a place like Smith," Dalby said.

According to Dalby, 85% of the students at Smith go to graduate school, mostly into fields concerning social services and education.

"I have to tell you that most of the people who enter [Smith College] do graduate," Dalby said. "People change, transform, and blossom like a flower."

"There are some amazing success stories," Dietel added. "[Our students] are extraordinarily determined."

For more information about Mount Holyoke College, visit www.mtholyoke.edu.

For more information about Smith College, visit www.smith.edu.

When the Circus Comes to Town

continued from page 2

filed a lawsuit based on the allegations that he had made.

These allegations are detailed in a report by the ASPCA, The Fund for Animals, and the Animal Welfare Institute. It contains allegations of abuse, cases of Tuberculosis infections, and the death of elephants such as 3-year old Kenny and 4-year old Benjamin.

In the case of Kenny, according to Rider, the head veterinarian told the head of the elephant department that Kenny was too sick to perform. But during the third show, the head of the elephant department sent him out to perform anyway. He died shortly afterward.

Manginger insisted that although Kenny contracted a fast acting virus, he did not perform. She said that once caretakers noticed a change in his behavior, they acted immediately by contacting local and staff veterinarians and veterinarian technicians. The staff collectively decided that since elephants are herd animals, leaving Kenny in the barn by himself would cause him "undue stress," so they brought him to the area along with the other elephants.

"Unfortunately," she said, "he did pass away from this fast-acting virus infection."

The report that contains the allegations will be used in the laws which Rider and the three organizations have against Ringling Brothers. If the outcome of the lawsuit goes Rider's way, all elephants would be removed from the circus.

PL 05960

Get Advised and Win a Prize

Benefits to Early Advising and Registration

By Natalie Thompson

Are you tired of waiting in long lines? Are pushy students and the run-around at the registrar's office's making you fear registration? If so, maybe you should consider early advising to jump-start next semester's registration.

Early registration starts on November 25 from 2:30 to 6:30 pm; however, students must be advised before they can register. November 25 also marks Early Advising Day. All advisors will be available to help students plan their spring semester.

"The goal of the special advising day is to encourage students to register early for the spring term in order to get the classes they need," said Dean of Student Affairs Lisa Montgomery.

Early advising and registration can make students' lives a lot less problematic and also give them enough time to focus on other significant issues. The earlier students get advised, the better.

In fact, according to Registrar Ed Sylvia, most advisors are gone after final exams. At that point, students may have to see a counselor, who is not an expert in their field, to determine where they end up the next year.

Montgomery added that when most students go to register, they find that the classes they need have already closed, and that is the primary motive behind the Early Advising Day.

"Classes close really quickly," she continued.

"We try to pick prizes that benefit [the] students, and excite them," said Montgomery.

Students who register on or before November 25 are automatically entered to win a computer, $100 bookstore gift certificate, and one airline travel certificate.

In addition, students who are advised and registered by December 11 will be eligible to win two $100 bookstore gift certificates and one airline travel certificate.

Although offering prizes is a great reminder for early advising and registration, according to Montgomery, the college is not offering just any prizes; it's offering prizes that will promote education. A computer and printer are important tools for education, and the $100 bookstore certificate can be useful when purchasing textbooks.

"We could give away football tickets, but it's not as beneficial," said Montgomery. "Registering early is good, and we strongly encourage it."

So, take advantage of the Early Advising Day and register before November 25 or December 11. The benefits mean much more than a prize. Plan your semester early, and save the stress for when it's really needed.

Another Tuition Increase

continued from page 2

their education," stated Dr. Lisa Montgomery, Dean of Students.

According to HCC Student Handbook (2003-2004), tuition for a full-time student at HCC, that is, a student registered for twelve or more credits, is $1,014, plus applicable fees.

Although the tuition at HCC is increasing, it is still affordable when comparing to other colleges and universities. According to Sacred Heart University's web site, the fee for a student attending full-time is $20,268 plus applicable fees.

The University of New Haven will cost just slightly less at $20,123, plus applicable fees, according to UNH's website, www.newhaven.edu.

Southern Connecticut State University is a bit cheaper, but is still $8,723, fees included, according to their web site.

its sources are very credible.

"It's all fabricated information," she said, "so I would never read it or go by it." She believes that all three organizations have a political agenda, which is to tell people what to eat, what to wear, and how to spend their entertainment dollars.

"They file lawsuits," Maninger said, "to get PR stunts all to further their political agenda."

Although Rider has this lawsuit pending against Ringling Brothers, he insists that he is not trying to stop the circus.

Rider travels to most towns where the circus is performing. He now owns a van purchased for him by his daughter, which he sleeps in, but prior to using the van he traveled to each show via a Greyhound bus. He insists that he is not employed by any animal welfare agency and he does not receive a paycheck.

"This year it's just private people donating money. No big group is even funding me this year." Rider states that he received a $5000 donation from a private individual, which he has been using since June. "I've literally been living on that much money," he added.

However, Maninger disagreed.

"This case is very old, made by a former employee who is being paid by animal rights organizations," said Maninger.

"I think he's an individual who's down on his luck and who unfortunately was looking for an income," she added.

According to Rider's attorney Katherine Meyer, the case is currently pending in the Federal District Court in the District of Columbia.

Editor-in-Chief Yesenia Rosado also contributed to this story.

PL 05961

Daily Egyptian 02
Fall 2002

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New RSO to protest at Carson and Barnes circus Thursday

Samantha Edmondson

Daily Egyptian

Tom Rider, former Ringling Bros. Circus elephant trainer, pushed the VHS tape into the VCR. He paused and looked up at the audience gathered Monday night in the Student Center Kaskaskia Room for his presentation on animal cruelty.

"Be prepared, you might get squeamish," he said as a scene with an elephant trainer, three endangered Asian elephants and fellow animal handlers in a barn appeared on the television monitor.

Within the six-minute footage, Tom Frisco, a former animal care director and long-time elephant trainer for the Carson and Barnes Circus, called the elephants obscene names, beat the animals with an electric prod and told his fellow trainers abusing them in the barn, away from the public, was alright.

"Hurt 'em. Don't touch 'em. Make 'em scream."

After saying these words, Frisco shocked the three endangered Asian elephants with the prod. The pachyderms hollered with pain, the new caretakers watched with confusion and an undercover video captured it all.

The People for Equal Treatment of Animals (PETA) investigators released the tape. Rider presented it along with other circus animal abuse footage to a group of students and members of the new Registered Student Organization, Students Speak Out For Animals, who sponsored the event.

The impending arrival of a Carson and Barnes Circus, performing two shows on Thursday at the Southern Illinois Airport outside of Carbondale, has brought more than a nationally known event back to Southern Illinois. It has prompted the first animal rights campaign for the RSO and a protest toward the cruelty of circus animals at the event.

Natalie Wodynksi, a junior in university studies from Lemont, and the president of Students Speak Out For Animals, said has seen undercover video footage such as the evidence Rider presented Monday night.

She saw Rider's presentation in Washington D.C. in February and wanted to invite him to speak before the circus came to town. He responded within two weeks and wanted to advocate their efforts toward campaigning for animal rights.

PL 15783

She said more than 15 people want to help the RSO pass out leaflets and flyers about circus animal abuse at the circus Thursday, but more importantly to educate citizens about what can go on behind the scenes.

"We want to inform people and let them know what happens to the animals in the tent," she said. "We want to let people know and hopefully change their view for what they find as entertainment."

The Carson and Barnes circus has sold up to 3,000 tickets for past performances and has done well in the Carbondale area. Other attractions include trapeze artists and clowns, but the most popular attraction is animal tricks.

Paul Legare, advanced marketing coordinator for Carson and Barnes, said he and the circus company are aware of Frisco's actions and the videotape. He has spoken with Frisco about his actions and the trainer said he was apologetic about the language and how some of his actions were portrayed. But Legare said there are two sides to every story.

"It is a great piece for PETA, but it was done in an editing studio," he said. "Tom Frisco, who I have spoken to, said it was a locker room setting and didn't know anyone said it; it was in a closed setting."

Rider noted to the audience at his presentation Monday night the Carson and Barnes Circus' reaction to the videotape was that they were apologetic about the language, but did not respond to the animal abuse.

Legare said the circus trainers, sponsored locally by the Carbondale Rotary Club, do an excellent job and protect the livelihood of the more than 100 animals in the show.

He noted the circus invites the public to come out and watch the elephants and the hired help put up the main tent for the circus. But he added that after the animals leave the public they are not mistreated.

"They are in fact on display, but some think as soon as the public leaves, we beat them behind their backs," Legare said. "We have a clean record ˜ the USDA [United States Department of Agriculture] does inspect, and we inspect almost daily."

However, PETA has recognized more than 30 citations and investigations since 1982 against Carson and Barnes, with some investigations still open.

Rider, who trained elephants for two and a half years, said some of the tools trainers in most circuses have are overused to control animals. One such tool is a "bullhook," a long stick with a fire poker type point on the end.

Rider showed undercover video footage of a man in the Ringling Bros. Circus who hit an elephant with the bullhook and it got caught in the mouth of the animal. Instead of carefully removing it, he yanked down with both hands, piercing the skin.

Rider said according to the Humane Society, piercing the skin of an elephant or any animal with a bullhook is a violation and is illegal.

"Actually the skin of an elephant is as thin as a human's," Rider said.

PL 15784

A statement released by the director of advance coordination for Carson and Barnes Circus noted that "all circuses have a first amendment right to perform with animals, as an artistic exhibition. The public has a right to choose to patronize the exhibitions. In its 66-year history, the Carson and Barnes Circus has been inspected continually by various federal, state and local humane agencies with regard to its animal care procedures. Carson and Barnes Circus has been cited as one of the most progressive circuses on the road."

But Mary Boehler, a registered nurse from Makanda, said she had never seen footage and heard facts such as those Rider presented Friday night. She has not actively participated in animal rights campaigns, but her mind has been changed.

"It was very bad and I hope to talk to Natalie about helping out," Boehler said. "I want to educate others and let them know what happens to these animals."

Reporter Samantha Edmondson can be reached at sedmondson@dailyegyptian.com

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PL 15785

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Volume 76, Number 45 | April 4 - 10, 2007



League of Humane Voters members and animal-rights activists rallying outside Madison Square Garden on Saturday.

Activists want to rein in circus use of wild animals

By Chris Bragg

In making their point on Saturday that Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus is cruel to animals, the League of Humane Voters of New York City was not subtle: Outside Madison Square Garden they chained and "beat" a person in an elephant costume with the same type of bull hook the circus uses to discipline elephants.

During the circus's first New York performance this year, John Phillips, the director of the N.Y.C. League of Humane Voters, said the group wants this to be the last year elephants and other wild animals are used in the circus.

"Ringling has been fined tens of thousands of dollars by the U.S.D.A. [United States Department of Agriculture] and is responsible for the deaths of at least 24 elephants since 1992," he said. "They cannot be trusted to take care of animals properly. In fact, the Bronx Zoo plans to retire its elephants to a sanctuary because they can't adequately meet the needs of their elephants. Who on earth believes that Madison Square Garden is a suitable environment for wild animals?"

Phillips urged the New York City Council to pass a ban on the use of wild animals in city circuses, which would essentially amount to a ban on Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey. Phillips said 13 councilmembers had already come out in support of the ban. The main sponsor of the legislation is Councilmember Rosie Mendez.

"We say that we're an enlightened society, but we allow animals to be tortured and do things quite unnatural," Mendez said in an interview. "Jumping through flaming hoops and big elephants sitting on little chairs, it's just not appropriate." She added that 27 other municipalities had already passed similar bans.

PL 15786

More than 100 people turned out at the press conference, including celebrity speakers, such as Rue McClanahan from the television program "The Golden Girls." A surprise guest was Tom Rider, a former Ringling employee who worked as a "barn man" taking care of elephants.

"What I saw every day is what I call a 'system of daily abuse,'" he said in an interview. He described the use of bull hooks that led to pools of elephant blood, as well as a lack of daily exercise for the elephants.

Ringling Bros. officials said the animals are, in fact, treated well.

"We're very proud of the animal care we have," said Tom Albert, a circus spokesperson. "They mean a great deal to us and are the heart of our shows."

Albert said the accusations of mistreatment are inaccurate.

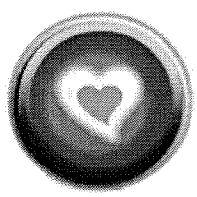
"They don't really know what they're talking about," he said of the animal-rights activists, "whether it's about working with animals or what we do when we care for our animals."

Ringling Bros. is still popular among many New Yorkers. Early last Wednesday morning, roughly 1,000 people cheered wildly as a parade of 10 elephants walked down 34th St. to Madison Square Garden, in an event kicking off the circus season.

The attempted circus ban comes as the New York City Council recently passed legislation banning use of aluminum bats in high school baseball games and capping the number of pedicabs. (The mayor, however, last week vetoed the pedicab legislation.)

Although it pulled out all the stops last weekend with its caricature of an elephant beating, the League of Humane Voters still couldn't upstage Barnum & Bailey. The circus made national news when Bello, its feature-attraction clown, lost his foot-high bike Friday night, only to have it returned on Sunday.

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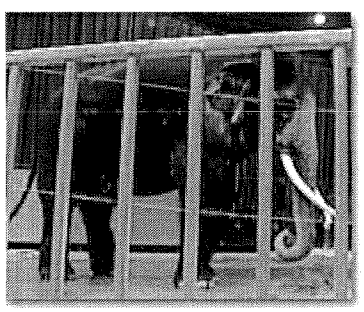
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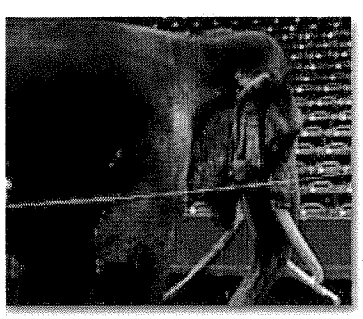
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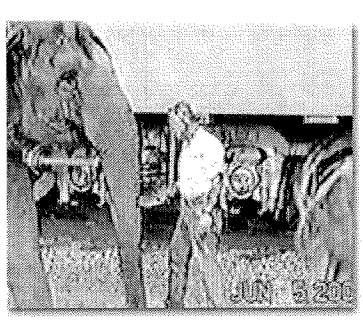
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Alleged Elephant Abuse at the Circus









Abuse at the circus... A former elephant trainer speaks out about what he calls the repeated mistreatment of elephants at Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Circus. Their show is currently in Amarillo.

NewsChannel 10's Marissa Bagg sat down with the trainer and Ringling Brothers to get the story.

Tom Rider paints a horrific picture of the abuse he says goes on daily behind the circus scene. So he's teamed up with several animal welfare groups and filed a lawsuit in hopes to take elephants out of the Ringling Brothers show for good.

"I saw what I call systematic daily abuse, everyday the bull hook is being used to hook or jab an elephant causing pain," says Rider, who use to work with Ringling Brothers for 2 years working with the elephants.

Rider shared this jarring video that appears to show several incidents of abuse where trainers are hitting the elephants with sharp bull hooks.

"I complained to my supervisor but it goes no further, you can't go to the owner and say 'hey they're beating the elephants' because they'll fire you," says Rider.

NewsChannel 10 met with the circus manager at the civic center today and he painted a different picture.

"I've been 10 years with the show and seen nothing but care and respect of the animals each and every day," says Jason Gibson.

Gibson says bull hooks are not used to train this elephant performing in Amarillo, he is voiced trained by his first name.

"If you're doing verbal commands why do you need a bull hook, get rid of your bull hooks," says Rider.

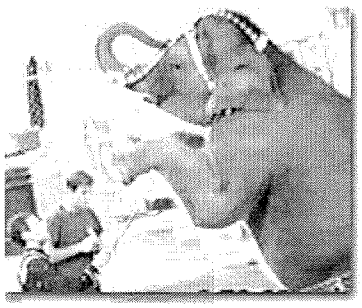
Gibson defends the use of bull hooks.

"A bull hook is like a leash for a dog, it's the extension of the arm, it's a worldy accepted form of guiding an elephant around," says Gibson.

Rider doesn't buy that. He says there is no humane way to have elephants in a circus, and hopes to prove that with the lawsuit.

"It's not about me or money, it's about the abuse of the

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elephants at the circus at Ringling."

The lawsuit alleges Ringling Brothers is violating the Endangered Species Act, because the Asian Elephant used in their show is on the Endangered Species List.

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"Greatest Show on Earth" Ends Up in Court

Aired December 19, 2001 - 12:40 ET

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THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

LEON HARRIS, CNN ANCHOR: Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus has been criss-crossing the country and delighting adults and children alike for more than a century. But now, the famous circus is about to take its act to a new audience: inside a criminal courtroom before a jury.

CNN's James Hattori with that story.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

JAMES HATTORI, CNN CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): This isn't the kind of spotlight Ringling Brothers elephant trainer Mark Gebel is accustomed to.

MARK GEBEL, RINGLING BROS. AND BARNUM & BAILEY CIRCUS: No, I can't right now. I look forward to talking with you. Thank you.

The 31-year-old son of famed tiger trainer Gunther Gebel-Williams was literally born into the circus. But now, Mark Gabel is in the legal arena, accused of abusing an Asian elephant while performing in San Jose, California last August with a common circus tool called an ankus, or bull hook. In a statement, a police officer at the performance says she, quote, "saw Mark Gebel lunge at the first elephant with his ankus. It was obvious from his voice and body language he was angry. I saw his arm go forward in a jabbing motion."

The humane society says his action violates a California law applying specifically to elephants.

LISA RADLOFF, HUMANE SOCIETY: 596.5 is about misdemeanor elephant abuse and breakage of skin through abuse.

HATTORI: A photo taken by the humane society shows what appears to be a bloodstain. Ringling Brothers had its veterinarian examine the elephant and provided this photo showing the same area after being washed.

JAMES MCMANIS, RINGLING BROTHERS ATTORNEY: It's a pinprick injury that had a bloodstain of about a nickel in diameter. That's all it is on her best day. And I don't think it's got any business being in court.

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HATTORI: Tom Rider, who once worked for Ringling Brothers, says animal abuse is common. He's part of a federal lawsuit to try and stop circuses from using elephants.

TOM RIDER, FORMER RINGLING BROTHERS EMPLOYEE: One case, in Richmond, Virginia, we found 20-plus hook marks on Zinon (ph), and 30- plus hookmarks on Rebecca, just trying to lay the elephant down.

HATTORI: Ringling Brothers officials believe animal rights groups are going after Gebel to gain publicity for their cause.

CATHERINE ORT-MABRY, RINGLING BROTHERS SPOKESWOMAN: Because of that famous name, this young man is being persecuted.

HATTORI, (on camera): If found guilty, Gebel could face up to six months in jail and a $1,000 fine. Meantime, Ringling Brothers says its show will continue to go on as usual.

James Hattori, CNN, San Jose, California.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

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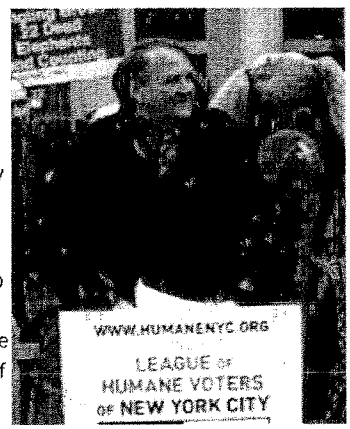
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League of Humane Voters of New York City

3/18: Press Conference RE: Intro 389



On March 18th at 12pm, the League of Humane Voters of New York City (LOHV-NYC) will hold a major press conference outside of Madison Square Garden, urging the City Council to pass Council Member Rosie Mendez's Intro 389! Intro 389 would end the use of elephants and other wild animals by the circus.

Former Ringling Bros. Circus employee Tom Rider (right) will be joining us at the press conference to speak about the cruelty that he witnessed first hand. We'll also be joined by representatives of the Humane Society of the United States, In Defense of Animals and other supportive animal protection organizations.

Over the past 2 years, LOHV-NYC has been educating the City Council about the plight of wild animals in the circus. Our work is paying off! Intro 389 is now a bi-partisan effort sponsored by 21 members of the 51-member Council. We're only 5 members shy of a majority of support... but we need to show that there is massive public support for this bill. Please join us at the press conference! Your attendance is crucial!

What: Press Conference in Support of Intro 389
When: Tuesday, March 18th at 12pm
Where: Madison Square Garden (33rd St. and 7th Ave., near Borders bookstore)
Why: Because Wild Animals Are Not Performers!

Mark Your Calendar! On March 20th, the day of Ringling Bros. opening show, please also call your Council Member and urge them to support Intro 389, the bill to ban the use of wild animals in circuses. Call LOHV-NYC at (212) 889-0303 if you need your Council Member's contact information.

Posted on March 3, 2008 5:28 PM | Permalink

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George Knapp, Chief Investigative Reporter

I-Team: Ringling Brothers Responds to a Pending Lawsuit

Updated: July 4, 2008 08:39 PM EDT



By one estimate, the Ringling Circus earns $100 million a year for its owner Kenneth Feld, an impresario with long-standing ties to Las Vegas.



The animal groups say there's a reason why elephants obey their trainers -- fear.



An American institution -- the Ringling Brother's circus is facing an uncertain future now that a lawsuit is moving forward in Federal Court. It took animal welfare groups eight years to get Ringling into court. The trial begins in October.

On a day hot enough to blister meat, in an asphalt parking lot behind a Las Vegas casino, two out-of-place Asian elephants splash around in a shallow pool. It's enough to thaw the heart of the most strident animal activist.

There's no getting around it, people love elephants -- on a level that seems almost primal. Ringling Brothers knows this better than anyone.

"You care about it when you stand next to a 10 foot tall animal. Your eyes light up, no matter how old you are. That's the experience we've been bringing to the country for 138 years," said Ringling Brothers spokesperson Andy Perez.

According to Perez, the elephants are essential to the circus, "Our polling shows 80-percent of attendees come because of the elephants. As much as the clowns and acrobats are part of it, so are the elephants."

By one estimate, the Ringling Circus earns $100 million a year for its owner Kenneth Feld, an impresario with long-standing ties to Las Vegas. Without elephants, the circus would fold its tent, its supporters say.

Attendance and profits remain strong, but it gets a little tougher each year. Animal activists are waiting at almost every stop to protest the treatment of non-human performers -- especially the elephants.

Andy Perez has worked for Ringling for ten years. He is the designated media liaison and responder to critics, "Animal activists have their view. It's the polar opposite of Ringling Brothers."

He lauds the circus for creating an elephant farm in Florida and a breeding program designed to help save the species. He says, with a straight face, that the stunts performed by circus elephants are perfectly natural.

"Elephants are playful. What you see in the circus is basically what elephants do in the wild. They stand on their head, on logs, on each other," he said.

"They stand in a line of 14 elephants?" asked Knapp.

"Absolutely. Have you ever seen a herd move?" said Perez.

"Seriously?" asked Knapp.

"Yeah, they move around. Elephants are social creatures. They move in herds," said Perez.

"In the wild, they would stand on hind legs, 14 in a row?" asked Knapp.

Elephant trainers in every circus, including Ringling, use the infamous ankus or bullhook. Ringling says it's a harmless but necessary tool.

"They stand on each other for mating -- for playing. It's natural behavior to reach for higher things off tree branches," said Perez.

If we take Ringling's word for it that elephants in the wild perform, a larger question remains -- are elephants cut out to be carnies?

A Ringling tour lasts two years and covers 80 cities. Elephants essentially live in railroad cars and in chains -- a part of their existence the public and media don't get to see.

It's the circus life that is at the heart of a lawsuit filed eight years ago by animal welfare organizations, which allege that an endangered species, especially one as intelligent as elephants, shouldn't spend most of its life in a boxcar.

Ringling says its pachyderms are pampered.

"It's a great life for elephants. They get 24 hour, seven-day-a-week care, people with them all the time, tending to their needs, their health. They get exercised -- they are in movement constantly. Look at the elephants. We invite the public to our open house, how healthy they look, their muscle tone. They're happy. They're in good condition," said Perez. "They respond to the trainers. They have great rapport with the trainers and enjoy themselves."

The animal groups say there's a reason why elephants obey their trainers -- fear. Elephant trainers in every circus, including Ringling, use the infamous ankus or bullhook. Ringling says it's a harmless but necessary tool.

"The guide is an internationally accepted management tool. It's necessary," said Perez.

"Necessary if you are going to have them in a circus," asked Knapp.

"If you are going to work with elephants period. If you are a 150 pound man, you need a way to communicate with that animal -- just like a leash with a dog. Can it be misused? Absolutely. But at Ringling Brothers, we don't tolerate it and have never been in violation," said Perez.

Undercover videos recorded by animal welfare groups paint a different picture, although Ringling has been very successful in resolving complaints filed with the USDA.

Some of the most pointed criticism comes from Ringling's own elephant experts and vets. Internal memos obtained by the critics are packed with first hand accounts of elephants that have been beaten and bloodied, scarred, abused, infected and denied water to prevent urination during performances. The allegations are from Ringling's own veterinarians.

"Your animal person said it happened lots of times -- bleeding in the ring. Others say it happens," said Knapp.

"In my ten years with the circus, I haven't seen that. I can speak from experience. I can't speak to what this person, he or she, what this person has written," said Perez.

One central issue in the federal court case is the intent of Ringling's breeding program. The circus says it's doing the world a favor by saving the species and that no elephant is forced to perform.

"Someone needs to protect and study. We're leaders in that. We started our center to learn more about them. We do work around the world," said Perez.

"Do you raise them for anything other than performing?" asked Knapp.

"Not every elephant is a performer, just like not every person is a performer. When a calf is born, a determination is made of what the calf is interested in. Some are shy, some are hams," said Perez.

But critics say the elephants either perform or die. Former Ringling elephant handler Tom Rider, a plaintiff in the lawsuit, says every single elephant born at the Ringling farm is performing in the circus, except for the four baby elephants that died while training or performing.

"There is not one baby elephant born at that conservation center that has ever been put into the wild. All they're

doing is having babies. It's like a puppy mill for elephants, breeding babies to put them in the circus," he said.

"Ringling snatches them from their mother by dragging them with ropes and starts dominating them. At six-months-old, an elephant has no concept of why they're being hurt. They don't understand what they're doing. But the show must go on," said animal welfare activist Linda Faso.

"We're caring for an endangered species. Put our money where our mouth is, keeping them from going extinct. The activists are not," said Perez.

Email your comments to Chief Investigative Reporter George Knapp

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