



Sometimes things can get too exciting, so now we had a slight tempo change with some miniature ponies and some three-ring aerial action. The final act of the first half really brought things back up to speed, however, with **James and Tapa Hall** and the internationally renowned "Castle's Performing Syrian Bears" (just in case you thought the Shrine Circus was perhaps a niche event, this is the third internationally known act that performed in one show!) The bears really went all out, and they weren't just dancing bears: they did handstands, walked on their front paws, rode bikes by themselves, rolled barrels, jumped hurdles, balanced on balls, rode high-seated bicycles, and even rode a motorcycle. I understand the bears were offered membership in the Aleppo Cycles after the show.

After a thrilling first half, there were still more things to do during the intermission. Apart from more food, there were photo ops with Jasper the Horse (who has a very nice smile for a horse), a merry-go-round, elephant rides, and a moonwalk run by Bunny Rose, colloquially known as "Bounce with Bunny" (preferably not with the food just purchased at the concession stand in hand). Business was brisk again during the intermission, and the Clowns were out and about giving out their clown cards and stickers, and signing their pages in the program for the kids. There were also some charitable presentations and the introduction of the Circus King and Queen.

Now, if everything that has already happened isn't enough for you, that's good, because there's still an encore to go! The entire Fusco family entertained everyone with their gaucho bolas and drumming, spinning and whirling and dancing away, and were followed by King Gustav and his Goats. The big finale was certainly big, as the elephants came out to do some very acrobatic things that you wouldn't normally expect an elephant to be able to do.

All in all, the shows were a smashing success – at one show alone, over \$200 worth of popcorn was sold, there were enough kids to keep seven face painters always busy, the concessions were flying off the counter, the acts were tremendous and very well-received, and best of all, everything went smoothly, and everyone had a good time, thanks to the hard work of not only every single member of the Royal Hanneford Circus, but every single volunteer and every single Circus Daddy who helped make the Circus a success once again. Apart from the absolute enjoyment of a day at the circus, everyone can also be assured that all the money raised is going to tangibly and directly help us help children, because that's simply what we do. See you next year!

.....continued from page 22

armed forces, followed by an introductory song and dance number to get the show rolling.

Now, every circus has its special attractions, and this year came **Raul, Margaret**, and the Rodriguez Sheepdogs. The sheepdogs were pretty athletic, all things considered: they jump through hoops, climb ladders, and can even push a bicycle. Next came a juggling display by the Fusco Brothers, just two of the "Fusco Family Gauchos" a troupe of performers from Argentina who were making their Shrine Circus debut. Juggling Indian clubs while spinning hula hoops, juggling hoops, juggling with their feet, and juggling a world record nine hoops simultaneously, the Fusco Brothers were fast, furious, and full of fun and enjoyment for all.

To change things up a bit, we were treated to some daredevil trapeze work from **Miss Angela**. If she flew any higher, she would have been on top of the auditorium. Next came General Hanneford and his horse Jasper (although it was rather more like Jasper the horse and his General – I know which I'd trust on the battlefield).

A lot of the fun and appeal of the circus is the chance to see out of the ordinary acts. The next act was downright exotic – Mongolian Archers, using the "traditional Mongolian compound bow." Their first trick was for the archer to shoot an apple off his lovely assistant's head, which is something like using a howitzer to hunt squirrels. The assistant being left in one piece (unlike the apple), the archer next proceeded to shoot at balloons his assistant was holding, and the piece de resistance was a Rube Goldberg-esque reverse trick shot with a crossbow, which set off a chain reaction of arrows flying through the air to strike more balloons. Did I mention the archer was blindfolded at the time and aimed based on his assistant's voice commands?



Marathoners Surpass their Goal

NOT only did our Shriners Hospitals for Children— Boston Marathon team -- Danielle Surprenant, Andrea Evans, RN, Helena Bauk, RN, and Michelle Dannaher -- complete the Boston Marathon with impressive times, they surpassed their fundraising goal of \$10,000 by nearly \$3,000!

All four women agreed that helping the patients at Shriners was the motivating factor that led them to tackle this prestigious race. "I have wanted to run the Boston Marathon for as long as I can remember, but I have never been motivated to train," says Surprenant, a Child Life Therapist (4:49:43). "Running for an organization that means so much to me and for my patients gave me motivation not only to train but to finish."

The team trained through a long winter cold snap with early morning temperatures in the single digits, ice covered streets and nasty wind chills, so the predicted Nor'easter on Marathon day didn't scare them off. "Knowing that we were raising funds for the kids is what motivated me on the cold mornings when I would've just loved to sleep in. It honestly kept me going," explains outcomes research nurse Bauk (4:18:28), who completed a 17-mile training run while pushing her 4-year-old son when her babysitter cancelled at the last minute.

Evans (4:38:56), a new employee who works on the reconstructive unit, says she is honored to represent Shriners Hospital in the Boston Marathon. "I am proud to work for such an amazing organization, and I think this was a great opportunity for me to be able to raise money and give back in a small way," she says. "I mainly wanted to do this for the hospital and our patients -- not to break any records!"


As the wife of a Boston firefighter, Dannaher (4:05:47) says that Shriners Hospitals for Children—Boston is near and dear to her

heart because she knows about the suffering that burn-injured children endure and the great care they receive at Shriners. The 2007 race was her fourth marathon and her second one to benefit Shriners.

"Knowing I am making a difference in at least one child's life at Shriners Hospital is worth every second of training and running the 26.2 miles," she says. "I am so proud to run the Boston Marathon to support Shriners Hospital and thankful for the opportunity to help the kids. That is what got me across that finish line proud and happy!"



HELENA BAUK, Outcomes Research, gets a well deserved hug from her son at the finish line.



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