



# Newsletter

November, 1971

Vol. 23 No. 11

And in the center ring . . .

## Roger Dollarhide, Juggler

If someone tells you he was driving through Elizabeth Park in Hartford and saw an eight-ring unison fountain, he's not talking about some new aquatic display installed by the City of Hartford, he's talking about the juggling specialty of Roger Dollarhide.

A very soft-spoken individual, Roger recently became procedures supervisor in The Hartford's methods and procedures department. Joining The Hartford in 1969 in Santa Ana, California, as a member of the office administration training program, he was promoted to assistant office administration superintendent in St. Louis upon completion of his training. In March of this year he transferred to the home office.

What does all this have to do with juggling? Well, juggling just happens to be Roger's long-time hobby.

When asked how he became interested in, not to mention trained for, juggling, Roger replied, "I was always so uncoordinated I couldn't play baseball or other team sports. I guess to prove something to myself, and to overcome my ineptness, I took up juggling when I was in the ninth grade. This was something I could practice by myself, and no one could throw me off the team. I didn't have anyone to teach me to juggle, I learned by myself on a try-and-try-again basis.

"One of my incentives was a strong desire to be a part of an annual parade in my home town of Bellingham, Washington. In order to participate in this parade, a friend of mine and I took up juggling and also taught ourselves to ride unicycles."

Roger began by juggling balls made of rolled-up socks. These were convenient and didn't break when they were dropped. After gaining some dexterity he moved on to golf balls, then to sawed-off broom handles and plastic plates.

### International Association

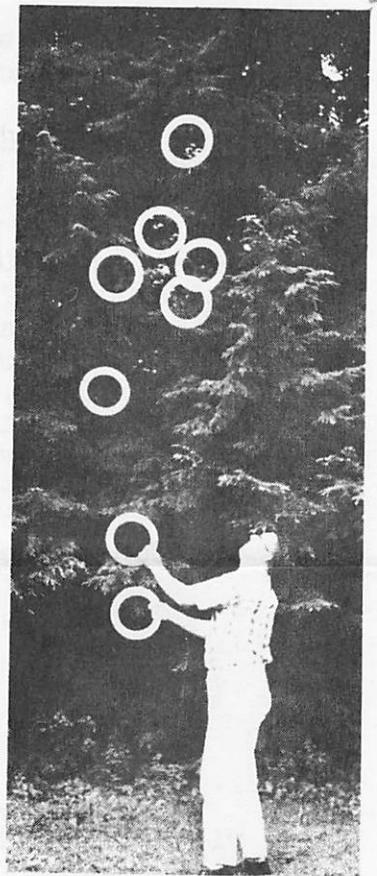
Two years after Roger took up juggling, he learned of the International Jugglers Association, a worldwide organization whose membership is comprised of amateur and professional jugglers. This association has members in the United States, South America, Canada, West and East Germany, Australia, England, Scotland and New Zealand, to name just some of the countries represented.

Roger became an active member of this association, learning about sources of specially-designed juggling equipment and exchanging information and tips on juggling with amateurs and professionals throughout the globe.

In 1968 he became president of the International Jugglers Association, and, after serving his year in office, took over editing the association's monthly newsletter. Although no longer president of the association, Roger has helped to run the organization for the last two to three years in addition to producing the newsletter.

In 1969 he was responsible for organizing the first international competition for jugglers. Today this is still the only open juggling competition in the world. The latest convention and competition of the association was held this past July in Rocky Hill, Connecticut.

For an entire weekend, a large motel in this community was invaded by jugglers from all over the country. Indian clubs, balls, hoops and plates flew through the air, to the delight of guests, passers-by and the juggling aficionados. One of Roger's good friends, who protests he really isn't a "cut-up," flew in for the convention from Salt Lake City. His specialty? While standing on one foot rotating a hoop on the other and balancing a cone and ball on his head, he simultaneously juggles — are you ready? — a shingle hatchet, sickle, butcher knife and an axe.



Roger's eight-ring unison fountain.

### A Little Bit On Juggling

Roger insists there is no trick to juggling. Many, many hours of practice and a whole lot of patience are required to master this skill.

Basically there are four styles of juggling. The first, combination juggling, involves juggling several different items at the same time. Another, numbers juggling, uses only one kind of instrument but in varying quantities, such as five oranges.

One of the most popular juggling styles with spectators is Indian clubs. With just three of these specially made and balanced instruments, millions of tricks are possible. And have you ever seen a juggler take a single small ball and roll it up

The Hartford STAFF/September 1971

(Continued on p. 4)

THE IJA NEWSLETTER

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EDITORS NOTEBOOK

The calendar for 1972 shows that the 4th of July falls on a Tuesday, which brings up some questions regarding the '72 Convention.

Starting with the 1969 Convention in Hollywood, we broke tradition by having the Convention in July rather than the end of June. The 4th was good, because the hotel was nearly deserted and we got a special rate. We went that route again at the same hotel in 1970 and we also got a fairly good deal last year here in Hartford for the three days July 2,3,4.

There was one drawback to this arrangement-some professionals had to work on the 4th.

In 1972, we may have a Convention time which has the advantages and not the disadvantages of the July 4th weekend. We could have the Convention on the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and the pros could still work on the 4th. I imagine many will have Monday, July 3 off from work. Therefore as 1972 Convention Chairman, I propose the following Convention Schedule:

- June 30, Friday- Night before party
- July 1 Saturday-Convention and start of IJA Juggling Championships.
- July 2 Sunday- Convention and conclusion of Championships.
- July 3 Monday- Convention and Banquet.

If there are no serious objections to this arrangement, I will go ahead with the plans.

Perhaps it's not a good idea to expect the Ringling Bros. Circus to be at it's "Greatest" when playing its last date of the season. We were very disappointed in the appearance of the Blue (I think) Unit at New Haven just before Thanksgiving. The entire performance was slow. Also, it was disappointing that there were no featured juggling acts-only a few walk-around Clown School grads doing one trick each. The best juggling I saw was a 3 ball routine being practiced by a prop man after the show!

I called my dear friends Louise and Homer Stack in California after learning that Homer had spent a stint in the hospital. It amounted to a "routine" operation, and Homer wants all to know that he is just fine and busy as ever.

Hope you won't object to my putting an article about myself on the cover of the Newsletter this month, but I am rather proud of it and it was the best cover subject I have on hand. The "STAFF" is the company newspaper of The Hartford Insurance Group by which I am employed. So much for now-RVD.

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NEW MEMBERS

GEORGE BECK Capriol, Ontario, Canada  
Sponsored by Mitch Schnaer

JOEL FINK 307 6th Ave., New York. N.Y. 10014  
Sponsored by Hovey Burgess

CHARLES GALT 6801 15th Ave. NE. Seattle, Wash. 98115  
Sponsored by Roger Dollarhide

MR. GAY NG 1539 Clay St. Apt. #1, San Francisco, Calif. 94109  
Sponsored by Homer Stack

BRUCE ROTHSCHILD University of California. Dept. of Mathematics  
405 Hilgard Ave., Los Angeles, Calif. 90024  
Sponsored by Ron Graham

REINSTATED MEMBERS

NICK GATTO C/O Central YMCA, 24 W. Franklin St., Baltimore,  
Md. 21201

HENRY VANCELETTE 119 Cottage, Lynn, Mass. 01902

ADDRESS CHANGES

BARRY COLE 619 Pole Line Road #259, Davis, Calif. 95616

BOB GEFER Box 108, Roanoke College, Salem, Va. 24153

ICDR L. BEN McEACHIN Naval Hospital, Pensacola, Fla. 32512

ROSTO Oostdorperweg 29, Wassenaar, Holland, Europe

ADRIAN SULLIVAN C/O Larry Weeks, 456 Brooklyn Ave., Brooklyn,  
N.Y. 11225

\* \* \* \* \*

EDITOR'S NOTE: The attached letter from new member Al Forbes in New Zealand my not look like a professionally typed document, but the content is of such interest, that I wouldn't want to leave a word out, and I felt it unnecessary to spend my time or the IJA's money to have it retyped just to look pretty. Hope you don't mind, Al-I get letters that look worse! RVD

\* \* \* \* \*

63.—BASILICA DE GUADALUPE, D. F.  
BASILICA OF GUADALUPE, MEXICO.



*Hi,  
Taped a "Wanted" to  
show in N.Y. to be aired  
on 11/17. Had a picture  
with Hovey's Judy badge's, also  
caught Mel Ody's Act. Here  
have seen Mike Baum with  
the Ginnotters, also picture  
Larry O'Brien in 1968. Will  
be home in a few days, open  
in London on Jan. 10.  
Regards,  
[Signature]*



*Roger Dollarhide  
50 Hamilton St.  
Apt. B7  
New York  
USA*

## Roger Dollarhide — Juggler

(continued from page 1 )

one arm, down the other, around his back, flip it with one foot, and so on? This is still another style called manipulative juggling. Then, of course, all of these can be further specialized by doing them on a tight wire, unicycle or other apparatus.

A bit of inside information which you might keep in mind the next time you watch a juggler is that when an odd number of items is being juggled, a criss-cross pattern from right to left is employed. If an even number is being manipulated, generally half is juggled with the left hand and half with the right, working independently of each other. (Would this be a case of not letting the right hand know what the left hand is doing?)

### Brief Juggling Career

Roger never actively pursued a full time career as a juggler,

but frequently appeared at fairs, in variety shows and parades, and for various organizations. His closest brush with the big time came when he appeared on Ted Mack's Amateur Hour.

One day, during the Seattle World's Fair, a notice appeared in area newspapers that the Amateur Hour would be holding auditions for talent and taping a few shows at the Fair. Not requiring any encouragement, Roger auditioned. He was called back for a second audition after which he received notification that he had been selected to perform on the show.

There were several rehearsals preceding the big day on which the show was taped. On that day all of the acts had to go through five full performances. The first a rehearsal for the cameras, the second for the music, the third for the lights and the fourth for the stage director. The fifth and final was the real thing, with the

cameras recording the entire program non-stop.

By this time most of the performers were getting tired. To a juggler, each repeat of his performance could be the one in which he misses. Happily Roger gave a perfect performance for the cameras and had the additional distinction of being one of only two performers interviewed on the air by Ted Mack.

We wish we could tie this whole story up with the big blue ribbon, but unfortunately there was a 10-year old acrobatic dancer on the program with Roger who caught the public's fancy and won the prize.

Today Roger juggles primarily for his own pleasure, practicing about an hour a day to keep his skill. His most frequent "appearances" are in Elizabeth Park where the limitless ceiling and wide-open spaces allow him to work at his art without fear of doing any damage to his apartment. Twice a year Roger does travel to Central Park in New York City where many members of the International Jugglers Association gather for an afternoon of juggling.

Roger, who recently married, is now teaching his wife to juggle. Possessing confidence in her potential, he is allowing her to skip the rolled-up socks beginnings and go right to golf balls. Do you suppose she has the same confidence in Roger when it comes to washing and drying their good china?

HARTFORD AREA NEWS

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The Hartford **STAFF** SEPTEMBER 1971

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Publications Division, P. R. & A. Dept. Ext. 4975  
Photography: Roots, Steven Nestler, Hartford;  
Juggler, Roger Dollarhide, Hartford; all others,  
Edward Polanski, Audio Visual Director.

Forest Hill Road  
1 R.D. Henderson  
Auckland,  
New Zealand

20th September, 1971

Dear Roger Dollarhide:

It's sure a small world! I, also, can remember about ten years ago when Tom Howe of Vancouver, B.C. showed me a copy of the I.J.A. Newsletter; at the time I hadn't noticed where in the U.S.A. it was published--anyway, I do now. I'm certainly glad to hear I've influenced your decision to take up what some people would consider a crazy pastime (I was juggling in a park in Vancouver, I was barefoot, it was pouring rain but I was too busy to notice when suddenly a policeman tapped me on the shoulder and asked me if I'd ever been in a mental institution!).

I'm certainly interested in joining the I.J.A. and am enclosing the application form and a check in payment of a year's dues. However, I can't guarantee you'll get much juggling news from me because I'm so busy practising the art myself, or else working as a labourer--just enough to keep the wolf from the door--that I don't get time to notice what the other juggler's are doing. I have never worked professionally as a juggler and probably never will because there are so many things to learn and the art is so fascinating that I just can't be bothered working up an act, traveling all over the place, etc..

I think the New York Juggle-In as mentioned in the March Newsletter is a terrific idea. I have spent a lot of time juggling in the public parks of Auckland but only occasionally met other adult jugglers, although I've given lots of kids tips on the art. I saw the Harlem Globetrotters when they were here several years back; had a juggler working with four balls, also did three balls in one hand, but I don't remember his name.

The "brochure" Bob Geer showed you was part of a juggling course I have written entitled "Dynamic Juggling." When I first became interested in juggling in 1956, I couldn't find anything written on the subject by a real juggler. There were a few books on the circus in general, but they weren't much good because they repeated the same old false clichés about starting when you're very young and implying that you also have to have some special inborn talent to become a great juggler like Rastelli. I agree that it helps to have some natural talent to become a great showman or a great pianist, but with pure juggling all you need is a bit of common sense and lots of practice. When I became keenly interested in the art, I would have given a lot to get my hands on something about juggling with photographs showing what you have to do to get started etc. In "Dynamic Juggling" I have tried to explain basic juggling as I have learned it from my own experience using the simplest possible juggling props--balls. I have sold this course in Canada, U.S.A., and Australia from an ad in Popular Science at a price of \$30 --(\$20 if the buyer sent me a picture of himself juggling five balls)--. If you are interested, I would make this course available to I.J.A. members at a nominal charge of \$5.00 (sent surface mail) or \$6.00 sent by Airmail from New Zealand to anywhere--(this could be stated in a small ad starting in the same issue of the Newsletter in which you run the story about me)--however, that is up to you.

Thanks very much for sending me the one picture of you juggling with 8 rings. I like the way you sign your name, "6 ball shower", and would sure like to see a picture of that! What size balls do you use?

About myself: the enclosed newspaper clipping gives you lots of background material for you to work on without me having to repeat it here and in addition here are some other details you might like to know.

1956, April, living in a cheap rooming house in Vancouver, been unemployed for several months. Landlord believed summer had arrived and closed down heating system. Bought three Lacross balls and was practising with them over the bed to keep warm. After about a month I could keep these three balls going for a few seconds. It was a terrific feeling. Combed the Vancouver public library for books on juggling. Found books on everything else but practically nothing on juggling except a picture of Rastelli, a very general note on juggling in a German Encyclopedia. Became really interested in the possibility of juggling five balls and was practising two hours daily. Tennants complained of noise from bouncing balls and landlord threatened to throw me out so I built a net to juggle in (picture enclosed). The "cage" as I called it consisted of two wooden rings  $6\frac{1}{2}$  feet in diameter with fish netting stretched across them and pulled to the edge of the ring in many places with "rubber-bands" (cut from a car inner tube). The top ring was suspended several inches from the ceiling by three equally spaced wooden posts which reached from floor to ceiling (8'4"). The bottom ring was suspended from the upper ring by 24 equally spaced rubberbands (long strips of the inner tube) so as to hang just above knee-level from the floor. These rubber bands were threaded through loose fitting netting which connected the two hoops. In the center of the bottom hoop was a circular opening with a sock-like extension (net) which fitted around my waist and was held snug with elastic. In the side net I had a pocket to hold the balls. So, to juggle in complete silence and without the necessity to chase balls all over the place, all I had to do was to lift the bottom ring, stick my head through the center hole, and let the ring fall down around me. The rings were made of curved plywood strips laminated together with screws to make several separate sections which in turn were bolted together to form a circle. Probably a much quicker solution to the ring problem would be to make them out of black polythene tubing.

I used the "cage" from 1956 to 1962 and found it extremely useful for learning difficult tricks such as four balls in one hand. I set myself a rigid juggling schedule and between 1956 and 1962 averaged over 6 hours of juggling practice daily. I got by as much as possible without working by simplifying my life to the extreme, eating one meal a day, etc.. I can't get so much practice at the present time since I've become a part-time farmer, having bought a place in the country big enough for a cow or a few goats (make our own butter and cheese from the milk etc.) plus growing our own vegetables. We lived all last year in a tent while I was building a house on the place, not very fancy, cost me less than \$700 for second hand lumber to build with. I don't need the "cage" now as I've learned to pick up the balls with my bare feet (from the grass). I better quit before I run out of words! You have my permission to reprint any of the enclosed glossy photos, and anything from this letter and the enclosed newspaper clipping in writing up your story for the I.J.A. Newsletter. Sorry about the delay in answering you--it took me a while to locate some photos.

Sincerely,

Enclosures:

Photos, Newspaper clipping,  
Dynamic Juggling

P.S.: Any mail sent surface rate from U.S.A. to here takes two or even three months to reach us (depends on very few boats) so would advise airmail if you wish a quick answer as it takes 3 to 5 days in contrast!



PERMANENT ADDRESS: 1429 PAWNEE DRIVE

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA 89109

PHONE 734-2439 (AREA CODE 702)

5742 SW 51st Terrace  
South Miami, Fla. 33155

Dear Doc:

Sept 13, 1971

It certainly was very nice of you to write me and I am sorry that it has taken me so long so reply.

I have now closed an 11 month engagement at the Americana and am catching up on the correspondence.

We were, for along time, waiting to see if the show was going to Las Vegas directly after closing here but the last minute the deal fell through and frankly I am just as happy. I had done a solid 18 months in Europe and then flew here to open the last minute and that is how it has been going for me for the last 8 years...I am very thankful but I am also happy to have a bit of a breather.

Right now I am engaged in jungle warfare around my house here in Miami (the house in Las Vegas is rented and has been since I left there in the spring of '68) As you are also in Florida you know how things grow during the rainy season so I can see still another week just to get all the trees etc tamed then will have to spend about a week on the roof as we have a few problems up there that need attention. After that I shall spend a few weeks painting the house and by that time I shall be ready to look at the props again...I shall start working on them and practicing again. I need a good two months to catch up and then I will be off again and perhaps to Europe...I am now waiting on a deal in Puerto Rico and want to give it some time but if that doesn't come in within the next month or so will start to prepare to return to Europe.

The Show-biz scene in the U.S. for acts of my genre does look rather grim and I can see where I will have to return to Europe if I want to get the kind of bookings I like. Outside of Vegas and a few other places there really isn't that much unless you want to get into the club-date field and right now I don't care for that as it is always a lot of trouble for an act with props and music cues and you never know what kind of situation you are getting into.

Well Doc...that's about it for now...I did appreciate your very kind letter and am wishing you the very best of health.

Sincerely yours,

*Dear Roger: I am writing you  
the article and will drop you  
a further line soon.  
Thought this might be  
something for the News letter "Doc" C.*

MR DAKE WALDEN  
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ARLINGTON, MA 02174



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