

THUNDER TALK
Tom "Thunderhead" Toutz

THE CIRCUS

I just love the Circus. I have loved it since I was a little kid, when Ringling Brothers, Barnum & Bailey came to Oxnard. They unloaded at the train depot and the elephants towed everything out to a big vacant field near the airport. We watched in awe, as the Big Top was set up and everything was being prepared for the big show that night. And what a show it was! Lions, tigers, The Flying Trapeze, the clowns and all the daring acts made up the show. Some things just stick with you forever, and the Circus is one of them for me.

I took my Grandson, who is 7 years old, to Circus Vargas. It was great! As my Grandson watched trapeze artists execute their intricate maneuvers, he was amazed at them having no fear. And that made it worth the whole trip. The Flying Trapeze is the main event at the Circus. They are truly the stars of the show. Even though the Circus is not as big or extravagant, it is still exciting to be there. Gone are the Sideshow and all the ferocious animals that once made up the event. Some say it is for the best, however, I wonder if that is true.

Car races used to have a Sideshow for big events. Joey Chitwood and his daring Stunt Drivers would thrill audiences with their stunts. Motorcycle riders would crash through a burning wall of flame. Motorcycle jumpers and other daring acts of bravery were part of the draw that brought fans out to see the races. Just like the Circus, the Sideshow is no longer a part of the show...Some say it is for the best. I wonder if that is true!

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