

LAS VEGAS SHOWCASE

Bill Willard's VEGASTARS

Top of the news is return of LIZA MINNELLI's December date at the Riviera in concert. Her triumphant playback in June after a long hiatus, was a nostalgia bath for those who remembered a still earlier "return" with JOEL GREY. Both LIZA and JOEL brought the audience to collective feet every show with their patented "Cabaret" finish. LIZA comes in for 10 days playing dinner shows, alternating with BUDDY HACKETT on the midnight shift, during the week but playing two perfs Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights. With her career sizzling -- LIZA has a vidspec and major film on deck plus Easter concert dates -- she chortles, "It was good getting back after a three-year hiatus. There's nothing like one of those live audiences in Las Vegas." Her Riv fling is amidst the resort's 26th anni celebration starting in mid-November running for a month. An estimated 3,500 guests will party down gourmet dinners, dance and watch superstar shows of LIZA, NEIL SEDAKA, JOAN RIVERS, and LORETTA LYNN as the JIMMY DORSEY BAND, fronted by LEE CASTLE, recalls the swing era in several elegant balls. Also planned for the guests from all over the U.S., Canada and Mexico, fashion shows, a mammoth New Orleans - flavored Mardi Gras event and scrumptious gifts. That Mardi Gras, by the way, will feature Dixieland music and creole cuisine and the Riv's ballroom will be appropriately decorated as the N.O.'s French Quarter. Ah, to be a high - roller and a Riv high - roller for a month! . . . Recent Silverbird toppers the 5TH DIMENSION join of blue eyes FRANK SINATRA at the Beverly Hilton Oct. 30 in a gala to benefit St. John's Hospital in the seaside city of Santa Monica. For laughs, FRANK brings along BOB NEWHART and for music LES BROWN'S ORCH and strings led by MURRAY KORDA. At the swank Beverly Hills soiree gala look for FRANK's wife BARBARA, the JIMMY STEWARTS, ED ASNERS, HENRY FONDAS, JACK WRATHERS, IRENE DUNNE and a mess of other high society rounders...

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Film "Cheaters" with \$12,000,000 budget will start shooting late November at Imperial Palace spotting Indonesian - born MARRIANNE MARKS. She'll be seen shortly opposite SEAN CONNERY in RICHARD BOOKS "Wrong Is Right." Action drama "Cheaters" with an all-star cast, is based on real life case histories of a vet chief of security at a Vegas hotel casino with the 'drams scribed and directed by IP's special events chief, JERRY SCHAFER....DAVID BRADLEY is now the Showboat's publicity pandrum. GALE GAKER joins PETER ANTHONY in the Sahara Casbar lounge, alternating with "For The Fun Of It," through Oct. 18 with MARK ANTHONY on tap. La BAKER was a lead warbler in "Hallelujah Hollywood" at MGM Grand. . .Count on THE BINIONS to keep on top o the gambling heap in town. Horse-shoe prez JACK BINION, after \$500,000 aggregate jackpots, will fly the winner to New York and Wall Street investment firm to invest in blue chip stocks or whatever, then on to a tax specialist who'll explain how to get around the IRS by whatever loopholes necessary to keep most of the winnings. ED MILLIGAN takes over g.m. post at Nevada Palace. Onetime g.m. of Holiday Inn Center Strip and the Landmark, ED was chosen "Innkeeper of the Year" for all 2,000 Holiday Inn properties. . .And this SOS from Caesars Palace' public relations agency, SOLTERS/SOSKIN/FRIEDMAN -- regarding the Grand Prix Formula One race Oct. 17 with PAUL NEWMAN chairman "Word is out there is nary a ticket or a room available at Caesars," cries the release. "Taint so. Caesars Palace is, of course, delighted that everyone thinks that seats for the race and rooms in Las Vegas are gone as soon as they announce an event, build a 2.2 - mile track and construct a 45,000 grandstandviewing area. . . There are still seats, rooms, tickets available. . ." Understand Caesars has a lower priced packet for those who can't stay for all the events or don't wish to put out big bux to see those chuggers blast around the raceway.

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The low robbery rate among the 33,000 tourists daily is somewhat surprising, says Sgt. TOM MAURINE of Metro robbery detail, considering they are excellent targets for thieves. Stats show tourists are victims in only one out of three robberies reported here. MAURINE

admits visitors usually carry substantial amounts of cash or travelers' checks, but when given the old stick - up don't often stay around to help police identify the robbers. "They are often upset and even though they had planned to stay several days more, they might just go home right after the robbery meaning we have to conduct most of our investigation by long distance" . . . Another headache for the city is the enormous hooker invasion. The gals are getting very aggressive on the Strip, on Glitter Gulch and even the sidestreets. Clark County commissioner THALIA DONDERO'S recent meeting was another in the many trying to get a handle on the problem. The only idea coming out of the discussion was police foot patrols 24 hours, but the price tag would have to be absorbed by the hotels and Las Vegas Convention & Visitors Authority. But the Authority has a big stake in keeping the area clean for conventioners. "Convention delegates are reluctant to bring their families to this atmosphere," moaned BILL HAMMOND, assistant exec director of LVCVA.

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Broadway came to Vegas this week with BOB FOSSE'S "Dancin'" in Aladdin Theatre for the Performing Arts Tuesday for a week, "Flower Drum Song" with PAT SUZUKI at Union Plaza for three months and "Best Little Whorehouse in Texas" at Desert Inn another bow, through Dec. 19. On Wednesday The Acting Company from the John F. Kennedy Center in DeeCee began its series of perfs and workshops at UNLV with Samuel Beckett's "Waiting for Godot." Bizzy JOAN RIVERS fills her timeslots on "Tonight Show" as guest host Monday through Wednesday, before whisking back to Vegas for a two frame coheadliner with TONY ORLANDO teeing Thursday at the Riviera.

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MAC BELIEVES IN MUSIC

Mac Davis, singer, songwriter and contemporary poet returned to the MGM Grand Hotel's Celebrity Room.

Born in Lubbock, Texas, Mac is unique in today's galaxy of performers. His hometown personality and versatile style has made him one of the most popular artists to appear in the Celebrity Room.

Mac Davis the contemporary music man and modern day poet, will perform through Oct. 7th.

Lonnie Shorr, the "Thinking Man's Comedian," will be Mac Davis' special guest.