

LAS VEGAS

SHOWCAST

Bill Willard's VEGASTARS

SUPER SUNDAY this coming Sunday finds volunteers participating in United Jewish Appeal's nationwide call for funds in support of vital humanitarian services to the ill, handicapped, aged and disadvantaged youth. It's an international drive with more than 200 volunteers and 20 local Jewish orgs making phone calls from the Dunes North Tower HQ.... FLORENCE LARUE is the star of 5TH DIMENSION and she and cohorts will be spotted in the Tropicana's Fountain Theatre opening the 28th through Feb. 24. TIA ZADORA, who'll be putting more time before cameras than on the Riviera stage this year taped a new album which includes the theme from her first pic, "Butterfly," clefted by CAROL CONNERS & ENNIO MORRICONE. "Butterfly" will be screened early this year at the Berlin and Manila fests. Big Brothers & Big Sisters of Southern Nevada toss a wine tasting & auction Saturday in convention center of Caesars Palace, a fundraiser for the cause... JACKIE BASKOW, who places actors in films shooting and around Las Vegas, married STU GRANT, handsome Pro Arts poster model, Sunday and a mob gathered to congrat the couple in LIBERACE'S rehearsal salon on East Tropicano Stardust now has CARLTON & CO. and EARL MANOFF'S FANTASY FACTORY to compliment juggler KRIS KREMO and ice skating specialists ROBBIE LALONDE & NICK POWERS in 82 "I do" show. It was a localite, VIRGINIA COMPRATT, who won the classy '57 Chevy recently in the Sahara's "Let the Good Times Roll" anni celebration. Mentioning autos, JIM SANTEE, who for 37 years restored some 2000 cars for his own business is now director of Imperial Palace auto collection. His first restoration, by the way, was a '27 Chevy. CYNDY HURT, a beauty from Chicago and Churchill Records country star, was in town as hostess in the Akai booth during the Winter Consumer Electronics Show, her third year repping that company. While in town she immediately took her new single "Don't Come Knockin'" to KRAM-AM & FM. CINDY is another upcomer in the JIM HALSEY Co. stable which also has ROY CLARK, MEL HILLOTSON, TAMMY WYNETTE et al.

★★★★★

Casio the calculator, timepiece and musical instrument firm whose toys and practical wonders are based on high-tech chips, pulled off first exposures to products at the Consumer Electronics Show with a luncheon at the Dunes attended by writers from most of the top audio & video publications last Wednesday. One of the musical keyboards demonstrated was an electronic computerized player piano, but instead of piano rolls, the player uses a scanner like the ones in supermarkets with notes con-

verted into bar codes, storing up to 345 melody notes and up to 200 accompaniment chords. CES senior veep JACK WAYMAN complimented the ingeniousness of the continually expanding international firm with a terribly play on Shakespeare. "Julius Caesar was wrong," he deadpanned. "Casio does not have a lean and hungry look". To accommodate the 64,000 CESers over the weekend all hotel motel facilities were bursting at the seams. MGM Grand had opened its new 760-room tower making 2836 rooms and the two Hiltons alone provided over 4000 cubicles for starters. Strange to see MGM Grand Hotels Inc. reporting earnings down as of quarter ending Nov. 30 after years of uppish figures but prez AL BENEDECI predicted economic success through '84 at the recent annual stockholders meeting. And the seminar "Fires: Prevention & Postscript" with noted guest lecturers from all over the U.S. was held Monday and Tuesday at -- where else but the Grand?

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BOBBY VINTON taped a pilot for syndie backed by an all-girl band and opened with the femmes Thursday at the Grand. JOAN

RIVERS all-girl comedienne with VINTON, will rest a week before joining NEIL SEDAKA at the Riviera Jan. 28... At the Riv where LIBERACE opened last Thursday through the 27th, LEE popped for a new wardrobe of dazzling duds designed by Michael Travis with furs by ANNA NATEECE to sashay withing the penthouse set blueprinted for him by HENRY LICKEL, who also dreamed up MERV GRIFFIN'S Riv sets... TOM JONES took on a Caesars Palace fortnight Thursday with non-politician GEORGE WALLACE... The good news at the Desert Inn is that the dollies and all the jollies returned Tuesday for another long run of "Best Little Whorehouse in Texas" through April 4.

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SAM BOYD will be Distinguished Citizen of the Year with award presented at Union Plaza on the 28th by National Conference of Christians & Jews... TONY BENNETT stars in a PBS-TV trilogy spec with COLENT BASIE for the March fundraiser Marathon, the first section taped in November. Second and third parts were taped last week at Boston's Copley Plaza where he received an honorary doctorate of music in 1974.

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