

LAS VEGAS SHOWCASE

Bill Willard's VEGASTARS

Las Vegas ----- The mercenaries and arms merchants gathered in Las Vegas at the Convention Center last Thursday through Sunday some 10,000 buyers of bullets and armament. The international arms bazaar flew under the doublespeak banner of "Defense '83" with 350 exhibits from 180 companies and some 48 workshops and seminars described in the brochure "on the latest in defense technology, tactical and strategic doctrine, conflict and geographical studies." Good afternoon Mr. Orwell....Very few oldtimers left in Vegas to remember when BUSTER CRABBE, "Tarzan the Fearless" and "King of the Serials" brought his watery epic to the Strip at the Last Frontier. Booked by entertainment director MAXINE LEWIS, who now resides in Palm Springs, the show was titled "Water Follies of '44" and

sported a bevy of Hollywood starlets diving, splashing ensemble trix and cavorting with the clowns and, of course, CLARENCE LINDEN CRABBE himself, doing the sprints in the pool alongside Highway 91, the two-lane route to LA....LOLA FALANA and HELEN REDDY co-hosted the 6th annual Rhythm & Blues Awards Show Tuesday at Imperial Palace, taped for CATV... Dunes snatched PAT CRUZEN just as he was starting work as Summa Corp.'s new chief operations officer at the Sands.

★★★★★

The eyes and ears of Strip showshoppers are trained on Caesars Palace this week with DAVID MERRICK's Tony-Award-winning tuner "42nd Street" getting into high gear Friday after a couple of preview perfs Wednesday and Thursday. Principals are MILLICENT MARTIN as Dorothy Brock; RON HOLGATE as director Julian Marsh; NANCY SINCLAIR as Peggy Sawyer and JIM WALTON in the Billy Lawlor role. Direction is by LUCIA VICTOR recreating the late GOWER CHAMPION's original concepts and staging, with Champion choreo extended by KARIN BAKER & RANDY SKINNER. Music &

lyrics, of course, are by HARRY WARREN and AL DUBIN to the MICHAEL STEWART & MARK BRANBLE book.


★★★★★

PAUL ANKA has ducked back into the Aladdin for a couple of weeks... "Legends in Concert," limning BUDDY HOLLY, MARILYN MONROE, BOBBY DARIN, JANIS JOPLIN and ELVIS PRESLEY, becomes a multimedia event at Imperial Palace....A lavish LIBERACE gala May 21 at LIBERACE's Tivoli Gardens Restaurant will benefit the Las Vegas Chamber Music Society, with guests of honor LIBERACE and LVCMS musical director VIRKO BAILEY. Opening of LIBERACE's dinery is being coordinated by FRED FAVORITE, manager of LIBERACE's Design Center; EILEEN HAYES, LVCMS managing director and COLLEEN SCHROEDER, LVCMS board member....New nitery, JOE PETERSON's J-R's Playbill opened last Friday off-Strip on Paradise Road with MICHAEL DARRIN's "Hot & Sassy" revue and preview of ladies-only "What Do You Say To A Naked Waiter"....LEW SALL's Lafs Unlimited, formerly the Comedy Workshop at the Tropicana and Maxim hotels, goes with the yocks every Wednesday at Deli 300, alternating with JODY'S FIVE....TONY BENNETT, toplining the Fairmont in Dallas through May 10 fills offstage-time reminiscing with the hotel's entertainment poobah, TONY ZOPFI, who was publicity director of the Riviera when BENNETT played there in the halcyon days....Signed for DON RICKLES' June 9-15 Sahara Shift is DEBBIE REYNOLDS.

★★★★★

The Oscar-winning, but banned in Washington, "If You Love This Planet," drew quite a crowd last Thursday night at Flamingo Library. Pic was free, sponsored by Nevadans for a Bilateral Nuclear Weapons Freeze...One gimmick

**PAULA KELLY
HAROLD NICHOLAS
FREDA PAYNE**




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GEORGE BURNS RETURNS TO SAHARA IN MAY


Sahara Las Vegas Hotel and Casino President Paul W. Lowden announced that comedian George Burns will return to the Sahara's Congo Showroom for a special Memorial Day weekend engagement May 27 - 30.

Burns played to sellout crowds at the Sahara in February during a five-day engagement celebrating his 80th anniversary year in show business. At that time, Lowden and the Sahara hosted a gala anniversary party for the 87-year-old performer that received nationwide media attention.

Burns, who glibly refers to himself now as a country singer, sang about a dozen songs during his hour-long sets at the Sahara during that engagement as well as performing the stand-up comedy that received him the "King of Comedy" title earlier this year.

"We are delighted that Mr. Burns has agreed to a return engagement at the Sahara," Lowden said in announcing the new dates. "He has had many career triumphs on the Congo Showroom stage, including his February engagement which was the show business event of the year in Las Vegas."

A RENAISSANCE



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HOTEL/CASINO