

## 2009: Ringling Videotaped Beating Elephants

### Undercover Investigation Reveals Ringling Lies About Elephant Beatings

Although Ringling tells the public they treat the animals humanely, this year a PETA investigator secretly videotaped Ringling elephant handlers with the “Zing Zang Zoom” show repeatedly beating and whipping elephants in the face. Virtually every handler was abusively using whips and bullhooks, weapons that resemble fireplace pokers, on the elephants. View the video at [www.CIRCUSES.com](http://www.CIRCUSES.com)



Bullhook

### Ringling “Animal Superintendent” Caught Beating Elephants

In Ringling’s 2009 program guide, **Alex Vargas**, Ringling’s “Animal Superintendent and Head Trainer,” says that when the elephants hear the music, the handlers have to practically hold them back from going on stage. However, the truth revealed by the undercover video shows the handlers, including **Vargas**, hitting, beating and whipping the elephants in the face just before going on stage.



Alex Vargas

### Ringling Hides Animal Abuse



Angelica and Sara chained in Oakland, 2004

In 2004, after a handler was caught on video in Oakland, CA stabbing and jabbing Angelica, a chained 7-year-old elephant, with a bullhook, Ringling’s Vet Tech Deb Fahrenbruck wrote an email to owner Ken Feld to notify him

that she had suggested to **Alex Vargas**, not to stop the abuse, but to devise a way to hide the abuse from activists’ cameras by putting up a “tent wall” – proving that Ringling has no problem abusing animals, they just don’t want to be caught. Fahrenbruck also told Feld about an elephant who was “**dripping blood all over the arena floor from being hooked**” and that Ringling’s “Elephant Dept. Head” Troy Metzler was repeatedly hitting young Angelica with a bullhook and shocking her with an electric prod.

**The Circus Is Not Fun For Animals**

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**The Circus Is Not Fun For Animals**

## Ringling Elephant Abuse Trial Reveals Cruel Details About Breeding Facility

Ringling's so-called "Center for Elephant Conservation" (CEC) is just a front for supplying the circus with elephants. In 2009, **RINGLING ADMITTED** in federal court that:

- Elephants, at the CEC, are chained a minimum of 16 to 22 hours per day;
- All baby elephants are torn away from their mothers at 2-years of age or younger, while they are still nursing, for one reason – to be trained for use in the circus;
- Training baby elephants involves breaking their spirit by taking them from their mothers, tying up their legs for long periods of time, isolating them from other elephants and hitting them with bullhooks;
- One 2-year-old baby elephant, Aria, was chained nonstop for four months and only let off chains for 40 minutes a day to be trained;
- Gary Jacobson, director of the CEC, lied to USDA investigators, in 2007, about the death of 8-month-old baby elephant Riccardo – Jacobson told the USDA that Riccardo was injured while "playing," when in fact Jacobson had tied a rope around Riccardo's trunk and was using a bullhook to forcibly "train" Riccardo to sit on a pedestal and perform circus tricks when he fell off the pedestal, broke both hind legs and had to be euthanized;
- Videotaping of the baby elephants being trained is forbidden because in the modern world the training is difficult to defend;
- Ringling owner, Ken Feld, has seen all the elephant handlers strike the elephants with bullhooks.

Although female elephants stay with their mothers for life and males leave at about 13 years of age, Ringling uses ropes and chains to forcibly separate nursing baby elephants from their mothers. This is very sad and painful for both mother and baby. For the elephants, the circus is not family entertainment it is a family tragedy.

### Attending Ringling Supports Animal Abuse

Every dollar you spend at Ringling Bros. Circus is a dollar that says, "I support beating elephants." Until **you** stop attending the circus Ringling will continue to beat, chain, cage and force animals to perform unnatural and painful acts. If you care about animals please spend your entertainment dollars elsewhere.



*Ringling's breeding facility – unnatural & barren*

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