



NEWS OF ANIMALS

Elephant Birth Trumpets Conservation History

(NAPSA)—On December 5, 2003, at 9:25 a.m., the birth of Riccardo, a 232-pound newborn, male, Asian elephant was good news for elephant lovers everywhere and people dedicated to helping conserve this magnificent species.

The birth was also historic news for the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Center for Elephant Conservation (CEC), marking a monumental first for the scientific research and breeding facility.

Riccardo is the first offspring from two elephants born into the care of Ringling Bros., making him the first second-generation calf at the Center, which opened in 1995 in Central Florida.

“While each Asian elephant birth is a cause for celebration, we are particularly thrilled with Riccardo’s arrival,” stated Kenneth Feld, CEO and Chairman of Feld Entertainment, Inc. “The second-generation birth represents unprecedented success in the strides toward conservation of the species, creating a more diverse gene pool and additional opportunities to share our work and the knowledge gained at the CEC worldwide. We are living up to our credo, ‘Endangered Species? Not if we can help it.’”

Since the 1990s, more than a third of the viable Asian elephants born in North America were born into the care of Ringling Bros.



Baby Riccardo, just moments after making his historic arrival at the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Center for Elephant Conservation (CEC).

Currently, fewer than 40,000 Asian elephants are left in the world, so each new calf takes the Asian elephant one step further from extinction.

The CEC was founded by Feld Entertainment, the parent company of Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey, to keep Asian elephants alive for future generations.

Built in 1995, the 200-acre state-of-the-art facility was designed for the reproduction, research and retirement of the Asian elephant.

Knowledge gained there is shared throughout the world, especially throughout North America and Southeast Asia.

For more information about the CEC, visit the Web site at www.elephantcenter.com.