## SPECIAL EVENTS

## Hanneford cat tamer gets excited taming wild ones

Big cats and little cats are a lot dike - "they could care less about me," said animal trainer Lance Rames who is coming to the Palace of Auburn Hills this weekend with the Royal Han-

neford Circus. Ramos, 29, follows in the foot-Ramos, 29, follows in the footsteps of his father, Manuel Ramos, and represents the sixth generation in his family of circus artists. His family is known as "The Great Ramos Family of Mexico," but Lance was born and raised in the United States.

He took over his uncle's cat act when he was 16, but lions and tigers weren't exciting enough, so Lance added a few more big

'Rent' offers \$20 tickets

Royal Hanneford Circus When: Eight performances, Thursday-Sunday, April 9-12. Per-formances 7:30 p.m. Thursday, 11 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. Friday, 10:30 a.m., 3 p.m., and 7 p.m. Saturdoy; 1 p.m. and 6 p.m. Sunday, Where: The Palace of Auburn Hills, 2 Championship Dr.,

Where: The Palace of Auburn Hills, 2 Championship Br., Auburn Hills.
Tickets All scats opening night \$4. Tickets for Friday maines are \$5. Children 12 and under, and seniors 65 and over will receive \$2 off \$12 and \$8 tickets for all shows except the April 9 performance and 11 a.m. April 10 performance. Call (248) 645-6666. Groups of 15 or more, can call (248) 377-0100.

white tigers and a Tabby tiger.

"They all have different personalities," said Ramos. They're natural enemies in the jungle and would kill each other if left

mutual enemies in the jungle and would kill each other if left and we in the ring."
"It's high, it's exciting," said Ramos explaining why hee chosen this dangerous profession. I want to see if I can control and present these animals and come out in one pies."
He's had his reputy of big cats together since February. So far, "it's been smooth sailing," he said. They had one big fight. You can't read their minds. Everything is challenging. In the beginning of our act we day not they can where they ait up. They're about a foot apart from each other, and it's pretty tense."
While he's had plenty of close calls, Ramos said he's never been

hurt by his cats. When they're not performing with the circus, Ramos runs them through the act once a day. He works with them one by one to teach them tricks, and gradually adds other cats. "They snarl and growl at each other," he said. "It gets a little rough."

Ramos tours with the circus for nine months, and is off December, January and February Home is Riverview, Fla.

Besides the cats, Ramos also trains elephants and horse. He's an accomplished acrobat, bare-back rider and teeterboard artist.

back rider and teeterboard artist.
With the big cats he has to always be on his toes. The cats don't feel remorse or love. I can pet them, and a couple of minutes later they'll try to bite me." Elephante are different.
"Once they get to know you, you're fine," he said. Elephante are dari. Elephante are dari. Elephante are about the person who takes care

of them, and they're excited to see me. Elephants go through their routine fine."

It's the applause that makes this job gratifying. "It makes you smile when someone says you did a great job. It keeps me going."

To people who say it's cruel to train animals for the circus, Ramos says 'animals in captivity live longer and are healthier. They don't have to worry about their next meal, they're beautiful animals and in good shape."

Showcasing animals in the circus "shows the public wild animals and what ability the animals has, said Ramos. How agile they are and how you can teach them. People think we use them to make money. We live with them 24 hours a day. They're well cared for."

Married and the father of a boy who's 2, and daughter, 4 months, Ramos said he would like one of them to follow in his

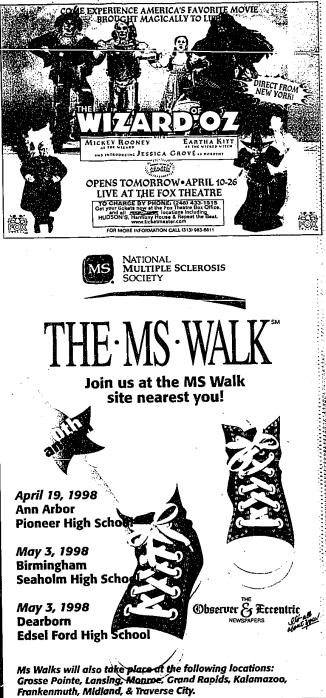
footsteps, but you never can tell.

He's looking forward to performing at the Palace. "Come out
and see it," he said. "You've probably never seen an act with so
many cats."

This year, the Royal Han-neford Circus presents a tribute to the Old West in a circus rodeo featuring Turvey's Trick Riding and Roping and dozens of per-formers from around the globe.

Mark Karoly, the "King of Comedy," and The Karoly Riders will celebrate 300 years of cquestrian excellence. Dania Kaseeva. The Queen of the Hulu Hoops, returns with her husband, David The Queen of the Hulu Hoops, returns with her husband, David Mans, the singing ringmaster, to present their astonishing magic, Miss Kimberly Smith, the youngest woman ever to be shot out of a canon, follows in her father's footsteps, Guinness Book, of World Records holder David Smith.





Call Z48/350-00Z0, ext. 216 for dates and specific site information.