

El Dorado County Fairgoers Enjoy Live Shark Encounter

Working with lions, tigers and elephants in the circus was good for Holland native Philip Peters, flying through the air as a human cannonball or doing acrobatics on the trapeze was equally exciting...for a while. After mastering those circus acts, Peters wanted a different kind of excitement and danger. So he chose a water act.

And he threw in some live sharks for kicks.

“When I was doing the trapeze and cannonball acts, I always thought it would be great to do the acts over a tank of sharks,” Peters explained “and then land in the tank as the finale. The owner thought it was a good idea, so I started the research,” he said.

The challenge at first was what type of sharks to get. “There’s over 350 types of sharks,” he explained, “so you have to know what type would be best. We weren’t looking for a blood and guts show—at least we were hoping it wouldn’t be” he laughed. “We really wanted to entertain people and provide education about sharks and their lives.”

Said Peters, “At first, I didn’t know too much about sharks and was bitten a few times. After a while I realized that I had cut fish for them earlier and the scent was still on my hands, which is why they attacked.”

But don’t expect to see trained sharks. “You can’t train a shark. They can get used to you, but that’s about it. We infuse a lot of humor and people don’t expect shark shows with humor,” he stated.

“Well, the sharks aren’t funny, but we are.”

Live Shark Encounter - three shows daily at the El Dorado County Fair, June 18-21 at the El Dorado Fairgrounds. For show times, see www.eldoradocountyfair.org.

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