

LIVING FOR KICKS

WELL HELLO, FOLLIES! The veteran troupers add a little spice to the entertainment.

VAUDEVILLE LIVES! A troupe of 24 amazing senior citizens perform 10 grueling 3½-hour variety shows a week — and their top act is a woman over 80 doing cartwheels.

The veteran entertainers get thunderous applause each night at the Palm Springs Follies in California and they say performing truly is the fountain of youth. "Age means nothing unless you let it," Follies owner Riff Markowitz told *The ENQUIRER*.

"This show is about the miracle of people having a second chance to live a full and abundant life.

"It's performed by folks who've seen most of the 20th century go by and are still able to sing, dance and perform strenuous physical routines.

"Once you've seen 82-year-old Beverly Allen cartwheeling across the stage, you'll know we've tapped into a forgotten resource in our culture."

For nine years, the group has gathered the talented old-timers to resurrect the vaudeville routines that charmed America during the first half of this century.

And they're not just duplicating the old acts — most are veterans of the originals on Broadway and vaudeville stages.

Every show is packed — and they sell 180,000 tickets a season.

The Follies features older guest stars such as



THIS BUD'S FOR YOU: Bud Mercer, 86, (left) — the Follies' oldest performer — steps out with "young" Noel Parenti, 61.

Donald O'Connor, Frankie Lane and Anna Marie Alberghetti, supported by a cast of versatile players.

Cartwheeling Beverly Allen — who once danced

SHOW-STOPPING SENIORS FIND FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH — ON A STAGE

The star still does cartwheels — at age 82!

with the Tommy Dorsey band — told *The ENQUIRER*: "I really missed the stage after I retired and when I got the opportunity to do it again at the Follies, I literally jumped at the chance."

Phyllis Sherwood, 65, has been dancing and performing since age 6. "I don't think of myself as old," she said. "We see ourselves the way we were at 20.

"We carry on, laugh and play jokes on each other. If I do have aches and pains, they are all forgotten when I perform.

"This is the greatest fountain of youth ever!"

The Mercer Brothers,



Bud and Jim, began their stage careers in 1929, the year the stock market crashed.

At 86, Bud, the show's



CARTWHEEL QUEEN Beverly Allen, 82, (above) struts her stuff between flips while Phyllis Sherwood, 65, (left) shows she's still got what it takes.

oldest performer, still dances and plays the banjo with the energy of someone 50 years younger.

"Sure we get tired," says Bud, "but we bounce back because we love what we do. Who wants to just sit around and watch TV?"

Adds Jim, "I love this show and I love the audiences. Who could ask for more?" — **WAYNE GROVER**