



PHOTOS BY CRYSTAL CHATHAM THE DESERT SUN

Dorothy Dale Kloss (left) is hugged by Palm Springs Mayor Steve Pougnet (center) on stage Thursday during the third act of The Fabulous Palm Springs Follies as Follies co-founder and impresario Riff Markowitz displays a city proclamation declaring the day to be Dorothy Dale Kloss Day.

Like a fine wine

The Follies' Dorothy Kloss receives a proclamation

Staff reports

Dorothy Kloss — the world's oldest showgirl, according to the 2009 Guinness Book of World Records — enjoyed a special moment in the limelight Thursday afternoon at The Fabulous Palm Springs Follies.

Palm Springs Mayor Steve Pougnet presented a proclamation to her declaring Jan. 15 Dorothy Dale Kloss Day.

Kloss, 85, has been performing with the Follies for 14 years. Born in 1923, she began dancing at age 3 in Chicago. As a girl — somewhere between the ages of 10 and 13, she said — she taught an even-younger Bob Fosse how to tap dance. Fosse went on to become a famous choreographer.

Kloss was catapulted to stardom with her own show at the Empire Room in Palmer House Hotel. She went on to perform across the country. Please see KLOSS, B7



Dancer Dorothy Dale Kloss finishes her makeup backstage before the 1:30 p.m. matinee show of The Fabulous Palm Springs Follies on Thursday. Kloss, who is 85 and has been an entertainer most of her life, says her makeup takes about 20 minutes. "I'm the last one in and the first one out," she said of backstage preparations.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE FABULOUS PALM SPRINGS FOLLIES

Dancer Dorothy Dale Kloss is photographed at age 10.

KLOSS: Hats off to oldest showgirl

Continued from B1

with personalities such as Liberace, Mel Tormé, Howard Keel, Kay Starr and Frankie Laine.

"I can't believe it," Kloss told the mayor and Follies impresario Riff Markowitz during the presentation at the beginning of the third act. "I'm just thrilled."

"Dorothy Kloss is an inspiration," Pougnet told the audience. "Her example and outlook on life is a true testament to the fact that getting older just means getting better."

Audience members were impressed, too.

Enid Barron, 62, of Toronto said that when Kloss came down the steps, she thought Kloss was one of younger members of the troupe. "Then she turned out to be the oldest. She's really amazing."

"It's fantastic," said Marilyn Cameron, 76, of Roseville. "It's pretty amazing that she can do that. She has to work hard at it."

Bill Gardner of Chicago added, "I'm 88 and you should see me in a bathing suit."



CRYSTAL CHATHAM THE DESERT SUN

Dorothy Dale Kloss performs with the ensemble during the performance of "(Get Your Kicks On) Route 66" at The Fabulous Palm Springs Follies on Thursday.



Showgirl Dorothy Dale Kloss steps to the front of the stage to introduce herself to the audience at the end of the first act during The Fabulous Palm Springs Follies on Thursday. At 85, Kloss is the oldest living performing showgirl as listed in the 2009 Guinness Book of World Records.



CRYSTAL CHATHAM THE DESERT SUN

Dorothy Dale Kloss jokes with fellow cast members Marcia Harp and Joni Naber backstage minutes before taking the stage at The Fabulous Palm Springs Follies on Thursday.



Dancer Dorothy Dale Kloss tap dances a solo number (left) during The Fabulous Palm Springs Follies on Thursday. Kloss performed tap numbers on television as a hostess and dance instructress for Chicago station WBKB in 1946.

CRYSTAL CHATHAM THE DESERT SUN