

WRITTEN PUBLIC COMMENTS RECEIVED

PRIOR TO THE

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' SESSION

ON

Thursday, February 26, 2026

AT

10:00 A.M.

Questions, concerns or comments about these items can be directed
to staff or the Commissioners by contacting the Commissioners' office at

(503) 434-7501

OR

BOCINFO@yamhillcounty.gov

From: [Gabe Buckley](#)
To: [BOC Info](#); [Gary Wertz](#)
Subject: On behalf of PETA, regarding performances including Viola and other wild animals
Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2026 3:43:01 PM

CAUTION: External Sender. Use caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

To Yamhill County Commissioners Johnston, Starrett, and King, as well as Fair Manager Gary Wertz:

I'm writing on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) regarding upcoming performances by Jordan World Circus and other traveling wild animal acts hosted at your venue. Viola, an elephant currently on tour with Jordan World, is elderly and has been used in various circuses since she was captured from the wild as a baby over five decades ago. **Viola has apparent leg stiffness and lameness that have persisted for years, conditions likely caused by decades of confinement and chaining. Jordan World continues to force Viola to perform and carry riders on her back.**

In 2025, Viola appeared in nearly 200 shows produced by Jordan World and other circuses across 16 states. For the few months of the year when she is not on the road, she is held at Carson & Barnes Circus's compound in Oklahoma, where elephants are warehoused and used in high-dollar public encounters and private tours. It's at this facility where Carson & Barnes' "animal care" director was [caught on video](#) violently attacking elephants with electric prods and sharp, steel-tipped bullhooks as he instructed trainers to sink and twist the bullhooks into the animals' flesh until they screamed in pain. The footage, captured nearly three decades ago, documented business as usual in the circus industry. Viola is seen repetitively swaying, an abnormal behavior that can indicate severe psychological distress.

More recent footage shows that Viola continues to display this swaying behavior, meaning she has likely experienced decades of psychological stress. A [2022 investigation](#) revealed that Viola and another elephant on tour with Jordan World, Isa, suffered from chronically swollen feet, toenail problems, and signs of arthritis and other conditions. **Painful foot and joint problems are among the leading reasons why captive elephants are euthanized, but Isa and Viola are still forced to perform and give rides.**

Under these conditions, it is no surprise that Viola has attempted to flee circuses at least four times, starting in the 1970s and most recently in 2024. While on tour with Jordan World in Montana, Viola escaped her handlers, causing property damage to the venue and panic as she ran through a busy downtown and residential area. In 2014, she

escaped from a Shrine circus in Missouri, and in 2010, she escaped from a circus in Virginia. In both instances, she sustained injuries before her recapture. Many people have been [injured or even killed by elephants](#), and given Viola's history of escapes and injuries, the risk of another incident is high. **By hosting elephant acts, your venue is supporting the continued exploitation of Viola and is putting the public at risk.**

It is never too late to make the compassionate choice to refuse hosting acts that exploit animals like Viola. **May I [please hear](#) that you will enact a policy against wild animal acts and protect animals like Viola from a lifetime of abusive training and forced performances?**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gabe Buckley', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Gabe Buckley (he/him)

Captive Wildlife Advocacy Specialist

Captive Animal Law Enforcement | PETA Foundation

(702) 970-7382