

How many fingers?



Larry Lorry was performing his celebrated one-man show on the history of plankton at the Flederer Family Theater last June when the accident occurred. A cable that anchored the big overhead spotlight to the flies suddenly snapped. The light broke free from its mooring and plummeted sixty feet to the stage floor below, right where Larry was standing. He must've sensed it, because at the last second he jumped aside. As a result, he took only a glancing blow to the head. Still, the heavy light knocked him to the floor, where he lay motionless for five minutes till the Flederer Family doctor arrived. He uncorked a vial of smelling salts and waved it under Larry's nose. The actor coughed once, shook his head, and tried to sit up. But the doctor held him down. "You've had a rather bad fall, old man," he said. "Before you get up, let's be sure you don't have a concussion. Now, then – look at my hand. How many fingers am I holding up?" Larry's head *was* spinning, but he did his best to focus his eyes in front of him. "Only one," he said, "however, you're holding up *six* hands." At any other venue, such an answer would've called for the MRI scanner. However, the Flederer Family Theater – like its sister Circus – was populated by some of the oddest performers anywhere. Case in point was the house doctor, a.k.a. Siegfried, the Six-Handed Surgeon, who could "administer the anesthesia, perform the brain surgery, fill out the insurance forms and hose down the operating room, all at the same time!" Ergo, Larry was given a clean bill of health. Within minutes, he was back on his feet, spellbinding the audience with even more fascinating planktoniana.