



Courtesy photo/Local History Center, Canon City Public Library
Bird Millman was both dainty and daring on the tight wire during early 1900s circus shows

See it live

WHAT: ‘Bird Millman,’ an original musical by August Mergleman.

WHEN: Performances are at 7 p.m. April 11, 12 and 13; and 2 p.m. April 13 and 14.

WHERE: Washington Elementary School, Ninth and College, Canon City

COST: \$6 for adults or \$5 for seniors, students and Fremont Civic Theatre members.

TICKETS: Advance tickets are on sale at the Book Corral and Safeway in Canon City or the Fox Den of Antiquity in Florence. Out-of-town tickets can be ordered by calling Mergleman at 269-3108.



Chieftain photo/Tracy Harmon

The musical’s Millman Trio features (from left) Teri Stultz, Justin Davis and Kyle Kahnke as the young Bird Millman.



Courtesy photo/Local History Center, Canon City Public Library
The Millman Trio featured a young Bird (right) and her parents, Jennie and Dyke Millman.



Courtesy photo/Local History Center, Canon City Public Library
Bird drew adoring crowds of fans wherever she performed.

HEROIN

High-wire

‘Bird Millman’ play portrays life of amazing ‘wire walker’

By TRACY HARMON
The Pueblo Chieftain

CANON CITY — The unparalleled life of Bird Millman — from her feats as the foremost female wire

walker to her sensational marriage to a millionaire and premature death as a penniless cancer victim — takes center stage when the Fremont Civic Theatre presents an original musical named for Canon City’s most famous resident.

Bird was born Jennadean Engleman on Oct. 20, 1890, to Dyke and Jennie Engleman, who ran a general store in Canon City and performed in small circus venues. The family lived on North Third Street, where, according to an article in “The Post Phone,” Bird “strung first a rope, then a wire between fence posts and to the goggle-eyed amazement of playmates, began to practice the art that brought her fame and fortune in later years.”

Armed with a new last name, the family, billed as the “Millman Trio,” started performing as a threesome when Bird was 6½ years old. Bird initially performed stunts with a pony, but was also



Courtesy photo/Local History Center, Canon City Public Library

Bird was 10 when she first performed a solo act, following her father’s 40-foot fall from a wire.



Chieftain

Cheri Hinz as Bird Millman and August Mergleman as Joseph O’Day, are the lead characters in the musical w Mergleman.

to the high-wire circuit. Millman’s “charming personality” endeared her to circuses, vaudeville and the Ziegfeld Follies audiences in the United States and Europe, according to historical information supplied by the Canon City Public Library’s local history center. A Grand Refined Vaudeville

flyer billed Bird upon the tight w daring, dauntless review claimed not only pretty, I personality and that captures eve skill on the wire Please see Bird,

