

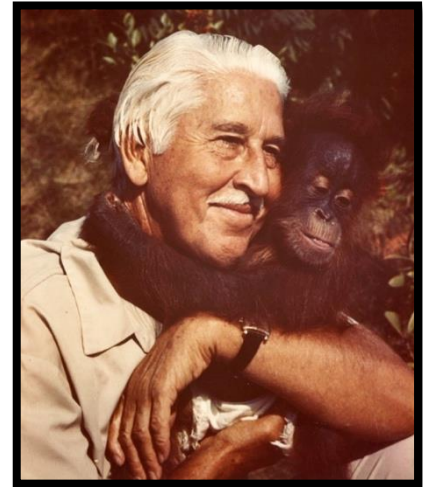
Omaha

May 8, 2022

Omaha, Nebraska

If I have a travel bug, these two share much of the blame.

Every Sunday afternoon in the 1960's and 70's, Marlin Perkins hosted a half-hour nature documentary TV show entitled, *Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom*. Perkins and other naturalists traveled the globe filming and observing animals in the wild. They brought fascinating creatures and distant locales into our living room, and I seldom missed an episode.



As a kid, growing up on a farm in Saskatchewan, my most exotic travel destination was Brandon, Manitoba. The world of Marlin Perkins and *Wild Kingdom* seemed like a dream. I aspired to be one of Perkins naturalists. In fact, I was so enthralled with the prospect of travel as a kid, I would have gladly traded places with his chimpanzee co-host, "W.K".



Even the television show's title invoked wonder. *Omaha*, I had no idea where it was. Nebraska could have been on the dark side of the moon for all I knew, and I had as much chance of going there as traveling in space.

As an adult I have followed up on some of the *Wild Kingdom*-induced dreams. I still haven't wrestled an Anaconda in the Amazon, been chased by an African elephant, or bottle-fed a kangaroo but this spring, I finally made it to

... Omaha

