

Can you play far, far away?

By Richard Silva

On Saturday, Feb. 3, a seemingly misguided musical group from Albuquerque with orange heads and bulging eyes landed on the NBC Gong Show. Appearing disoriented, waving their strange arms and twisting their langy bodies, the creatures nevertheless apparently knew what planet they were on and played their multi-colored instruments to the shrill sounds of Led Zeppelin's *Immigrant Song*.

Encouraged by the raging enthusiasm of the audience, the beings quickly shifted gear as their bodies and purple, robe-like garments swayed with the vibrating sounds. Their mouths remained motionless and their bulbous eyes unblinking.

Finally, Master of Ceremonies, Chuck Barris,

introduced the unearthly musical phenomenon as the *Band From Far Away* ... Albuquerque, that is.

The group, known as Ma/Goomba/Ga/Humbas from the planet Triaxion is an Albuquerque phenomenon.

The band is actually a group of brothers ranging in ages from 13 to 22, residing with their parents Julius and Connie Meyer in a modest home in Alameda.

Julius, the oldest son and spokesman for the group, was the creator of the costumes and mastermind for the idea.

The former art student at the University of New Mexico said he has always enjoyed playing Halloween pranks, even when it wasn't Halloween.

"It began about eight years ago," said the dark-

haired Julius. "I was in the ninth grade when I tried the old headless trick on some friends." He accomplished this by simply placing a basketball in the hood of a sweater which covered his own head.

From that time on, he developed his "technique" by experimenting with everything from cow eyes from an Albuquerque slaughterhouse to plaster of Paris masks.

He soon found out that the cow eyes didn't work because they had a tendency to shrivel up.

Realizing he had a knack for scaring the hell out of people, Julius proceeded to design the right costume. Most difficult task was scraping the materials together.

Farmington graduation gowns, styrofoam wig heads,

mannequin shoulders, helmets, aluminum reflectors, red leotards, and shoulder pads, all costing a minimal sum, comprised the Triaxion outfits.

What took a little more time was carving the instruments from discarded lumber in his back yard.

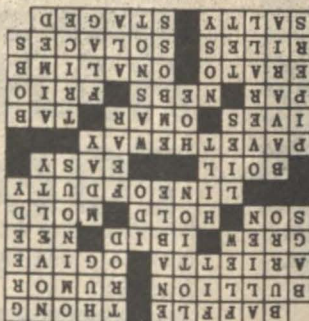
Once the costumes were completed he and his brothers began their careers by cruising Central Avenue on the back of a pickup. It was only a matter of time before they graduated to school contests, walking away with first prize every time.

As their confidence mounted so did their goals.

In just a couple of years, they had competed in and won Halloween costume parties, including one by the Bar-bizon School of Modeling, and another in the musical group La Belle's Disco Mania contest.

They captured another win in Farmington, another at Ned's and Natural Sounds.

Solution



They appeared in the New Mexico Highlands University Homecoming parade last October.

Then in November of 1977, they took first prize in a gong show at the Friar's East. They felt then that they were ready for the big time.

After making an appointment with the people at NBC (which turned out to be no small feat), the five brothers—Julius, 22 and currently a mine worker in Grants, Carlos, 21 and a student at NMHU, Dennis, 18, a recent graduate of Cibola High School, Sebastian, 14, a freshman at Cibola, and Kevin, 13, a Taylor Junior High student—departed for Los Angeles in August for an audition, stopping over in Arizona for their 14-year-old cousin Cris, also a member of the band.

A family of nine children and with modest means, the Meyers slept in sleeping bags in their pickup at rest stops along the way. Their experience had to be retraced in September for a final taping. This time, however, relatives in California made their stay far more comfortable.

Mrs. Meyer said that although she feared for her children's safety, she took their aims seriously. She added that her children have always gotten along and enjoyed being together. "I'm just happy to see that they can all be in it together," she said with a proud smile.

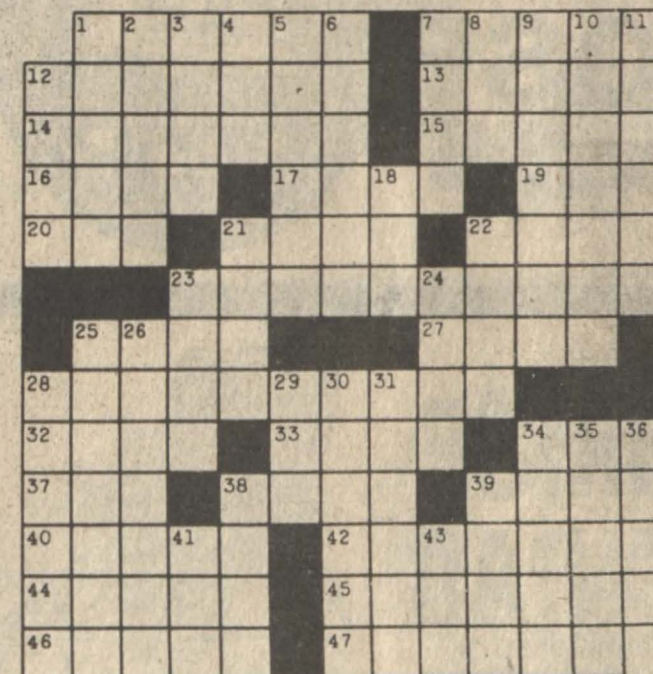
CROSSWORDS

ACROSS

1. Bewilder; stump
7. Narrow leather strip
12. Ingots of gold
13. Hearsay
14. Short operatic melody
15. Pointed arch
16. Expanded
17. Latin abbr. used in footnotes
19. Born: French
20. Heir
21. Grasp
22. Give shape to
23. In the —, in performance of one's job: 3 wds.

DOWN

25. Cookbook direction
27. Simple
28. Make preparation (for): 3 wds.
32. Folk singer, Burl —
33. Poet Khayyam
34. Flap
37. Golf score
38. Beaks or snouts
39. Cold: Spanish
40. Muse of poetry
42. Out —, in a vulnerable spot: 3 wds.
44. Irritates
45. Gives comfort to
46. Briny
47. Produced, as a drama



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DOWN

1. Pack animal
2. Foreign
3. Went by jet
4. Healthy
5. Soothing liquid
6. Make possible
7. Trampled (upon)
8. Embrace
9. Threatening
10. Newness
11. Piggish
12. Suitcases
18. Wedding phrase: 2 wds.
21. Sword handle
22. Official mobilization date: hyph. wd.
23. Is situated
24. Panic
25. Munich is its capital
26. Comprehensive
28. Certain musicians
29. Garden tool
30. Make a raised design on
31. "Rome — built in one day": 2 wds.
34. In a —, speedily
35. Pointed a gun (at)
36. Fishing floats
38. Given to prying
39. We have one on the moon
41. Vietnamese holiday
43. Cotton State: abbr.

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FOOD