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Cascading Carlos teaches more than juggling

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By Monica Fleming
Staff Reporter

There's nothing that can boost self-esteem quite like being able to juggle swords or flaming objects.

And, for those who missed Cascading Carlos' performance Aug. 15 at the Freeman Stage at Bayside, there's no need to worry, because there are other shows coming up!

Cascading Carlos is actually Carlos Mir of Delmar, Del. In addition to being a professional juggler, Mir is a past president of the Salisbury Wicomico Lions Club and is the founder and president of The Children's Theater of Delmarva. His act is called "101 Juggling - Building Self-esteem through the Art of Juggling." Instead of just watching, kids get a 40-minute explanation on how to practice juggling, followed by an hour of being able to practice with professional juggling equipment.

Mir explained that juggling can help with everything from focus and concentration to learning the importance of physical activity and exercise. And, of course, the importance of practice, practice, practice.

"It's good for the mind, for concentration and focus, and because I work with the Diabetes Association, I slip in nutrition facts, and it's good for cardio!"

At the age of 10, Mir went to Circus World near Orlando, Fla., with his parents. He was picked out of the audience, and the juggler explained to him the concept of the skill. Despite never having juggled before, he was able to juggle on the spot.

"The crowd exploded, and I got the buzz of being in front of a crowd from that," he explained.

Throughout his school years, Mir played lacrosse, so he started to juggle lacrosse balls and gradually learned to juggle different items and now can juggle seven different items at once. He now does 40 to 60 shows a year for libraries, schools and daycares, and has performed at a variety of festivals and parades.

Mir has enough equipment to always let 75 to 100 kids try their hands at juggling after the show - something he did at Bayside last weekend. He always uses teaching as part of his act, just like that first juggler did with him.

Mir also worked with a teacher in the Delmar School District to get a grant to help third-grade students stay focused. Because juggling can help with that, the students got to juggle at the end of the day as a reward if they behaved well.

"It helped the students with reading problems get stronger, and the kids were using juggling as a way of focusing. And students with reading problems, like dyslexia, as I have, and students who played an instrument picked up juggling faster." Mir said this



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Cascading Carlos shows off his skills.

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is because the dyslexic and musical students were used to having to use both sides of their brains.

"It really helped me as a child," he said of juggling. He also explained that his juggling helped him to excel at sports – something that eventually got him into college.

Besides nutrition facts, Mir adds fire safety talks while he juggles fire swords. "All those good parenting conversations you should have with your kids," he said. He also gives tips on how to get started in juggling without a big investment. "Socks are the best thing to juggle, because they don't bounce, and they don't cost any money."

"I'm not an expert juggler at all," said Mir, modestly. "But I can do some professional tricks, which is a testimony to my practicing," he said with a laugh.

For more information on Cascading Carlos, or for booking information, visit www.myspace.com/cascadincarlos online. He will appear at Family Day at Apple Discount Drugs in Salisbury on Saturday, Sept. 19, and in Ocean City at the West Harbor Marina on Saturday, Oct. 10. He will also be at the Cape Henlopen State Park Halloween Trail on Sunday, Oct. 25.

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