

**CHECK  
YOUR BRAIN  
AT THE DOOR:**

# The Comedy Juggling of

# WALDO & WOODHEAD

By Viveca Gardiner

Most performing teams form when friends decide to work together. If they're musicians, they jam in their dad's basement for a while and then decide to call themselves a band. If they're jugglers, they have fun passing clubs together in the gym, so they decide to make an act of it. But Mark Keppel had never even met Paul Burke when he approached him on the street in New Orleans and asked him to join a juggling act. Plus, Mark could barely juggle. Of course, Paul said no.

Waldo and Woodhead have an indisputable chemistry together. Waldo is a strong technical juggler as well as a smooth performer. On stage, he wears a tuxedo and tries to work as a gentleman juggler, although he's constantly thwarted by the bumbling, ridiculous Woodhead. Woody disguises his own good looks behind big glasses, plastered-down hair, and plaid shorts. Watching this comic

duo, it's almost impossible to tell how much is scripted and how much improvised; they are masters of spontaneity. Over the years, this winning combination has kept the team working all over the world.

Who would have believed Paul Burke and Mark Keppel would become Waldo & Woodhead?

## FROM MARK TO WOODHEAD

Although Mark wasn't a juggler, he did bring other skills to the offer. He had grown up performing in children's theater but developed a bad case of stage fright. A shy, introverted child, Mark studied music, but was so shy even the piano recitals were a burden. After majoring in

music and voice at Virginia Commonwealth University, Mark played in a few bands around Richmond, Virginia, in the late 1970s. His sister was dating renowned mime Bob Berky, who, along with Fred Garbo, offered clown workshops each summer in Maine. Mark decided to attend clown camp in 1979, flew to Augusta, and hitchhiked to Camp Wakela, where the workshops were held.

Mark was blown away by the level of talent