

THE NEW CALLIÖPE

For Members of Clowns of America International

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Eleanor Smith Happy 92nd Birthday!

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Clowning runs in the Family

Dedicated to my mother, Eleanor Smith, for her life of giving.

By Richard “Design-O” Smith
with Rachel Strnad

Dear friends, these past few years of writing for *The New Calliope* has been a dream come true for me, and I have been so grateful to share my many years of experience with the clowning world.

This month, though, I want to focus on a subject near and dear to my heart: my family. While not all of us are clowns, it is my hope that our story serves as an inspirational example of how the true heart of a clown can beat inside anyone, even if they never put on a red nose.

And what is the true clown heart? One full of selflessness and generosity. These qualities, and many others my siblings and I learned from my mother and father.

I’m sure I’ve mentioned before that there were seven children in my family. My father supported us with only a sixth-grade education, working six days a week even up until the week before he died. But despite how busy he was, he still took care of not only our family, but our neighborhood. If anyone needed anything, for example, if you were building a back porch, my dad would show up to help build it with his own hammer and nails. If he had five dollars in his pocket and met someone in need, he would give four away. It was a regular custom in our house to gather up whatever extra food we had each week to drop off on someone else’s front porch who needed it more than we did.

My mother was just as dedicated. Besides taking care of all seven of us, and we were no easy bunch, she still makes blankets and other items for children in the hospital. She regularly meets with other ladies at her retirement center to pray for those in need.

And that’s not mentioning the countless dollars both my parents raised through their work with the Masons. To them, if the cause needed help, they helped. Even if they didn’t have the funds themselves, they always gave their time. This led them into the closest thing they ever got to clowning. My dad was more than happy to put a costume on if the fundraiser needed it.

With this picture of generosity before us all growing up, it’s no wonder all us children have carried on the legacy. My youngest sister, Aileen, co-founded and co-facilitates a grief support group for people who have lost a loved one from the disease of addiction. She also serves on two local Opioid Task Forces, a collaboration of community leaders dedicated to supporting those with opioid addiction.

My brother, Andrew, has worked with people suffering from AIDS and has helped raise thousands of dollars for support groups and hospices in New Jersey and New

York. My youngest brother, David, spent many years as my father’s right-hand man. They both won local awards for getting the most people to volunteer in our area. When it came to blood drives, they had a reputation for securing literally gallons of blood. And four out of the seven of us took that final step into clown shoes.

I’ve already written extensively about my own charity work, so I’ll step aside and give my siblings the spotlight.

My sister Charlene has done unbelievable charity work for children, including Why Me, an organization for children with cancer, and several other charities. She has the biggest heart! Charlene also had the same drive I had to make clowning a career, and she’s won numerous awards at the Northeast Clown Convention and COAI. Look for her name in the top places for Pierrot, Character, and Comedy Whiteface in past convention issues.

Charlene has also passed the legacy to her son, Michael, who is an unbelievable face painter and balloon artist. He has helped me many times at shows for charity.

My work with Why Me, piqued my oldest sister, Donna’s, interest, and she asked me to make her a costume. She’s



Eleanor Smith’s clown costume designed by her son, Richard “Design-O” Smith.

very tiny and her nickname is Mousy, so naturally I made a costume for her that took the nickname and made it her persona. Though she's never been a balloon artist or master face painter, she is more than happy to show up as Mousy if it brings joy to children.

As of this writing, she has won the top New England award for the most clowning charity work. I believe in one year she did over one hundred and seventy-eight events for children living with cancer. Each of these events could be several hours, and she never received anything other than a thank you. But that's fine with Donna.

While my sisters and I were more focused in our charitable work than our parents, I can't help believing our bent toward children's charities came directly from them. Our parents gave us huge hearts for children, not because they were heavily involved with children's charities, but because caring for and protecting children was the fabric of our lives growing up.

For my older sister, Donna, this was especially true. When she was fourteen, my mother had our youngest sibling, David. About the time when most women were going through "the change," as it was called, her change was to have another baby. Since my mother still had to work, Donna quit school to be our surrogate mother. It was quite something to come home to an already clean house with our clothes miraculously put away, though us kids never thought to express our gratitude. Donna never complained, however, and she ended up having to take care of more than just nine Smiths.

I'm not sure how, but mine and my siblings' friends always knew our house was a safe place. The kids in our neighborhood were no strangers to troubled family situations, so when things were bad, they would come to our house. On average, we had about twelve kids including us Smiths at any given time. Sometimes, it would take my parents a week before they realized there were



Eleanor and Delbert Smith.

a few more faces at the table. But they never threw the kids out.

My parent's custom was to take the kids aside and tell them they could stay if they behaved themselves and went to school and church with the rest of us, but they also had to try to work things out with their parents. Sometimes things did work out, and sometimes they didn't. When they didn't, my parents had friends in our church who were more connected with social services, and they always made sure the kids found another safe home.

In this way, my parents helped over three hundred and fifty kids. When my father died, I was blown away by how many of them came to his funeral. These

were people whom I hadn't seen in fifteen years or more, all come to honor a man who had opened his door to them. Even though Pop didn't have much to share, he had treated them with kindness and dignity.

This down-to-earth, personal outlook has, I think, influenced my oldest brother's unique take on clowning. I've written before about my brother James, who roped me into clowning when we were kids. His infectious love of clowning was picked up by his wife, Annie "Sue-C-Q" RIP and his only son "Little Joey."

James, of all of us, has taken clowning to the most personal level. Instead of corporate shows, he'd rather come to people's houses for small gatherings



Richard Smith's father, Delbert, was a Mason with the Olive Branch Lodge of Masons in Millbury, Massachusetts for thirty-five years and a member of the Bethlehem Covenant Church in Worcester.



and put on his makeup in front of the kids. He's found children are fascinated by this, and never have been afraid of him because he's shown that clowns are people, too. While this unique perspective is not shared by all the clown world, and some might not want the illusion broken, James has taught many children in New England to value other people, even though they might not look like you, through the way he does clowning.

I deeply admire my older brother, and someday, I will write a more in-depth article about his Christian clowning and magic because James has embraced Christian clowning more than the rest of us. And this also is from my parents. My father insisted we all go to church. Sunday was the Lord's Day, though he usually was so exhausted he fell asleep during the sermon. If ever my father managed to keep his eyes open, the pastor took him aside afterward and asked, "What did I say that kept you awake?"

Through my recent sickness, my brother James and my youngest sister have grown even closer to me and have been wonderful emotional supports. My little sister always knew when I needed a phone call. I was in great pain and often had moments when I felt I would break under the stress; James would be there with a word of wisdom that didn't shove his faith down my throat, which was very important to me.

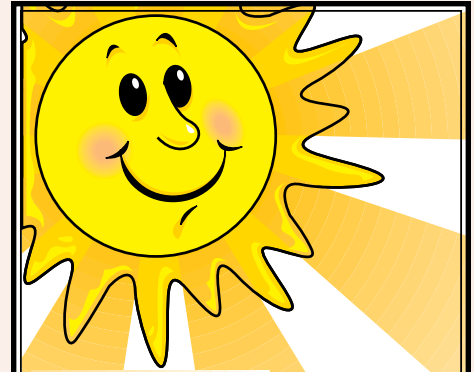
And this freedom, again, is from my parents. They both encouraged and

expected us to figure out who we were and what we wanted to achieve. I can say, looking back, that not one of us is a duplicate of the other, and my parents are proud of us. I remember visiting my dad at work and he would introduce me as his son, the clown. People would immediately interject with, "That's not very nice, Pop!" He would say, "No, no, you don't understand. My son is a famous clown. He makes costumes and has won hundreds of awards. I'm quite proud of him." And that's what we all feel about each other. Those who aren't clowns are proud of those who are, and we all share our parents' clown heart.

My father has since passed away, but my mother is still with us and still giving of herself every day, even at ninety-two, to her friends, her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

I loved sharing this bit of family history with you. I hope you enjoyed it as much as I did, and I hope it inspired you to think of those in your family who might not wear the clown costume, but who are truly clowns inside, sharing love and laughter with everyone around them. And who knows? You just might convince them to don a red nose.

I want to thank my mom and dad from the bottom of my heart for making me and all my siblings into the people we are today. And thank you, Smith clan, for being a part of my life and the clown world. I hope to see you all in the center ring someday. **TNC**



Our Good Cheer List

Please take a moment to spread a few words of good cheer with a card or note to one of these members.

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LIABILITY INSURANCE UPDATE

As a member of COAI, one of your benefits is the option of purchasing performer liability insurance at a reduced rate. Our new insurance company, American Specialty Insurance, is a branch of Brown & Brown. Brown & Brown transferred the policies to American Specialty Insurance and kept the same website name, www.insurecoai.org. The website is more user friendly and their customer service has improved. When you sign into the website, be sure your membership is up to date and have your member number handy. To reach American Specialty Insurance by phone, call 1-877-441-4011.

WORKING PRESCHOOLS

PART TWO

By David Ginn

Here we are with the second installment of how to work with the under six-year-old crowd. In the last issue, I left off with advice which is important no matter who your audience is: Have fun while you are doing shows for others. When you are having fun, you can better create fun for others. Show your audience, through what you do and say and act, that you're enjoying being there and performing for them. They'll love you for that.

Now let's continue with my list.

Use lots of helpers during your preschool shows, but don't use them for long tricks. Adults often enjoy long counting card tricks (not all of us, but some of us), and we can tolerate an effect that takes a long build up. Kids are not that way, especially young ones. Keep your tricks and routines relatively short, three to five minutes. Keep the magic simple, to the point, and uncomplicated. Remember, a ball rolling under a couch "vanishes" to a three-year-old!

Keep things happening during those routines. Magic happens, music plays, jokes and gags take place, and so forth. Try to avoid lulls of any sort. Know what you are doing and keep the show rolling at a steady pace.

Ask the children to respond. This technique keeps children involved. Using questions and responses during the warm-up gets the show off to a good start. I often start this way:

"If you are here, raise your hand." They do. "If you are not here, raise your hand." Some always do. I follow that with, "I'll wait until you get here!" The older ones, aged five, think that's funny. "How many like ice cream? Hands up! Pizza? Hands up! Hot dogs? Hands up! How many like to eat a dead rat? Hands up!" And that makes them laugh.



Use a puppet. This may scare some of you, and I didn't use puppets until about twelve years ago. Preschool shows are the best places to break in a puppet routine because most of those kids *believe* when you bring out the puppet. You don't have to prove that the puppet is real because they want to believe. Remember to treat the puppet as though it is real and never toss it aside. Handle it with care. I've had great success with the Dog Arm Puppet from Practical Magic in the UK, also now available in the USA from me at www.ginnmagic.com. I even shot a DVD showing my routines with it. Kids this age generally love puppets, especially if the puppet does magic!

Wave magic wands. Thanks to Harry Potter and Bippity Boppity Boo, all children understand the concept of a magic wand. Be sure to use a wand or something similar in your show. Have a child wave it to make something happen. They love doing this.

Let a child appear to do the magic. Whatever tricks you do, make the child helper the star of the show. Of course, we know you're the one making the magic work, but let the audience and the child think she is doing the magic whenever possible. Give the child the applause. After all, you'll get the paycheck!

Don't give a child anything that is breakable. I've used the breakaway wand and other such items all through



my career. I usually have it break several times with the child and then finally break on me, which makes the audience laugh louder. That is not what I am talking about here. Instead, I am warning you not to hand a child a hundred-dollar prop that would really be broken if he or she dropped it. Children have no concept of value, and they think we're so magical we could easily repair a damaged item. If you choose to use your grandmother's Royal Dalton china bowl in the show, handle it yourself. Don't put it in little Tommy's hands. If it gets broken, you can only blame yourself!

Teach something. My five preschool shows are not intended to be educational programs, but I teach something in each show. When I try to wrestle a bone away from my dog puppet, he snaps or bites at

me. I stop suddenly and say, "Boys and girls, you know it's not a good idea to try to play with your dog when he's eating his food. He might think you are stealing his food and try to bite you. Wait until he has finished eating to play with him." Yes, it's a lightweight message, but it might save a child from getting a dog bite! How do you think I learned that? Also, teachers and parents like the idea that you are teaching something to the children instead of just providing entertainment.

Use tricks with animals, but that doesn't just mean live animals. Children love animal themes, stories about animals, pictures of animals, animal toys and puppets, and of course, live animals. I have two shows called *Magic Animals*, in which every trick is an animal trick. Kids love this! I asked myself, "Why not?" And I did it!

Save the rabbit for the end. I close every preschool show with the magical appearance of a live rabbit. I have a dozen different rabbit production tricks for this very reason. Just like Santa Claus at a Christmas party, with preschoolers, you cannot follow a live rabbit trick. When the live magic bunny appears, your show is over!

Never vanish the magic bunny in preschool shows. These children won't realize it's "just a trick," and they'll fret over where he is. Make him appear, but not vanish.



Give children a reason to leave. When I produce the magic bunny at the end of the show, I put him in a cage on a chair near the exit door. All the children go out by that door and see the rabbit up close. Believe me, seeing that bunny is all that matters at that point, so they are happy to go out that way!

Turn the kids back over to the teachers. At the end of the show, purposely have the children look at their teachers or parents. Ask the teacher to take charge. Adults appreciate a performer who turns the authority back over to the leaders after the show. This makes you look organized and gives the children direction, as in, "Follow your teacher to go see the magic bunny."

I hope these twenty-five points will help you prepare and present a better show for preschoolers, wherever you live. I have five different shows for that age group. Each show runs thirty-five to forty minutes, not counting the time they spend seeing the rabbit at the end. They set up in ten to twelve minutes and pack up in the same amount of time. If you would like to see these "come to life," check out my DVD, *Comedy Magic for Preschoolers*, on the GinnMagic.com website. It shows three live shows, plus a thirty-minute tutorial based on this article. **TNC**





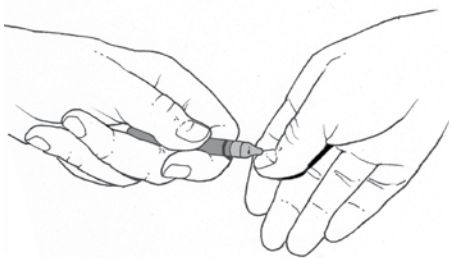
REBO'S Clown Bits and Props

By Bev Bergeron
Name the Color

This trick has been around a long time, but it still fools adults and children.

ROUTINE: Walk up to a table where a child is using one of the four basic colors from a container of crayons. Ask the child to cover the colors with his napkin (paper or cloth but not translucent). After the crayons are covered, the magician turns his back to the child and asks the child to place one crayon into his hand. The magician turns around and, after a little byplay, announces the color that was selected.

THE SECRET: The secret is very simple and very deceiving. When the magician turns to face the child, he makes a mark on his fingernail with the crayon. The hand with the mark is brought forward and touches the child's head, allowing the magician to see what color the crayon is. While doing this, the selected crayon is always held behind the back of the magician. After the color is announced, the crayon is brought forward to show that the choice was right.



REPEAT: This is one trick that, when repeated, becomes even more mystifying. When the magician shows the chosen color, he picks up the napkin covering the other crayons on the table. This is done to replace the chosen crayon, but it also allows the magician to use the napkin to remove the crayon mark on his thumb. Once the mark is removed, the trick can be repeated. I like to fool the daddy sitting with his child at the table. You can't believe how strong this trick is until you see the father's face after the repeat!

Bev Bergeron (1930–2020) gained fame in the early 1960s as Rebo the Clown on the nationally syndicated TV show, The Magic Land of Allakazam. For more about Rebo, check out our interview in the July/August 2020 issue ("Renaissance Funny Man," page 20) and the Last Walk-Around in the January/February issue, page 25. Grateful acknowledgment is made to Bev Bergeron's family for permission to publish selections from his lecture notes, Clown Bits and Props, and to Tony Dunn for creating original illustrations for The New Calliope.



JUNIOR JOEYS

By Regina "Cha Cha" Wollrabe, *Junior Joeys Director*

Hello, Junior and Teen Joeys!

Thinking about you is something I do quite often. To all of you who are students online or in school, I hope you have been doing well during this crazy time we are living in! Are you being helpful to your teachers and your friends by doing your best and trying to stay positive? We need each other right now. Many of us are getting tired of being on computers and not getting to do many of the things we wish we could.

You have learned some very important skills this year on your computers, and you've learned ways to be safe so that you don't get sick or make other people sick.

You have learned to be creative to have fun in different ways than you did before. It took patience to adapt to all the new rules, wearing masks, and learning a new way to do school—and even new ways to play. Your parents and teachers have also been learning how to do things differently.

You will be successful as long as you keep learning and trying even when things are hard. Don't give up! You have something special to do in this world. I've been thinking about you and how I really want to meet all the Junior Joeys who are clowns or want to be clowns.

You are all heroes to me. You are the generation of children who went to school online and kept learning during a pandemic. This is a first in history on earth. No kids ever have gone through a pandemic and did school on a computer as you did in 2020 and 2021.

My hope is that you are still finding ways to laugh out loud. What makes you laugh? Did you know that laughter helps build your immune system? Being silly keeps you healthy. It releases happy chemicals in your brain and it helps you feel joyful and relaxed.

Laughter is like a medicine that helps take pain away. These are some of the reasons we have hospital clowns. Science has proven that laughter helps people



istock/ghfrommars

feel better who are sick or in other stressful situations.

Try laughing when you are having a hard day, feeling down, or when you are sick. Watch a movie or play a fun game like charades or watch funny YouTube shows for kids. Better yet, go get your clown nose and put on your costume and do a funny show or sing a funny song for your family. You know how to be funny—just make 'em laugh, and the whole world will be a better place.

Bump a nose! **TNC**



PARENTS!

If your Junior Joey or Teen Joey needs a wig or costume, please contact me. Cheri Venturi—a Past President of COAI, former Junior Joeys Director, and recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award—has donated forty wigs for use by our Junior Joeys. We've also received donations of costumes and other clown supplies we want to share with you. Write to me at coaijuniorjoeys@gmail.com.

- Let's dream and think about online clown classes for our Junior Joeys. This summer would be a great time to get online to learn some fun skills. Are your kids interested?
- Let's have a Zoom Boom for Kids! Please email me if you are interested in having your children meet instructors who want to help pass on the art of clowning to our young entertainers.
- Many of the emails we have for reaching our Junior Joeys need to be updated. Always include your name (parent or guardian), phone number, the child's name, clown name, age, and what type of skills they enjoy learning about.

The Mightier COAI VIRTUAL CONVENTION

By Alene Kraus

COAI's first-ever virtual convention took place April 6–10 on the Zoom platform, with access on Facebook also available. Imagine five days of clown fun for ten hours a day with fifty classes, our General Membership Meeting, the banquet, seeing old friends, and making new friends. This truly was epic!

Two wacky clowns, Connie Morrow and Jim Donoughe, kicked off the convention with Wacky Walkarounds. Their workshop message was “Make it fun.” The principles of “Create an Experience” and “Make a Memory” were echoed in this unconventional convention’s daily offerings.

The mix of lectures and workshops covered a host of topics relevant to today’s entertainment market. We learned about setting self-study goals, utilizing Mike Bednarek’s SMART self-study program found in “21 Days to a Better Clown.” Some of our members have already taken advantage of this amazing program. Give it a look! Scott Correll and his Magic Bubbles brought out the little kid in all of us. Scott bounced bubbles, caught bubbles, and pretended to swallow bubbles until we were all just bubbling over.

Dave Hill, Steve Hart, and Duane Laffin made us laugh and taught us how easy it is to incorporate fun magic into our shows and walkarounds. Mr. Gregggy shared tips and tricks to make strolling entertainment fun and effective. Heather Green and Mama Clown demonstrated the ease of using rainbow pallets and simple strokes in face painting. Their models were adorable! We learned about the lasting power of henna tattoos with Ruth Ceretto and storytelling with Carol Marx. Improv was hilariously presented by Easily Amused.

Silly Billy taught us that exceptional entertainment comes with the journey, not the destination. He also taught us that increasing the number of audience interactions creates a funnier journey. Barbara Bird, Barb Field, and Hal Grant shared amazing Tips for Great Window Visits to a variety of facilities. Lee Andrews presented valuable facts about working virtually.

Jim Donoughe had us clucking right along with him in his Chickenology workshop. It was a smorgasbord of clucky ideas, including Chicken on the Barbie and Chicklets. Dave Bartlett shared his wisdom and many talents, including his five points toward continual progress. He reminded us to do the work and know comedic structure. Joe Barney shared his vast and heartfelt wisdom and experience. Stating frequently that “People need us and the normalcy we help to provide,” Joe provided first-hand insight into what normal may look like in the entertainment world in the future. Crissy Meinitzke expertly guided us through Canva, a program which allows us to create and produce ads on social media.



She also reminded us to make the ad connect to an emotion because people will remember how you make them feel.

Adam Schill offered Basic Balloons and Balloon Candy Cups for Fun and Profit. He began with the basic balloon types and balloon pumps, progressed to tying a balloon, and then went on to twisting. He is a patient and easy-to-follow instructor for these skill-based workshops. Adam was a great lead in for Buster Balloon and Rebecca Kanar and their spectacular balloon designs. How could you not enjoy the beautiful Balloon Bouquets with 350s given by



Merrily Johnston? Rounding out our balloon twisting skills, Kornpop showed us wearable balloon fashion for parades and other events. I thought these workshops were fantastic and stretched me beyond my comfort zone.

Pricilla Mooseburger's lecture on costuming was enlightening. Of course, we were given a peek at the Costume Shop and all the available costumes and accessories. Pricilla offered ideas and products for many inexpensive and fashionable ideas. Roy Stone taught us about stage presence and signage; all important details to help make us better performers.

Bonnie Corcia taught an easy-to-follow beginning ukulele class. Jackie Reynolds' class on ventriloquism taught us an interesting and useful alphabet, as well as some basic skills. Adam Kreutinger and his puppets almost made themselves. All these classes allowed us to stretch beyond our comfort zone and were very enjoyable!

Leslie Ann Akin brought us excellent information and examples of branding. Leslie Ann demonstrated ways for us to create "Magical Mirthday Parties" in our business. Classes were offered to help with competitions by Jim Donoughe and Frank Button. Each of these clowns has much to offer us from personal experience.

Even Santa attended this convention through Dale McKenzie, who truly brought the wonder of Christmas to us all. Avner The Eccentric had us on our feet, saying hello in a most unordinary



way! He pointed out how important it is to have the audience breathe with you and that it builds rapport. Avner stated that we need to be interested, not interesting. "Take a common puzzle and solve it in an unordinary way. Find the problem interesting." Avner made us think outside the box. Bubba Sikes exuded enthusiasm and energy while talking to us about increasing our Funny Potential. In true Bubba style, he said. "Make it simple; be relatable. Above all, you must do everything from the heart." Ah, Bubba, so very true.

Each of the presenters went beyond the call of duty to provide solid classes. We thank them from the bottom of our hearts.

Another group also made this a great convention. Those who attended, and there were many of us, were so ready, so eager to learn and share, and so hungry to see our COAI family that we all felt a closeness and camaraderie that went beyond common description. Everyone enjoyed the free time between lectures to visit and speak with each other. TNC

LECTURE TAKEAWAYS

"A costume is only a tool."

"Do what's right for you."

"Be YOU!"

"Be relevant."

"Be interested."

"Know your audience."

"Be relatable."

"Know trends."

"Remember the Rule of Three."

"It's the journey, not the destination."

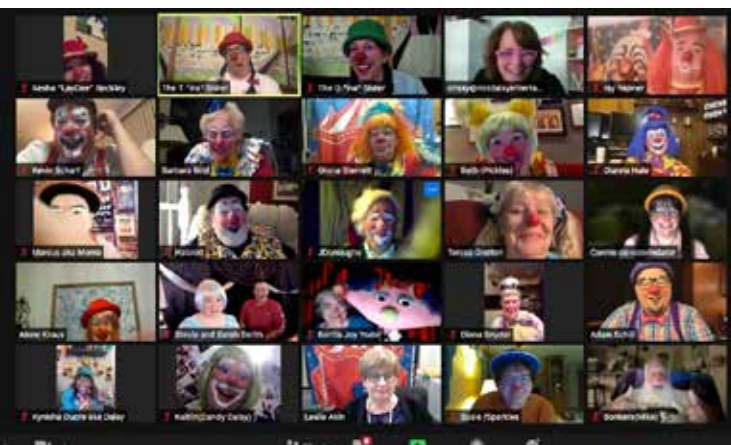
"People need us."

"Your character comes from within."

"Increase the number of audience interactions."

"Do everything from the heart."

"You must do everything from the bottom of your heart."



The *Behind-the-Scenes* Story of “The Mighty!” COAI Convention —and what made it “*The Mightier!*”

By Jim “Donuts” Donoughe

“The Mighty!” Niagara Falls Convention started out with a simple question at the 2018 Mid-Atlantic Clown Association Convention, “Hey, Bunky! Has COAI ever considered a convention in Niagara Falls or Buffalo?” Bunky Gretton replied, “Why don’t you two get on that?”

When my friend Connie “Punkin” Morrow and I got home from that convention, we hit the ground running, looking at hotel and convention sites. The craziest idea we had was the Hotel Henry, the former psychiatric hospital. Can you imagine the fun we could have had in the haunted psych center? When that didn’t work out, we tried the casino and other sites in Niagara Falls. We finally settled on the Sheraton and the convention center, which were a great fit.

We were well on our way to a great convention. We had a headliner, Mr. Rainbow, a perfect local talent; the vaudeville troupe, Easily Amused; even two legends who got back together, Joe Barney and Leo Desilites. We were stoked. We were in the home stretch when we got the news. Covid was hitting New York as well as the rest of the country very hard. We had to postpone!

Needless to say, we were incredibly upset that we had to stop when we were so close to the end. The next few days were spent calling and writing everyone to inform them of the gut-wrenching news that the convention was being postponed. However, we told them not to worry – we would work even harder to make it mightier! We changed some things around, got more speakers, planned other surprises, and started again. We wanted to make it even “Mightier” than before.

We thought it was smooth sailing after we’d hit that bump in the road. We thought the virus would go away soon, but we were wrong. The virus didn’t die off last summer, even though we were ready with a more exciting schedule and extra surprises. We

made more videos to advertise and had more contests planned. Things weren’t looking good in December, but we held out hope. In January, the staff at both the convention center and hotel were wondering if we were going to postpone again. That was just not an option since we had already invested so much of our own personal money and so much of our time. I didn’t think I could handle being let down again. We needed to be let out of our contract so we could pursue a different option. That is how Plan C, a virtual convention, came to our minds.



Connie Morrow and Jim Donoughe packing goodie boxes.

300 • 46 • 42 • 3 • ∞

The Mighty *by the numbers:*

Three hundred participants from eight countries on five continents.

Forty-six lectures with forty-two different performers.

Three shirt art changes.

And too many sleepless nights, tears shed, paper cuts, and phone calls to count!

It was nerve-racking to wait until we knew for sure if we would be hosting an in-person convention or planning a virtual convention. In mid-February, when nothing was looking up, I went pleading, crying, and begging to be let out of our contracts since the governor wasn't making the decision easy for anyone. It was a month and a half until I was finally released. I think they took pity on me because they knew it was all on me personally, not the organization. That was a relief, but waiting for the refunds was a different matter. We eventually received almost all our money back. The refunds had to wait, but the show had to go on, just like in the circus. We were determined to move forward.

Connie and I had to start over yet again! A new journey was forged into the unknown of a totally virtual convention. We called in every favor we had, threw ourselves at the mercy of our friends, and hoped for the best from others. Luckily, we have great friends. We started on a new schedule of great performers. All the while, we were doing double duty, planning and writing out refunds to all our faithful friends that believed as we

did that this would be an epic "Mighty" convention.

We gave as much of a refund as we could and still break even. The shirts were paid for. We couldn't end that contract. We also had money paid into the website and mailings. We couldn't lose that much, so we charged the fees to break even and still give our friends a great convention.

It took me over a week to write out all the refund checks and finish all the paperwork. I also had to write out all the address labels to send out the shirts and goodie boxes for those that were supposed to be part of the in-person convention. Meanwhile, we were tinkering with the virtual schedule to get everyone times that worked for them and us.

Our next biggest and stressful task was to tackle packing all those boxes with shirts and goodies that we received from various friends. Connie and I spent a chilly Saturday in her garage packing and labeling boxes and bags for six and a half hours. If you think we were crazy before, you should have seen us after that. It was even funny watching us put all those boxes in my van. We had almost a hundred forty boxes and bags. It was like a giant Jenga game.

My dad and I spent another four hours the next day double checking to see that we didn't miss anyone before I headed to the post office. On Monday morning, I headed to the post office with my very full van. The poor guy at the main post office wasn't expecting me and spent three hours checking in all those boxes. It took six trips to the car to bring them all in. When all was said and done, our receipt was eighteen feet long!

Then, it was the first day of the convention. Everything was mailed, refunds were sent, the schedule was finalized, and you would think we were headed for smooth sailing. However, life had one last jab for us. Connie and I were set up for the very first lecture when I received a message from one of our speakers. He had a family emergency and had to back out of his lecture. We quickly had



The third version of the convention T-shirt!

to find a replacement. Again, we have great friends, and Hal Grant and Myke Hutchins jumped in to fill the spot at the last minute.

When we planned the virtual convention, we didn't know the fun we would have during the break times. The laughter, the friendships made, and the comradery of the tin-foil hats! It was a bonding time and tons of fun. The virtual convention was truly just like an in-person one. Ideas were shared, friends made, batteries charged, and much laughter was enjoyed. We may not have been in the same hotel, but we were all in the same space enjoying being what we are, clowns.

After it was all over and the screens went dark, Connie and I thought it was over. Nope! I sent out a hundred forty-eight sets of notes for Wacky Walkarounds and Chickenology. Connie and I had started the convention, and we were there to close it out. The notes for Wacky Walkarounds and all the artwork will soon be added to The Vault, as well as the notes for Chickenology. "The Mighty" or what became "The Mightier!" Niagara Convention will go on teaching for years to come.

As Lee Andrews says, we love you all, and there's nothing you can do about it! It has been our pleasure to help make this convention a success!

Love you all! **TNC**



Jim's van full of goodie boxes to be mailed.

EVER THOUGHT OF PARADEABILITY?

By Richard “Design-O” Smith

with Rachel Strnad

Paradeability is one of my favorite categories! I love judging it at COAI conventions, if I can. And even when I can't, I try to find the time to wake up early and be out there on the route to support the contestants.

If you're considering competing in Paradeability, there are three key steps you need to take. The first is to know the rules backwards and forwards, as you would for any category. This includes knowing how many times you're expected to do your gag and how long the route is that you're supposed to walk. *Mycoai.com* has the rules listed for every category. Make sure you look at the current rules and don't rely on what you've read in the past; depending on circumstances, they may have been revised since last convention. There is nothing more frustrating than putting all your work into an gag that could get you disqualified.

The second step is to create your parade gag. If you're not sure, look through past convention issues in *The Vault* for inspiration. Parade acts are almost mini skits, which means they need the same care in structure and content. Make sure your joke is in good taste and you have a solid blow-off or surprise. For example, I competed in both paradeability and group skit one year with my friends, Nicholas Reed and Teresa Brewer using the same, three-beat plot. Teresa and Nick walked in front of our rolling backdrop and broke a wishbone. I ran out from behind the backdrop with a treasure chest. Teresa grabbed the chest and Nick grabbed me, both yelling, “I won!” While Teresa ran behind the backdrop with the chest, I said to Nick, “Well, if I had my wish, I'd go with the wench!” and ran after her. Our skit had more stage business, but it was the same core plot.

Two other points you might have picked up from that example which are essential for a paradeability gag is recognizability and repeatability. We were all in pirate costumes, so the audience not only instantly knew who we were, but also what the theme of the gag was. Paradeability is a great venue for trying out characters other than your usual clown persona. We also could reset our gag pretty quickly by Teresa handing the chest back to me and walking around to the front of the backdrop. If you can't reset your gag in seconds, whole sections of the parade route won't get to see it. Nick and I did one called “Mobile Dentist” that's a great example of this. Nick dressed as a dentist and wore a car on straps over his shoulders that had Mobile Dentist printed on the side. I walked behind him with a bandana around my head, holding my face as though I had a toothache and calling for help. Nick threw me a rope and told me to tie it around my tooth. Then he pretended to take off in the car while I yelled, “Wait! I've changed my mind!” That gag was very easy to transport, since we were wearing most of the props, and the only reset necessary was to give Nick the rope back.



Richard Smith with his Dominoes Pizza gag.

Both examples I've given are of group paradeability, which might be the way to go if you are just starting out and uncomfortable being the center of attention. However, timing is of paramount importance when more people are involved. There is nothing more frustrating than your gag falling to pieces because some of your partners moved too fast or haven't caught up yet. One group paradeability I did in Sturbridge, Massachusetts suffered from this. There were three of us all together in a fifties themed gag. My sister and another clown from Connecticut were dressed in fifties



Left: Richard “Design-O” Smith (center) with Sandra “Strawberry” Winstead (left) and Nicholas “Doc” Reed (right). **Right:** Nicholas “Doc” Reed and Richard “Design-O” Smith are ready for Paradeability competition with “Mobile Dentist.”

outfits with a jukebox between them, handing out candy. I came behind in a rig that was made to look like a policeman carrying me in a cage. I was dressed as Elvis and carried a boombox playing “Jailhouse Rock.” Because we didn’t keep pace with each other, the head judge thought we were two different groups, so we lost points.

What if you’re doing a single parade-ability? Still take the same things into consideration. Are you recognizable? Is your prop big enough to be seen from far away? Do you have a surprise ending? Can you repeat it? Especially if it’s just you, my best advice is to keep things simple. Your costume and your prop

can do most of the work for you to set up the gag. For example, I did a single as a chef with a box labeled Dominoes Pizza. All I had to do was open the box to show everyone my pizza, which had dominoes game pieces all over it. Recognizable, simple, repeatable. One year I didn’t keep things simple, I failed miserably. I dressed as a cowboy with a remote-control car that had a cow in it. I was also wearing a ten-gallon hat that hid a glass of milk on my head with a sign that said “Got Milk?” I needed both hands to lift the hat and put it back on, but that meant I didn’t have a hand left to operate the car; there were too many things going on in the gag.

Once you’ve created your gag, you’re on to the final step, which is to practice, practice, practice! Practice in front of your alley. Practice for friends. Practice doing it while walking the distance your parade route will be. The more you do your gag, the more you will perfect it. Doing it in front of other people will also help you find problems you might not have been aware of and fix them. And if you need any more advice, or just some encouragement, drop me a line on Facebook under Richard Smith. You can also write to me at thenewcalliope@gmail.com with questions or article suggestions. Until next time, bump a nose! **TNC**

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Puppet Routine for Church Events

By Margaret Clauder

This routine will get you plenty of laughs and can be used for a wide variety of church events.

Recently, a large church asked me to perform for their GLOW kick-off, with GLOW standing for “Go Light Our World.” They wanted a clown show with a Christian flavor that lasted an hour in length. They also wanted something fun and engaging for a wide age range, from kindergarten to sixth grade, with the majority of children being in second to fourth grades.

I do not often write a custom show for a single performance, but this was a very large church and a new customer. I began to think about how I could adapt a show, my birthday program with Maggie the Magical Clown, for what they were asking.

One of the most enjoyable aspects of my performances has been the use of puppets and vent routines. With a puppet, you can work with a partner with all the advantages of a partner and none of the disadvantages. The purpose of this article is not to tell you about how I adapted magic routines to this client, but to give the vents or puppeteers among us a routine that you can also use in churches for a wide range of occasions.

The beginning of the routine is specific to the occasion, but this could easily be adapted for VBS or other events.

Vent: Boys and girls, I would like to introduce you to my puppet friend, Elmer, who will sing for you my favorite children’s song, “Jesus Loves the Little Children.” Hello, Elmer.

Elmer: Hello.

Vent: Elmer, we are here tonight to celebrate GLOW.

Elmer: What is GLOW?

Vent: It stands for “Go Light Our World.”

Elmer: Eek! You’re going to play with matches! [Elmer hides his head.]

Vent: No, Elmer, we are not going to be playing with matches.

Elmer: Oh, that’s good. Eek! You’re going to be playing with lighters!

Vent: No, Elmer, we are not going to be playing with lighters.

Elmer: Oh, that’s good. Eek! You’re going to be playing with candles!

Vent: No, Elmer. We are not going to be playing with matches, lighters, or candles. GLOW means we will spread the light from within ourselves.

Elmer: Oh, that’s good. What do you want me to do?

Vent: Well, I asked you here so you could sing the song “Jesus Loves the Little Children” for everyone.

Elmer: Oh, Okay. I like that song. [Elmer begins to sing “Jesus loves the little donkeys.”]

Vent: Donkeys? Elmer, there are no donkeys in this song!

Elmer: What? Jesus does not love donkeys?

Vent: Well, I suppose he loves donkeys.

Elmer: Well, he should. He rode in on one.

Vent: You’re talking about what we call Palm Sunday, the day Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey and everyone waved palm branches. We are singing about children—not donkeys. Start over.

Elmer: Okay. “Jesus loves the little chickens, all the chickens of the world.”

Vent: Chickens? There are no chickens in this song!

Elmer: What? Jesus doesn’t like chickens?

Vent: Well, I suppose Jesus likes chickens, too, but this song is not about chickens. It’s about children. Jesus loves the little *children!*



Elmer: Oh, Okay. Elmer begins to sing, "Jesus loves the little children..."

Vent: That's right.

Elmer: All the children of the world.

Vent: Smile broadly and nod yes.

Elmer: "Blue and green and polka dot, when it's cold and when it's hot. Jesus loves the little children of the world."

Vent: Blue and green and polka dot? Where did you get that?

Elmer: Well, he loves everybody, doesn't he?

Vent: Well, yes, he does, but there are no blue and green and polka dot people in the world.

Elmer: Yes, there are.

Vent: No, there aren't.

Elmer: Yes, there are.

Vent: No, there aren't.

Elmer: Yes, there are.

Vent: Prove it.

Elmer: Okay, he's wearing blue, she's wearing green, and you're wearing polka dot!

Vent: Kids, Elmer needs some help. Can you help me sing the song to him? "Jesus loves the little children, all the children of the world, red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in his

sight. Jesus loves the little children of the world."

Elmer: "Everything is beautiful...in its own way. Like the summer sunshine, we all glow in our own way!"

Vent: Boys and girls, Elmer!

This turned out to be a very funny routine. I hope you puppeteers and vents enjoy using it! **TNC**

Margaret Clauder is a highly respected full-time kids show entertainer from Arlington, Texas. She can be reached at margaret@mcpsshows.com.



Welcome, NEW MEMBERS!

Steve Blencoe Santa Cruz, CA

Peter Burr Boulder, CO

Roxane "SPARKLES" Cordle La Pine, OR

Ian "Stripes the Clown" Goldsmith
Pennington, NJ

Connie "Kunckles the Caring Clown" Gunter
Malvern, AR

Melanie "Lollypop Luna" Marshall
Jerusalem, Israel

Mary "Top Hat" Parker Nashua, NH

Aaron "Pompom" Posey Omaha, NE

Cynthia Rich Avon Park, FL

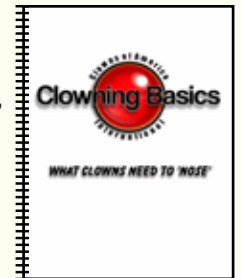
John "Scooter" Suggs Enfield, CT

Tina "Dipsy Doodle" Vanwormer
Schenectady, NY

A big thank you to **Richard Smith**
for gifting memberships!

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POCKETS'S

PILLS & PROPS



**Heather
"Pockets"
Wuersching**

Still they come! Here are four more ideas from the Pockets the Clown's Gag Bag collection. My friend Heather "Pockets" Wuersching has been collecting Gag Bag ideas for thirteen years, and she happily shares her collection.

For Pockets, the bags are not just freebies to give away. Instead, they provide the opportunity to establish a moment that will be remembered for a long time to come. Pockets believes that she is not just handing stuff out; she is creating memories.

We have set up a page of four labels which you can print and use if you do not want to design your own. Just email me and ask for the PDF for "Pills & Props," and I will send the page to you. The previous sets of labels are still available if you want any of them, as well.

CALMING CAPSULES: You have no need to remain stressed in any way! This "medication" is for the relief of impatience, frustration, stress, or panic. Take one capsule as often as needed. In case of emergency, take a red capsule immediately.

In the bag are jellybeans, a few red and others of any color. Tic Tacs, Smarties, or any other capsule or pill-shaped candy would also be suitable.



EYELID PROPS: There's so little time and so much to do! Can't stay awake a moment longer? Here is the answer, and it is drug free!

Pockets places two matchsticks in the bag, and these can be used to prop open both eyes.

GAG BAGS

By Ted "Twaddles" White

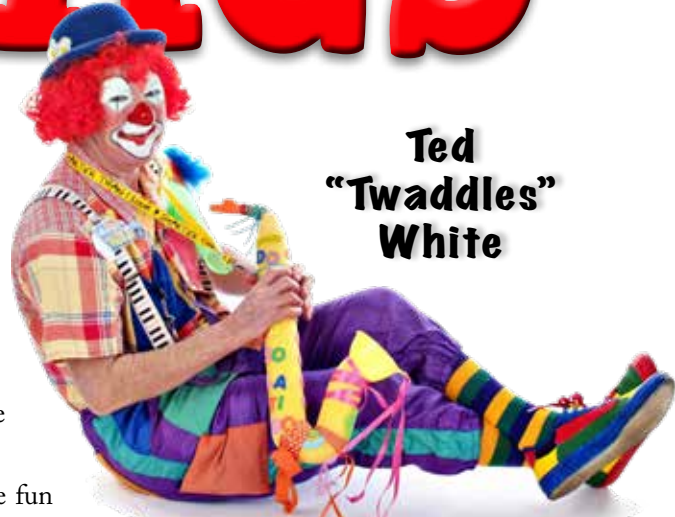
The clear plastic resealable bags currently in use are about four inches across the top, so these labels are four inches long. If you want to use narrower bags, you may prefer to have the page of labels sent to you as a JPG so you can adjust the size to suit.

What has she put in the bags this time? A couple of thumbtacks are in the bag. What could be "tackier" than this? To avoid injury, Pockets sticks the thumbtacks into a small block of polystyrene foam.

Most importantly, have fun! Have fun making these and have a lot more fun handing them out and interacting with the people in front of you.

Ted "Twaddles" White served as the COAI International RVP 2014-2020. Contact him by email at twaddles2014@hotmail.com. **TNC**

Ted
"Twaddles"
White



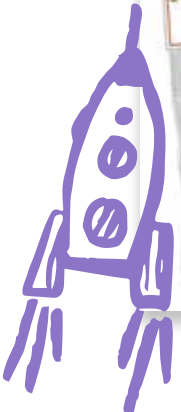
MAN-UP PILLS

We have all heard that the mere male is more sensitive to minor ailments than the female. These pills are the perfect solution for the treatment of Man Flu and all other imagined illnesses.

Man Flu (noun): An ailment that causes the male to feel sicker and more helpless than any other person ever. In females, this is known as a mild cold.

Directions: One tablet to be taken by male when acting like a nancy.

Ten or so Smarties are in the bag. Once again, there are many other tablet or capsule-shaped candies that could be used.



THIS IS JUST TACKY:

Sometimes, you might need to be a little different in giving gifts. Some folks just don't deserve the very best, so we try to cater for all tastes. This is the tackiest gift that can be found.

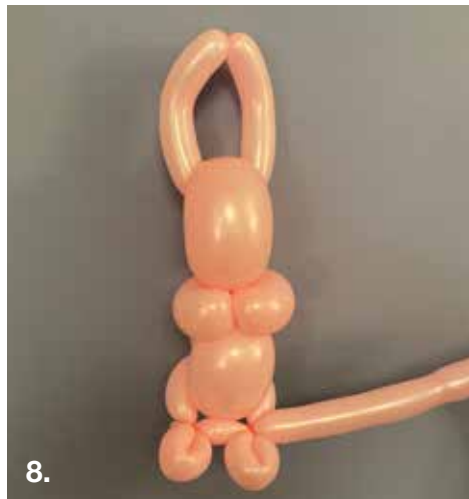


Precious Bunny

By Patricia "Pockets" Bunnell



1. Inflate a bubblegum pink 360 about halfway. Form two three-inch pinch twists and set it aside.
2. Inflate a bubblegum pink 160 halfway. Form two eight-inch bubbles. Tie off and discard the rest..
3. Form a four-finger bubble. Slide the 160 onto the 360. Form another four-finger bubble on the 360.
4. Twist the two bubbles on the 360 together, encapsulating the 160.
5. Form two six-finger bubbles for the bunny's body. Deflate and tie off the 360.
6. Inflate another 160, leaving a six-inch tip. Form a small loop and a pinch twist.
7. Slide the 160 through the body of the bunny. Make an eight-inch bubble and then form a small loop and a pinch twist on the end of the bubble. This forms the hind legs and feet.



7. Make a two-finger bubble and twist in at the opposite loop (foot).
8. Make a bubble on the 160 the same size as its body. Wrap it around the head.
9. Make another forearm the same size as the first and twist in at the foot.
10. Add a nose by forming a small bubble from a fuchsia 160. Insert this between the two cheeks of the bunny. Add artwork!

11.



Patricia "Pockets" Bunnell is an award-winning balloon artist from the Portland, Oregon, area. You may reach her by e-mail at oddballoon@gmail.com.

LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL

By Patricia “Pricilla Mooseburger” Manuel

istock/eskemer

Our world has been turned upside down. The good news is that there is a light at the end of the tunnel. I believe we will emerge from Covid-19 with a better understanding of our need for interpersonal communication. No doubt, we have all dealt with the fear of getting ill. We cannot underestimate the damage done from the loneliness we have all felt due to our isolation. Even if we are not isolated, we are dealing with loved ones who are. It is time to look forward! Let’s get reconnected and start clowning again!

Originally, Red Nose Readers was created as an in-classroom interactive reading and anti-bullying program. Readers went into the classroom, transformed into a clown before the students’ eyes, read a favorite story, did a silly routine (usually involving the teacher or assistant), and shared a message of kindness and acceptance of people who are different. That message still holds true and is more important than ever. Now, our readers are putting their shows together by filming them on their phones or using interactive Zoom-type platforms. Every school is doing it. They all have the technology. Teachers are still trying to get children engaged as they return to the classroom. You can be a part of this program. While you probably won’t get back into the classroom this year, you can still do Zoom shows for them. Check it out at www.rednosereader.org.

Summer is right around the corner. Now is the time to contact your park and recreation departments and local libraries. Outdoor story time is perfect for the Red Nose Reader message! Everyone can be socially distanced. I do not want to take away from entertainers who have made their living doing library shows. Volunteers still have a role to play in our community. Reach out and see where your talents can fit in. Outdoor events are more important than ever. Even a closed library has people working behind the scenes. Send an email or make a call and leave a message. Reach out to your local Head Start program and let them know you are interested in the upcoming school year. This will give you plenty of time to get your show together. Networking and building relationships early are the keys! Don’t wait until everything is back to “normal,” whatever that will look like. Reach out to every facility where you have performed in the past. Reach out to new ones! Let them know you are ready to work with them to develop programs that will work for them. Be open to their ideas.

- Set up a home studio for your recordings. Not everyone can afford a green screen, but a neutral yet colorful curtain can do the trick.
- Get a tripod to hold your phone or camera. Check your lighting.
- Practice filming your performances with your camera. Pro tip: turn it sideways for a better recording.



- Send it to a friend and get him or her to give you a critique.
- When you are recording, think of Fred Rogers from *Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood*. He talked to the camera like it was a real live audience. Be upbeat, friendly, and fun!
- Don’t wait to have a set gig. Make some recordings so you have examples to share.

Be brave! A year ago, I never would have thought I would have made dozens of recordings. Now, I am doing it for my business and church! You can, too!

Take advantage of what our clown community has to offer. Red Nose Reader provides a full program with background checks, scripts, and helpful tools for school and library performances. Mooseburger e-Alley helps you learn how to navigate Zoom with monthly meetings, continuing clown arts education, and fun. Share your alley’s joy! Mooseburger e-Alley online clown club wants your COAI alley to be a part of one of our online meetings! It’s easy to do! We want your alley representatives to talk about your club and some of the favorite things you do. You can share what you are looking forward to getting back to post-Covid or plans for the future. It’s easy!

- Choose a representative(s) and contact me at pricilla@mooseburger.com.



Tricia Manuel, Denise Barnaal, Marie Mavencamp, and Jane Kinney.

- Your alley rep will receive an email with the link to the Mooseburger e-Alley Zoom meeting.
- Share that email with all your club members, and they can all attend the meeting!
- Be prepared to share the great news about your club for twenty minutes! It's easy and fun!
- No membership is required. Enjoy the meeting, the education, the fun and games, and the sharing.

I can say that Covid has been a blessing in the new and creative ways I have been forced to look at my business. It has been a very exciting year. It's true there haven't been many costume sales, and Mooseburger Camp did get canceled twice. However, we now have the Mooseburger e-Alley, The Joyful Journey three-day online clown arts education conference, and new, exciting ideas for the Red Nose Reader program. People asked me why I started my clown

costuming business after I left Ringling Bros. as a clown. Well, there weren't a lot of jobs in Minnesota for used circus clowns! If you can't get a job, start your own business! Covid shut you down? Create new ways to clown!

We are doing our part to keep us connected, educated, and entertained at www.mooseburger.com.

Join today with six or more and you get a 10% discount. To get this deal do not order online. Call my office or email with the names, phone numbers, and addresses of all your group. One credit card or check needs to pay for the group. I can explain the details when you call. Everyone will be a full member once they pass the simple background check.
TNC

HAVE YOU TOLD A FRIEND ABOUT COAI?

**Give an application
or gift a membership
today!**



On behalf of Niagara Clown Alley,
Jim Donoughe, and Connie Morrow,
we'd like to give our thanks to the
following entertainers and lecturers
who came to our aid in our
time of crisis to make the
Mightier COAI Virtual Convention
a huge success!

Avner Eisenberg	David Kaye	Duane Laflin
David Bartlett	Buster Balloon	Heather Green
Mama Clown	Easily Amused	Joe Barney
Greg McMahan	Lee Andrews	Bubba Sikes
Rebecca Kanar	Roy Stone	Steve Hart
Alene Kraus	Bonnie Corcia	Scott Corell
Dave Hill	Mike Bednarek	Hal Grant
Barb Field	Barb Bird	Carol Marx
Adam Schill	Merrily Johnston	Dale McKenzie
Ruth Ceretto	Frank Bunton	Myke Hutchings
Adam Kreutinger	Priscilla Mooseburger	
Leslie Ann Akin	Crissy Melnitzke	
Jackie Reynolds	Kornpop McCullough	



And our Board Members who helped moderate:

Beth Cedarholm Alene Kraus
Sarah Rummells Smith
Alyshia Marie Turner
Regina Hernandez Wollrabe
Kesha Beckley
Gloria Sterrett
Adam Schill

Special Thanks to:

Mike Cox for keeping us grounded.

Ann Sanders, Bunky and Teresa Gretton, Sue Marranconi and Joe Barney for answering our questions when we were dazed and confused.

Sandra Winstead and Frank Bunton for their help with the hotel planning.

Glenn Kohlberger for helping us with ads and advertising with his usual sense of humor.

Adam Schill for manning the website and helping with credit card registrations.

Paul Kleinberger who checked up on us each week to make sure we weren't having any problems.

Lorice Bolde, Barbara Bird, and Sue Marranconi for donating to the goody bags.

LEARN HOW TO CREATE YOUR OWN FOAM PROPS!

SEARCH THE ARCHIVES OF THE NEW CALLIOPE
1990 SEP/OCT ISSUE



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Have you taken a dive into **THE VAULT** yet?

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Revitalize and improve your skills during this challenging time in history, or just be inspired. **It's FREE.** There's treasure waiting to be rediscovered in **THE VAULT. mycoai.com.** Then click on **THE VAULT.** You're in!

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THE LAST WALK-AROUND

James “Crazy Frosty” Adams

James Adams passed away February 6, 2021, from multiple health problems. He is survived by his wife and partner, Linda “Snowflake” Adams; sons, John and Jason; daughter, Jessica; and their families. Jim began his clown career in 1962 when he answered a radio call for a clown to visit a children’s hospital in Boston, where he was stationed. As a natural class clown, he thought he could handle the job. After talking to the head nurse, he outfitted himself with a thrift store hobo costume and dime store makeup. He admitted that he probably scared more children than he entertained, but he did make them laugh, and he looked forward to his visits until his discharge in 1963. He married Linda in 1979, and within a year, she had her own clown costume and was his lovely assistant. They primarily did events like parades, fundraisers, and community events. In the mid-1980s, they took a clown class through the Santa Barbara Adult Education Department. There, they learned clown history and hierarchy, and Frosty changed from a hobo to an auguste clown. He began his party clown business and joined COAI. Frosty and Snowflake attended their first COAI convention and participated in all the classes and competitions. James became skilled at balloon art, improved his performances, and loved interacting and learning from the many talented clowns that he met there. It was another beginning for him, and he began mentoring others in the Modesto area. He trained his best friend, Wayne “Snickers” Bare, who also came to conventions and became an accomplished

clown and balloon artist. Frosty attended conventions for many years and eventually taught a few classes on making parties more entertaining. Snowflake taught classes on face painting and contributed several articles to *The New Calliope* magazine. For several years, Frosty was the DJ for the awards banquet. Frosty put away his clown face each December to portray Santa for parties and corporate events. Many children in the region grew up with the same Santa, an annual tradition. His health declined enough that, by 2005, he had to put away his clown persona, and it was the last year for Santa, also. Although he lived quietly, he always had a joke or wisecrack to make everyone smile. He always promoted ethical and educated clowning, promoted COAI, and offered advice and training to all persons interested in clowning.

Wanda “Buddy” Boyce

Wanda Boyce, 97, of San Diego, California, passed away March 21, 2021. Wanda was born in Lincoln, Nebraska, and moved to California at four years old. Wanda graduated from Santa Ana High School and taught dancing at the Arthur Murray studio, where she met her husband, Forrest, who was a Marine. Together they had four children. Wanda studied clowning two nights a week at San Diego State in the 1980s as a student of Pokey Patty and Dee Gee. She later joined and performed with the San Diego State Clown Club. The club performed at hospitals, nursing homes,



and parades. They also worked at parties for disabled children at the beach. Wanda had many clown characters as an auguste clown, including Buddy, L.O. Weez, Fargo, and Bonkers. Wanda continued to perform, even after she stopped driving. In 2015, at the Boo Parade, a young reporter tried to keep up with her and finally gave up. She was a strong-willed woman who insisted on sitting on the back row of the San Diego All Star Clowns and Family Entertainers meetings, though her voice was still consistently heard. She earned the nickname Wicked Wanda! She always carried a small bag of walkaround items. She could entertain for hours with her little bag. She loved spending time with people and entertaining them, particularly her children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren.

Marilyn “Cheery-O” Hollinger

Marilyn Hollinger, 88, of Omaha, Nebraska, passed away February 8, 2021. She was a much loved member of Omaha’s Wild Clowndum, Alley 147. She was a clown of exceptional joy for thirty-three years and was loved by one and all. Marilyn made it her life’s mission to accept everyone. She would listen, give support, show empathy, and share her faith. She loved to have fun, and her laugh and skills as a clown made her a favorite of many in Omaha. She was best known for her hospital ministry, taking balloons to the sick, performing faith-based skits for youth services, doing face painting at charity events, and performing magic and storytelling at birthday parties. Marilyn was a strong member of the Omaha Alley. She took the jobs no one else wanted, such as asking members to sign up for shifts at our annual Septemberfest. It was hard to say no to Marilyn. We will miss



her constant smile, her sparkling eyes, and her infectious giggle. We are all grateful for her presence among us for all these years. Marilyn was preceded in death by her daughter, Lisa Hollinger; siblings, Melvin, Eldon "Bud", Leo, Franklin, and June Sobotka. She is survived by her loving husband of sixty-eight years, Ernest "George;" children, Vicki (Dave) Contreras, Gloria (George) Pulliam, and Chris (Jerry) Lorentzen; grandchildren, Sean (Shannon) and Derek Contreras, Amy (Dustin) Ream, Angie (Luke) McConkey, Mandy (Patrick) Salesberry, and Scott (Laura) Lorentzen; great-grandchildren, Gavin, Brody, Tabitha, Creighton, Harrison, Aniston, Ellison, Weston, Tenley, Kyson, Noah, Nyla, Nash, Collin, and Adelyn; and sister, Martha (Rodney) Davis.

Thomas "Pop" Patterson

We are sad to say that Pop left St. Clair's Happy Clowns on May 28, 2020. Thomas Patterson was a natural at clowning around. As he neared retirement from his job in 2000, he fulfilled a longtime dream and attended Mooseburger Camp. For the next several years, he delighted children with his antics at library functions, church events, and birthday parties in Northeast Mississippi, where he retired. Eventually, Tom and his wife bought a home in Murfreesboro, Tennessee. Pop became a Happy Clown of St. Clair's Senior Citizen Center, where he was an inspiration and teacher to the other happy clowns. He will surely be missed.



Jeanne "Freckles the Clown" Woska

Jeanne Woska, 73, originally of Howard Beach, New York, peacefully passed away at home on January 24, 2021, after a long battle with cancer. Jeanne was the daughter of the late Joseph Schittig and Catherine Feeney.

She was married for fifty-four years to the love of her life, Richard C. Woska, whom she met when she was only thirteen at a trampoline gym. Jeanne spent the last forty years of her career as a professional clown working with Clowns of America International. Jeanne served as the historian for COAI and on the Northeast Clown Council for many years. She helped run regional conferences in the Northeast and was a frequent judge for international and regional conventions. She served her clown alley, the Greater Hartford Alley, Alley 107, as President, Vice President, and board member. She also helped her alley win the COAI Alley CHARLIE Award two times. She competed and won in many categories, including Comedy Whiteface, Auguste, Lite Auguste, Character Clown, Tramp/Hobo, Group Skit, and Single Skit.



She was honored with the Clown of the Year award in 2010 and with a Lifetime Achievement Award for her more than twenty-five years of service to clowning. She enjoyed investing in the growth of other clowns, and her advice and assistance was deeply appreciated by her many colleagues and friends. Jeanne was an artist her entire life. She dealt with all her troubles by cracking jokes to make everyone around her smile and feel comfortable, no matter how serious the circumstances. She was extremely loving and giving to everyone that knew her. She is survived by her loving husband, Richard; children, Charles and Cathy (Chris) Carroll; grandchildren, Kimberly (Trey) Horne, Cas, Christine, and Jessica Carroll; great-grandchildren, Raygen and Addleigh Horne; siblings, Joanne (Thomas) Pigoski, Elizabeth (Patrick) McCarthy, and Jack (Kathy) Schittig; and many nieces and nephews, great nieces and nephews, in-laws, and friends. Donations can be made on her behalf to the American Cancer Society, P.O. Box 22478, Oklahoma City, OK 73123. Cards can be sent to Richard Woska and Cathy Woska Carroll, 37 Neelans Road, Enfield, CT 06082.

Write for The New Calliope!

We count on you to keep this magazine chock full of interesting and educational clown fun. But you may be thinking, "I don't have anything to write about." Never fear! Here is a list of topics we'd love to see featured in upcoming issues.

Your Favorite Story: Share a favorite experience in your clown career that makes you pause and say, "This is why I do what I do."

Costumes: How do you make a costume on a budget? How do you care for and clean your costume? How does your clown face affect your costume choices?

Noses: Tell us about them. What goes into choosing a nose? What are the pros and cons of a glue-on versus a nose attached with string? We'd even welcome hilarious incidents with clown noses.

Wigs: How do you choose a wig? What constitutes a quality clown wig versus a cheap knockoff? How does your clown persona affect choosing a wig?

Skits, Patter, and Movement: We'd like some in-depth looks on the process and methodology behind putting together a good clown routine.

Marketing and Taxes: How do you market yourself as an entertainer? How do you handle payments? Do you know an accounting expert? How about interviewing them.

Hospital Clowning: Benefits, cautions, best practices.

Places We've Been: Are you a globe trotter? Maybe you've clowned in all manner of strange places here in the States. Tell us about your adventures!

If you're interested in contributing, e-mail us at thenewcalliope@gmail.com.

CLOWN COMICS

INSPIRATION AND HUMOR

THE EYES HAVE IT

By Ann "Tuttles" Sanders

★ Stage Manager: Harold "Ducky" Wood. Starring: Jerry "Dr. Dufus" Dodson, Courtney "Dally" Harris, Jeremy "Dilly" Manning, Kathy "Sparkles" McPherson, Evelyn "Giggles" Smith. Members of Kolonial Klowns of Williamsburg – Alley #357

Photos by Tim "Sawdust" Laynor



YOU CAN BE A KID-SHOW CELEBRITY!

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DAVID GARRARD'S SKETCH-O-MAGIC

Show a sketch pad of a dozen different faces. The pages are cut into three segments—forehead, eyes and nose, and mouth. Show the audience how you can create a variety of funny faces by flipping to different segments of the pages.



Ask three spectators make random selections as you flip through the book, stopping at the top of a head from one picture, eyes and a nose from another picture, and a mouth from another. Another spectator opens an envelope you previously gave him. He pulls out a picture—and it matches perfectly the audience's selection!

Strong, visual magic that gets the audience involved. Great for close-up or stage. You'll flip over it! **\$25**

SAMMY SMITH'S SUPER FROG

Show a picture of Super Frog wearing his hero cape. Slide him into an envelope, and give it to a magic helper for safekeeping. Then display an empty envelope and give it to another helper. Say the magic words, and Super Frog will jump from one envelope to the other ... or will he?

This cute and highly visual trick with a twist ending is easy to perform, and printed in three colors on high-quality materials. Made to last! **\$20**



SAMMY SMITH'S DEJA ZOO



A completely baffling trick for kid shows or grown-up audiences! No skill required!

Show a set of animal flash cards, each with a different zoo animal—Zebra, Kangaroo, Giraffe, Elephant, Lion, Tiger, Panda Bear, Snake, etc. The cards are large enough to be seen from a distance.

Two people in the audience THINK of an animal. You pick up two blank cards and make a quick sketch of the animals you believe they have thought about.

Your predictions are placed on a wooden display stand. When you turn the stand around, you have correctly guessed the two animals. You're a genius!

Absolutely no artistic skill is required! You never actually have to draw anything. The trick is gimmicked and ready to use right out of the package!

Everything is supplied: gimmicked cards, marker, card stand, and a routine by Samuel Patrick Smith. **\$35**

SAMMY SMITH'S PUFF THE MAGIC RABBIT

One of our most-requested items, this is part of our "Sammy Signature" series, and comes complete with a quality hand puppet and Sammy Smith's original "Puff the Magic Rabbit" routine word-for-word. **\$40**



SILLY BILLY'S MAGIC PARTY PICTURE

Turn any child in your audience into a magical artist! Show a simple, black-and-white drawing of a room set up for a birthday party, except there are no balloons, decorations, presents, or birthday candles. Have your volunteer write his name across the cake, draw candles on it, and write his age on a party hat in the crayon colors of his choice. Then he holds the picture facing away from the audience while they all say the magic words. When he turns the picture around, balloons, presents, and decorations have appeared in full color in the drawing! **\$20**



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