

THE NEW CALLIÖPE

For Members of Clowns of America International

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Lifetime Achievement Award
Tricia Manuel



Your COAI Officers

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



President
Michael B. Cox
9415 Alameda Ave
Richmond, VA 23294
804-270-1165 (H)
804-337-6143 (C)
coai.president.mike@gmail.com



Vice President
Merrily Johnston
2076 Begonia St.
Casper, WY 82604
360-713-3893



Secretary
Teresa Gretton
3411 Lisa Circle
Waldorf, MD 20601
301-843-8212
tgretton@comcast.net



Treasurer
Sandra Winstead
11801 Riverpark Way
Chesterfield, VA 23838
804-350-3687
strawberry.red1@yahoo.com

DIRECTORS



**Alley
Region Support**
Vacant



Conventions
Frank "Buff Phoon" Bunton
3129 25th Street #213
Columbus, IN, 47203-2436
812-371-5742
buffphoon@gmail.com



Education
Adam Schill
P.O. Box 1076
Columbus, IN, 47201
812-525-7429
adam@bigtopproductionsllc.com



Junior Joys
Regina Wollrabe
Post Office Box 40
Gresham, OR 97030
503-807-2584
coaijrjoys@gmail.com



Membership
Carrie Ray
413 East Ash Lane
Euless, TX 76039
214-577-6002
carriera10@yahoo.com

REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENTS



Northeast
Bill Le Blanc
2 Dee Jay Road
East Bridgewater, MA 02333
508-378-1545
bildabbles@aol.com



North Central
Sara "Special K's" Kreutz
P.O. Box 454 Holstein, IA, 51025
712-369-0809
sarakreutz@yahoo.com



Northwest
Alyse Axford
116-A Sudden Valley Drive
Bellingham, WA 98229-7751
360-647-9229
sales@zigzag-ragz.com



Midwest
Bobby Semon
663 Oranewood Dr.,
Virginia Beach, VA 23453
757-424-1288
bobby@bobbythecrown.com



Midwest
Beth "Pickles" Cedarholm
1450 River Ridge Rd.
River Falls, WI, 54022
715-426-0774
clownpickles@gmail.com



South Central
Matthew Spraggins
1668 Chesterwood Drive
Rockwell, TX 75032
972-746-8455
magicalmattyfun@gmail.com



Southeast
Caitrina "Simplicity" Monaco
6625 County Road 17 South
Sebring, FL, 33876
863-253-1867
coai.cmonaco@gmail.com



Southwest
Lisa Ponce de Leon Terai
710 Lukepane Avenue, #101
Honolulu, HI 96816
808-271-4190
lolly4upaint@gmail.com



Canada
Dale McKenzie
867 Raynard Crescent SE
Calgary, AB T2A 1X6
403-273-9047 (H)
403-606-7750 (C)
funehappenings@shaw.ca



Latin Countries
Angel Morales
24 RR5 Jardines de
Caparra, Bayamon,
PR 00959
787-565-3205
jobolin2008@aim.com



International
Ted White
20 Maple Court
Yandina, QLD 4561
Australia
+61-7-5472-8018
twaddles2014@hotmail.com

STANDING COMMITTEES

Audio Visual: Marilyn Barrett, 407-844-2862 • klowkop@prodigy.net.

Awards Advisory Council (AAC): Teresa Gretton (Chair), 301-843-8212 • gretton@verizon.net. Bob Gretton, Angel Ocasio, Keith Stokes, Mike Cox.

Budget: Mike Cox, 804-270-1165 • coai.president.mike@gmail.com. Sandra Winstead.

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Clown Week: Carrie Ray, 214-577-6002 • shimmygiggles2011@yahoo.com.

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Good Cheer: Crissy "Miz Daisy" Melnitzke • 863-221-4183 • crissy@mizdaisyentertainment.com.

Historian: Teresa Gretton, 301-843-8212 • tgretton@comcast.net.

International Ambassador Program: Bob Gretton, 301-843-8212 • bunkytclown@comcast.net.

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Parliamentary Procedure Advisor: Cleon Babcock, 515-266-6530 • ccbabcock@aol.com.

Public Relations: Bonnie Love, 619-282-9668 • bonbonsandiego@yahoo.com.

Scholarship: Adam Schill (Chair), 812-525-7429 • adam@bigtopproductionsllc.com

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COAI Business Office
Post Office Box 122
Eustis, Florida 32727

Telephone:
1-877-816-6941 (toll-free)
1-352-357-1676

Hours: Monday–Friday
9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (EST)
E-mail: coaioffice@aol.com
Website: www.mycoai.com

Magazine Production
SPS Publications, Inc.

Editorial Assistant
Rachel Strnad

Graphic Design
Jessica Friend
Tracy Hofmeister

Creative Consultant
Regina “Cha Cha” Wollrabe

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Tricia “Pricilla Mooseburger” Manuel

THE LUCKIEST CLOWN IN THE RING

By Rachel Strnad

Clowns of America International is proud to present the Lifetime Achievement Award to Tricia “Pricilla Mooseburger” Manuel for ... well, being herself! If you’ve been a member of COAI for any length of time, you will have heard the name Pricilla Mooseburger or Miss Moose numerous times: in *The New Calliope*, at conventions, on costume labels. Perhaps you get her newsletter. Maybe you’ve attended Moose Camp. In the world of clowning, it’s hard to think of something Tricia hasn’t done.

Which made it somewhat of a surprise to learn she hadn’t always wanted to be a clown. She didn’t even think about it till her Freshman year in college when she got the opportunity to clown in a local parade. “I knew I was going to be doing this for the rest of my life,” she remembers. “I really didn’t know how, and I wasn’t sure why, but I was so captivated by that experience that I knew it was something I had to do.”

Crazy Lucky

This revelation led to some experimentation. It was 1980, before the internet, so her search for further clown knowledge mostly involved talking with the local Shrine clown who had organized the parade. The rest she figured out on her own with some rudimentary knowledge of stage makeup. “I was lucky,” she admits. As the year progressed, lucky would turn out to be a colossal understatement.

The first piece of luck came as an opportunity to clown with a small troupe in California over the summer, living in a tent and performing up and down the coast. “The whole summer, I kept telling myself that I was doing this because I needed to really immerse myself in clowning to make sure it was what I really want to do.” It was, and while she was out there, she discovered an ad for The Ringling Brothers’ Clown College in the pages of *The New Calliope*. She filled out an application and her luck snowballed.

The college contacted her, requesting an audition, but there was no way Tricia could make it to Florida, or any place in between, to comply, let alone pay for travel expenses. “I talked my way in. I remember vividly saying, ‘If you just give me a chance, I will work really hard. I want to be the best clown I can be.’” They spoke several times. Tricia explained she was clowning with a small troupe. “So they knew my heart was in it. Ron Severini was my dean and he must have heard something in my voice that resonated with him. It was one of those things that was meant to be.”

Her acceptance letter arrived while she was still in California. Then came the next hurdle her luck had to get her over: asking her parents to borrow fifteen thousand dollars so she could drop out of college and go to clown school. “I will never forget the fear and trepidation of asking my parents to borrow money.



I was thinking, ‘Okay, if they say no, I’m going anyway and I have no idea how I’ll get the money to go.’”

However, after a long pause once she’d made her case, they did say yes, though they were still a little skeptical. Decades later, Tricia found out that her father turned to her mother after they hung up and said, “Go make sure there really is a clown college.”

The program began in September of 1982 down in Florida, then the winter quarters for the Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Circus. They had gotten a good deal on a beachfront hotel that was undergoing renovations. Tricia flew straight from California, and as she walked into the hotel courtyard, the full weight of what she was trying to do hit her like a badly mixed pie. “There were sixty of us, many of whom were trained clowns. There were people juggling torches, riding six-foot unicycles, passing clubs, all kinds of crazy stuff. I was so overwhelmed and frightened to see all these talented people, and I thought they’re going to find out I don’t know anything and send me home!”

After a good cry, though, she pulled herself together and told herself to keep her eyes and ears open and her mouth shut; maybe then they wouldn’t notice amongst the rest of the students. She did just that for the next grueling ten weeks while she learned to be the best circus clown she could. “It ended up being one of the most rewarding experiences of my



life. Some of those people are still my closest friends today.”

The school taught makeup, comic movement: how to fall, take a pie, do a double take. “There was a big emphasis on writing your own material,” she remembers. “Being a producing clown.” They also learned circus history and basic operations, as well as dealing with the press and conducting one’s self in an interview because it was no guarantee the students would get in the circus



Tricia the Clown fresh out of clown college in 1982.

simply because they went to the school. “It was pretty narrow even to get into clown college. Thousands of people applied and only sixty were taken.”

The instructors continually reported back to Irvin Feld, the circus owner, on those sixty students. At the end of the ten weeks, he arrived to judge their performance and material in a final Gala show. “I think if I had realized what I was trying to do, I’d have been totally intimidated and not done it.” But Tricia’s luck still held. “I had multiple appearances. I got a lot of my own material into the Gala. I worked with some really great clowns and we created some really fun stuff, got noticed, and we got jobs.”

On the Road

Tricia worked on *The Show*, as they call it, for three years. She lived on the train in a three-and-a-half by six-foot room and learned to work harder than she ever had. “I learned to clown through all the pain of life, when I was sick, tired, hurt. We had a joke that if you needed to cry, you’d bend over and blink so your tears would go straight down. When the whistle blew, you had to go out there and give it a hundred and ten percent.”



Above: Pricilla Mooseburger at the White House Easter Egg Hunt, 1983.

Left: Pricilla’s Kazoo Band during the All Star Clown Show, Moose Camp’s finale.

Nevertheless, Tricia holds memories of the circus as some of the best times in her life. In her second and third year on the show, she got the opportunity to ride Pootsie, one of the elephants, in a production number. You can read more about her experiences with the elephants in our 2018 March/April issue.

Beyond clowning, Tricia had plenty to do outside the ring, mostly in the sewing department. “I couldn’t pound a nail straight or build a prop, but I could sew. I did a lot of creative costume construction.” Again, these were the days before the Internet, and many times she wouldn’t even have a pattern. They’d request things like a bear costume and she’d have to figure out how to make one. “We learned to skip over ‘I can’t do that’ really fast because it was your job and because you had all kinds of creative people with you who figure out stuff, too.”

Clowning In California

In 1987, Tricia decided she needed a break. As wonderful as it was, life on the road was physically and emotionally demanding. She’d dislocated her knee in her first year and never fully healed. It was also hard being away from home. “It’s like being in the military. I missed my sister’s wedding, funerals, births. I missed everything because I was on the show fifty weeks out of the year.”



Pricilla Mooseburger promo shot, 1985.

Her usual luck kicked in, however, in the form of a contract Ringling signed with Disneyland California to provide acts for the show *The Circus at Disneyland*, which ran for ten weeks in the winter. The second year, Tricia moved out to California permanently. She found two other girl clowns to room with, and performed independently throughout the summer for birthday parties, schools, and company picnics. “That’s when clowns could make a living at this,” she remembers. “The birthday party market had fierce competition.”

This transition also gave birth to the Pricilla Mooseburger we know and love today. Ringling clowns never took on personas. “Circus clowning is so much an extension of who you are,” Tricia explains. “Like act people. This is what I do; I’m a juggler. I’m Tricia Manuel and I’m a circus clown.” Then, when she went to Disneyland, where everything is about being a character, Tricia the Clown fell flat as a name. “I was in a skit another clown and I had written, Professor Sprocket Weebuckel’s Potion, Lotion, Hair tonic, and Gearlobe Show, with *Tricia the Clown!* Well, that was really boring.” She didn’t have to look far afield to find a more interesting name, though. In high school, Tricia had styled herself as Pricilla Mooseburger for fun. Now, she re-introduced the alias as her clown

name. “A lot of people think that’s my real name, and that’s fine. I don’t correct them. I am Pricilla Mooseburger, and now I’m Miss Moose.”

Miss Moose, the Muppet

Creating Miss Moose was quite a leap for Tricia. Pricilla Mooseburger carried her through her twenties and thirties, teaching, performing, starting her costume business, but she had her drawbacks as Tricia got older. “I’m fifty-seven now. I used to wear contacts, so being a White Face wasn’t a problem, but I started having trouble with my eyes and got to the point where I had to wear glasses.” Pricilla Mooseburger was also not so great in a parade under the hot sun. “It was really hard to parade in a White Face in ninety degrees when I couldn’t see anymore. Plus, not to be vain ... but to be vain, what I looked like in my twenties is not what I looked like now close to being sixty. I’m more of a Muppet.”

Beyond the physical limitations of the persona, Tricia knew she had changed as a person. “When I first put makeup on and looked in the mirror, I thought I was beautiful. I was very critical about who I was and how I looked, and for the first time, I liked what I saw. I wanted to be the prettiest clown.” Now, Tricia realized she needed a persona that reflected who she was at fifty-seven, comfortable in her own skin. “Brenda Marshal is my hero because she was a White Face, and she made that change. I thought, ‘Wow, if she can do it, maybe I can do it, too.’”

After years of toying with the idea and test running looks in places where she wouldn’t endanger her brand, Tricia finally sat down with her design assistant and started working in earnest. “It was like getting a second wind in my career. I’m really happy with this character.”

Mooseburger Originals

This ability to step out of her comfort zone and adapt to meet her current needs is a quality that Tricia has brought to every venture she’s undertaken. While



Top to bottom: Ringling Clowns, 1988. Demonstrating clown makeup. Tricia and a member of her expansive rubber chicken collection enjoying Minnesota’s Polar Vortex last winter. Tricia on her way to class with the Red Nose Reader Program.

in California, costuming fell in her lap. “There were so many people who wanted me to sew for them.” She began by designing costumes for Ringling’s Clown College, then for a unit that went to Japan. When she discovered conventions and clown costume production companies, she decided she wanted in on the game. So, she got space, hired enough employees for mass manufacturing, and realized almost immediately that she had made a tactical error. Most of the conventions she’d likely sell at were on the east coast, and her family and support system were back in Minnesota.

Fortunately, Mooseburger Originals was small enough to relocate to her hometown, reopening in the back room of Tricia’s parents’ department store. When they retired, she took the whole building over, eventually expanding to a second building when they began the costume rental branch of the business. “A colleague of mine in Florida who runs a costume rental kept bugging me to do it, so I gave it a try and it just grew.” Renting out costumes also opened up a whole new, fun avenue of service. “I get to have fun dressing up other people, normal people. Clowns get to dress up all the time, but these people only get to dress up once, maybe twice a year.”

COAI and Moose Camp

It was around this time, the mid-nineties, that Tricia also joined the COAI board as Midwest Regional Vice President, though she couldn’t tell you exactly when she started. “I’ve been a member for so long, they might have to look back in their records to tell when I joined because I can’t remember.” During

her six years on the board, Tricia worked tirelessly on setting up the scholarship fund, which is still in place today. She also worked to help support the many regional organizations in existence at the time, and to standardize the dealers’ rooms for conventions.

The year of 1995 also saw the birth of her daughter, Julia, and Mooseburger Clown Camp. The first year, it was called Mooseburger University. The next year, she scaled things down, and the Mooseburger Camp we know today began officially in 1997 at a retreat center about seven miles from Tricia’s home.

“We do everything,” she explains. “It’s about training all types of clowns, from beginners who haven’t put on makeup before to those who are delving into advanced character development.” The camp is structured with coursework in the morning; students come signed up for specific things like puppetry, writing your own show, stage movement. In the afternoon, a plethora of workshops are open to everyone. At the end of the week, all attendees participate in a big public show in one of Tricia’s buildings. She provides the props and sets. *The All Star Clown Show* is Pricilla’s highlight of the camp. “Parents who can’t afford to take their kids to *Disney on Ice* or the circus can bring their kids for free to *The All Star Clown Show*. For the clowns, we want to give them opportunities like being in a clown gag with someone else, because a lot of clowns work by themselves. It’s a great opportunity to experience clowning in a group, which is great fun.”



Teaching a comic movement class.



Everyone gets to have some good, clean fun during the Moose Camp pie fight!

This year’s Moose Camp is also special because many attendees have signed up to participate in the first Clown Summit, Tricia’s brain child, to address the current state of clowning and its future. Tricia organized the summit in part because of the direction she’s seen clowning go in the public’s perception. “When I started clowning, every kid of means in the metro area had a clown at their birthday party. People put themselves through college, or their kids through college with their businesses. It was wonderful and everyone loved clowns. I don’t remember, and I was at Disneyland with thousands upon thousands of people every day, anyone being afraid. And now it’s a big thing.”

Fighting the Scary Clown Image

Taking something innocent and twisting it isn’t new, so perhaps it was inevitable pop culture would get around to clowns eventually. “I remember watching *Killer Clowns from Outer Space* with some clown friends near the end of my time in California,” Tricia remembers. “We laughed at how stupid it was. We thought nobody’s going to be scared by this. It’s ridiculous!” But then came the first *It* movie, commercials with scary clowns, *American Horror Story*, and a whole media generation that twisted the image into something horrifying. Big box stores saw an opportunity and started producing scary clown merchandise. “We’re naïve in the best possible sense,” Tricia explains.

“When you first put on makeup and have kids laughing and shouting to take your picture, you feel like a rock star. It didn’t occur to us that this could be damaged or threatened and we didn’t really know how to fight it.”

Then in 2016, the scary clown in the woods hoax hit the internet. “That just devastated the clown world,” Tricia explains. “I had times when the only reason my phone was ringing was that people were calling me to tell me their events were cancelled, or they were being asked not to come to the hospital or nursing home they’d been going to for fourteen years.” And if clowns couldn’t clown, they weren’t going to buy anything for their acts, which caused a crash in the clown supply business.

Given all this, Tricia put on her thinking cap and came up with two strategies to help her clown community. The first was the Summit. “I honestly felt that if we could put our smart brains together and figure out some ideas, we could help ourselves and promote the positive image of a clown.” With Mooseburger Camp as her vehicle, she set out to bring members of the three international organizations, World Clown Association, COAI, and the Shrine Clowns together. “We have some really smart people who have signed up. We’re so proud of them because they are choosing not to work on their own personal growth but using their resources and time to come up with ideas for the greater good of clowning.”

The second strategy is Red Nose Readers, which promotes clowning in the classroom. This used to be a normal

occurrence. “I would put on my make-up in front of the kids, do a little pantomime, and then read. It was fun. Kids learned about clowns and no one was afraid. So now, I thought maybe we need to go back to our roots and show kids that clowns aren’t scary.” Tricia got together with several colleagues, most of whom are former teachers, and enlisted the help of her local Head Start program. “We wrote the script. We created a teacher’s packet, a letter for the kids to take home, and a booklet with coloring pages. It’s a great program.” And so far, no one has been afraid.

Caring clowning in particular is where Tricia sees the art thriving in the future. Things can’t go back to the way they were, but by being creative and working to be more service oriented, clowns can continue to show the world we’re still needed. This might be in a room of Head Start kids, at a nursing home, in a hospital, a cancer walk, or special Olympics, anywhere they can bring joy. “That is so much more fun. It just feeds your soul. You are your truest self when you are in clown. When I put that purple wig on, I get to leave behind all my worries, all my troubles, all my aches and pains. And if I can do that for myself, then I’m in a position to do that for someone else. Go ahead, laugh at me, you can’t worry about yourself if you’re laughing at me.”

In The Family

Tricia’s heart of clowning has spilled over into her family as well. In fact, her adopted son, DJ, came into their family through clowning. When he was young, a Moose Camp staff member approached

Tricia about allowing him to come to camp. “I’d seen him around the community. I thought he was a sweetheart, but I didn’t really know him.” At first, Tricia said no; he wasn’t old enough, but the staff member insisted, and she finally made an exception. DJ attended camp every year from then on. “By the time he was a senior, we realized he needed a family. We both had a discussion because he needed a mom and I needed a son, so we unofficially adopted one another.”

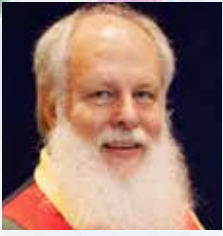
Watching her son and daughter perform is one of Tricia’s most cherished memories, right alongside performing with them. “Performing with my daughter is just magic. We have a show called *The Story of Two Clownies, A Moosical*. It’s just a riot.” Julia grew up clowning, and followed in her mother’s footsteps as a Ringling clown. She still performs and teaches, but she is also studying sign language interpretation.

Tricia sees the clown community as her family as well. “Watching the clowns do their thing, that’s the same thing as watching my son and daughter. These are all my people. I just want to thank the clown community at large. It has enabled me to live this dream. I’m very grateful and I feel very blessed for all the clowns out there who were open to my nutty ideas and supported me. Just the love that comes from the clown community—I have never known of any group of people like that and I’m really honored and blessed to be one of them.”

We are blessed to have you as one of us, Tricia. Here’s to many more years of nuttiness. **TNC**

Although Tricia was not born with a red nose, she has dedicated her life to the art of clowning. She is a constant advocate for passing along the positive Clown Legacy. Tricia Manuel has moved steadily forward promoting the Art of Clowning. However, her greatest contribution has been passing the art to her daughter, Julia, and her son, DJ. She is a true teacher and role model. I tip my red nose to a lady who has made a difference in our clown world and truly lives clowning every day.—*Cheri “Cherioats” Venturi*

Tricia is definitely one of our very best. Her sharing of her experiences and things she learned under the big top has brought the real world of the circus to thousands of town clowns. Her teaching at conventions, local alleys, and at her outstanding Mooseburger Camp is tireless, and through this she has singlehandedly raised the look and the performance of today’s clown. As a lifetime member of COAI, a past president, treasurer, and recent board member, I have been around for a long time. Tricia Manuel represents the very, very best we are as clowns.—*Judy “Dear Heart” Quest*



From the President

Mike "Bonkers" Cox

I want to thank everyone for the phone calls, cards, flowers, and messages regarding my wife, Barbara "Sweet Thang" Cox's passing. Your thoughts and prayers have really been appreciated and it's been very humbling to hear all the great comments made about her. She will be greatly missed! Our clowns are the BEST!

Well, by the time you read this, the 2019 convention will be over and thoughts of the 2020 convention will be on everyone's mind! Wait a minute for breaking news ... I think I hear the noise of a waterfall! Slowly, I turn ... could it be? ... please stand by as we announce our 2020 COAI Convention site! You will not want to miss this one.

Question—now that the 2018–2019 fiscal year is close to ending, what do you as a COAI member want from your board for 2019–2020? I will be starting my last year (yes, it is time) as your President on July 1, 2019, but I want to hear from our members: What do you want to see done? What can this board do for you and COAI? You can e-mail me (see inside cover for address), mail me a letter, mail your Regional VP, or any board member! Let's communicate better and do it now. Do you have ideas for increasing our overall membership numbers? More benefits of being a COAI member? Let us know what you want. This board works for you, so put us to work! Don't let COAI stagnate. Let's be proactive.

We still do not have a Director of Alley and Regional Support as of this writing, and I am flabbergasted no member has come forward to take on this important position within YOUR organization. As president, I am responsible for nominating members, and no one wants to step up. Alleys are important! Our regions are important! Is there a problem with this current board that no one wants to be part of it? I would like to know.

And finally, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to be your president. This position has a lot of responsibilities, but it is a FANTASTIC board that makes this organization click! And I thank each board and committee member for a job well done. **TNC**



Vice President's Report

Merrily Johnston

Starting or Growing Your Business

COAI exists to help our members spread the joy of clowning. Our clown family includes those who do volunteer work, as well as others who perform professionally, either full-time or part-time.

In the next couple of issues, I will share some ideas on the business side of clowning—how to start or grow your business. Whether you entertain full-time or clowning is more a hobby, you can be as busy as you like. I would like to see all of our members successful in their clowning, so I will share the things that have worked for me in my twenty-one years of full-time clowning experience.

When you consistently deliver *exceptional service* and provide a *memorable experience*, you are already halfway there. We all know that the best advertising is "word of mouth," so always be exceptional! We just need to get people to see how amazing we are. (And you are all amazing!)

I have some experience, as I've started Merrily-Go-Round Entertainment several times in the last twenty-one years. I moved from Washington State to New Jersey to Pennsylvania to Oregon, and now I have been in Wyoming just over a year. Within a few short months of being here, I booked three weekly restaurants and jobs at many

corporate events, senior centers, schools, family gatherings, and birthday parties.

One thing I've heard entertainers say is, "There isn't enough work to go around because there are too many clowns in my city." My answer to that is *never!* I've lived in areas where there were lots of clowns, and that only meant there were many people that I could share my excess jobs with. If you haven't heard of the Law of Abundance, check it out. My mantra has always been, "Find people who don't know they need me until they see me in action."

Decide how much work you want, and in my next couple of articles, I will help you find ways to make it happen! And remember: The world needs us and the joy we bring! **TNC**

VOTE, VOTE, VOTE!

By Ted "Twaddles" White

Bylaws and Rules Committee Chairman

There are no elections of COAI Officers this year, but we do have a proposed bylaw change that the membership must vote on.

This proposed bylaw amendment, approved by the Bylaws and Rules Committee, was printed in the January/February issue of *The New Calliope* and will be presented to the General Membership Meeting at the COAI Convention on Tuesday May 7, 2019, which commences at 1:00 p.m. at Texas Station Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada.

This proposed bylaw amendment will not be voted on at the General Membership Meeting, but will be presented to the entire COAI membership for voting.

Our bylaws are important, and from time to time it becomes necessary to make some changes to ensure the organization provides the best conditions for our members. For this to be successful and effective, You must be actively involved and cast your vote for the benefit of all members.

All ballots must be received by midnight June 7, 2019, USA Eastern Standard Time.

You may vote online at www.mycoai.com. Please review the proposed amendment and if you have any questions, e-mail me and I will respond as soon as I can.

Ted "Twaddles" White has been the COAI International RVP since 2014. Contact him by e-mail at twaddles2014@hotmail.com.

PROPOSED CHANGE TO BYLAWS.

The following proposed amendment will be presented at the Annual General Membership Meeting in 2019.

Amend ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP, Section 1. Paragraph c.

"Family membership shall be open to anyone whose parent, spouse, or adult sibling residing in the same household is a regular member in good standing of COAI."

Amend to read: "Family membership shall be open to anyone eight (8) years of age or over whose parent, spouse, or adult sibling residing in the same household is a regular member in good standing of COAI. A Family Member must then abide by all the COAI rules for his/her age group. Example: an eight- to fifteen-year-old Family Member shall have no voting privileges and may not compete as an adult member."

RATIONALE: This will remove the misunderstanding (loophole) that led to a young child Family Member competing as an adult at a COAI Convention.

Submitted by Ted White, COAI Bylaws & Rules Committee Chairman.



HOW TO VOTE ONLINE

Voting is simple. Just follow the directions below.

Sign in to your account at www.mycoai.com with your username and password. If you do not know your username and password or do not have them yet, call the COAI Business Office at 1-352-357-1676. Please note that you may not vote using another member's login information.

Click on "Membership" in the top menu.

Click on "Election Ballot" in the drop-down menu.

Check to see that your COAI number and your region are correct at the top of the form.

Complete the form.

Double check your entries and click "Submit" at the bottom of the page. You have voted!

Thank you for participating.

Moving?

Please send your change of address to the

COAI Business Office
Post Office Box 122
Eustis, Florida 32727



Ice Cream SUMMER FUN

By Tim "Saw Dust" Laynor of Kolonial Klowns



When you want a refreshing summer treat, you naturally think of ice cream! Therefore, as the temperatures rise, it is a perfect time to add ice cream jokes to your summer entertainment.

Special thanks to Jerry "Dr. Dufus" Dodson for sharing the following idea: Using the three pictures provided, ask, "From what kind of cow do you get vanilla ice cream?" Show the card with the white cow and say, "A vanilla cow."

Next ask, "Do you know what kind of cow gives you chocolate ice cream?" Show the card with the brown cow and say, "That's right! A chocolate cow."

Before you show the final picture, ask if anyone knows the name of the ice cream that has stripes of strawberry, vanilla, and chocolate. You may or may not get the response Neapolitan. If not, supply the answer yourself or say all the flavor names quickly enough they run together as one word: strawberryvanillachocolate.

Then announce that you have searched far and wide to find the cow who gives this three-flavor combination. Show the multi-colored cow with a flourish.

The pictures often lend themselves to some rather interesting conversations!

Here are a few other ice cream jokes for you to share:

A man entered the ice cream shop and asked, "What kinds of ice cream do you have?"

"Vanilla, chocolate, and strawberry," the clerk wheezed, patted her chest, and coughed.

"Do you have laryngitis?" the man asked.

"No," she whispered. "Just vanilla, chocolate, and strawberry."

Why do newspaper reporters hang out at the ice cream shop? *They are always looking for a scoop!*

Why did the ice cream truck break down? *Because of the Rocky Road!*

What's an electrician's favorite ice cream flavor? *Shock-A-Lot!*



From the Treasurer

Sandra Winstead

Dear COAI Members,

For the first time in more than ten years we are raising dues. Membership rates are going up by \$5, except for Jr. Joeys.

As a board we considered several factors before making this decision. We have improved a number of your member benefits, such as adding access to The Vault (thirty-six years of *Calliopes!*), renewing your dues online, a new and improved website, a great insurance program at a reasonable price, and the online alley for those members who don't live near an alley! Hal Grant is doing an amazing job with that alley.

Even though our Jr. Joey rates aren't going up, that program is outstanding as well, thanks to Regina Wollrabe.

We also recently added an online edition of *Clowning Basics*, COAI's go-to book for all things clown, for our members to enjoy for free. And we just created another free resource, David Ginn's *Starting in Magic* book, which you can view at www.mycoai.com.

The board knows this isn't the only volunteer organization you can belong to, and we appreciate your continued membership in COAI. Sometimes it is easy to lose track of how many improvements we have made, and we all know that costs, like postage, have risen in the last decade. We mail thousands of *Calliopes* to members six times every year, and that postage increase is significant for us.

Raising dues seemed inevitable, but we did it because we thought there was enough value in the additional benefits we provide to warrant it, and we hope you understand that we have increased costs to cover. The board voted for as low an increase as possible—considerably less than the actual rate of inflation in the past ten-plus years.

We have more exciting member benefits in the works, which you will be reading about soon! We look forward to continuing to serve our members in new and exciting ways.

Thank you for your support!



JUNIOR JOEYS

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



Beginning Juggling

What happened to the sick juggler? I don't know, but he kept throwing up.

When you're performing a juggling routine and you drop a ball you could say, "This is where my act starts picking up!" Or, "Wow! Did you feel that big gust of wind?" Then you could juggle the balls on the floor and announce, "This is called *floor juggling!*"

Many times when I'm clowning around, kids will ask if I can juggle. I will then pull out my clubs or balls and juggle for them. They will say, "Oh, wow, you are a real clown!" I'm not sure why people make that connection, but I have found it a good skill to have.

You do not have to be an expert juggler to put a little routine into your act. If you are eight years old and older, it's a good time to start learning these skills. Not only is it great for clowning, juggling will also help you improve in your math and reading skills! It's a brain thing, and the process of throwing and catching creates a neurological chemical reaction in your brain that improves and strengthens your ability to focus and concentrate. Juggling takes concentration, which causes you to think about what you are doing at the moment, and that causes you to forget about your problems at school or home. This is why it is said that juggling helps relieve stress. Juggling is great exercise that helps you burn calories; it helps your brain grow and is believed to help fight memory loss.

Let's talk about the techniques we have chosen for our criteria page to help you get a good start in learning how to juggle. If you do not have scarves, you can use plastic grocery bags. If you would like to try juggling balls, you can make them out of balloons with rice inside. We have a video on this very thing on our COAI Jr. Joeys YouTube channel connected to our website at www.mycoai.com.

Cascade: Hold the scarves in the center and let the rest of the cloth fall down so it looks like a ghost. Have two scarves in one hand and one scarf in the other hand. Toss one of the scarves from the hand that has two. Then toss the scarf from the other hand, and finally the last scarf that is in the first hand. Keep tossing and catching the scarves in front of your face, creating an x-formation or a figure-eight pattern.

Columns: Throw one scarf up in the middle and two scarves up from the sides. Alternate the pattern, so that you always have one going up in the middle. As it comes down, throw the two on the sides up, and then catch the one in the middle as it is coming down. Keep repeating this pattern.

Shower: When you do the shower technique you want to start throwing your scarves around in a circle. The right hand does all the throwing. The left

hand does all the catching. Try to learn this technique in both directions.

Splits: Splits are fun. They are kind of like columns, but the difference is that you are throwing the scarves from the sides. Three scarves will mean that you throw one scarf up from the right and two on the left. Alternating one up and then two up going from side to side. Catch the one as it's coming down. Throw it back up and catch the other two coming down on the left. Four scarves means two scarves up on the right side and as they are coming down you throw the other two scarves up on the left side, quickly catching the two on the right as they are coming down.

Cascade with Balls: Start with the hand that has two juggling balls. When one ball peaks, throw another one with a scooping underhand throw, creating a figure eight.

The criteria for the Beginning Juggling Pin is a place to get started. There are many techniques and tricks you can learn, and we hope that once you have a good foundation you will keep learning new tricks and become an expert. Try to practice ten minutes a day. You can do this! Don't give up! Tell us your progress by sending an e-mail to coaijrjoey@gmail.com.

The design for the Beginning Juggling Pin was inspired by Eileen Shafer, one of our COAI Teen Joeys.





BEGINNING JUGGLING PIN

To earn the Beginner Juggling Pin, accomplish each of the steps below. Have your Junior Joey Leader or parent e-mail the COAI Jr. Joey Director with your accomplishment, name, and address and we will send you a Beginning Juggling Pin. Bump a nose!

- Juggle three scarves using the cascade technique. 15 throws-and-catches.
- Juggle scarves in columns.
- Juggle with combined moves, under leg and behind the back.
- Perform "The Shower"—three scarves in a circle going the same direction 10 times.
- Perform splits with three scarves.
- Perform splits with four scarves.
- Juggle one ball, 15 tosses hand to hand.
- Juggle two balls tossed to opposite hands 15 times.
- Juggle two balls in one hand, 15 times.
- Perform cascade with three balls, 15 throws-and-catches.
- Perform comedy juggling, such as floor juggling and armpit juggling.
- Parent / Jr. Joey Leader Signature: _____
Date: _____

Are You Brave Enough?



By Tricia “Pricilla Mooseburger” Manuel

This article is for clowns who have been clowning for more than five years. Wait – okay, let me back up.

This article is for anyone who has been clowning long enough that they have had financial and personal success with a clown character and are feeling the need for a change.

You have to be very brave.

It is one thing to write new material after you have had success with a number of routines. It is much more comfortable to stick with the tried and true stuff than to trot out something totally new and risk failure! You have an image to protect, your clown brand to maintain, and a fragile performer’s ego to shelter! (At least most of us will admit to that.)

Should you change? If so, why?

Society keeps hounding us, telling us that kids are afraid of clowns. We hear our clients say things like:

“Can you come and do your clown show, but without makeup?”

“We really just want a balloon twister, not a clown.”

So, we start to think we need to change in order to stay relevant. But don’t let that be your only reason to alter your clown. What if your character has grown and developed out of your current look? What if you are in need of a change to re-energize your clowning?

How do you do it? I will tell you it takes some thought and requires going outside your comfort zone. I can only speak from experience, so here is my journey.

Years ago, I tried an Auguste clown face just to be in step with my students. I was telling them not to be afraid to try something new, but I myself had been wearing the same whiteface for many years. I felt I needed to practice what I was preaching.



So, I surprised everyone with a new clown character at a convention: Kookla. It was my clown version of the cute little puppet from the TV show *Kukla, Fran, and Ollie*. The reaction I got was really mixed.

The people who were new to clowning and who really didn’t know me loved the new character. The people who knew me were horrified! They asked questions like:

“WHAT? Where is Pricilla Mooseburger?”

“You aren’t going to stop being Pricilla, are you?”

I was really puzzled by the mixed reactions, but I did understand one thing from that experience: People don’t like change.

It is human nature to avoid change and growth. We are creatures of habit; we don’t want monumental shifts in our lives.

I wasn’t really attached to that Auguste character, so I didn’t do much with her. Years later, as I got older, I faced some health issues. I got heat stroke a couple of times while in my full whiteface. It made me realize I needed to come up with something cooler for parades.

So, I put together another new Auguste look. One of my customers had returned a cute little plaid clown suit and we made her something different. I loved that plaid! It was fun, functional, and it worked great for hot weather.

Then disaster struck: The costume got *stolen* at a hotel. Bummer! I couldn’t replicate the costume I had; it was a very special plaid fabric. Now what would I do!

It really made me think. Could I put the same thought and effort I had put into my original whiteface clown and come up with something I would love just as much?

That's a tough question to answer honestly.

I had seen a number of my colleagues give up their whitefaces, loose their wigs, and adopt more character Auguste makeups. I was so impressed with their bravery.

Could I be that brave?

For those of you who don't know my backstory, I have been the same white face since 1982 and I took on the clown name Pricilla Mooseburger in 1987. That is a long time to work on a character and a brand. As an individual, I have been through a lot. I am not the same person I was in my twenties and thirties when I developed Pricilla Mooseburger into a brand. Do I dare make a switch?

The reality for me is that in the Pricilla Mooseburger character I have nothing left to prove. She has taken me around three circus rings on the back of an elephant. She danced around Disneyland performing in stage shows and countless photo ops. Her cartoon image has been the center of my brand for my costume shop, and she is the goodwill ambassador for my clown camp. Pretty big shoes to fill. Yet ... She doesn't satisfy my every performance need anymore.



But I knew once my cute little plaid suit was stolen that I needed to make the change. So, I took all my ideas and lessons learned over the years and created a new Auguste character called "Miss Moose." I absolutely love her! I have zero regrets about this life-altering metamorphosis. Not only has she been a blessing to my health, but she gives me more freedom than I had as Pricilla Mooseburger.

Now that I have started the Red Nose Readers program, I recently had to come up with another new character: different hair, different costume, and different aspects of my personality. I needed something minimal that would be good for visiting schools and libraries and could be put on quickly and easily by myself. So, I went through this big change again. Let me tell you, it was easier the second time around.

I encourage you to take the plunge and test the waters. Play around with new makeup designs or a new set of costume accessories. If you were brave enough to come up with your first character, I believe you have what it takes to revamp yourself. Believe in

yourself and know there are no right answers when it comes to self-discovery. I'll be cheering you on!

Tricia Manuel is "Pricilla Mooseburger," "Miss Moose," and a longtime member of COAI. She has been operating Mooseburger Clown Arts Camp and Pricilla Mooseburger Originals since 1989. More clown educational articles can be found at her blog: www.mooseburger.com. TNC



Welcome, NEW MEMBERS!

Maki Atoyama WA
 Devon "Miss Dee The Clown" Bates MD
 Faye H. "Lilac Peabody" Baumann PA
 Lucas Benitez DR
 Joseph "Joey-O" Blustein WI
 David "Fiddle D" Boutwell NC
 Deborah "Dr. Dee Dee" Brin NM
 Anne "Lulu" Brûlé Canada
 Lakeesha "Parkplayparty" Bussey OH
 Chris "Magic Christopher" Cary NC
 Jason "Smarty" Cloud OK
 Rita "Dizzy The Clown" Cole KS
 Linda "Noodles" Coope TX
 Yvonne "Clown Magic" Creque NY
 Zackary "Wacky Zacky" Devoll OH
 Frank "Kiwi" Guzman PR
 Candra Helton AR
 Joanne "Fancy" Hoey FL
 Kent Huang CA
 Richard "Clownboy" Kirsch VA
 Carol "Mismatch" Klein NY
 Abbie Lawrence CO
 Vicki "Lolli-Pop!" Lewis IL
 Elaine Long MD
 Jose Jeronimo "Joselin Master" Lopez Hernandez Mexico

Manuel Cristobal "Payaso Saltarin" Manuel Hernandez Mexico
 Maritza "Mary Flow" Marrero OH
 Donna "Mousie" McCarthy MA
 Doretta "Sweet Tater" McGill-Tate FL
 Virgen M. "Munequita Milita" Melendez PR
 Kenya Marie "Lazitos" Melendez Rodriguez PR
 Emmett Kelly Museum KS
 Barbara A. "BeeZee" Nickelotti WI
 Shirleen Pilcher MO
 Richard "Ricardo" Pilcher MO
 Claribel "Zulinky" Ramos FL
 Alan Rich CA
 Susie "Giggles/ The Fairy Grandmother" Roth HI
 Bianca Salinas TX
 John "Big John" Sicola TX
 Joseph James "Deputy Doo Da" Smith OH
 Kimberly Spence PA
 Remy "Super Trolin" Vasquez NJ
 Elizabeth "Paisley Poppins" Voss NE
 Linda "Elbee" Wiland OH
 Amanda Wisley MD
 Phillip Wolfe MD

May 6-9, 2019

COAI Convention
 Las Vegas, Nevada
www.mycoai.com

June 9-14, 2019

Clown Camp
 La Crosse, Wisconsin
www.clowncamp.org

June 11-August 10

**Cheerful Clown Alley
 35th Annual Clown School**
 Houston, Texas
www.cheerfulclowns.com

July 10-13, 2019

**International Brotherhood
 of Magicians Annual Convention**
 Scottsdale, Arizona
www.magician.org

July 29-August 1

All Star Clown Week
www.allstarclownweek.com

July 30-August 4, 2019

Mooseburger Clown Arts Camp
 Maple Lake, Minnesota
www.mooseburger.com

August 12-16, 2019

American Clown Academy 2.0
 Forsyth, Georgia
www.aca18.com

September 4-7, 2019

Southeast Clown Association Convention
 Tampa, Florida
southeastclowns.com

September 25-29, 2019

Texas Clown Association Convention
 Fort Worth, Texas
kudosra@yahoo.com

October 8-13, 2019

Midwest Clown Association Roundup
 Grand Rapids, Michigan
www.midwestclownassociation.org

November 1-3 2019

Daytona Beach Festival of Magic
 Daytona Beach, Florida
www.daytonamagic.com/2019-convention

November 7-10, 2019

**Mid-Atlantic Association
 Clown Convention**
 Harrisburg, Pennsylvania
www.midatlanticclownassociation.com

November 10-14, 2019

FAVE Convention 2019
 Las Vegas, Nevada
www.faveconvention.com



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SELF-PROCLAIMED GRUMP

WALT “WALLY” LEE

By Ann “Tuttles” Sanders

COAI Clown of the Year 2007 – COAI Lifetime Achievement 2014

Clowns of America International (COAI) recently said farewell to one of its founding fathers, one of the old-school, tell-it-like-it-is good guys, and one of the organization’s all-time favorite hobos, Walt “Wally” Lee.

For those who know the history of COAI, you know how Walt played a vital role in our organization since its beginning. You may also be aware of his many clowning accomplishments, including being one of two 2010 COAI Life Time Achievement Award recipients. I had the honor of nominating him. During one of the many information gathering telephone conversations I had with him, he shared he was a “self-proclaimed grump,” which was the foundation of his hobo character, Wally.

If you would be so kind as to indulge me for a few moments as I reflect on my memoirs of Walt.

I met Walt right after I started clowning. He was one of the COAI judges in the Hobo/Bag Lady competition I entered in 1997. He scored me lower than anyone else on the panel and wrote half a page of comments, one of which was, “You are in the wrong category—you are a Character, not a bag lady.” His harsh criticism was a bitter pill to swallow at the time, but upon reflection, everything he wrote was honest and



absolutely true. It was then I realized, in order to be competitive, I had to change. It wasn’t the judges’ fault I didn’t win. It was mine and Walt made certain I knew that.

Since 1994, anyone who has competed listened intently to what he had to say. He was the official time keeper for the COAI Competition Committee and, like it or not, his word was law! Like all those who crossed the finish line in paradeability, I saw him standing there holding his stop watch. Believe me, nothing struck fear in the hearts of competitors like hearing him say, “Ten, nine, eight...” My hands often shook when I hadn’t finished my balloon sculpture or face painting design when his voice rang out, “Two minutes... Ninety seconds... One minute...” No competitor was spared. If you didn’t make it to the holding area in time for make-up competition, he closed the door. On more than one occasion, I heard late arrivals try to talk their way past him—all without success. You knew, when doing a skit or routine, if the timing light turned yellow, you needed to wrap it up and get off stage. Walt took his job seriously. It wasn’t always pleasant, but he knew the



rules applied to all competitors and he diligently enforced them.

At the conclusion of my first individual COAI paradeability entry (2010), Walt came over to me and laughed. He said, "You just ran the course in less than thirty seconds. You have plenty of time. You didn't need to run." To be perfectly honest, when I heard the word *Go*, my brain screamed, "RUN!" In later competitions, I could hear Walt's voice in the back of my mind telling me to slow down and work the crowd. He was right when he told me, so many years ago, I was in the wrong make up category. He was right again. If you go with an easy-to-reset comical sight gag, you have plenty of time.

In 2011, at the COAI convention in Anaheim, California, following the presentation of the Life Time Achievement Award to Keith "Toby" Stokes, Walt said to me, "You won the Life Time

Achievement Award; haven't you?" After I told him I had not, he beamed a smile as only Walt could, gave me a wink and said, "You will." His prediction came true in 2014. I cannot tell you how honored I was to be in the company of Walt, Betty Cash, Keith, Cheri Venturi, Marilyn Barrett, and Pat Roeser.

Walt was a wealth of information when it came to COAI's history. As one of the organization's Historians, he stock-piled copies of COAI's *The Calliope* (mimeographed and stapled newsletter style publication) as well as volumes upon volumes of COAI's *The New Calliope*. What he didn't remember, he would research. He knew who was who and what was what when it came to clowning. If I needed information for a *New Calliope* article, he was my go-to source. He could also entertain you for hours on end with stories from past conventions. After hearing many recounts

about the old days, let me just say, "A good time was had by all."

I never knew Walt's first wife, Joann. When I interviewed him in 2005 for an article, he spoke of her support in his early years of clowning. Who I do know is Walt's long time best friend and current wife, Shirley Lee. When Walt and I were hanging out at the 2018 COAI convention, I thanked him for bringing Shirley back to COAI. Walt told me many times he felt very fortunate to have had such supportive ladies in his life. (Fun fact: Shirley, known as Daisy the Clown, and I both got our clowning start with Virginia Alley #3.)

I am, as are so many others, a better clown for having known Walt. I feel certain our organization is better because of him. Yes, Walt was a self-proclaimed grump, but he was COAI's self-proclaimed grump, and, those who knew and loved him will miss him dearly. **TNC**

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Regina "Cha Cha" Wollrabe
COAI Director of Jr. Joey's
16"x20"

DESIGN-O'S WARDROBE

LIGHT AUGUSTE ON A BUDGET



PART 2: SEWING THE SHIRT PANELS

By Richard "Design-O" Smith
Adapted for Print by Rachel Strnad

In our last article, we figured out a costume design on a budget, bought fabric to embellish the store-bought clothes we had, and cut out our pieces. Now we are ready to sew.

Bias Tape

This is optional. I have had people ask me if you can make this look without bias tape, and the answer is yes! Just fold the outer edge of the shirt panels under five-eighths of an inch and top stitch an eighth of an inch from the fold.

If you want a contrasting trim around your panels, you will need bias tape. You can buy pre-made bias tape, or you can make it, as I explain below.

1. Figure out how many yards you need by measuring along the princess seam from the shoulder to the hem on both sides of the shirt, front and back, and around the hem. Give yourself a few inches extra, just to be safe. Note: When measuring a curved area, always use a tape measure, never a ruler, for greater accuracy.

2. Lay out your contrasting fabric folded in half, right sides together, along the selvage edge. Using a ruler at a

forty-five-degree angle, draw diagonal lines three inches apart down the fabric. The goal is to create three-inch-wide strips, so you'll be cutting along the drawn lines. Depending on how big your seams, add the appropriate seam allowance. This may seem tedious, but it's better to measure twice and cut once than have to go out and buy more fabric.

3. Cut out your strips along your drawn lines and sew the short ends together to create one long piece of bias tape. Double check to make sure it's long enough and add more if you need it.

If you aren't crazy about sewing a bunch of little bitty seams, there is a method for making bias tape that requires only two longer seams. If you Google "make a continuous piece of bias tape," you will immediately get good tutorials with lots of pictures.

Once you have your strip, lay it out flat on your ironing board and fold and press the outer edges to the center. Be careful not to stretch the fabric! You should end up with a long length of one-inch bias tape.

The Panels

1. Sew your front panels to your back panel, right sides together, along the shoulder seam. The pattern won't match up, but that's okay.

3. Stay-stitch along the collar curve at five-eighths of an inch. CAREFULLY clip the curve just shy of your stitching line at half-inch to an inch intervals, and fold the fabric along your stitching line. Press. Since this edge will be sewn to the shirt, it may help to baste it down.

4. Fold over the buttonhole edges of your front panels five-eighths of an inch and press. Again, it may help you to baste these down.

5. Pin and sew your bias tape along the outer, curved edges of your panels, right sides together, raw edge to raw edge. This may seem counterintuitive, since you just folded





up your bias tape nice and pretty, but this will make it easy to fold the bias tape around the raw edge of your panel, preventing it from fraying. Note: you might want to pin one side of the panel, then snip the bias tape to start on the other side so you can sew both sides at once. Don't sew tape along the bottom of the panels yet.

Attaching the Panels to the Shirt

1. Line up your panel's shoulder seam with your shirt's shoulder seam and pin in place. The folded collar edge of the panel should butt up against the shirt's neck hole, just under the collar stand. I also recommend lining up the shoulder end of the panel with the shoulder of the shirt and pinning the two together at the seam to keep things straight. Note that your panel probably won't reach all the way to the armhole seam; ours went just to where the princess seam met the shoulder.

2. In the front, pin the buttonhole edges of the panels to the front closure edges of the shirt. On

the side with the button band, the folded-over edge of the panel should come to or be just shy of the stitching line holding the button band on the shirt.

As I said before, our shirt had a placket covering the buttons, so we just needed to line up the fold of our panel with the outer edge of that placket on the buttonhole side. If your shirt doesn't have hidden buttonholes, consult a sewing reference to make new ones. This may mean your closure edges will be folded a little more or less than five-eighths of an inch, and that's okay. Everything is going to be sewn down.

3. Line up the outer, curved side of your panels with the princess seams on the front and back of your shirt. Since these edges have the bias tape on them, make sure the tape is folded all the way over the raw edge. It will overlap the princess seamline and

that's fine, just make sure the panel is laying smooth. It may help to do this part with the shirt on an ironing board.

4. Stitch in the ditch along the shoulder seam and along the seam connecting the bias tape to the panels. Top stitch at least an eighth of an inch from the turned-under edge along the button band, around the collar, and along the buttonhole placket edge. This should effectively sew the panels to the shirt along every style line, which further reinforces the shirt. You should have no trouble washing it.

5. Sew the remaining bias tape around the hem of the shirt, right sides together, raw edge to raw edge. The shirt itself won't have a raw edge, but your panel will. Fold the bias tape around the hem and top stitch it in place by stitching in the ditch.

That's it for the panels! Next issue, we'll tackle re-creating the collar and cuffs.

As always, if you have any questions about what I've covered here, just let me know. My email is resdesigno@msn.com. Or you can contact our editors at thenewcalliope@gmail.com with comments or suggestions. **TNC**

STARTING IN MAGIC

By David Ginn



One of the new resources available to COAI members at www.mycoai.com is an online edition of David Ginn's *Starting in Magic* book. While the book is written with Junior Joeys in mind, it contains many fun tricks and stunts that full-fledged grown-ups can use, as well. Here are two items from the book—a gag and a simple magic trick—that you may want to try.

'AMAZING' RING OFF OF PEN

Here's a really simple stunt designed to amuse more than mystify. However, it's fun, and that's what counts.

You'll need an ink pen, the kind with a removable cap. Also, you will need a ring that will easily slide onto the pen.

Now for the action: Show your friends the pen and the ring. Slide the ring onto the pen and have a friend hold the pen at each end. Instruct him to hold tightly and not to let go no matter what happens.

"Believe it or not," you tell the spectators, "I will remove the ring from the pen even though Mike holds onto the pen at each end the whole time." Give that a few seconds to sink in. After all, it sounds impossible.

Then say, "All right, are you ready? Here I go." At that moment, grab one of Mike's hands in each one of yours and pull them apart. The pen will come apart in the middle, leaving Mike holding half the pen in each hand. You may then easily slide the ring off the middle of the pen. And Mike never even lets go!

THE RICE BOTTLE

The performer fills a soda-pop bottle full of rice using a funnel. Then she shows a chopstick, which she pushes down through the neck of the bottle into the rice. After saying a few magic words, she lifts the chopstick with just two fingers—the bottle of rice comes with it, magically clinging to the chopstick!

The secret is simple: First fill your bottle with rice using a funnel or a piece of paper rolled to form a funnel. Then press the chopstick firmly into the rice several times, pushing the stick up and down to pack the rice tightly inside the bottle.

The rice itself does the rest of the work. The last time you push the chopstick into the rice, the pressure of the stick will force the rice against the sides of the bottle and actually grip the chopstick. You will feel this as the rice tightens.

You will be able to lift the chopstick, and the bottle of rice will come with it. Yet the chopstick will come out easily whenever you want; it takes just a little pull. At the end of the trick, you may pour the rice out to prove it is not prepared in any way. Remember, to those who do not know the secret, this is a great mystery. Have fun with it, as I have!

David Ginn is the author of Clown Magic and dozens of other books about entertaining family audiences. Visit him online at www.ginnmagic.com.

HARRY'S HILARITIES

By Harry Allen

LAUGH LINES

One person laughing: "No individual laughing, please. Stay with the group." • "Will you please pass that laugh around?" • "Thanks, Mom!"

No laughs: "I would like to say something funny at this time, but I don't want to break the mood you're in." • "You might as well laugh now. I don't get any funnier." • "When I come to a joke you like, hold up your hand."

Hard laughter: "I can't wait to hear what I have to say next."

Laughter ahead of time: "Either I'm talking too slow or you're thinking too fast."

Lots of laughter and applause: "That won't stop me." • "You're a good group. Looks like I'll have to do the whole act."

Harry Allen is the co-owner, with Irv Cook, of Daytona Magic in Daytona Beach, Florida. Harry tours extensively with his dealer show, demonstrating the latest in magic supplies, combined with his quick-witted delivery. Visit him online at www.daytonamagic.com.

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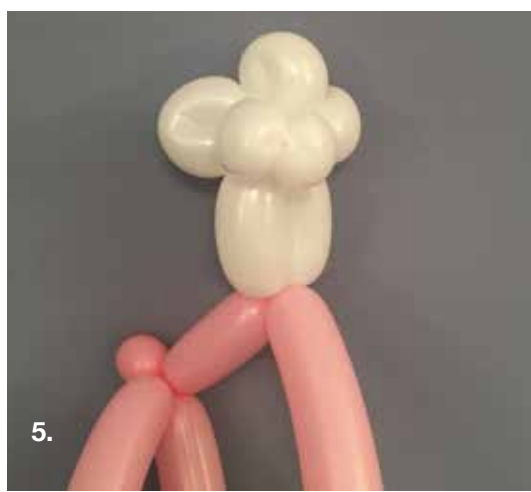
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Dog Hat

By Patricia "Pockets" Bunnell



1. Make a basic hat base (see Bunny Hat in the March/April issue). Using your hand as a guide, make a bubble on the arch of the hat base and set aside.
2. Inflate a White 260, leaving a 6-inch tip. Make three small loops. These will become the cheeks and lip.
3. Twist two 2-inch bubbles to form a muzzle.
4. Use your hand as a guide to make an eye bubble.
5. Twist in at the hat base above the small bubble. Form another eye. Discard the remaining balloon and tie off.
6. Twist the center loop around the 1-inch bubble at the bottom of the hat base.



7.



8.



Tip

7. Inflate a 260, leaving a 5-inch tip. Form a medium loop and a pinch twist, then form two sets of the following: a small bubble, a pinch twist, and a medium loop. Deflate and detach the rest of the balloon.

8. Using the remaining balloon, make a small bubble and tie off. Twist the small bubble in at the front of the muzzle. Add artwork.

TIP: I use Kryolan "Youth Red" rouge to color in things like the bottom lip, cheeks, and eyebrows. This is my FAVORITE product to use on balloons next to Sharpies!



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.

Snapshots



San Diego All Stars at the St. Patrick's Day Parade.

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Photography by Ravi Sidhu

A HISTORY OF CLOWN SHOES

By Rachel Strnad

A Google search of the term, *clown shoes*, turns up the most interesting results. Apparently, there is a Midwestern brewery that goes by the name of Clown Shoes. According to the Urban Dictionary, the term is a pejorative slang for anything ridiculous. For example, “Dude, those hydraulics make your car totally clown shoes.” The Vans shoe company, popularized by BMX riders and skateboarders, made clown shoes in the ’70s. Their signature style was a three-color, checkered high-top called “Flappers.” The history of this funky footwear is just as opaque as the red nose history, and comes with a twin set of legends.

EARLY LEGENDS

There are those who say Joseph Grimaldi was the first to wear big shoes in his clown character. However, if one looks at white face clowns from his era to the early twentieth century, most clowns were tumblers and acrobats, a vocation ill suited to giant shoes.

Others say it was Tom Beiling, the first Auguste, who started the trend. After displeasing his mentor, Renz of the great German circus, Beiling was confined to his room for four days. Finally, bored out of his mind, he decided to try on an oversized outfit for the amusement of his fellow clown apprentices. They liked it so much that they bet him he couldn’t sneak into the ring. Beiling was caught by Renz and thumped roundly. In an effort to escape, he tripped on his oversized shoes and landed in the ring. However, the truth of this story is questionable, especially since there are multiple versions.

THE MINSTRELS

Perhaps a more plausible explanation is that big shoes came about during the early-nineteenth century debate over slavery with the rise of the blackface minstrel. It was believed African Americans had large feet, so these minstrels wore big shoes as part

of their costume. The trend stuck, and has since lost its racial connotation.

HARD DATA

The English-born clown Billy Hayden is the first clown to be documented wearing big shoes. He first performed with Pablo Fanque’s circus in 1865, and supposedly also worked for P.T. Barnum. Hayden was also one of the pioneers of the talking clown, invented a large bustle that could hold a dwarf clown, and performed with a pet pig. Across the water, Silver Oakley wore oversized shoes in his umpire costume, making him the first clown in America to wear oversized shoes in a circus. His pair are now on display at the Ringling Museum of the Circus in Sarasota, Florida.

However they got started, the giant shoes were here to stay by the twenties, and became so essential that we just can’t imagine the clown world without them.

TNC

WHAT I'VE LEARNED FROM ONE AND TWO YEAR OLDS

By Connie "Punkin" Morrow



Picture Buffalo, 2001. A clown, four years into parties, doing her first two-year-old birthday party. It was a magical day for me as well as my small guest of honor, though magic wasn't one of her favorite forms of entertainment. While doing my famous dove pan routine, the baby fell asleep drinking her bottle. She finally woke up when her mom nudged her. I ended up just giving her the toy that was supposed to magically appear.

Then came the next mistake. I made balloons for the older kids but gave plastic bath toys to the babies. I found out this wasn't a good exchange because the babies went after the older kids' balloons and threw the toys on the floor. There was a lot of screaming and crying that day, mostly from me.

By this time, I was at my wits' end. I took the face paints out. Guess what's not a good idea? Trying to paint a toddler's face. I tried it on my first little friend, and she turned her head just as I was getting ready to paint. Now I had a child with a huge, blue slash across her face. Then she decided to feel the paint, and ended up with it on her hands as well. She looked like Lake Erie in the summer without the seaweed. Have you ever tried to explain to a parent why their child's face is blue instead of decorated with a flower?

Games aren't the best things for this age, either. I bought a Pin the Nose on the Clown game at the dollar store thinking this would be easy and they'd love it. First thing to remember: **DO NOT TRY TO BLINDFOLD A SMALL CHILD!** Once again, mass chaos. The stickers went everywhere but where they were supposed to go, including on the real clown!

The parents were very understanding. After all, the older kids had a ball.

I left that party wondering what to do.

I observed my nieces and nephews to see what they liked to play with and what entertained them. They liked to jump, run, bang on things, yell, sing, dance, and burst soap bubbles. After months and months of research, observation, and trial and error, I got up the nerve to try it again. This time, I was ready.

Since the bubbles were such a big hit, I bought a bubble machine and the biggest bottle of bubble soap I could find. Great! One thing to do with the babies! My next mission was to find some kid-friendly music. "The Chicken Dance" was my first choice. I also added "London Bridge is Falling Down," "Twinkle Twinkle, Little Star," and just about anything that was upbeat, even "YMCA." Just look back in the days of Dick Clark. For those of you who don't remember him, look up

American Bandstand. Those things covered the running, jumping, dancing, singing, and yelling ideas.

My next find was puppets. Babies love stuffed animals, and puppets are even better because their mouths move and they can talk to the children.

I was on a roll now. Then one day, while at a friend's house, I saw her little one taking the pans out of the cupboard. I remembered my nieces and nephews doing this when they were little. They'd hit the pans together or with spoons. At that moment, Punkin's Cotton Pickin' Kitchen Band was born. The dollar store had everything I needed. Pots, pans, whisks, spoons, you name it. The only problem was when the manager came over and asked why I was banging on the cookware with a whisk. The police were not called, and I was able to walk out with my stash of pots and pans a free woman!

The last thing I came up with was a small, inflatable pool. The sales clerk asked me if I had young children at home. When I told her I did not, she said that I would not fit in that pool. How rude! But I digress. I bought two bags of big plastic balls and made my very own ball pit. I thought this was a great idea. I actually inflated the pool, bent it over, and secured it with bungies for easy transport.

Then it was party day!

I was all packed up and ready to try out my new creations.

Upon my arrival, I was met with cheers and applause. Most of that came from the parents, who had been with twelve kids for two hours already. I opened by asking if anyone wanted their faces painted. The older kids all did, so I put out the bubble machine for the babies, and off I went to paint faces. If by chance a parent was adamant about face painting their baby, I used a stamp with a face-painting stamp pad. No actual paint was involved. "The Chicken Dance" was next, along with



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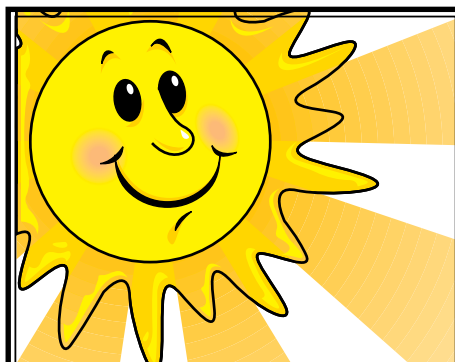
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some really funky dancing and singing. During that time, my puppet came out to help. The babies especially loved him, and all wanted to hug the poor guy. Fortunately, he was washable.

Then it was time for the unveiling of Punkin's Cotton Pickin' Kitchen Band. The babies had a ball. I couldn't believe how much they loved banging on those pans. Even the older kids were playing. The music was bad, but lots of fun. I added to the noise with my kazoo. The parents were reaching for Tylenol.

The last thing on my list was balloons for the older kids and the ball pit for the little ones. Both were a hit; the babies had a great time and the older ones all got to keep their balloons.

The parents were ecstatic, the kids were happy, and I proved to myself that there was a way to entertain babies at a party. Moral of the story: The only way to entertain a baby is to be a baby. And I certainly did that! **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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1347 Ava Road
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Dale McKenzie
867 Raynard Crescent SE
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THE LAST WALK-AROUND

Walt “Wally” Lee

Walt “Wally” Lee took his final bow on January 25, 2019, as he entered the gates of Heaven to see Jesus face to face and be reunited with loved ones and friends who had passed through those gates before him.

Walt stumbled into clowning when he was working for the Department of Defense and was asked to play the cymbals in a clown band for the annual Christmas party. After his first appearance, he didn’t think he’d ever do it again, but continued doing the Christmas parties. Then, he met other clowns in Baltimore, Maryland’s Freestate Alley #30 and realized clowning was in his blood.

He served on the Board of Directors for Clowns of America International for twenty-one years as Sergeant-of-Arms and served as Chairman of the History Committee until his passing. In addition, he served on the Competition Committee, helping contestants to get into the proper order, judging competitions, or timing participants in the Paradeability competition. When time was running out for the participant to cross the finish line, he’d start counting, “10, 9, 8, 7...” , much to the amusement of observers and participants alike. They’d start running to make sure they weren’t disqualified and it got to be part of the schtick. It always brought Walt such joy to share his love of clowning with others and was willing to go the extra mile to help a developing clown when that clown showed genuine love and interest in the art. Walt was honored in 2010 with the Lifetime Achievement award for clowning. He was one of the first two recipients of this award.



Walt is preceded in death by his wife of forty-two years, Joanne N. Lee and his parents, Walter R. Lee, Sr. and Estella Marlow Lee. He is survived by his wife, Shirley; sons, Skip (Kristen) and Christopher (Kathleen); daughter, Faye (Mike) Airhart; grandchildren, Brendon, Connor, Devon, Addison, Emmi-Elizabeth Lee, and Collin Airhart.



Jackie LeClaire

Jackie LeClaire, 91, of Sarasota, Florida, died in his home on Saturday, March 16, 2019.

Born Jackie LeClair (his father added the e in 1946 to make their name sound more French) to circus clown parents, Jackie was destined to be a performer. He began riding in floats for Ringling Brothers Barnum and Bailey circus when he was a toddler. By age sixteen, he had officially joined the Ringling Brothers and was assisting his father as an acrobatic clown. “Clowning was a very serious business with my dad,” he told The Herald Tribune in an interview upon his retirement. “It was right or it wasn’t. No gray area. It was a job. He made me realize that if you’re going to do it, do it right or don’t do it at all.”

He carried this dedication with him into every aspect of his career. When the circus went to Cuba, he went in his father’s place, and performed all his stunts there. He also toured as his own one-man show for schools, birthday parties, and auto shows. Once, he traveled 27,000 miles in fourteen weeks for auto shows. In 1952, he worked as Cornel Wilde’s stunt double in *The Greatest Show On Earth*.

In the sixties, he returned to the circus as a production clown, traveled to South America, Europe, and was part of the first American circus to perform in the Soviet Union. He spent many years as an advance clown, pulling “every publicity stunt imaginable,” for both Ringling and Circus Sarasota. Even after he officially retired from the circus, he couldn’t stop clowning: He joined Laughter



Unlimited, a program through the Circus Arts Conservatory that brings clowns and entertainers into nursing homes.

Jackie also had a heart for children, and even earned the moniker “The Children’s Clown” during his time with the circus. In later years, when he moved to Bay Village, his door was always open for the residents’ visiting grandchildren to come see his tricks and explore the veritable museum of circus memorabilia that was his apartment. “I’m a junk collector,” he said of himself. “Not being able to have some things all my life, I’m making up for it.” In the circus, he’d shared a top berth with another aerialist on the train and they were allowed one shoe bag each for their personal effects.

Jackie always said he “never made any money in this business,” but he garnered a wealth of honors, and awards. He was inducted into the International Clown Hall of Fame in 1996. In 2002, a wheel was added for him in the Circus Ring of Fame at St. Armand’s Circle in Sarasota, Florida. In 2009, he received the Lifetime Achievement Award at the Sedona Film Festival, and was honored at the 2010 John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art Circus Celebrity Night. When the Sarasota Opera presented a screening of *The Greatest Show On Earth* in 2017, LeClaire was one of the few local circus performers who were greeted with cheers.

Jackie leaves behind no blood family, but a legacy of clown brothers and sisters.

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Keith “Toby the Clown” Stokes



Keith “Toby the Clown” Stokes, 96, passed away March 22, 2019 at the Southern Lifestyles in Lake Placid, Florida. The son of Helen (Henn) and Floyd Stokes, Keith was born on January 18, 1923, in Marshall, Illinois. He served with honors in the U.S. Army Air Corp, as a navigator in

B-17 bomb group in Europe. After his discharge, Keith went to work in the insurance business. He went on to become an owner and president of his own life insurance agency in Illinois. After retiring, he moved to Lake Placid in 1980, and took his experience as a Shrine clown to start the Toby Clown Foundation and School. He was an active member of the Masonic Order, Scottish Rite, Shrine, Lake Placid Noon Rotary Club, American Legion, Clowns of America International, Southeast Clown Association, and International Shine Clown Association. As a clown, Keith enjoyed visiting hospitals and nursing homes to uplift the spirits of the patients and residents. He loved to be with his family and friends any time they could get together, especially his grand- and great-grandchildren. Keith is survived by his children, Dale Stokes, Darla Oltmanns, Susan Clary, Vivian Ashbaugh, Marion Trueblood, and Carolyn Shearer, 13 grandchildren and numerous great-grandchildren. A service to celebrate Toby’s life was held on March 27, 2019, with many clown friends attending and the VFW Post 4300 Honor Guard providing military honors.

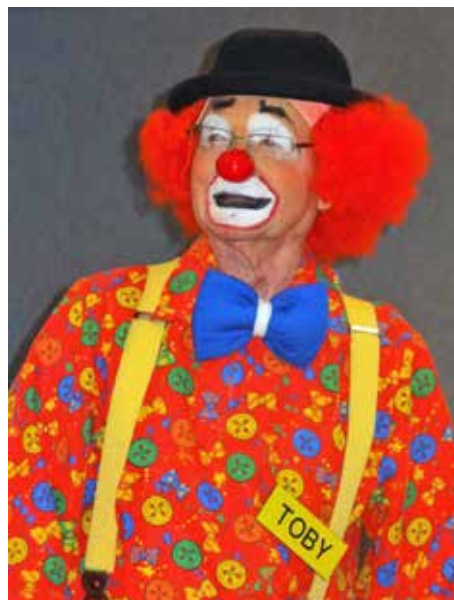


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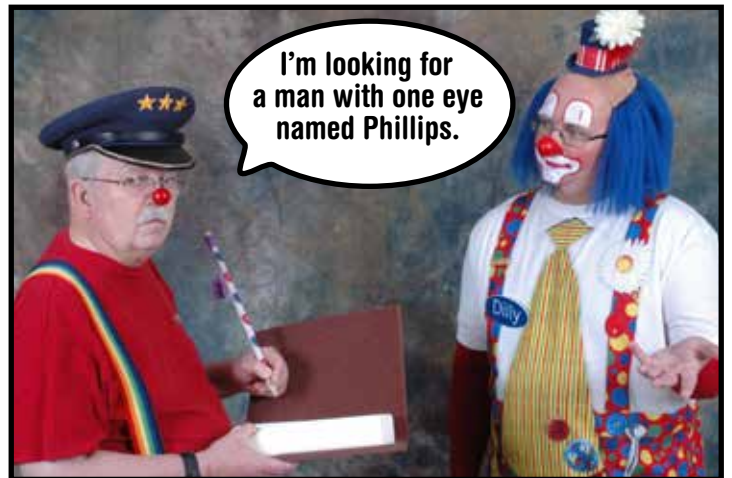
CLOWN COMICS

EYE-D

By Ann "Tuttles" Sanders

★ Starring: Jeremy "Dilly" Manning and Jerry "Dr. Dufus" Dodson. Kolonial Klowns of Williamsburg – Alley #357. Stage Manager: Harold "Ducky" Wood

Photos by Tim "Sawdust" Laynor



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