

THE NEW CALLIÖPE

For Members of Clowns of America International
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COAI President
2022–2024



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PRESIDENT ADAM SCHILL

Reflecting and Looking Ahead

Editor's Note: Adam Schill's reelection as COAI President normally would land him on the July/August cover. The photo of Adam as Santa, however, was too good not to run during the holidays. He graciously agreed to the delay.

By Beth Cedarholm

Adam Schill hasn't quite mastered juggling clubs, swords, or even balls, but he is definitely doing some serious juggling with all of the tasks in his hectic life. In addition to serving as COAI President for a second term (2022–2024), Adam is working full-time in a payroll management firm, has been elected President of his local Realtors' association, is busy with clowning and balloon gigs (and Santa at Christmas), and is a dedicated husband and hands-on father, with two young boys.

As he moves into his second term as COAI President, Adam is reflective about how he has met the challenges he has faced during his first term. One of the most defining issues of his presidency has been the pandemic, which has been a constant presence since he took charge in July 2020. He admits that, back then, he naively felt that we were in the "final phases" of the pandemic. Festivals were starting up again, and Covid-19 cases were on the downturn. Then, as fall approached, cases suddenly spiked. "Covid teased us," he says.

In January 2021 Adam, the Board, and convention organizers from the Niagara Clown Alley (who were originally supposed to host the 2020 convention), made the difficult decision to take the convention virtual. Adam explains that New York State had very strict Covid guidelines, making an in-person convention all but impossible. There was a surge of cases, and vaccines were just starting to become available.

COAI's 2021 virtual convention was a roaring success, with about three hundred clowns taking part. Adam praises the dedication of Jim Donoughe and Connie Morrow, who had been working diligently to plan the convention for several years. "They did an excellent job organizing classes," he says, "with a solid twelve hours of instruction every day." Adam says that, having recognized that many members were facing financial hardship during the pandemic, registration fees for the convention were set very low at thirty dollars, and COAI membership was not required to take part. "We gained new members," he says, adding that "everyone was appreciative of our efforts."

Another way COAI reached out to cash-strapped members in the face of the pandemic was by launching its Clown Stimulus Program, which covered COAI membership dues for those in need. Adam explained that they used money that had been raised for scholarships through the last convention auction,

since there were no scholarships being awarded at that time. "Once you don't renew your membership, it's easier to not come back," he says. "As an investment in COAI, we decided to take that money and give it back to our members."

While the pandemic put a temporary halt to in-person gigs, it also provided new opportunities for COAI and its members. "Necessity is the mother of invention," says Adam, adding that the pandemic offered new ways to use technology to teach, perform, and maintain contact with members.

While COAI's Board of Directors had been conducting its monthly meetings online for a number of years prior to the pandemic, it was new to much of the membership. The monthly educational Zoom Booms were born out of the pandemic, says Adam, who gives Education Director Alene Kraus much of the credit for launching the program. "Zoom Booms started as a way to check in with our members and to make sure they were doing okay," he says.

The Zoom Booms were wildly popular throughout the pandemic. Addressing topics from Holiday Balloons, Hat Tricks, and Hospital Clowning, they attracted up to ninety participants per session. "If it hadn't been for Covid, we wouldn't have done it," says Adam. Zoom Booms also provided a rare



Left: Most of Adam's Santa visits in 2020 were virtual or drive-by events. Right: Adam en route to a balloon-twisting gig, 2022.



Left: By December 2021, in-person Santa visits were back in demand. Top right: Lorraine's face-painting on their sons, Emmett and Eli. Bottom right: Schill family photo, clockwise from top left—Eli, Lorraine, Adam, and Emmett.

pandemic opportunity to kindle new friendships with fellow members, as well as to reconnect with old friends. “Sitting around talking after Zoom Booms and having that community time was invaluable,” he says.

The pandemic also forced Adam and other entertainers to adjust the way they clowned. For instance, Adam says that many of his 2020 Santa visits were virtual or drive-by. He built an elaborate North Pole backdrop in his basement for virtual visits. He wore a face mask to in-home visits, and intentionally didn't schedule any in-person visits in the two weeks prior to Christmas—to ensure that he would be able to celebrate his own family Christmas—even if he did catch the

virus. He says that by December 2021, Santa visits were back to normal, with more than forty in-person visits on his personal Santa calendar. One exception was a Santa gig where Adam was placed in a storefront window with a two-way speaker. He refers to this gig as his “fish-bowl Santa.”

Finally, in 2022, after three years, COAI convention-goers were able to meet in person in Atlanta. “It was great to see everyone face-to-face—many whom I had never met outside of Zoom,” he says. “It's always interesting to see how tall they are in person.”

About one hundred and ten clowns attended the convention, with thirty

instructors and fifty classes. Adam notes that a few people took home mild cases of Covid from the convention but that “most would say that it was worth it to be able to hug their friends.”

A highlight for many at the convention was the guest appearance of actor David Arquette, who had purchased the rights to Bozo the Clown in the fall of 2021, and his “Bozo team,” who were filming Arquette's upcoming clown documentary. Adam says he felt that the Bozo team's presence at the convention was one hundred percent positive, but that they received some pushback from convention goers who didn't understand what Arquette was trying to accomplish with his clowning. “We need to be

careful not to knock them down because we don't understand," he says. "I tend to give everybody the benefit of the doubt," he says.

Adam gave the same "benefit of the doubt" to the producers of the YouTube show *Excuse me, What?*, who attended the convention to film an episode of their show. He admits that allowing them to attend the convention was risky, but that he and fellow board members carefully vetted the producers beforehand, and the result was "the best public media we've had."

Adam believes that his leadership style has evolved during his first term. "I've gotten more understanding and more diplomatic," he says, attributing this to experience. "A lot of it is getting to know people's personalities, how to best deal with those different personalities, and how to mitigate when conflicts arise." But he says that, overall, the board has "meshed" really well. "We have some good workers and idea people." He adds that he is excited about the newcomers joining the board this year: Patti Ummel as the Midwest RVP, Jim Caffrey as Convention Director, and Jerry Gill as Treasurer.

Education Director Alene Kraus gives Adam an A+ for his work in his first term as President. "Adam is a very capable President," she says. "He has the ability to be a guide and a facilitator, while maintaining the ideals and standards of COAI. He is willing to do the work it takes to make a good organization even greater. It's been a pleasure to work alongside Adam these past two years."

Adam says that he feels he has won the trust of members, some who were initially skeptical of the young leader. "I came on as Education Director at age twenty-seven, with guns blazing and lots of head-butting. But by the time I became President, most of the influential members had grown to know me well enough to know that when I said I was going to do something, it got done, and that I had COAI's best interest at heart."

Adam has grown in his personal clowning, as well. He is currently developing



Top row: Family outing. Lorraine at a face-painting event. Second row: Now with two entertainers in the family, Lorraine face paints and Adam twists balloons during outdoor events.

a stage show with music and larger props. "I did it backwards, by booking a gig first and then putting together the show," he says, "but it's something I've always wanted to do." Adam's two young sons also seem to have inherited the entertaining gene. Emmett, now eight, has become very interested in magic. Eli, three, loves clowns. Adam says that Eli recently told his mother, Lorraine, "I love it when Daddy clowns." Lorraine, too, is delving deeper into the clown world. She served as registrar at the 2022 convention. She is honing her face-painting skills and purchased her first clown nose. Adam

credits an increase in his gig bookings to having Lorraine's face-painting available as part of the package.

Now, Adam looks forward to two more years at the helm of COAI, and to a busy performing schedule. "There is such a demand coming out of Covid," he says. "People just want to be happy, to laugh, and enjoy life."

Beth "Pickles" Cedarholm is a frequent contributor to The New Calliope and serves as COAI Secretary, a position she has held since 2020. Reach her by email at clownybeth@yahoo.com.



First-Term Goals: Have They Been Met?

When he took over the reins of COAI two years ago, Adam outlined his goals, addressing a number of COAI's most important issues. Now, reflecting on the past two years, he reviews the progress made on these objectives.

Increasing Membership: We're on the right track. Just in April and May of this year we were up eighty members. I believe that part of this is because the tide is starting to turn on the coolness of clowns. I'm getting more requests for events in clown. The culture is changing. There haven't been any new scary clown movies or bad media. It's all cyclical. Even The Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus is coming back.

Attracting a Younger Generation of Entertainers: This has been a bit of an uphill battle, with some members not wanting to get out of their comfort zone. We need to be willing to accept different styles of clowning that maybe aren't our forté. Even some of the haunt clowns do birthday parties the rest of the year. Kicking them to the curb just because they dress up like scary clowns at Halloween is doing a disservice to the industry, because they are the ones who are going to carry on the tradition of birthday and friendly clowning in the future. I think that embracing them is good for everyone.

Balancing the Books: I've worked with Sammy Smith on many cost-saving measures. For example, we found a new CPA who charges us less than half of the fees as the last one. We rearranged the insurance structure for the board. We got rid of unnecessary services with our website and eliminated our toll-free 800 number. Sammy renegotiated our printing contract for *The New Calliope* to save money. There's been a little bit of savings here and there, but it all adds up. We are also excited to have Jerry Gill join the board as our new treasurer. Already he has brought better order to our bookkeeping, and his level-headed approach to finances is benefiting the organization.

Increasing the Value of COAI Membership: During the pandemic, the Zoom Booms were a huge hit and a valuable new educational resource. After this program ended, we announced that Giggle Bytes, COAI's virtual educational alley, which meets monthly, will now be a benefit available to all members, with no additional dues required. We've expanded the educational resources on the Vault with new books. We've changed our insurance program available to members, with more comprehensive coverage that provides a broader spectrum of what's covered. We now offer a one-million-dollar per occurrence and five-million-dollar general aggregate. In addition, our policy now covers bubbles and foam, which were not covered under the old policy.

Increasing COAI's Online Presence: We have several Facebook groups that do well, especially Friends of COAI. In addition, COAI is now on Instagram, with lots of younger people following us. We hope that many of these people will eventually join COAI.

Helpers Times Two

By Kyle Peron

Your show is going great: the people love you, and you're riding that natural high only a show can provide.

You ask for an assistant from the audience to help you out, and they make their way to your stage. You introduce yourself and ask their name. The child says his name is Billy. Suddenly, the audience is laughing their heads off. You find it rather odd that an audience would laugh that much at a kid's name.

Then, you realize something. You turn to your left and discover that Billy's younger brother has tagged on to your jacket, and he's carrying his Boo Boo Bear. You've now found yourself in a situation that I think we've all been in from time to time. So, what do you do? What tips and techniques are there for dealing with this situation?

These situations can and do happen to even the best of entertainers. Nor are they limited to the scenario described above. For example, you might try to choose a helper from your audience when another audience member stands up to volunteer—so you choose them, instead of who you really wanted. Or worse, several people stand up at the same time, each assuming that you asked for them. I find that all these scenarios fall under the realm of “helper management,” or the art of selecting a helper effectively.

No matter the particulars of the situation, I think the most important rule is to tackle it immediately. Too many magicians try to ignore the problem, which is not a solution. The audience sees the situation, too, and they really want to know how you – the entertainer – will handle it. They will feel uneasy if you don't. Ignoring the problem does not make it go away. Instead, it creates a distraction for the audience.

If you are a professional, as we all should be. then you must learn to handle these situations head on. There is no single “right” way to handle these things. Many of you may have methods that work for you, specifically, based on who you are and the character you play on stage. Nevertheless, here are some tips and suggestions that may help.

- If an audience member stands up and they are not the person for whom I was aiming, then I usually just invite them to the stage and work with them anyway. I always keep in mind that the audience really has no idea what my intentions are, or what will happen next, unless I tell them. In this scenario, I choose to not draw attention to it and work the routine with this new person instead. If the routine is not appropriate for



the person standing, then I can simply switch to a different effect. I always have a few effects ready at my table for this exact situation.

- If more than one person stands up at the same time, I have a few options. I often do a slight pause. This pause lasts no longer than two seconds but creates an opportunity to wait and see if one of them may sit back down. In many instances, they do. If they don't, then I can still bring both people to the stage and utilize them in the routine. If you know your routines well, then there is always a way to involve both people.

Continued on page 26





ISTOCKPHOTO/MENTOIMAGE

By Samuel Patrick Smith

Did you know that the old saying, “One rotten apple spoils the whole barrel,” has a scientific basis? As apples ripen, they emit a gaseous hormone called ethylene, causing their companions to ripen and rot. Mold quickly spreads through a barrel as it seeks additional food sources.

Most of us have observed the same phenomenon among people. One bad apple—or sometimes a clique of two or three little stinkers—can taint or destroy a gathering, club, or organization. Bad apples may be well-intentioned folk whose own inner drama spreads like a gaseous hormone. They may be egomaniacs who want to run the whole show. Or they may be conniving troublemakers. Regardless, they create chaos and simmering ill will.

Bad apples work through misinformation, seeking to discredit others with vague accusations. That same energy, used with intelligence and kindness, could propel them into powerful positions as effective leaders. They could have a lot of fun while helping their organizations grow.

Often the most contentious situations in a home, business, or club are created when financial problems arise. One department experiences a major failure, but instead of owning up to their mistakes and resolving to do better in the future, the perpetrators turn on others to detract from their own failures. The good news is that problems need not doom a family or an organization. With a spirit of cooperation, difficulties can turn into opportunities. “Don’t be afraid of a little opposition,” writes Napoleon

Hill in his classic work, *The Law of Success*. “Remember that the kite of success generally rises against the wind of adversity—not with it!”

Kites rise, too, with encouragement from our peers. Are we the wind that lifts others’ spirits into the bright blue sky? Or are we the rain that makes them soggy and earthbound? The habit of praising others for their positive contributions creates a happy, upbeat atmosphere.

Some fear that those who receive praise will quit working, satisfied with their accomplishments. The opposite is usually the case. People who are encouraged are motivated to do even more. They feel that their efforts have not been in vain.

In *The Law of Success*, Napoleon Hill also writes of the power of a “Master Mind Group”—a tightknit team of individuals working together for a common purpose. Miraculous results can occur, he notes, but absolute harmony must prevail.

A popular song says,
*“I can fly higher than an eagle,
 For you are the wind beneath my wings.”*

When we’re in harmony, we soar. One visionary can start the process. Looking for and praising the good, finding reasons to hope for a better tomorrow, helps restore others to a healthy perspective. With this kind of positive energy, it’s more difficult for rotten apples to cause division. A lot of work may lie ahead, but with a positive attitude, we’ve reached the core of the problem. **TNC**

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ARE YOU GOING TO HAVE FUN TODAY?

By Kent Cummins

I was Founder and Camp Director of what has become Fantastic Magic Camp (www.magiccamp.com). My mom was the Puppetry Coordinator.

It was Wednesday morning, the third day of the fourth week of camp. Mom and I were driving to the camp, and I was in a foul mood. I don't even remember what I was complaining about, but after a while, Mom looked over at me and quietly asked, "Are you going to have fun today?" I glowered and glared at her.

Mom continued, "There's a lot of important work to be done, but if you can't have fun doing it, you might as well shut it down."

She was right, of course. The Magic Camp was helping hundreds of kids gain improved self-confidence. We were training teens to become effective leaders. We were using the fascination and *fun* of magic, juggling, and puppets to transform young people in positive ways.

I have never forgotten that lesson, and I decided to share Mom's wisdom with you this month. After all, last month we talked about, "It's fun to be fooled!" But is it also fun to fool people? We are magicians. That is what we do. (Well, hopefully, we also *entertain!*)

HOW DID MY MOM HAVE FUN?

Mom dressed up as a clown to promote the circus. She made puppets and did puppet shows. She painted circus scenes, rabbits, and landscapes. She kept wonderful journals and wrote about her experiences. She loved to cook. She painted her kitchens yellow. She went dancing with my dad. She made costumes for my magic shows. She helped me run Magic Camp.

When Mom had a stroke, and was no longer able to speak, write, or use her right hand, she taught herself how to use her left hand. She continued to send cards to friends and family, and she started coloring large format coloring books with her left hand. (She had me put those pictures up on the wall in the nursing home.)

My dad used to say that everything always worked out for the best. I don't think that is true, but I feel like my mom was a great example of making the best of whatever happened. She always found a way to have fun.

WARTIME WIZARDRY

I did not volunteer to go to Vietnam, but I found myself



there, as an inexperienced Army Captain, nevertheless. It was 1968 during the Tet Offensive, probably the worst phase of this unpopular war. My wife of less than three years did not approve of the war. Our church actively rallied against the war. This was NOT fun!

And yet...

When I was S4 (supply officer) of a Petroleum Operating Battalion, the Commanding Officer would often shout down the hall of our temporary building to get my attention...but the call had to be relayed by the staff in between us. So, I created a "Panic Button" for his office, which I then wired to a portable cassette tape player at my end of the building. When he pushed the button, it played "When the Saints Go Marching In" by the Dukes of Dixieland. He couldn't hear it, but I was always in a good mood by the time I reported to him!

Our unit managed to put together occasional outdoor barbecues. We played basketball when we could. I planted some zinnia seeds that my wife sent, and one of them grew and flowered! My mother-in-law sent me an inflatable Easter Bunny, which I blew up and put next to my sleeping bag.

The Army purchased a pre-fab Lomma Enterprises Miniature Golf Course for the in-country R&R (Rest and Recuperation) Center at Red Beach, and sent me there for a week to supervise its installation.

I put together a small band, and we performed for the troops when we could



Kent as Chester the Clown.

find the time, with a show that I called “Wartime Wizardry.” Much to my supply sergeant’s chagrin, I juggled three live hand grenades. (No, I did *not* pull out the pins. Do you think I’m crazy?)

My mom had given me an old Instamatic camera, and I took hundreds of photos (35mm slides). After I returned, I put together a slide show called “What did you do in the war, Daddy?” (Although I was not yet a dad.) I used eighty slides that showed only the positive and fun things during my year in the combat zone.

HOW NOT TO HAVE FUN

It has been said that if you love what you do, you will never work a day in your life. Not everyone reading this column is a full-time professional magician, but I know from the emails I get that some of you are. And most of my readers are magicians, perhaps hobbyists or part-time pros.

I love being an entertainer! Hopefully, so do you. That means we have fun every time we perform, right?

Well, maybe not. Sometimes, we may wind up with a terrible audience or performing situation. It has only happened to me once, and ironically it was during a Sunday School meeting at my church. I had volunteered to do a magic show

for the kids while my wife and the other grown-ups were at the main church service.

But the kids were the *definition* of incorrigible (“incapable of being corrected or amended”—*Merriam-Webster Dictionary*)! I had never seen such rowdy kids, and I was the only grown-up in the room. Kids actually came running up to my table and grabbed props. I tried to continue with the magic show, but it was a lost cause.

For the only time ever, in thousands of performances, I stopped the show, packed up my props, and left the room. Let the other grown-ups figure out what to do with those kids! This was thankfully a unique experience, but there have been other times when it was hard to have fun during a show.

Trying to entertain in a gigantic fun house, where loud music and other noises drowned out everything I tried to say to the small group of young kids in my audience.

Other locations where the sound system stopped working in the middle of a show.

Knocking over a table full of props, which spilled all over the floor.

Bending over to pick up a prop, and hearing my pants rip.

Parents talking and ignoring my birthday party show.

Teachers grading papers and ignoring my school show.

A librarian re-shelving books and ignoring my library show.

A show in which I was sick, and had to keep stooping behind my table to blow my nose!

An outdoor birthday party where the wind blew all of my beautiful Rice silks around, and the Texas heat almost killed my rabbit.

An attempt to do strolling magic in a bar where there was a live band and most of the patrons were drunk.



Bonzo Crunch with Magic Camper clown.

Professor Cheer’s Comedy Rope Trick getting tangled up inside my costume, so that I had to turn my back and unzip my pants to get the pieces of rope out.

A corporate event in which their awards and speeches ran more than an hour late, and nobody wanted to stick around for a magic show.

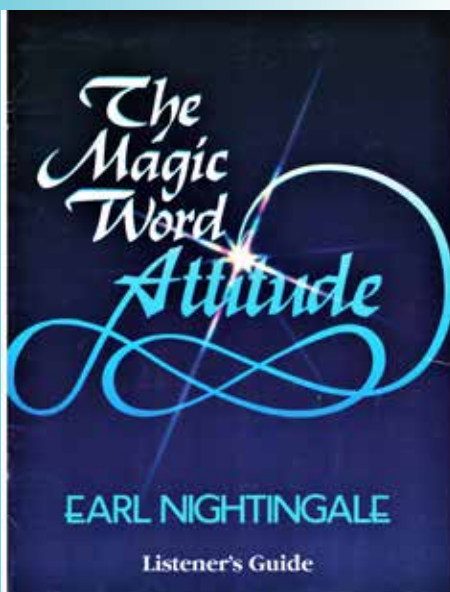
HOW TO HAVE FUN, REGARDLESS

You cannot keep everything bad from happening to you while attempting to entertain. Murphy’s Law has not been repealed—“Anything that *can* go wrong *will* go wrong”—and unexpected circumstances will challenge you no matter how much you prepare.

But preparation can help! I often talk about playing the “What Could Go Wrong Game.” I have written about this in previous columns, but the basic idea is to try to think of anything that could possibly go wrong while you are performing, and then figure out what you will do if (WHEN) it happens.

If you have prepared as well as you can, remind yourself why you are doing this. Howard Thurston is said to have reminded himself about the importance of his audience before every show. Remind yourself that people want to enjoy your performance, even if things don’t go the way you intended.

When life gives you lemons—perform the Borrowed Bill in Lemon!





Mom in clown. Kent's daughter, Nogee the clown.



get so wrapped up in the details that I forget to stop for a meal. I now carry protein bars with me, just in case.

Don't forget to drink! But drink lots of water, and limit the alcohol and caffeine.

Build a team. Most things are more fun when you can share them with others.

IS THIS FUNNY?

We were planning a family vacation. Mom pointed out that we often had a lot of bickering during family vacations. ("Are we there yet? Stop kicking me! I have to go to the bathroom. Are we there yet?")

Dad suggested that we play a new game. Whenever anyone noticed that someone was not being cheerful, they were to hold their hands above their head and say, "Is this funny?" We all agreed that it was a ridiculous idea...but we did it...and it worked! There was something so silly about it, that whenever someone did it, we all started laughing (although we all tried not to).

Less bickering and more fun.

BE A CLOWN!

Clowns know how to have fun, right?

Okay, actually being a clown can be hard work. But it seems to me that the whole purpose of clowning is to provide

fun for audiences, so maybe if we can get into a clown mindset, it will help us have fun as well.

I have been a clown character at various times in my career. My son and I took circus classes when he was in elementary school, and I have a picture of him as a clown. My daughter did balloon twisting as "Nogee the Clown" to help pay for school. (Her clown name is a joke about the spelling of our last name.)

Mom was a clown from time to time.

If you perform as a clown, remember that you are there to share the fun. *You can't share what you don't have!* And if your performing persona is *not* a clown, use the techniques of clowning to help *you* have fun.

Lance Burton and Mac King grew up together in Louisville, Kentucky. Mac became a very funny magician—obviously a clown, even without the white-face and red nose. Lance became a classic magician with a very serious look for his award-winning dove act. But both of them have fun while performing.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Are you going to have fun today?

Kent Cummins writes a monthly column, "Marketing Magic," in *The Linking Ring*, the official publication of the International Brotherhood of Magicians. He has fun hearing *your* ideas and experiences. Reach him by email at kent@magichotline.com. **TNC**

WHAT'S THE MAGIC WORD?

Earl Nightingale made a small fortune by teaching people that the magic word is *attitude*. You cannot always control what happens to you, but you can usually control what you do about it. And it starts with how you let yourself feel about it.

When people ask me how I am doing, I usually say, "Fantastic!" I find that just saying it makes it feel more real. We ultimately create our own reality, so why not create one that is fantastic?

Your *attitude* really can work magic!

SOME SECRETS TO HAVING FUN

Remember your goals. If you know what you are trying to do, and why it matters, you are more likely to enjoy the process, even when things go wrong.

Prepare properly for your prestidigitation. Play the "What Could Go Wrong Game." You can then have fun playing with your mistakes.

Maintain a positive attitude. Realistically, things will not always go the way you want them to, but if you maintain a positive attitude, you can go with the flow.

Make time to exercise. If your body is in good shape, you will feel better and have better stamina when things go wrong.

Don't forget to eat! When I am busy on a project, I sometimes



Left: Professor Cheer's Comedy Rope Routine. Right: Wartime Wizardry floorshow in Vietnam.

What's in a Name?

By Tricia “Pricilla Mooseburger” Manuel



It can be a very challenging experience to pick a clown name. It seems like it should be so simple, right? But we attach so much value to names.

When a new clown asks me how to pick their name, the first thing I ask is “Did you ever have a nickname?” Nicknames make great clown names: Sammy, Buster, Bubba, Shotzie, Sweetpea—the list goes on.

Some names are quite common: Buttons, Sparkles, Rainbow. In a metropolitan area, that can cause problems for clowns competing for jobs. “I’m the *real* Shenanigans!” In that case, you might want to choose something more unique. Clowns have often added something extra to a common clown name to make it less common. For example: Mr. Rainbow, Silly Sparkles, Joyful Buttons.

Don’t freak out if you discover that someone else has the same clown name as you. There are so many duplicate names in this world, just ask Sammy Smith! You can still make your own mark and be memorable for who you are.

Remember, however, that you need to keep your audience in mind. Forty years ago “Little Dickie” was a great name for a short-in-stature clown. I’m sad to say that we’ve become a sexualized culture, and that today his name would cause too many snickers and snide remarks. Think it through!

When my daughter Julia was a little girl, she picked Cherry Mooseburger for her clown name. I will admit that I thought it sounded like a stripper! Nevertheless, it was my daughter’s choice to make. Later on, she became Julia the Clown on Ringling, and then created her current character Miss Wanda Fool. It’s fine to evolve.

My clown name was a high school nickname. Pricilla Mooseburger was the funniest name I had ever heard, and it was a real person! I even had “from the desk of Pricilla Mooseburger” stationary. Little did I know that years later, it would become the perfect clown name for me. Seasoned professionals gave me a lot of grief for my choice. I was told that it was a terrible name because kids would have trouble saying

it. But it worked for me and my business because the name is so memorable that no one ever forgot it.

When I switched from a whiteface to an auguste, I wasn’t ready to leave Pricilla Mooseburger behind so I just shortened my name to Miss Moose. I will always be Pricilla Mooseburger at heart. Changing your make-up doesn’t necessarily mean you have to change your name. Brenda Marshall is still Flower the Clown even after switching from whiteface to auguste—and it was not a problem.

Pick a name that makes you smile! Choose one that fits your personality as a clown. Don’t let anyone choose it for you.

Happy clowning!

Tricia Manuel is the unmistakable Pricilla Mooseburger. You can find her online at www.mooseburger.com with Pricilla Mooseburger Originals costumes and supplies, Mooseburger e-Alley and www.rednosereader.org. Or just call her! 320-963-6277! pricilla@mooseburger.com.



The Funny Side of Nursing Homes and Assisted Living Facilities

By Connie “Punkin” Morrow

I’m sure almost all of you have worked nursing homes and assisted living facilities. I have for many years. I will confess that I’m not an expert. I usually leave them and head to my car to have a good cry. If the facility is a good one, the residents have everything they need. But under some circumstances, there are places that need a lot of help when it comes to comforting people.

My sister was at one of these facilities to have some physical therapy. When she had liver cancer they put her in an Alzheimer’s unit and, without going into too much detail, she was treated very badly. When she succumbed to her illness she had only been there for a few weeks. I had several hot discussions with the nursing supervisor and finally threatened to blow the home in. Guess what? That home closed shortly after my sister passed. On the other hand, my mom was in one for six weeks doing PT. She was treated wonderfully and never had a problem—as well as my mother-in-law. They did everything from crafts to movies to singalongs.

So, what’s the funny thing about facilities? I’m going to share a few stories with you.

One nursing home had an outdoor, carnival-type event. As usual, I was making balloons and doing walkarounds. One of the nurses came up to me and said, “Hey, you should go talk to Emily.” Off I trotted to see her. Holy Cow! This woman was well into her nineties and she was telling me dirty jokes! I laughed so hard. She was a gem.

At the far side of the festivities, I saw Joe sitting all by himself in his wheelchair. I went over to talk to him and found out he didn’t like to get around too many people. He wasn’t a people person. I started talking sports with him. He was a big Buffalo Bills fan and we talked about all the players from the past. We had a great conversation, and there was one player’s name that neither of us could remember. I bid farewell to Joe and went out to talk to some other people. Pretty soon, I see Joe wheeling his wheelchair over to me as fast as he could. He was shouting, “It was Joe DeLamilure.” Yep, Joe and I got along just great that day.

At yet another facility, I met a lady named Grace. Grace was the Assisted Living facility’s resident jetsetter. You could just tell by the clothes and jewelry she wore. Her hair was perfect and she was looking for a man! She told me all about a trip she was

taking to Florida and she was going to go out on the beach and find that man. Grace, I sure hope you did!

I met Helen at that same facility. Several of the others told me that Helen was blind and never joined in on anything. I went over to her and told her I was going to make her a balloon. Having a dad who had glaucoma and gone blind in one eye, I kind of knew what I had to do. I made a dog and then took her hands and let her feel each part of the balloon, telling her where the head, the ears, the nose, etc., were located. Helen had a big smile on her face. The others told me she hadn’t smiled like that in ages. That made me tear up, but also feel good, too!

Then there was George. George was a big man who was sitting in his room when I met him. I did a balloon, told some jokes, and then did a walk-around. I told him I was late that day because the police stopped me for having a little pot on me. He looked shocked. Then I took out the little ceramic flower pot that I carry and he laughed so hard he started to cough. I gave him that pot and he was going to use it on his friends at dinner that night. I hope they laughed, too, George!

One of the other things I do is make little holiday gifts for the residents. Last year I made several candy cups, both regular and diabetic, as well as Christmas cards. I made handmade Valentine’s Day cards for them, and when St. Patrick’s Day came around I created green paper carnations for them to wear. I also save all my magazines and take them over to them. They really appreciate these types of things.

These facilities can be sad and depressing, but you will be the light of their day if you can go in there and make them smile! I heartily suggest you visit one and you’ll see how funny these people can be.

Connie “Punkin” Morrow serves as COAI’s Northeast Regional Vice President. Reach her by email at punkin@punkintheclown.com.



We are super excited to announce that we have set up an **online merchandise store** for all of the coolest COAI gear to make your friends jealous! At the moment we have three different designs, with many different merchandise options for those designs. A portion of all sales comes back to support COAI and help us to keep dues low and provide quality benefits for our members! We have everything from T-shirts, sweatshirts, onesies, phone cases, mugs—you name it! Everything is available in men's, women's, children's, and babies' sizes. And they all come in a huge rainbow of different colors! You can check it out at www.teespring.com/stores/coai.



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JUNIOR JOEYS

Music Pin



By Regina “Cha Cha” Wollrabe,
Junior Joeys Director

Hello, Junior Joeys!

I always like to start with a few jokes that fit my topic so you can collect them in a joke file or notebook. Here are a few that I found about music.

What type of music does a balloon hate? Answer: Pop music!

What makes music in your hair? Answer: A headband.

I keep hearing music coming from the printer. I think the paper is jamming!

The music pin is here at last, and I hope you are already jamming with your music. If you don't play an instrument yet, here are a few things you can do to get started.

There are hundreds of instruments to choose from, but clowns often play ukuleles because they are small and somewhat easy to learn. They are especially good for those with smaller hands. Whatever instrument you want to learn, the people who work at a music store can help you figure out what size you need. They may also recommend a teacher who could help you learn to play. If you do buy a ukulele, avoid toy instruments, as they are difficult to keep tuned.

We are keeping this pin as simple as possible so that you can think about adding a little music to your clown act. If you would like to play a tissue-box guitar, a one-string banjo, or a bucket bass, you can find instructions on YouTube that will teach you how to make them. These funny instruments are great clown props and will be fun to use in your show or at a nursing home visit.

Every clown needs a kazoo. You can make great sound effects or use them to communicate instead of talking. Playing the kazoo with a group of

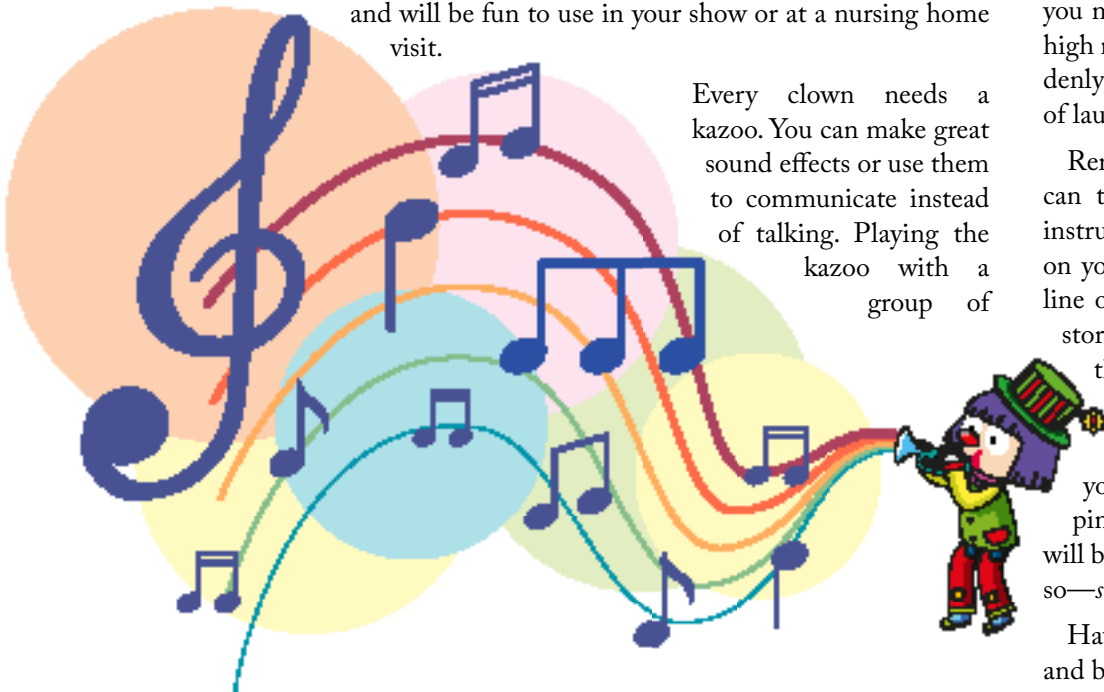
clowns is fun. You can hum the same song and decorate your kazoos, making them fun and silly, by adding hoses, funnels, and feathers. (I learned this idea at Mooseburger Camp this summer.) Practice your instrument daily for three weeks in a row to earn your music pin. You can get better and better if you continue practicing. Music is a language, so take time to learn its vocabulary—the scales, rhythm, symbols, and notes.

Two more instruments that are fun to use in clowning are the miniature harmonica and the slide whistle. Search on YouTube for how to play “Happy Birthday” on a miniature harmonica. The slide whistle is a great clown prop. I use it all the time. Get your audience to stand up on the high note and sit down on the low note, making the whistle go in and out faster and faster. Your audience will jump up and down quickly as you make the slide whistle go from the high note to the low note, and then suddenly stop. This usually results in a lot of laughter.

Remember you can't tuna fish, but you can tune your own instrument. Most instruments can be tuned with an App on your phone, or a tuner you buy online or in a music store. I prefer music stores because they can help you find the right items and show you how to use them.

I want to congratulate those of you who have been working on your pins. I am proud of your progress! We will be connecting on Zoom again soon, so—*stay tuned!*

Have a musical day, keep clowning, and bump a nose! **TNC**





BEGINNING SKILLS IN MUSIC

Music is a life skill: something that you will learn and carry with you for the rest of your life. Music adds many possibilities to your clowning. You can use music to create sound effects, play a song for others to sing along, or entertain your audience with a live solo performance. Music's primary goal is to have fun and be creative. Bump a nose.

- Learn the scale of Do, Re, Mi, Fa, So, La, Ti, Do.
- Learn the notes C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C on your instrument.
- Learn what rhythm is and how to create different patterns.
- Learn about whole notes, quarter notes, eighth and sixteenth notes.
- Learn terms: staff, treble clef, and bass clef.
- Learn terms: crescendo, decrescendo, forte, mezzo, piano.
- Make a tissue box guitar, one string banjo, or bucket bass.
- Get a kazoo and practice songs and sound effects.
- Practice an instrument, daily, for three weeks in a row.
- Optional clown props: slide whistle and a mini harmonica.
- Parent/Jr. Joey Leader Signature _____

Date _____

25 Years go

By Lauren Jurgensen

We love our readers' enthusiasm for *The New Calliope*. In addition to positive comments about the six new issues we publish each year, we enjoy hearing about COAI members' fun discoveries in the Vault at www.mycoai.com.

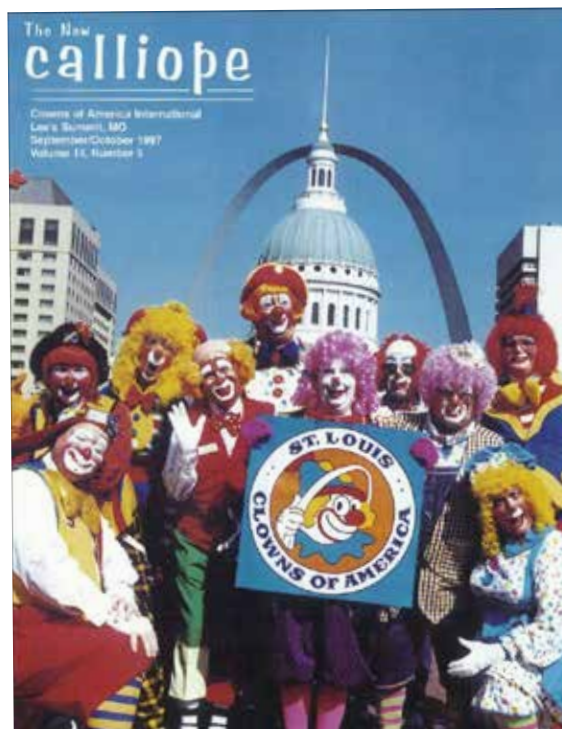
This month we go back to the September/October 1997 issue, which contains a little bit of everything, and *a lot* of excitement for the then-upcoming 1998 COAI International Convention in St. Louis. Naturally, the convention's hosts that year—the St. Louis Clowns of America (Alley #128)—graced the cover.

Catherine “Cath-E-Oh” Hardebeck, Alley #128's president, wrote in to hype the event. She recommended convention attendees bring their Halloween costumes to the springtime convention. Why? One of the convention dates happened to be on Friday the 13th, and they planned to party in style.

Belinda “Gertie Jo” Spears wrote a letter to the editor asking if it was possible to start a COAI alley-for-one, given that there were no other clowns in her rural community. Editor Cal Olson replied that although COAI was unable to recognize a single-clown alley, alleys were not limited by geography. “Many of us belong to several alleys, even though we can't attend all (or any!) of the meetings,” wrote Cal. “We rely on alley newsletters to keep us informed and in touch.” He recommended a few ideas, including joining another alley as a long-distance member, or trying to persuade at least four other “lonely” clowns to form the first and only long-distance alley in COAI history.

In “Getting Real About Competition,” David “Mr. Rainbow” Bartlett detailed his complex feelings about clowning's competitive culture. After describing an incident where several clowns attempted to steal another clown's performance slot at a local restaurant, he suggested an alternative: instead of trying to replace a fellow clown, inquire with other restaurants about hiring you as a clown. If one restaurant is hiring clowns to perform, surely other restaurants and businesses might see the value in doing the same. Mr. Rainbow suggested that this approach could create more—and better—opportunities for the entire clown community,

The issue includes more great articles worth revisiting: Discovery Mime Theater's Brian Begley and Mary Inman provided a brief history of miming in “Mime Basics.” Bruce “Charlie” Johnson urged in “Clowning for those Special Audiences” that it's



vital for clowns to show compassion toward children and others with special needs; he recommended Richard Snowberg's book *Caring Clowning* on this subject. The seventh article in Karen “Peppermint” Reinholt's birthday party series described best practices when clowning in public spaces.

Joyce “Ida-No” Olson, then COAI's North Central Vice President, explored the intersection of clowning and Christianity in “Clown Ministry—Hugging and Loving,” while COAI Director Trudi Sang published her favorite tips for weaving Bible stories into one's clown act.

Margaret “Maggie” Clauder gave advice on how to throw the best pirate-themed party. In “So, You Think You're a Clown,” Carol “Bebe” Enters extolled the virtues of never compromising one's efforts to bring joy, humor, and laughter to their act—you never know when there's an audience member who really needs it.

Check out these articles and more by logging into your account and accessing the Vault at www.mycoai.com. **TNC**

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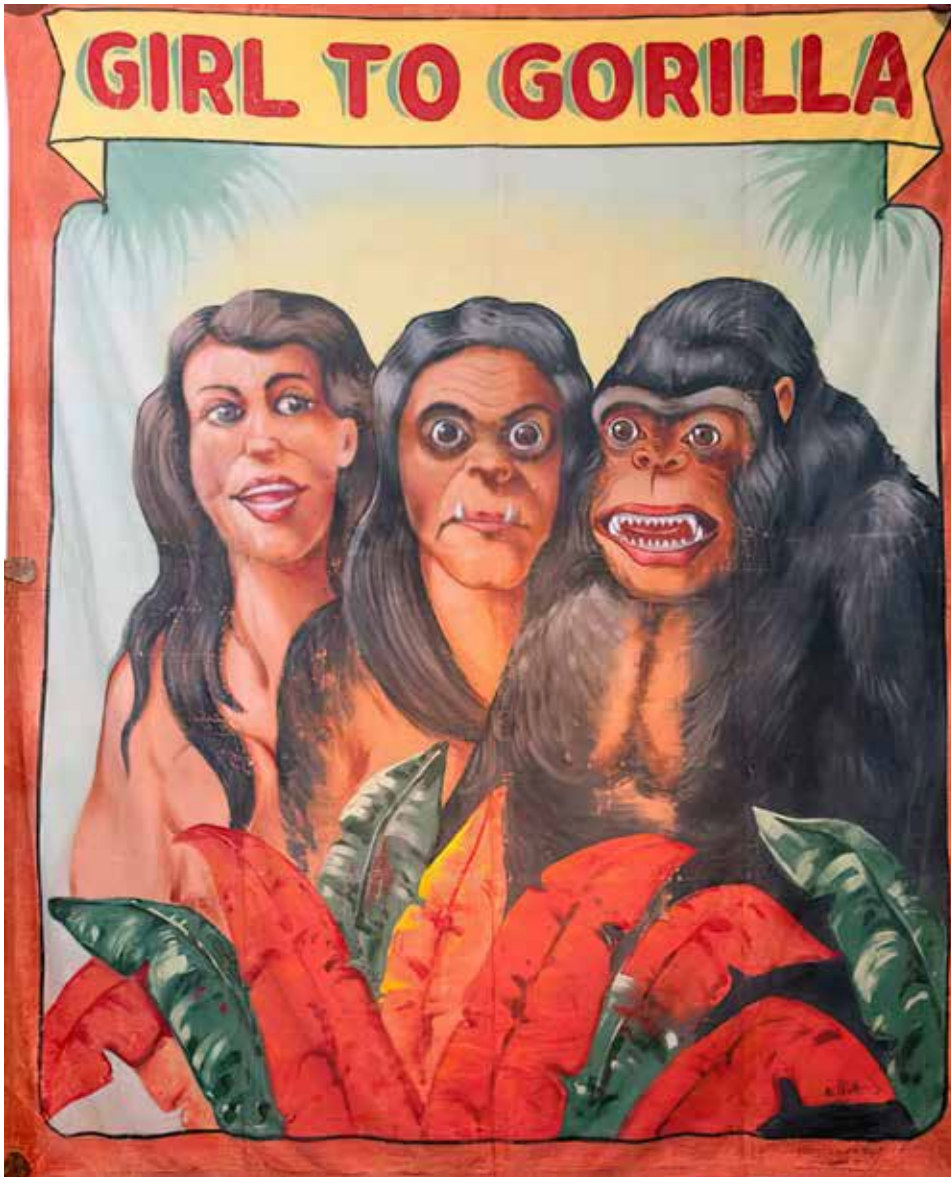
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BEV BERGERON AND THE GORILLA GIRL

By David Ginn

One of the most important telephone calls of my life came to me in graduate school at the University of Georgia. It was fall quarter, September 1968, and somehow the president of the Georgia Magic Club, I.B.M. Ring 9, tracked me down.



Vintage carnival banner for Girl to Gorilla.



Rebo the Clown and Mark Wilson starred in the nationally syndicated TV show, The Magic Land of Allakazam. They also made live appearances at fairgrounds and other large venues.

“David,” he said, “Mark Wilson is bringing *The Magic Land of Allakazam* show with Nani and Rebo to the Southeastern Fair in two weeks. It turns out that one of his male assistants is in the hospital, and he is looking for a college student to fill in for the ten days. So I thought of you. Is there any chance you can get out of school to do it?”

Could a young magician who grew up watching *Allakazam* every Saturday morning for five years get out of grad school to work for Mark Wilson?

I did not hesitate one second.

“Yes,” I said. “I will make the arrangements.”

Thus started the next big adventure in my magical life. I immediately went to each of my college professors and explained the situation. I purposely did not *ask permission*. I wasn’t going to be told *no*. Instead, I explained how important the job was to my potential career, and I asked them what I needed to do to make

things work with my courses if I took off for ten days.

Amazingly, each teacher thought it was a good opportunity and approved my leaving, telling me how I could catch up on my return.

That's how I ended up spending two weeks working as an *Allakazam* assistant in October 1968.

The day before the fair started, I met with Mark and Nani at their hotel room a few miles from the fairgrounds. They explained that my job was to do anything needed—off stage, occasionally on stage, go for this and that—and I agreed. We were to do three thirty-minute shows daily at 1:00 p.m., 3:00 p.m., and 5:00 p.m., and we started the unloading and setting up process the very next morning.

That's when I met Bev Bergeron (Rebo the Clown) for the first time, in street clothes and no makeup, along with two other stage assistants, Marilyn and Wayne. Due to the fact that the stage had only one large dressing room on each side, Mark, Nani, and Marilyn shared the room on stage left, and Bev, Wayne, and David—plus the doves—shared the stage right room.

So the whole crew, supervised by Bev, put together the Train Illusion, the canvas covered box, a Super-X, the dollhouse, and a few other larger tricks. Wayne and I, in addition, were in charge of selling a fifty-cent Mark Wilson Magic Kit after each show.

We would perform a show, sell kits, reset the show, then have about an hour off between the shows. Bev taught me how to quickly reset Abbott's Tear Apart Dove Vanish using Scotch Magic Tape, so I did that after each performance.

Mark and Nani, on stage left, were always busy between shows; therefore, Wayne, Bev, and I spent lots of time together.

One afternoon, a week into the run, Wayne went to see a friend working the fair. So between shows, Bev said to me, "I'm gonna walk down the midway and visit this guy. You wanna come along?"

"Sure," I told him, not knowing that I was in for an education.

Bev stayed in his Rebo makeup all day, but not in costume. Between shows he wore a step-in work suit, like a mechanic. So that's the way he was dressed as we walked down the midway to his friend's exhibit.

The Girl to Gorilla

When we arrived at the exhibit, I first noticed huge banners with lurid full-color paintings on canvas. They depicted a bikini-clad girl held inside a cage, a flash of light, then a big hairy gorilla coming out.

"It's a blue-room illusion," Bev told me. "Also known as Pepper's Ghost. Disney uses the same principle to make ghosts appear in the Haunted Mansion when you ride through it." I had seen Pepper's Ghost



in my early magic books, but never in person.

On a platform in front of the tent, a barker was talking and drawing a crowd, while people were buying tickets and entering the tent. "See Gambora, the Gorilla Girl! A beautiful girl by day, but a savage beast by night! Alive and in person! See the amazing transformation right before your very eyes! You will never forget it, ladies and gentlemen! A once in a lifetime experience! *Gambora*, the living beauty who transforms right in front of you to a *hideous wild beast!*"

The barker spotted Bev in his Rebo makeup and work suit, then gave him a nod to go inside.

Bev said, "Follow me, and stay close," and inside the tent we went.

There were already seventy-five to a hundred people inside the tent, standing on a sawdust floor and facing a platform raised maybe three feet off the ground. Mounted on the platform was an empty steel cage about five feet square and eight feet tall. Strange dramatic music was playing over old speakers.

Bev pulled on my arm and told me, "Let's stand over here to the side. You don't want to stand in front of the exit." I followed him as instructed. His attitude seemed to tell me to watch and listen, so I followed his lead and kept my mouth



David Ginn in 1968, shortly before he worked with Mark Wilson and Bev Bergeron for ten days at the Southeastern Fair.

shut. I had no idea what we were about to witness.

After a moment or two, the crowd swelled to over one hundred people. The music lightened up for a moment, and a voice out of the semi-darkness spoke up:

“Ladies and gentlemen! Prepare yourselves for a once-in-a-lifetime experience! Feast your eyes on the solid steel cage on the platform! Behold, Gambora, the Gorilla Girl!”

Now the music started playing again with a strong bass beat—dramatic jungle music, like something out of a Tarzan movie.

A door opened on the side of the cage, and a bikini-clad girl with blonde hair stepped inside. The door closed. There she stood, quiet in the center of the cage.

Nothing happened at first. The transformation was gradual. The girl’s skin was white, her hair blonde, but slowly she started to darken. It was as if your eyes were playing tricks on you. I recalled Lon Chaney, Jr. changing into the Wolfman in the Universal movie of the 1940s. That’s the way it was. It took maybe thirty seconds total—but sure enough the blonde girl changed into a hairy brown gorilla!

Nobody was talking inside the tent.

Once the transformation took place, the gorilla became the new show. He (or she) did some gorilla moves, grunting, beating on his mighty chest, snarling his face, and grabbing the steel bars at the front of the cage.

The audience stood absolutely still as if in a trance. There was no danger, no problem. After all, the beast was secured inside a steel-barred cage.

That’s when the gorilla stepped to the very front of the cage and shook the bars. No problem, steel bars. Then he grabbed the two center front bars—and in one rough movement, he ripped them out of their mountings, tossing them aside. Instantly I realized those two bars were made of rubber.

With a mighty roar over the loud speakers, the gorilla stood on the front edge of the cage. Then he leaped into the audience!

That’s when pandemonium broke loose. Girls, boys, teens, women, men, and children started screaming, shoving, and running for the exits. The gorilla was grabbing at people left and right and chasing them out of the tent. Had Bev not steered me to the side, we would have been knocked down and trampled!

As it turned out, Bev and I were laughing our heads off! Despite the fact that it was a man in a gorilla suit, just pretending to be a gorilla, the unexpected factor of him jumping into the crowd scared everybody. Nobody was going to just stand there—they ran out of fear!

The gorilla attack lasted less than ten seconds. That’s all the time it took to clear the house. Bev and I stood off to the side and waited. The gorilla came back to us from the exit, reached up and pulled off his full head mask, revealing a man in his forties. About that time the barker entered the tent.

“Bev Bergeron,” said the barker, “great to see you. This is Jack the Gorilla.” Bev and Jack shook hands, then Bev introduced me. It turned out that Bev and the barker had worked together years ago.

“How’d you like the way I ran ’em outta here?” asked Jack.

“Loved it,” said Bev.

“Me too,” I said. “I didn’t know what was going to happen, so it was a big surprise to me. Do the people run out of here every time?”

Jack said, “Pretty much every time. Now, once in a while I get some teenage boys who want to stay around and fight. But I just pull off the mask and say, ‘Can you believe I make a living doing this?’ Then I shake their hands and thank them for coming to see me. ‘Go home and tell your parents and friends you

shook hands with a gorilla!’ They like that—psychology, you know.”

We all chatted for a few minutes, then it was time for us to return for our five o’clock show. Back up the midway we walked with me asking Bev questions the entire way.

That was my education concerning the Girl to Gorilla.

I didn’t know or understand it at the time, but Bev was mentoring me from the time we met. He was one of those guys in magic with a great deal of experience, and he had a great memory as well. All I ever had to do was ask him questions and just listen.

I discovered something important that day. If you know an older magician who has “been there,” spend time with him or her. Ask showbiz questions and absorb the answers. You never know what knowledge you might pick up. You might learn something that sticks with you and helps you the rest of your life.

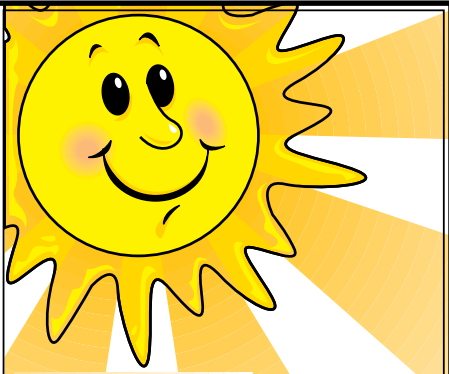
In the case of Bev and the Girl to Gorilla, I have a memory that has lasted me fifty-two years. And those ten days of working together started a friendship that lasted a lifetime. **TNC**



NOTE: To view a vintage film of a live performance of the illusion, search YouTube for “Girl+to+Gorilla.” Look for “Sheba, the Girl to Gorilla,” running time: 2:01 minutes. You will see a black-and-white version with the sounds and sights of a live performance. **DG**



When David Ginn met Bev Bergeron in the fall of 1968, not only was David in graduate journalism school, but he was also writing his first book, Colorful Magic. Nearly fifty years later, Bev Bergeron was a consultant on David’s ninety-fourth book, Kidshow Magic Kompendium. Reach David Ginn by email at ginnmagic@gmail.com



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.

Ruth "Sweet Sue" Hoppe

Parkview Manor
516 13th St. room 111
Wallman IA 52366

Miriam "Senorita Soto" Kleinberger

2 Maple Lane North
Loudonville, NY 12211

Kathy "Noodles" Gurak

18 Park Avenue
Garfield, NJ 07026

Richard "Design-O" Smith

97 Grafton Street, Back Door
Shrewsbury, MA 01545-5646

St. Joseph's Manor

Fran "Cuddles" Smith
6448 Main St
Trumbull, CT 06611

Judy "Dearheart" Quest

715 North 36th Street
Omaha, NE 68131-1906

Good Cheer Chair:

Bonnie Corcia

bonkygibird@gmail.com
732-718-5840



COULROPHOBIA

By Skip Way

Let's talk about the elephant in our sock drawer: *coulrophobia*, or what is known to common folk as the fear of clowns. Several collegiate studies agree that as many as one in ten children share some level of this fear. They also found that children are more likely to fear male clowns than our female clown peers.

For those of us who appreciate and love the clown, this phobia seems ridiculous. However, we must understand that for the child who lives it, the terror is very real. Phobias are always irrational and incredibly specific. When we're frightened, a primal survival area in the brain called the amygdala fires up and forces us into a frantic "Danger, Will Robinson" dance. Our bodies react by boosting adrenaline and kicking our fight, flight, or freeze response into mega mode. A child's natural embarrassment at this autonomic response simply intensifies the dread.

What is it about our clowns that inspire such unease? Studies indicate that many children find it disturbing when they cannot read someone's facial expression. They see only the painted mask and are uncertain about what lies beneath, or how to react. A painted smile can never be as comforting as a natural smile. This is especially true of male clowns whose faces tend to be bolder and more garish than the delicate features of female clowns.

Children commonly experience an expectancy bias. This bias is common

to our fear of dark places, spiders, and flying, causing us to see only the worst possible outcome to a situation. Many expect clowns to behave in unpredictable and manic ways and this uncertainty generates apprehension in children. Those predisposed to anxiety are likely to have an even stronger reaction.

It's important to remember that our Grimaldian predecessors developed the traditional clown's garish paint and overt actions to make the clown's facial expressions visible to an audience seated hundreds of feet away. In this era of close personal contact, the more natural humanity that we display in our faces and actions, the less likely we are to ignite this phobic fear.

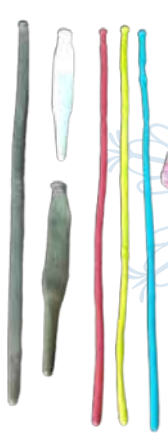
As professional entertainers, when we identify a part of our act that isn't working, we either modify or replace it. For the sake of our children and as true doyens of the clown arts, should we not apply this same validation to our appearance and behavior? **TNC**

Skip Way has been a professional children's entertainer for more than forty-five years. Upon retiring from the Air Force, he settled in Raleigh, North Carolina, and began working stand-up comedy and military clubs along the East Coast. While lucrative, he missed the laughter of children and returned to a career in family entertainment as a classic kid-show performer named Happy Dan. Reach him by e-mail at rway@nc.rr.com.

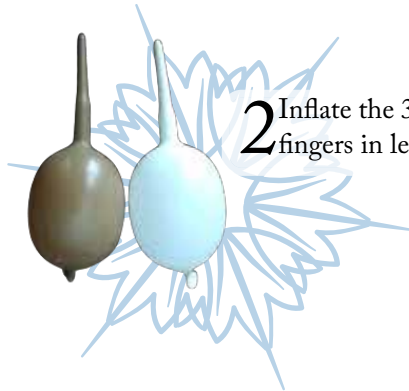


By Merrily Johnston

SNOWMAN ON A LOLLIPOP



1 Items needed to make a snowman on a lollipop: One white 321, one brown 321, one brown 260, three 160s desired colors, one Dum Dum lollipop.



2 Inflate the 321s to four or five fingers in length.



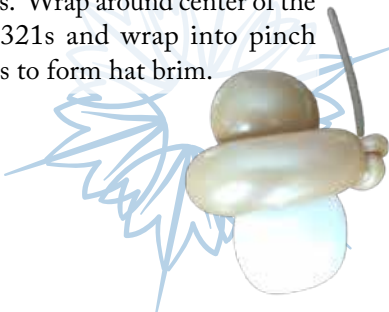
3 Apple twist both 321s by pushing the knot to the other side.

4 Grab the knot on the other side, remove finger, and twist between inflated balloon and knot. Tie a scrap of balloon at the twist of both 321s to hold in place.



5 Tie the ends together and trim one. (The other will be used to attach flower.)

6 Inflate the brown 260 about half way. Make two tiny pinch twists. Wrap around center of the two 321s and wrap into pinch twists to form hat brim.



7 Blow a puff of air into the teal 160 and wrap it around the hat. Inflate the red 160 half way and make tiny five-petal flower. Attach to the hat by wrapping one of the 321 ends into it.



THE LAST WALK-AROUND

John Brackett

John Brackett, 95, of Canandaigua, NY, passed away on October 12, 2022. Born on October 2, 1927, he was a past president and lifetime member of Griffin Alley Clowns, COAI #17. John performed as both “Chippee” (auguste) and “Chipper” (hobo/tramp). During parades, Chipper always got laughs with the toy skunk that peeked out of the hobo-bundle he wore slung over his shoulder. Chipper twisted balloons and performed tricks for birthday parties, charities, fundraisers, and walkarounds. He continued to entertain for many years, even in his assisted living facility after he’d retired from active clowning. John and his fellow Alley members used COAI materials to teach many aspiring clowns. He always made himself available to give tips, advice, and encouragement.

John was an honorable man dedicated to good citizenship, and served in the US Army from 1945 to 1947. He later joined his local fire department and its Exempt Club. He also started a Neighborhood Watch program and a monthly Community Breakfast, always in pursuit of bringing people together. John’s family supported his memorable clowning activities with enthusiasm and attended every event they could.

John was predeceased by his wife of sixty years, Barbara, and his brother Timothy DuBois. He is survived by



his three daughters Janna Brackett, Jeanine Brackett, and Linda (Jeff) Pederson, his sister Claudia (William) Smith, his brothers Lawrence (Claire) DuBois and Paul DuBois, sisters-in-law Mary DuBois and Estelle Simmons, grandchildren Lindsey, Jacob, and Lee Pederson, several nieces and nephews, and the many clowns he helped get their start. He will be missed and remembered by all.

Kathy Gordon

Kathy (Mary K. Hunt) Gordon, 76, of Hollywood, California, died October 24, 2022. Born and raised in Hollywood, she graduated from Hollywood High School in 1963. Kathy attended Los Angeles City College’s Theater Arts program before transferring to the Opera Workshop at Cal State Northridge. A talented opera singer who won many awards, she made her professional debut performing in the Los Angeles Opera Company’s staging of *The Magic Flute*.

Kathy graduated from Immaculate Heart College with a bachelor’s degree in Theatre Arts and a minor in Music. She married photographer Alexander “Sascha” Maurice Gordon and had a



daughter, Jennifer, before the family moved to Klamath Falls, Oregon in 1974. Kathy performed with the Portland Civic Theater and Portland Opera before developing her “Jolly Molly the Clown” character and business in 1980. She spent the next thirty years as one of Portland’s premiere children’s entertainers while also working as a secretary. In addition to teaching voice and piano, Kathy served as President of the Northwest Performing Arts, Inc.

She took pleasure in bowling, world travel, and walking her dogs on the beach. Kathy is survived by her daughter Jennifer “Sascha” Gordon and Jennifer’s fiancé Chris Newell; her grandchildren Nina, Skyleo, and Theo Manning; her sister Roberta Jackson Cullen of Woodstock, NY; her nieces Margot and Jean Cullen; and many friends and family throughout Utah, California, and Oregon.



Beth Jean Leamer

Beth Jean Leamer lost her two-and-a-half-year battle with cancer on February 13, 2022 at her home in Sun City, AZ. Born September 28, 1937 to Jack and Jennie Galloway on their family ranch in Valentine, NE, Beth grew up in Bassett, NE and graduated high school in 1955. She attended Nebraska’s Wayne State College where she graduated with a master’s degree in teaching. Beth married Wayne Kurpuweit and had two sons, Bret and Troy. In 1975, she married Ray Krueger in Foster, NE, who adopted Bret and Troy. They lived in Foster until Ray’s passing in 1989. In 1990, Beth married Norris Leamer. They spent the next twenty-eight years residing in Pierce, NE and Sun City, AZ. Norris passed away in 2018.



Beth was a teacher and loved her students. She taught at several Nebraska schools before her retirement in 1991. Beth was also a talented calligrapher who adored Sudoku puzzles. She and her husband Norris spent their time traveling, learning the clown profession, and growing their faith in Jesus Christ. Beth was always active in church choirs, but her finest moments were making people smile and laugh whenever she performed as Suzy Q the Clown. Red Hot Clown Club visited schools, nursing facilities, hospitals, and other local events. Beth shared her faith boldly, keeping her eyes on Jesus in a picture she kept close.

She was preceded in death by parents Jack and Jennie Galloway, her brothers Jack, Don, and Jim Galloway, and her late husbands: Ray Krueger (1989) and Norris Leamer (2018). She is survived by her sons: Bret (Sharon) Krueger and their children Kristina Krueger, Kelsi (AJ) Martinez, and their daughters (Pria, Ruby, and Eden), Sheridan and Codi (Leah—fiancé) Krueger of Denver, CO, Troy (Kim) Krueger and their children Kelsey (Chris) Thornton and son Levi, and Ren Krueger of Colorado Springs, CO.

Barbara “Bumbles” Porath

Barbara Doris Porath of Lincoln Park, Michigan passed away on December 19, 2020. Barbara was employed for many years as a supervisor at Michigan Bell/Ameritech. While she was working for them, Barbara began performing as “Bumbles” and “Matilda” in 1979 with the Michigan Bell Clowns Galore.



Over the years, she donated her time to bring smiles to many children—as well as adults—by performing magic and comedy shows. Her talents were many: face painting, balloon sculptures, and pocket magic for company picnics, grand



openings, retail stores, malls, and birthday parties. Barbara also performed with the MBT clowns for many years at the Wayne County Michigan Sheriff’s Annual Circus.

She made several key contributions to the professional clown community. Not only did she teach people the art of clowning through the Midwest Clown Association and Clowns of America International, she held office positions within both organizations.

Barbara is survived by her brother Gregg Sabourin, sister Nancy Douglas-Young, and several nieces and nephews.

Julianna Thompson

Julianna “Julie” Voich Thompson, 64, of Herminie, Pennsylvania, passed away on March 1, 2021. Known as Julz De Clown, she was both a member and past president of the Tri-Rivers Clowns, as well as a member of the Clowns of America, World Clowns, and Mid-Atlantic Clown Association. Julie also belonged to Ring 158 (Greensburg, Pennsylvania). She had been a member of the I.B.M. since 2002, holding I.B.M. number 63045. She worked in customer service for Transcare Ambulance Service.



Julie is survived by a daughter, Kelly Valmassoni and Kelly’s husband George Valmassoni, of North Huntingdon, Pennsylvania; a son, Joshua Thompson and his wife Viki Thompson of Springdale, Pennsylvania; her partner, Andrew Parlog of Herminie, Pennsylvania; her four grandchildren, Jacob, Cassidy, Dylan, and Alyssa; her brother, John Voich and his wife Debbie Voich of Delmont, Pennsylvania; and her sister, Millicent Heinack of Butler, Pennsylvania. **TNC**

“Helpers” Continued from page 8

The toughest situation is when a younger sibling comes on stage to help an older sibling. This must be handled delicately, and correctly, before it snowballs out of control. You have several options in this situation. First and foremost is to not ignore the child. You need to be aware of their presence, and address it in a fun and lighthearted manner that lets the audience know you’re 1) aware of it, 2) okay with it, and 3) able to address it and move on with the routine.

This never means embarrassing the child. The child is just acting how a young child does. First, I may say something like “Oh, hi there. I guess we have another fine helper who wants to be a star.” The idea is to address the child and let the audience know you are aware of them. This also gives the parents of the child the chance to react. In some cases, saying hello to the child will be enough to alert the parents, who may fix the problem for you. If the parent doesn’t get the hint, you need to find a way to use the child – in some fashion – for the routine. You may ask the older sibling if they would not mind working together as a team to make the magic happen. In other words, you’re asking the older sibling to assist you with the younger one.

The last tip I’ll leave you with is simple. However, it’s a common mistake that many magicians make. You can prevent most of these problems from happening by simply being more specific when you select a helper. If you are on stage, choose the person by describing their location and perhaps what they’re wearing. You can also walk to your audience and select a helper that way. This allows for fewer errors. **TNC**

Kyle Peron is a family-entertainer specializing in stage and illusion shows. He is also the author of several books on magical performance and marketing. He makes his home in Pottstown, PA with his wife Kelly. He can be reached at kylekellymagic@gmail.com.

WHAT COULD POSSIBLY GO WRONG?

By Beth “Pickles” Cedarholm



The following stories from COAI members are about real-life clown blunders. They are tales of woe from entertainers whose gigs didn't go quite as expected. While these performers endured some impossibly bad situations, they soldiered on, gleaned tidbits of wisdom from their negative experiences and becoming better—and wiser—entertainers.

Matthew Spraggins, Clown

I'd known that the tire on my car had been bad for a few months, but I held out as long as possible before getting it fixed.

While driving to my second clown show gig of the day, I got a flat tire. Big deal. A flat tire—I've had flat tires before. I can change that thing in ten minutes and be back on the road (or so I thought).

After I jacked up the car to change the tire, the jack slipped, and the car fell off the jack and onto the ground, leaving me no room to get the jack back under the vehicle. I was stuck with no way to fix my car. I struggled and struggled, lying on the ground, greasy and sweaty, ruining the white shirt I planned to wear with my costume at my clown gig.

Ten minutes turned into thirty minutes, and thirty minutes turned into an hour.

I had no choice but to call and cancel the event. My client, who was quite



displeased, suggested I leave my car on the side of the road and “take an Uber,” because she had “all these kids running around.” Instead, I called a tow truck to get a quote on a six-mile trip to the Walmart Tire Center. That quote had more zeros in it than I could count. Uh, no way. I decided I would figure it out on my own.

About half an hour later, I got the jack wedged under something solid, and dangerously raised it just high enough for me to get on the spare tire. Then I hobbled around the corner to a Firestone Auto Care and met with a salesman, who talked me into buying four tires instead of just one—so he could meet his daily sales goal. The tow truck would have been cheaper.

Julia Swanson, Clown

When I was with the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus, we did a gag where the clowns dressed up in penguin costumes and performed tricks for marshmallow rewards. We would balance a ball on our faces and turn around in a circle. Then we'd invite one volunteer audience “penguin” to join us.

On this occasion, the “trainer” (also a clown), had picked a teenager who was



a bit rambunctious. Our last trick was a penguin pile, where we would lie in a pile with me on the bottom. When the volunteer jumped on the pile, he tried for a flip and landed on my head.

My greasepaint smeared on the floor. Luckily, my clown nose absorbed most of the impact. We finished the gig like normal. Afterward, I was shocked my nose wasn't broken. There was, however, a bruise all around where my clown nose made contact with my face. Boy, did it hurt to put on clown makeup for a week or two!

Beth Cedarholm, Clown

I was recently divorced after almost twenty-five years of marriage and had finally mustered the courage to start dating again. I hadn't dated since the late eighties, and things had changed a bit since then. Nevertheless, I bravely signed up for Match.com and started the daunting task of online dating.

I soon started chatting with a man named Bill. I suspected Bill wasn't a love connection, but he was pleasant enough. Like me, he had a pug, so we had that in common. On Thursday, Bill messaged me asking if I had any fun weekend plans. I told him that I was working Friday night and had a clown



birthday party gig in the Minneapolis suburb of Prior Lake. An excited Bill replied that he worked in Prior Lake. He wondered if I wanted to meet him for dinner or snack after my gig. I politely explained to Bill that I couldn't just slip into a gas station restroom after my party and reappear five minutes later in my human form. It was messier and more complicated than that. So, if we met after my gig, I would be Pickles the Clown.

Bill was persuasive. After the birthday party, I found myself waiting to meet Bill in the parking lot of Tjs Bar and Grill. I shoved a handful of balloons in my pocket and waited for Bill to arrive. I told him that I'd be the one with the green hair, red nose, and—of course—clown shoes.

Bill seemed, well, *shocked* when he found me in the parking lot. I don't know what he was expecting. I had warned him, after all. Anyway, we went into Tjs Bar and Grill, which was divided into two areas. To the left was a packed, family-friendly restaurant, and to the right was the bar. We headed over to the restaurant area. Children immediately swarmed me while parents asked if I would pose for photos with their kiddos. Bill looked on, patiently, while I greeted children and posed for pictures.

Bill ordered appetizers and we engaged in idle first-date chit-chat, occasionally pausing so I could pose for more photos with children. During one awkward moment when there was a lull in the conversation, I made Bill a balloon alien hat, which he courteously set on the table and said he'd pass on later to his daughter. (Red flag! When your clown date makes you a cool balloon hat, wear it with pride!)

Eventually, I needed to use the restroom. The ladies' room was on the other side of the establishment, which meant walking through the bar and past patrons who were engaging in Friday night happy-hour festivities.

Everyone loved clowns at Tjs that night. As I made my way to the bathroom, the patrons hugged me, posed for selfies, and asked for my business card. One of them, a man who had clearly enjoyed a few beers, noticed the balloon alien hat that I'd made for Bill and begged me to make one for his friend (who was celebrating a birthday). I told him I would do so later.

I eventually made it back to my table but, lo and behold, the drunken patron from the bar had followed me and was now *begging* for an alien balloon hat. I quickly whipped up another hat and sent him on his way, but not before he stuck a ten dollar bill in my pocket. Several other bar patrons approached my table and requested balloons, all of them tipping me.

At the end of the night, Bill picked up the tab for the appetizers, and I left with a pocketful of crisp bills. Bill and I never progressed to a second date. This was the first and last time that I dated while in clown, and the only time I have actually made money on a date.



Do you want to share a tale of woe, a lesson learned, or a "What Could Possibly Go Wrong?" story? Send it to Beth "Pickles" Cedarholm at clownypickles@gmail.com. All entries are subject to editing for clarity and length.

Welcome, NEW MEMBERS!

- Connie Stein Cinnaminson NJ
 - Scarlett Storm "Scarlett Storm" Lexington NC
 - Ione Andrade "Nona" Burlington MA
 - Diane Pedroza Levittown NY
 - Regina Martinez "Silly Sparkles" Pflugerville TX
 - Cassandra Wilson "Asyilia Wonder, Spinstress of Dreams" Spring TX
 - Andrea Izbicki "Anna Banana" Erie PA
 - Bob Moyer "Billy" Medina OH
 - Ken Shasteen "Smoothie!" Knoxville TN
 - Alexis Lamiable Montreuil AIN France
 - Richard Oden Baltimore MD
 - Christina Wright "BunBun" SantaFe TX
 - Randy E. Payne "Fiddle Sticks" Pearland TX
 - Leesa S. Peoples "Lollipop" Splendora TX
 - Melody L. Knight "Mochi Macchiato" Pearland TX
 - Monica M. Bowling "Munny" Rosharon TX
 - Kealy M. Racca "Razzmatazz" Houston TX
 - Thomas C. Crews "Swami" League City TX
 - Dianne Zomper "Z" Houston TX
 - James McDonald "Jum Jiggles" Saint Michael MN
 - David Peterson "Flap Jack" Svea MN
 - Teresa Frank "Cup Cake" Svea MN
 - Joan Stein "Joaney Baloney" Vienna OH
 - Kiera Brown Beachwood OH
 - Bryan Palus "Jello" Columbia MD
 - Terry Kelley Louisville KY
 - Logan Jimenez New Philadelphia OH
 - Michael Litwin "Michael" Portland OR
 - Marilyn Arroyo Soto "Moztasita" Bethlehem PA
 - Latoya Fletcher "Phancy" Minneapolis MN
 - Xena Johnson Minneapolis MN
- A big thank you to
Virginia Sanders
Connie Morrow
 for gifting memberships!



From the Director of Education

By Alene Klaus

It is hard to believe that the Christmas season is upon us. Soon a new year will begin! What will you do new in 2022? How will you refresh and restart for the coming year?

A few thoughts—

Look at your clown wardrobe and props through the eye of a camera. You will more easily see the things in need of repair or replacement.

Next—repair or replace.

Try and practice a new skill.

Reinvent or update an old skill.

Sponsor a membership for a friend.

Smile more. Remember, smiles are contagious!

Have a great holiday season, and keep spreading joy!

TNC

The Home of Kidshow Magic GinnMagicShop.com

Free Books
Free Reads

200 Free
Videos



All New Website!

COAI 2022-23 BUDGET

The 2022-23 budget was discussed and approved by unanimous vote at the October 5, 2022 COAI Board of Directors meeting, held on Zoom.

Income	
Membership	60,000
Magazine Ads	2,000
Merchandise	500
Convention	0
Interest	0
Auctions	2,800
Other Misc	0
Total Income	65,300
Expenses	
Calliope Printing - SPS Pub	14,400
Calliope Postage - SPS Pub	6,000
Design/Editorial Fee	16,800
Business Manager - SPS Pub	15,200
Zoom Meeting Expense	180
Other Board Expenses	0
Officer Phone/Postage	0
Professional Services	750
Web Expense	622
Business Office Phone	1,200
Business Office Postage	3,600
Convention	0
Calliope Advertising Commission	0
Printed Materials	500
Credit Card Fees	1,140
Insurance (Errors & Omissions)	1,600
Scholarships	1,500
Education	0
Trophies	250
Jr Joey Expense	0
Other Misc Expenses	50
Total Expenses	63,792
Net Income/(Loss)	1,508

Ring of Honor

The 2022 Ring of Honor notices will be included in the November/December issue.

HAVE YOU TOLD A FRIEND ABOUT COAI?

Give an application
or gift a membership today!





REBO'S Clown Bits and Props

By Bev Bergeron
Snake Can Routine

ARTWORK BY TONY DUNN

This routine is completely mine; however, several people have taken it without permission and have even written it up as their own. The routine was developed while working children's birthday parties in the early 1960s. I incorporated it into my stage act about 1965. Since then, only a few have been given permission to use it. Since others have taken it without asking, I am now giving it to the world with one request: please remember that it belongs to Rebo the Clown.

PERFORMANCE: After a handkerchief has vanished, pick up a can and indicate to the audience that the lost item is in it.

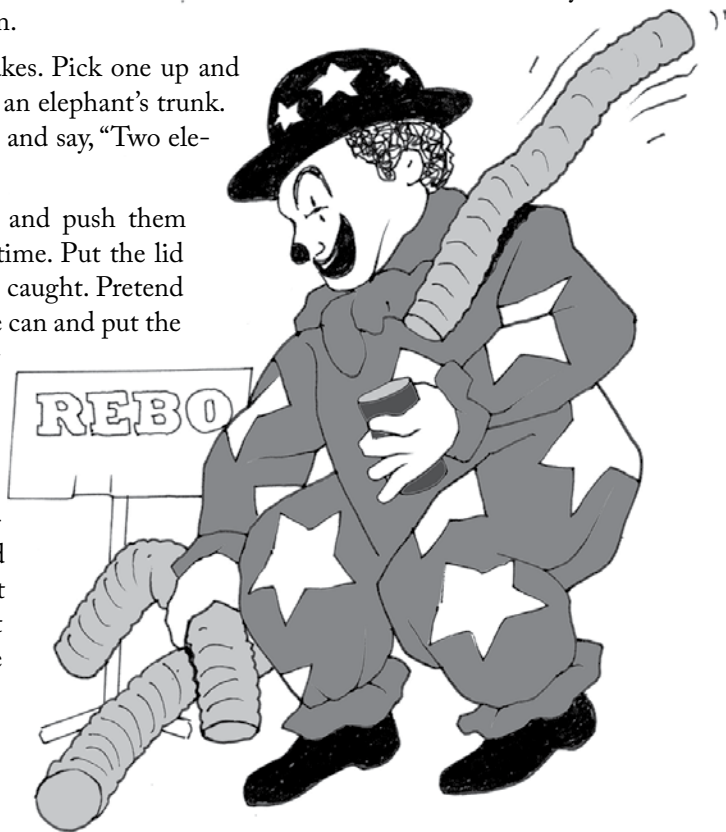
Open a can of snakes and allow the snakes to fly out. Pick up one snake and push it into the can. As you reach for the second snake, the one in the can flies out over your head. Repeat this for the third snake.

Put the snakes into the can one at a time and hold them in. Hold them with one hand, reach for the lid on the table, and allow all three to shoot out as you place the lid on the can.

Gather all three snakes. Pick one up and hold it up to look like an elephant's trunk. Then, hold two snakes and say, "Two elephants' trunks."

Pick up the snakes and push them into the can one at a time. Put the lid on and get your finger caught. Pretend to secure the lid on the can and put the can on the table. Allow the snakes to fly out as you take your bow.

NOTE: At birthday parties, you should omit the final fly. Just put the lid on and put the can away for the next show. **TNC**



CLOWNS OF AMERICA INTERNATIONAL

Annual Membership

Individual Members—\$45

Seniors (65+)—\$35

Junior Joey, e-membership—\$10

Junior Joey, printed magazine—\$15

Family Membership—\$25

Lifetime Membership—\$1,000

E-Membership—\$35

International E-Membership—\$25

\$25 of the COAI membership includes a one-year subscription to *The New Calliope* magazine. Subscriptions are not a benefit of the family memberships. (Only the Individual Membership in the household receives *The New Calliope*.)

Send membership dues to: Clowns of America International, Inc.
Post Office Box 122 • Eustis, FL 32727. Make all checks payable to COAI.

Join or renew by calling 352-357-1676 or visit www.mycoai.com



CLOWN COMICS

TRAINING GROUND

By Fred "Ozzie" Baisch

★
Featuring Fred "Ozzie" Baisch, Rick "Trickie" Arends,
and Beth "Pickles" Cedarholm.

Photos by Katie Baisch



FOUR FUN-TASTIC CHRISTMAS ROUTINES

to Make Your Holiday Shows a Success!



Art by Gina "Cha Cha" Wollrab

RUDY REINDEER!

Show a colorful cardboard plaque of Rudy Reindeer. Rudy couldn't fly like all of the other reindeer, so Santa gave him a magic cape – and a special job. Rudy flies from house to house scouting out which houses have chimneys and which ones have doors, so Santa will know ahead of time where he needs to use his magic key.

To demonstrate Rudy going down a chimney, you slide him into an envelope printed with a chimney design. One volunteer holds Rudy in the chimney envelope while another helper holds an empty envelope with a printed door design.

The audience shouts the magic words, and the plaque is pulled out of the chimney envelope, Rudy is gone! A cut out area where he used to be is all that remains.

When the door envelope is opened – oops! Rudy is NOT there! His little green silk cape tumbles out, but no reindeer. The cape disappears, but Rudy is nowhere to be seen. Finally, after a frenzied search and lots of enthusiastic "advice" from the audience, Rudy Reindeer is found to be clinging to the second helper's back! "He made it to the next house – he just went around to the back."

Be the first on your block to own this fabulous flying reindeer. Everybody needs a little R&R – that's why you need Rudy Reindeer! **ONLY \$20!**



Art by Selina Frederick

BIG RED NOSE!

Rudy starts out as a blue-nose reindeer. The children object so you magically turn his nose to red. You like it better the other way but when you try to change it back, the color vanishes from the reindeer's nose. The children howl as the red nose ends up on you! Complete with glossy cards and a high quality, red foam nose. **ONLY \$20!**



Art by Selina Frederick

PRESENTS OF MIND!

Display a set of jumbo cards, each with a different holiday picture (candy cane, Santa, snowman, candle, gifts, ornament, angel, etc.). Two spectators think of any picture. You roughly sketch the pictures you think they have mentally selected. Place your sketches on a stand, and when you reveal your drawings, you have correctly guessed the pictures

they chose! Absolutely NO artistic skill is required! Complete set includes cards, card stand, and marker. **ONLY \$35!**



A fun idea by Silly Billy

MAGIC CHRISTMAS PICTURE

Show a black and white drawing of a rooftop with reindeer and sleigh ready to land – except the sleigh is empty! No color, no Santa, no presents, oh no! A volunteer picks several crayons and writes his name on the sign in front of the house, colors the reindeer's nose, and adds some smoke coming from the chimney. The child holds

the picture while everyone says the magic words ("Out to Lunch!"). When the picture is turned around, Santa and a sleigh full of presents – complete with a Christmas tree – appears, all magically colored with crayons! The child keeps the magic drawing as a souvenir of the show! 20 refills included. **ONLY \$20!**



Please include \$7 for shipping & handling.

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SPECIAL OFFER! Mention The New Calliope when you order and receive Fetaque Sanders' "The Magician's Christmas Gift" absolutely free! Offer expires December 31, 2022.