

THE BIG TOP

Mid-Atlantic Clown Association Newsletter

Dec/Jan 2019

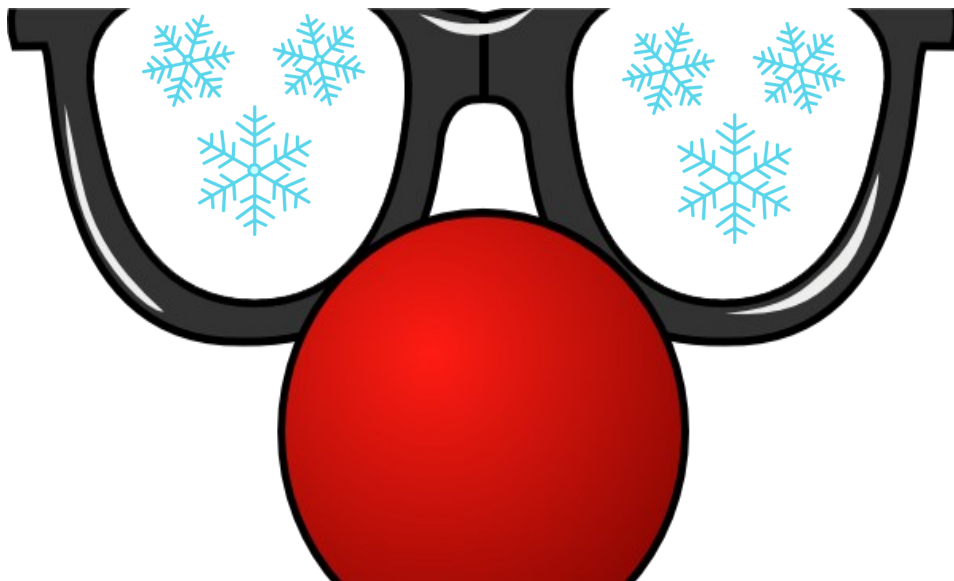
He Just Asked Me To The

MID-ATLANTIC CLOWN ASSOCIATION
CONVENTION

SENIOR
Prom

November 7-10

Red Lion Hotel
Harrisburg, PA



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Pat Stevenson
MACA President

Message from the President...

Thank you again for your patience. I apologize again for delays. **

WOW! What an awesome convention. We heard so many positive remarks about our sessions, entertainment, raffles and lecturers! Congratulations to everyone who attended! Balloon jams, face painting and so much more. Everything went very smoothly and then all of a sudden it was over and we were working on the 2019 convention. I sincerely hope that you will share your experiences and our attendance will increase for 2019...without participants, we can't hold these awesome conventions!

Send pictures and articles about how you are using what you learned. Networking is as important as structured classes.

Our 36th Annual Convention will continue the education theme. Thursday will be our Reunion, Friday the Pep Rally and then Saturday, our Senior Prom! (you may interrupt "Senior" any way you wish)

Please, if you want a copy of the cd with all the convention pictures, send \$5 paypal to skootchee3419@gmail.com and one will go in the mail promptly. (no waiting—promise)

Our officers and staff are continuing their education so that they are ready with new material. Kidvention, Clown Cabaret-Build your clown act, WCA and COAI conventions... contact Bob Gretton with any suggestions...bunkytcklown@comcast.net



Now it's time to work on Alley and Tent meetings. Valentine's Day St. Patty's Day Easter and yes this year will go quickly and we will be in Harrisburg at the Sr. Prom!

Bump a nose and see you down the road,

Pat Stevenson

Patty Cake

Clowning is Not dead. Keep the world laughing!

Be the person who makes someone smile today!

Life as a clown and that other persona “real person”!

** First there was the Festival of Trees, then Thanksgiving, a parade, 5 Christmas parties that provided over 550 participants with hats, scarves, gloves, socks, food and fun stuff with a bunch of clowns and Santa. Thom and I coordinated, bought and stored all the decorations for 3 trees and three wreaths, blankets and the rest of the gifts in the living room and dining room. (The trees had to be decorated. The gifts all had to be wrapped, bagged and delivered.) Thanks to Clown Alley #30 and the Knights of Columbus.

We did design the certificate and send out some cd's. We are slowly working on vendors and lecturers for 2019.

Then it was off with the grandgirls for an after Christmas trip to Hershey Park...it was drizzling so there were very few people in the park...the girls could ride 3 or 4 times without getting off and getting back in line! Making memories.

Of course we celebrated the New Year!

Then it was my birthday...I decided last minute to use some reward points, go to Williamsburg, VA and have dinner in one of my favorite restaurants. What a great day until we turned onto rt 60 and the check engine light came on! After several recommendations, car went to be fixed Sunday at one of the few places open. We added 2 days to our hotel stay and two days in the “shop”. My car was towed home. Learned how to use Uber and meet a wonderful couple from Cumberland, MD who also helped us get around. Took over a week to get apt at home at our local dealership and because of the background, they were waiting for their top mechanic to start the diagnosis.

...that was at least 8 hours of sitting and no one touching it. An additional 6 hours to hear “we found the problem” . Good news—it's not the engine or any of the parts we already paid for in Williamsburg. Bad news—it's the computer. It will take another couple days . So as of this writing, I am 11 days without a car with no return date known.

Let's not forget the 3 hours last week the other car was getting 4 new tires and an alignment. Needed something reliable to drive.

Add the funeral for Sister Priscilla. Sister belonged to the Circus Ministry and The Little Sisters of Jesus. She was based in Baltimore and her memorial was held in Baltimore. We met Sister many years ago while in Altoona, PA visiting the Jaffe Shrine (Billy Martin) Circus.

The Big Top is almost ready now!

CHAPLAIN'S MESSAGE

By Bill "SHOBO" Schober
MACA Chaplain

Can I Pray for ya??

Hey MACA. Sorry I missed the 2018 Convention this past November. I heard it was a fun one. I am honored that you guys elected me back the position of Chaplain and would like to do what I can outside the time of the convention;

One of the things I know I can do without being asked is to pray. In my local church, we have "pray chains" with some of the women circles. But I'm afraid they become more of a "gossip chain". When there is need, one member will call the next and the next will call the next in the chain to communicate. Not to throw my Mom under the bus too much (she is not going to read this anyway and I have expressed this to her in the past), she will do her duty of passing the info onto the next member without stopping to pray about the need in the 1st place. This is very easy to get in that trap. Especially today the way News flies on social media and mis-information is received.

I'd like to ask a few request:

- 1) If you hear of a need ...Stop and Pray about that request or need. And know our God is control of the whole situation
- 2) If you feel incline...give me a call or email me so I can pray too. I would LOVE to Pray for that need.
- 3) Continue to keep that need in Pray. Sometimes a 2 second "shout out" to God does not do the trick as an acronym I heard for PUSH is Pray until Something Happens

MACA is a great Community of friends and family. Family support each other in time and Pray. I gotta be honest with you, I really get irritated if I hear clowns within MACA undercut or tell others "so and so are not very good clowns" Once we are divided , we no longer become an association. The Bible I read says in Galatians 5:13-14 New International Version (NIV)

¹³ You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh^[a]; rather, serve one another humbly in love. ¹⁴ For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself."^[b]

May God bless your blessings as you bless others for the coming year.

God Bless and bump a Nose,
Bill Schober
Chaplain of MACA 2019
Shobodaclown@yahoo.com
856-423-8214

Convention 2019

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Will You Be There?



If you follow face book, you will see that so many clowns and Alleys are very busy during the holiday season. Between performing, being an elf helping Santa or actually being Santa, our profession provides entertainment to those corporate sponsors right on down to the hospitals with children's parties, assisted living residents, and everyone else in between.

If you were at the convention this year, you heard about hospital clowning. You heard about ministry clowning. You heard about the Santa Character. You heard about balloons, face painting, and how to generally be the best clown you can be!

You can get most of this information from fb, you tube and other sites on line, but there is no better place to learn and grow than net working with others. As you sit in the sessions and see the reactions of others, you will know what little pieces you can adapt to your character or what you might want to change. Not every class is for you. But even if you think you will never use a skill being taught; artistry, technic, finesse and confidence can be gained.

Please consider the convention in November 2019.

35th Annual Mid-Atlantic Clown Association
Convention

Birthday Bash!

If you missed it you missed this

Saturday Night's Dinner and Headliner Show featuring:

Bob "Mr. Puppet" Abdou



And.....

MACA 35th ANNUAL CONVENTION

Wrap_Up

Numerous training classes:

DAY 1



Puppet Training with Bob Abdou



Face Painting Tips with Susan Saunders



Beginning Balloons with Mary Ann Ross

- ⇒ Holiday Fun - Scott Correll
- ⇒ Working w/a partner - Bob and Teresa Gretton
- ⇒ Walk around clown - Dave Hill
- ⇒ Clowns that bring smiles - Larry Etchison



Themed dinner—Throw Back Thursday



Open Skit Night

MACA 35th ANNUAL CONVENTION Wrap-up

Numerous training classes: **DAY 2** and **Day3**



Paper Roses with Bob Gretton



Fun and Games with Balloons with Dave Hill

Skills 101 with Kevin Brown

- ⇒ Promoting Yourself - Terry Slaymaker
- ⇒ Funny Prop Shop - Scott Correll
- ⇒ Business Aspects of Children's Party - Mary Ann Ross
- ⇒ Face Painting - Susan Saunders
- ⇒ Paradeability - Thom Stevenson and Keith Karas
- ⇒ Ministry Clowning - Tina Cole
- ⇒ Hospital Clowning - Kesha Bleckley
- ⇒ Literacy and Library programs - Renate McIntosh



Physical Comedy 2 with Thom and Keith

MACA 35th ANNUAL CONVENTION Wrap-up

Friday Nights Entertainment - Kevin Brown



Installation Of Officers



2018 Clownitarian Award Winner
Ryan Schwendel

Honoring our Military
Members and Veterans



MACA 35th ANNUAL CONVENTION Wrap-up

Pics around the convention



MACA CLOWN ALLEY NEWS

Hello!

This year was my first ever MACA conference and joining MACA. It was such a wonderful experience! I remember one of the nights, someone had suggested that the "new people" should write something in about themselves... So here is my little blurb!

My name is Kelly Dalton a.k.a. Violet the Clown, I am from Bethlehem, PA. I went to college for Art Education at Kutztown University, but I remember even during college thinking to myself that I wanted to be a clown. Fast forward to me being a stay-at-home-mom, I met my clown destiny at church. In the summer of 2017 I met a lovely lady at church, Pat Stilfies-Beahm a.k.a. Bandaides (she is also a member of MACA) who took me under her clown wing as a mentor- who teaches me balloon twisting and the ways of being a loving, caring clown. From there I joined the Disciples of Joy clown alley, where I have enjoyed doing clown skits, shows, and events in our area. The members of the clown alley encouraged me to come to the MACA convention this year and I am so very glad and grateful that I did! I met amazing people and learned so much! I'm happy to be a part of this wonderful group!

I also have some pictures from MACA that I will attach!

Have a great night and merry Christmas, and a happy New Year!

Sincerely,
Kelly Dalton



MACA CLOWN ALLEY NEWS

Balloon Art: Making It Personal

Recently I was hired to make balloon art for nursing home residents in their large activities room. Upon my arrival, the event coordinator suggested I make balloons in a far corner of the room, and she would hand them out to the residents around the room. While the coordinator was no doubt trying to be helpful, her approach would have reduced balloon making to somewhat of an impersonal commodity. I politely offered instead to circulate around the room so I could make balloons directly in front of each resident as I chatted with them. Fortunately, the coordinator agreed to let me circulate. The residents were eager to tell me about their lives and families and ask about mine. We shared some humor, and they were entertained by watching the inflation and twisting process up close. I was able to provide an engaging, personal experience for each resident, not just a tangible item.

Applying that goal of providing a personalized experience to line work, there are many little ways I try to customize balloon art for the recipients and engage with them personally. I know my twisting colleagues can add countless other ideas to my starter list:

For swords, I'll ask the recipient his or her name while chatting. I present their finished sword by announcing, "I dub thee Sir Dylan of the royal purple sword" or "I dub thee Fair Maiden Sophia of the glimmering gold sword," for example. Sometimes I make myself a sword before an event starts so I can occasionally grab it, proclaim "en garde," and start a play duel with one or more sword recipients. I've found this to be a fun thing to do especially when a group of kids ask for swords.

Depending on a recipient's age, gender, or school/sports affiliation on their clothing, I offer to make what amounts to the same style of wand but call it a princess wand or wizard wand or spirit stick (for school or professional teams). The colors and toppers would vary, of course, to reflect the nature of the wand.

If a child can't decide on a balloon color, I'll suggest something that matches their clothes. "How about green to match your Ninja Turtles?" or "How about lavender to match your unicorn?" Or I'll turn the colors into flavors or kid-friendly items: "Would you like cherry red or cotton candy pink or alien green or pumpkin orange?" For teens and adults who can't decide, I ask what their favorite colors are or whether they'd like something in their school colors or the colors of their favorite sports team. I try to stick to seasonal sports -- baseball in spring/summer and football in fall/winter -- unless they're already wearing fan gear for a certain team. During the Olympics and World Cup playoffs, I might also ask if they'd like the country colors of a favorite athlete or team.

If someone asks for a dog or cat, I ask if they have a dog or cat at home, and, if so, its name, breed, color, etc. If I'm adding a color and leash, I'll ask if they want their pet's name written in Sharpie on the collar. For those without a pet already, I'll ask if they've thought of a name for their balloon animal and whether they want that name on the collar. If they've chosen a name (Sparky, for example), I'll ask them to hold "Sparky" for just a minute while I inflate the collar/leash balloon. This approach also works with other common pets that people request as balloons: fish, birds, turtles, etc.

Sometimes, if the circumstances permit, I may ask a child who seems particularly fascinated with the inflation and twisting process (or who's starting to act up a little) if they'd like to help me inflate a balloon. I let them put their hand on top of mine and slowly say "all the way up" and then "all the way down" as our hands go up and down on the Filbert pump. Often times the other kids in line who have overheard this will slowly repeat "all the way up" and "all the way down" as I inflate a balloon when it's their turn.

I'd love to hear ideas that other balloonists have used to personalize line work. In the meantime, happy twisting!

Ryan "Twist" Schwendel
Northern New Jersey State Director



MACA CLOWN ALLEY NEWS

Evolution of a Mrs. Claus

I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season. Things around here slow down for the winter months, so I decided I needed another way bring in some income. In 2016, I created my new character Mrs. Holly Claus. Portraying Mrs. Claus turned out to be a very different experience compared to my clown adventures. She's a little more reserved and grandmotherly than Snippy Doodles.

I still remember my first event at a library. I had finished my program and talking with the librarian. A young boy entered the room and took one look at me and exclaimed, "Mrs. Claus!" I talked with him a few minutes before leaving and realized he really believed I was Mrs. Claus. There is something different here. I don't really know how to explain it.

It was exciting because it was something new. I didn't have many events and I wanted photos, so I traded a performance for photo rights. I used those photos the following year for advertising. It was a start. I joined every single Santa group I could find. I also joined the Mrs. Claus groups. I suggest if you decide to become a Santa or Mrs. Claus that you join those groups. There is so much information out there. I haven't been to any of the schools, but I might go sometime in the future. Mrs. Claus has become my favorite character and I really want to add to her skills. She is so much more than a mere extension of Santa. She is a performer. She can tell stories, perform magic, entertain with puppets, bake cookies and make crafts with the children. There is so much that Mrs. Claus can bring to an event and people are starting to realize it. <https://www.npr.org/2018/12/22/678128144/this-year-mrs-claus-is-coming-to-town-and-not-as-santas-sidekick>

I started getting more libraries and daycares. The University of Delaware reached out to me and I became Mrs. Claus at their Breakfast with Santa. I'm always trying to expand my knowledge and my skills. I joined the IBRBS and that opened up another world. I discovered Nationwide Santas and joined up with them. That year they placed me with a department store for three Saturdays in December. So now my Mrs. Claus was promoting toys, telling stories, and working on crafts with the children. That year my Mrs. Claus also rode on a fire truck, sang songs with the children in the middle of a restaurant, and sat next to six different Santas while passing out candy canes.

I picked up some home visits, and public elementary schools. I think my biggest group was 60 children. I found that kindergarteners have a lot of questions for Mrs. Claus. They also want to tell me everything about their Elf. At first I wasn't a fan of the "Elf on the Shelf," but eventually I figured out a way to add him into my program. I love it when there's an Elf in the classroom. I can blame everything on him or her. If my magic snowball wand falls apart, I know there is a sneaky Elf hanging around. The children would ask me about the sleigh. I think that's easier for Mrs. Claus. Santa has it and I have a rental. If Santa is with me I tell them that the reindeer are back at the North Pole. They don't like to fly when it's not snowing. They will on Christmas Eve though because they know it's a very important job.

Mrs. Holly Claus is becoming a bigger part of my life. There is just something about looking at that red dress and thinking about the days to come. The changes in the Christmas Community are adding to my excitement. I am already counting the days until next season.



Renata McIntosh (snippydoodles)
Delaware State Director



MACA CLOWN ALLEY NEWS



Kapo's gang report:

2019 is here and we are looking for even more adventure with our clown alley. Each monthly meeting is filled with a great social time and learning experience. Come join us sometime ..

We normally meet the 4th Tuesday of the month at the municipal building in Maple shade.. Past years we had a Local police Officer stop by to show some Safety tips in light of the clown scare that normally happens every Halloween season, and Laughter yoga session, and balloon jams.

This year we got to go back stage at the Big Apple Circus thanks to Alex Barney and enjoy an outstanding circus. We invited a local Santa (Santa Philly) who does not clown to see what tips we can learn from each other when chatting with little one. We also partnered with Jersey Comics to do a benefit Softball game verses the military in Lakewood NJ. We also invites an ASL instructor. She was able to teach us some of the basics

On a personal note. I really enjoyed that class as I used some of the techniques during my portrayal of Santa at Great adventure this past season. To be able to communicate better with a hearing impaired child is PRICELESS

This year I'm sure we have even more fun learning laughing and sharing the JOY of Being a Clown

Bill Schober
aka Shobo Da Clown
President of Kapo's gang



2108 ASL



2108 Balloon Bash



2108 Balloon Jam



2108 Softball Game



2018 Holiday Party



2018 visit to the Big Apple Circus



MACA CLOWN ALLEY NEWS



Missed Steve and Ryan
this Christmas since they
are in Paris France.

The "car" full of gifts
before it broke.



Sister Priscilla's memorial



Freestate Alley #30



Santa Willie^

Patty Cake and Skootchee attend
Poppo's retirement from Baltimore County
Fire Department >



Just a few of the 550 gifts



^Spencer Horsman
and Bob

<B-mini

Bosco



^Toodles

Santa
Thom>
And Poppo



MACA Information Center

or Things you may not know about MACA

CLOWN SEARCH

Did you know that the Mid-Atlantic Clown Association provides a way for people to contact it's MACA clowns on our website?

We have a link on the site menu "**Clown Search**" where anyone accessing the site can find a clown in their area to perform. Your listing as a member is free BUT... You need to provide your information. We do not act as a booking agency. The information is there for contact purposes only.

If you would like your contact information to be published on the website, please send your information :

Clown name
Email address
City , State
Phone Number

to the webmaster, Thom Stevenson
Skootchee3419@gmail.com.



MACA MEMBERSHIP

Looking for some help in your clowning career ?

Looking to meet some new and some well established clown ?

Join the mid-Atlantic Clown Association (MACA)

Our purpose is to promote the education in and the preservation of the ancient art of clowning.

To become a member, click on this link to apply for [membership](#).

Changing the World One smile at a time

Send YOUR Alley News and items you may want to share with other members to the Newsletter Editor.

The MACA Newsletter is distributed bi-monthly and submission are due to the editor by the 20th of the month before publication. (Articles are due by June 20th for inclusion in the July/Aug newsletter).

Please, no hand written articles. Pictures may be blurred if the megapixels are not high enough.

Send articles to Editor: Thom Stevenson at
skootchee3419@gmail.com



Scholarships

Scholarships are important!

Not only for the recipient for financial reasons but for the learning experiences.

We do not just “give it away”! We ask each applicant to provide information about their current abilities, their performance jobs, their clown group participation and their clowning goals.

We ask the individual to pay the fees upfront to show their dedication to learning and the art of clowning. We expect each to attend as many classes at the convention as possible and prepare for a lifetime of laughter.

There is also an interview. Just a sit down talk about why you want to clown and to go over all that you have presented on your application. If you have any recommendations from other MACA members or the clowning community, make sure you attached the items to your application.

MACA wants to help as many new attendees as they can. Some years there have been no scholarships...some years several. We also realize that the tuition/registration and trip is sometimes just too much for a new clown.

If you know someone who really wants to come, but can't afford the whole package, please contact Sandi Smith.

Be the person who makes someone smile today! **Keep the world laughing!**



Clownatarian

The MACA is the only clown organization that gives a Clownatarian award every year and that's because, we made it up! Way back, when the MACA was being formed, The Keystone Klowns decided they wanted to give an award to a clown for just being a great clown person. There was a gentleman worked with new clowns and who on several occasions paid for registration fees, hotel rooms, etc. for clowns who were just starting out and did not have money to come to a convention. It was decided this fellow was a Humanitarian and hence the name Clownatarian.

This award was never intended as a Clown of the Year type award but as a thank you to a good human being who was always there to lend a helping hand in any way they could to other clowns. For the first, at least 15 years the trophy award was purchased and given to a person chosen by the Keystone Klowns, eventually as many of them passed away or left the clown world for various reasons, the MACA decided to take over the presentation of the award.

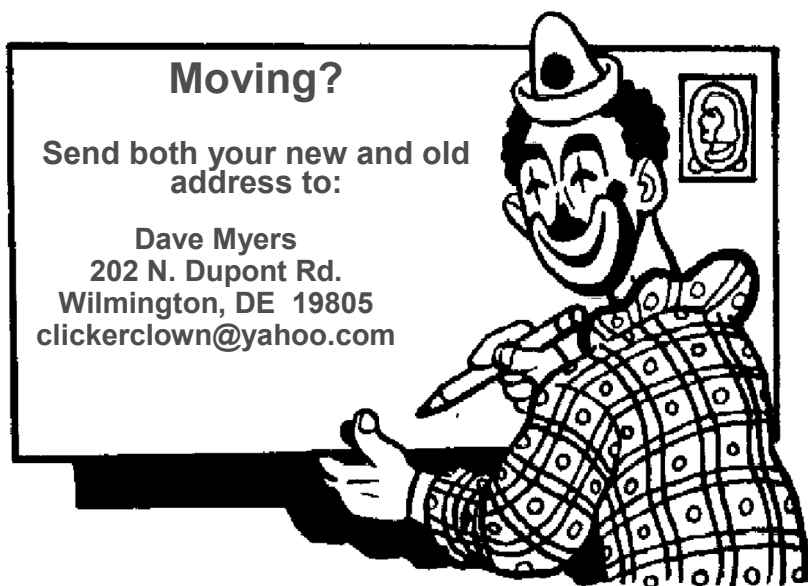
This year we have re-organized the selection committee to include more currently active members and have decided this committee will be made up of previous Clownatarian award winners that are currently serving on the MACA Board of Directors. Therefore, this year's selection committee will include Nellie May, Darlene Morgan, George Cabin, John Kral, Sandi Smith, and Bill Schober.

To be selected as a Clownatarian, a clown is nominated by a member of MACA by submitting a letter to the selection committee stating why this person should be considered for this award. These letters are reviewed without names of the person being nominated or the person nominating them being noted so that the nomination is based on good deeds only.

Please send any nominations you have for the 2018 award to me at dotthec clown@comcast.net or to my home 169 Buckingham Dr., Southampton, NJ 08088 and I will see to it that the current selection committee receives your nominations.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions and I will try to answer.

Sandi “Dot” Smith



"Anyone who has paid their dues for 2018/2019 and has not received a membership card please contact Dave Myers at 320-691-5804 or clickerclown@yahoo.com"

MID_ATLANTIC CLOWN ASSOCIATION INC.

2019 OFFICERS AND STATE DIRECTORS

President	Pat Stevenson	(410) 256-8862	pat_stevenson@verizon.net
Vice President	Susan Saunders	(717) 549-3320	gettysbear25@aol.com
Secretary	Dave Myers	(302) 691-5804	clickerclown@yahoo.com
Recording Secretary	Alene Krouse	610) 864-5969	srateach@gmail.com
Treasurer	Dennis Gesel	716-449-3165	djgesel@yahoo.com
Officer Emeritus	Nelle May	(412) 654-4158	
Editor	Thom Stevenson	(410) 256-8862	skootchee3419@gmail.com
Education	Bob Gretton	(301) 843-8212	bunkytclown@comcast.net
Chaplain	Bill Schober	(856) 423-8214	shobodaclown@yahoo.com
Historian	Sandy Smith	(609) 801-2571	dotthec clown@comcast.net
Membership Chair	Ellen Gagnon	(856) 727-9261	classitheclown@comcast.net
Trustees	Jim Shores	(410) 207-0444	jim_shores@msn.com
	John Crull	(240) 762-0500	slapshotwizard@aol.com
	Mary Jo Noble	(610) 693-3450	tmjnoble@verizon.net
<u>State Directors</u>			
Delaware	Renate McIntosh	(302) 653-1658	renate@snippydoodles.com
Maryland	Keith Karas	(410) 453-9288	keithkaras@yahoo.com
Northern NJ	Ryan Schwendel	(732) 255-6859	cschwendel@comcast.net
Southern NJ	Ron Mount	(609) 859-3772	hoboshady@yahoo.com
New York	Lori Swink	(914) 523-7413	luluwinks222@gmail.com
Ohio	George Caban	(330) 750-1107	onefunnyguy@hotmail.com
Eastern PA	Alene Krouse	(610) 864-5969	srateach@gmail.com
Central PA	Jennifer Miller	(717) 515-0405	Jenniferfae@gmail.com
Western PA	Diane Jones	(301) 947-0959	toodlestheclown@aol.com
Virginia	Paula Ward	(804) 276-5578	paulaaward@comcast.net
West Virginia	Larry Etchison	(304) 276-3394	pocomajic@yahoo.com