

THE BIG TOP

Mid-Atlantic Clown Association Newsletter

Jan/Mar 2016

MACA Convention- Hugh Success

The 2015 convention was held at the Clarion Hotel in New Cumberland, PA from November 11th - 15th. It was a fun filled five days of informative lectures, dealer rooms filled with props, tricks and lots of clown wardrobe and friendly competition.

The lectures were multi-disciplined from balloon twisting to puppetry. There were new lectures on "How to Promote Yourself", Makeup Techniques and "The Business of Clowning".

This is the only convention that I know that includes 3 dinners with entertainment in the price of the registration fee. The dinners included 2 buffet style servings and a Saturday night banquet sit down dinner. Thursday evening's entertainment was the GONG Show where convention participants performed a variety of talents. Friday evening's entertainment was a puppet show starring Bob Abdou and his great puppets. Saturday we were entertained with the comedic antics of Lew E Andrews and Bubba Sikes with commentary by Joe Barney.

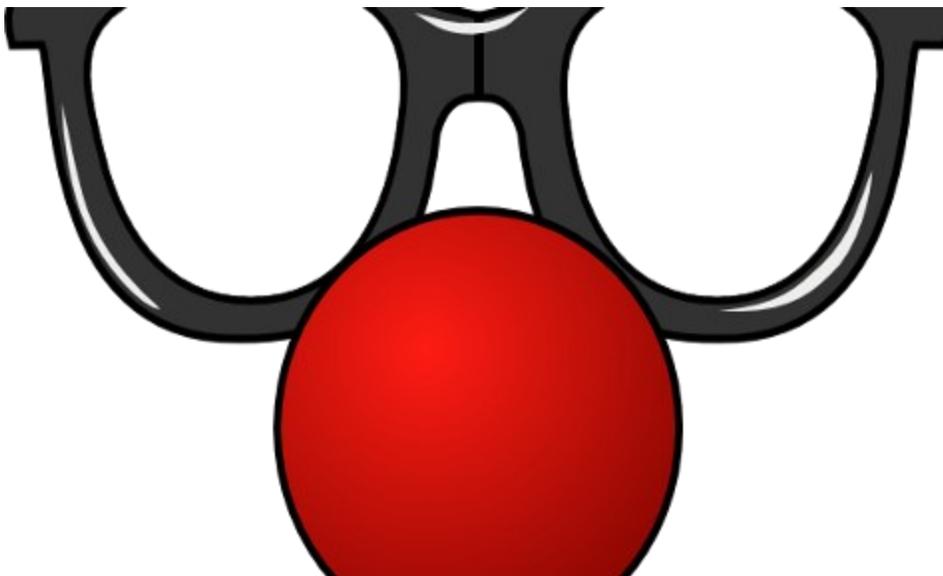
Competition Day proved arduous for the judges with such great talent on the stage and in the hands of both balloon and face paint artists.

The convention concluded with fellowship led by our chaplain Bill Shoher.

For pictures and other commentary see page 9.

"only convention that I know of that includes 3 dinners and entertainment in the price of the registration fee."

- Thom Stevenson



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By John "Kris Krunch" Kral
MACA President

Hello all and "Happy New Year",

I hope your Christmas and holiday was fantastic.

As you can see we are sending "The Big Top" magazine via the internet.

This is new ground and I would like to thank our past editor Terry "Buttons" Slaymaker for all of his hard work in getting the MACA magazine published in the many years in the past. Also, I would like to thank him, again, and Thom "Skootchee" Stevenson for getting the electronic edition ready to be sent out.

Well, the convention 2015 has past and is now history. Now we will try and regroup for MACA convention 2016. There will be more on that in later issues.

Thanks to everyone who attended this year's convention. I think it went well with a few hiccups that were encountered, as with every event.

I hope those who attended had a fun time and learned something they can use in clowning. Please tell your clown friends about the convention. As with all organizations our numbers are declining and this is the best convention on the east coast for education, fun and food.

Thanks to Annette "Ivey Drip" Darragh and Sandi "Dot" Smith for putting together another group of lecturers and vendors. You don't know how hard it is to come up with a schedule that is acceptable to all.

I would like to thank Pat "Patty Cake" Stevenson who took care of the meals and other convention problems. That is one of the behind the scene events that goes un-noticed until there is a problem.

There are various people who volunteered to help out with the convention. Way too many to mention and I don't want to miss anyone by name so I will send out a general "BIG" thank you for all your help.

If there are any suggestions for MACA please let one of the Board of Directors know what is on your mind. Any help is greatly appreciated in advance.

As with all conventions the goal is to learn new ideas and implement that knowledge in your clowning. Conventions are a good way to meet new people and revisit relationships with old friends. I think I go just to be around my extend clown family who I have met over the years.

It's just down right "FUN".

Please help the new "The Big Top" editor make this a great publication by sending in

articles. I keep asking for your help/support in this endive to make the editors job of putting every issue of "The Big Top". I will keep asking until he tells me he has to many articles. One that I just thought of would be "How You Got Your Clown Name". I'm sure there would be some interesting stories about that.

Well, that's all I have for this issue. Nothing earth shaking that I am able to write (type) here so I will close for now.

I hope you all have a great "New Year" and pass smiles on to everyone you meet.

Talk to you all soon.

Keep em laff'n,

John "Kris Krunch"
"I love being a clown" Willie
from Philly



The "Curse" of being a clown...

Been thinking...YEAH I know, that's a stretch for me, but did you ever feel a "curse" of being a clown. If not, maybe you should. No, I'm not talking about a curse that an evil witch doctor might place on you, nor am I talking about the dark side of making people laugh. As a matter of fact, while researching this topic on the internet, I saw a number of cases and very dark story lines of that type of curse. You know, the stereotyped tear faced Pierrot you might see a picture, or Smoky Robinsons' song "Tears of a clown". Some people have underlining issues going on in their lives that they don't allow the outside public to see, which later gets in the way of their growth. I read in a blog that *both Hollywood's greatest comic performers, Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton, suffered from bouts of Depression. Chaplin once said "to truly laugh, you must be able to take your pain and play with it"* That's a whole other topic of conversation. Maybe it's more of a "Call of Duty". And No, it's not another version of that game on xbox.

The Call of duty I'm talking about is the duty one should feel if you are a clown. When you're in clown in public, you're always on. No matter if you see someone looking at you or not, you're "always on" when your in clown. Some people don't get that concept. Not that you should be "on" 24/7 but remember, if in public, you have a duty to be a clown.

COAI has the eight clown commandments. Remember they are commandments and not mere suggestions.

The Eight Clown Commandments

1. I will keep my acts, performance and behavior in good taste while I am in costume and makeup. I will remember at all times that I have been accepted as a

member of the clown club only to provide others, principally children, with clean clown comedy entertainment. I will remember that a good clown entertains others by making fun of himself or herself and not at the expense or embarrassment of others.

2. I will learn to apply my makeup in a professional manner. I will provide my own costume. I will carry out my appearance and assignment for the entertainment of others and not for personal gain or personal publicity when performing for either the International club or alley events. I will always try to remain anonymous while in makeup and costume as a clown, though there may be circumstances when it is not reasonably possible to do so.

3. I will neither drink alcoholic beverages nor smoke while in makeup or clown costume. Also, I will not drink alcoholic beverages prior to any clown appearances. I will conduct myself as a gentleman/lady, never interfering with other acts, events, spectators, or individuals. I will not become involved in or tolerate sexual harassment or discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability or any protected status.

4. I will remove my makeup and change into my street clothes as soon as possible following my appearance, so that I cannot be associated with any incident that may be detrimental to the good name of clowning. I will conduct myself as a gentleman/lady at all times.

5. While on appearance in makeup and costume, I will carry out the directives of the producer or his designated deputies. I will abide by all performance rules without complaint in public.

6. I will do my very best to maintain the

best clown standards of makeup, costuming, properties, and comedy.

7. I will appear in as many clown shows as I possibly can.

8. I will be committed to providing an atmosphere free of discrimination and harassment for clowns of all ages to share ideas and learn about the art of clowning

There is even some school of thought that you should not eat while "in clown". I can see the arguments on both side of this. Once you eat in public, like normal, the mystical view of the clown character goes away to the ones that are watching. On the other hand, if you hungry, its better to eat than see a clown passed out on the sidewalk because of starvation. Personally when I'm offered to eat at a gig, I decline and say all food taste funny to me ..BAHHH . I'm not here to argue this being right or wrong, I'm just suggesting to be aware of your surrounding when "in clown".

Recently Shady and I have expanded our LAUGH Clown Ministries into the Caring Clown venture at a local Nursing home and Hospital. We perform together all the time and have had some training with "No-Joe" Joey Thurmond with his Sunshine Foundation. I had clowned at the nursing home my dad was at while in rehab after his stroke and also clowned at a few hospitals many years ago. I had some experience in that field. We thought we would "play it by ear" once we got to the nursing home. When we arrived, they placed all the residents in one area and we were "on". Performing for the elderly is much different than a congregation at a church. By the end, we had a good time and set up our next time. I got an email from the coordinator a few weeks later

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

saying how everyone is still talking about us, which was news to us because ¾ of them did not seem to respond to us being there. Ya just never know. A few weeks later we had a “walk thru interview” at a local hospital. While waiting in the lobby for the coordinator there, and a few teenage volunteers wanted to see us do an act. Of course we obliged, but later was told not to clown in front of the welcome desk as many people come into the hospital to visit for other reasons than joyful. So there is a time to clown and time not to clown. By the way, we passed our interview and are now set for monthly visits to different floors of the hospital. We come in another way to enter the hospital now.

The word “no” doesn’t come out my mouth enough. Lee Andrews, Lew-ee the clown, who was at MACA this year, is a clown who also has the clown “curse”. He, with out a doubt, is the hardest working clown I know. He travels the point A to point B all the time and is hardly home. I think it’s his inner drive, or duty, to be the best and that feeling in his belly to help make people laugh or to help others learn from that skill.

Over the year’s I’ve dealt with my different levels of Dyslexia. I can remember struggling through college years, staying up very late to re read everything, and back them before the laptop, I had what was known as type-writer. LOL Any form of mistake or typo required a new sheet of paper. Although not official, I believe I passed that trait onto my daughters. They would complain that they couldn’t do this or that because of dyslexia and that they were cursed. I told them many times to look at it as a blessing rather than a curse. The dyslexia requires you to work that much

harder than the other people in your class.

Being a clown can really be a “curse” and a “blessing” if you think about it. As a clown, you are asked to help make people smile, even if they nor you are in a smiling mood. When in clown, it’s your duty to act like a clown which in effect, may bless someone that day. You just never know the effect you have on someone while your in clown, by just giving a wink, or a quick smile to someone near you. But please remember, that “on” button can be turned “off” while out of clown. Being “on” all the time can be scary and annoying. Just ask my wife.

Having a “Call of Duty” also holds truth in my faith. In Matthew 28:19-20 it states: *19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.* This is known as the “Great Commission”. It’s not known as the “Great Suggestion”. As a believer, you are to go and tell others what you know. Some may see this as a “curse”, since it’s required of you, even when you don’t feel like it. I would suggest clowning is like this. We are required to go and teach what we know and learn, so others may

enjoy. When we are in clown we are to act like a clown, and enjoy the ride because that’s what is in you to do. Yes it might not be a “curse” but is sure is an important “Call of Duty” so you can receive a “blessing”.

Bump a nose,
Shobo

A Clown’s Blessing
Author Unknown

**May your noses be red and shiny,
And your smile always bright.
May your cheeks be nice and rosy,
Your eyes sparkle in the light.
May your shoes be always too big,
Your costume be perma-pressed,
Your heart overflow with laughter,
Every time your clown is dressed.
May face paint be at the ready,
And your balloons be “easy-blow”.
May children run to greet you,
Wherever you may go**



Moving?

Send both your new and old address to:

Dave Myers
202 N. Dupont Rd.
Wilmington, DE 19805
clickerclown@yahoo.com



Clowning is all about Learning, Growing, and Sharing. We had the joy of doing just that at the MACA Convention this year. We enjoyed having the opportunity of sharing our stories about touring as the Advance Clowns for the Cole Bros Circus. Our other lecture was teaching the "Art of the Paper Napkin Rose". Bob Abdou took the time and effort to video tape this lecture. It's on You Tube. Now everyone now can perform this Random Act of Kindness.

Search You Tube for..... How to create a napkin rose by Bunky & Teresa Gretton
MACA convention Nov 2015

Check out this video on YouTube:
<http://youtu.be/7tvMw09BTa4>



The Reason!

by Pat Stevenson
MACA VP

Did you clown through the Holiday Season? Why? I am guessing you have a "clown heart" and the skills and desires to make people laugh.

I have seen so many pictures on fb of joeys going into hospitals, assisted living facilities and performing at other events.

Then, I found this sign outside a middle school auditorium. I am sure it had no direct reference to clowns, but to all the children entering the space.



So, whether you are performing at a birthday party by yourself, at an event with lots of other entertainers, in the center ring, or just walking down the street, remember - YOU have a special gift! YOU can be the reason someone smiles! Share those smiles and laughter all the time. Be "The Reason"!

Fun Kids Play

by
George Caban
(aka Porgie the Clown)
Ohio State Director and past
President.

I would like to share some fun
kids play I use .

If you make a letter B out of
foam and put it in your hands
and tell the kids you caught a
little Bee. Look, I have a little B
do you want to see it? I don't
want it to get away so be
careful (open your hands a
little till they see the B. You
can do the same with the letter
J. Make a letter J out of Blue

foam (Blue J)and also with
the letter C. Using a red letter
C you can part the red sea
(Red C). Remember to have
fun and then the kids will to.
When I go to a party and
everyone yells look there's a
clown I turn and look for him
too. I say where did he go? He
always follows me but I can
never catch him. He must be
real fast. I can't ever catch
him.



MACA CLOWN ALLEY NEWS

Freestate Clown Alley
Presents:



Huge HUGE thank you to everyone that helped with all the events this past Holiday/Christmas Season.



Especially the Ravens!

The Freestate Clown Alley is active year round!

Members attend events and conventions starting in January. The Alley comprises entertainers of all types. They enjoy sharing experiences and skills not only at monthly meetings but on road trips and performing together.

Looking forward to MACA's 2016 convention. Patriotic Clowns with a salute to our service men and women!



< Alley Tree for Kennedy Krieger Festival of Trees 2015.



Elves at the Christmas Party >



Steve Copeland and Ryan Combs in "Twas the Gift Show before Christmas"

Bobby >



Clown Week 2015



Washington DC 4th of July Parade!



Message to live by!



Kapo's gang 2015

Kapo's gang had another busy year

We went to our normal events like, Kates Krusader' cancer bowl a thon, Dolan Fund Family boat ride on the Sprit of Philadelphia and the Susan B Koman Cancer walk on Mothers' day, Buddy Walks , Mario's Alex lemon aide stand ,and IHOC walk for the Homeless, to name a few

We moved the location of our meetings and days we met to the 4th Tuesday of the month and we now meet at Maple Shade municipal building. Although our numbers of regular members attending meeting and gigs, we still have a core group that keeps the group going. We are excited to have some new members join our gang and even participate in this year's MACA skit completion. We "Done" good this year at MACA taking 2nd place in Group skit. After a 3rd place finish in 2014 we look forward to taking 1st in 2016..So we challenge the other alleys toward a friendly completion We are looking forward to bringing more smiles in 2016

Bump a nose

Kapo's gang



Cancer Walk 2015



Connie at Cancer Walk 2015



Jodie at Cancer Walk 2015



Shady at Mario's



Peggy and Shobo



Pearl at Mario's



2015 MACA Convention

Rumble In The Jungle



Let's get ready to rumble

CONVENTION THEME NIGHTS



Thursday Theme



Friday Theme



Saturday Night's Award Banquet



Saturday Entertainers : Bubba Sikes, Joe Barney, MACA President John Kral and Lew E. Andrews



Clownitarian Award Presented to Joyce Donaldson



Leon and Linda McBryde



MACA President John Kral received award from COAI VP Bill Le Blanc



Installation of the 2016 MACA Officers

Face Painting Competition

Cheek Art



1st Place Susan Saunders
2nd Place Pat Jannell
3rd place Denise Schroeder



Full Face



1st Place Pat Jannell
2nd Place Susan Saunders
3rd place Denise Schroeder



Makeup Competition



White Face



2nd Place Diane Jones

Auguste



2nd Place Bard Mamrod
3rd Place Jerry Keebler



Character



2nd Place Susan Saunders

Hobo



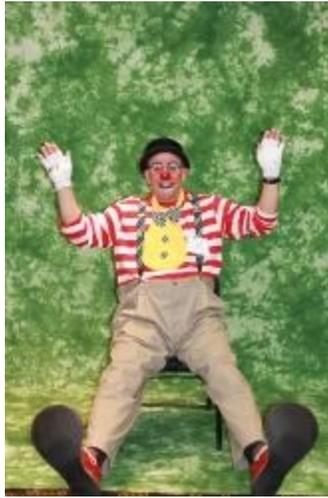
1st Place John Kral

Skit Competition

Single Person Skit



1st Place Ron Mount
"Shady"



2nd Place Bill Shoher
"Shobo"



3rd Place Joyce Donaldson
"Clipper"

Group Skit



1st Place Chocolate



- 1st Place Joyce Donaldson, Christina St. Marie
- 2nd Place Kapo's Gang
- 3rd Place George Caban and Sandi Smith



2nd Place Clown Class



3rd Place Did You See It

Paradeability



1st Place Bill Schober



3rd Place Barb Mamrod



1st

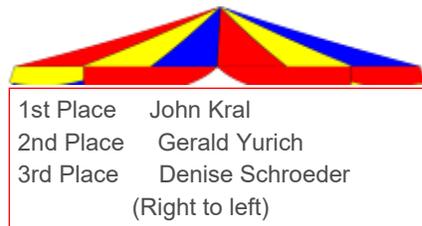
Single Balloon Competition



2nd



3rd



Multiple Balloon Competition



1st



2nd



1st Place	John Kral
2nd Place	Denise Schroeder
3rd Place	John Sullivan
(Right to left)	



3rd



Circus

Find and circle all of the Circus words that are hidden in the grid.
The words may be hidden in any direction.

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E H A B F F T P P D A H N I
N O A X L R M V D E R I F A
A O R M A N R O C P O P O V
P P M P U N I C Y C L E E G
C S E C L V X E U T K X P G
R Z R C L O W N S E M H O S
E E R E T S A M G N I R R U
L E L P M B E G Q S Z E T J
M I G E E A S S R S L S H K
B K O A P C T E R G E T G K
O G R N C H G N G O C L I M
U S R U S I A U O G H I T A
H U L T T I J N F I T T C L
O X Q S L N Q Q T L L S Z P
    
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BEARS
CAGE
CLOWNS
ELEPHANT
FIRE
HOOPS
HORSES
STILTS
TIGER
TRAPEZE
JUGGLERS
LION TAMER
LIONS
NET
PEANUTS
POPCORN
RINGMASTER
TIGHTROPE
UNICYCLE

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