

THE BIG TOP

Mid-Atlantic Clown Association Newsletter

May/June 2017

MACA CONVENTION 2017



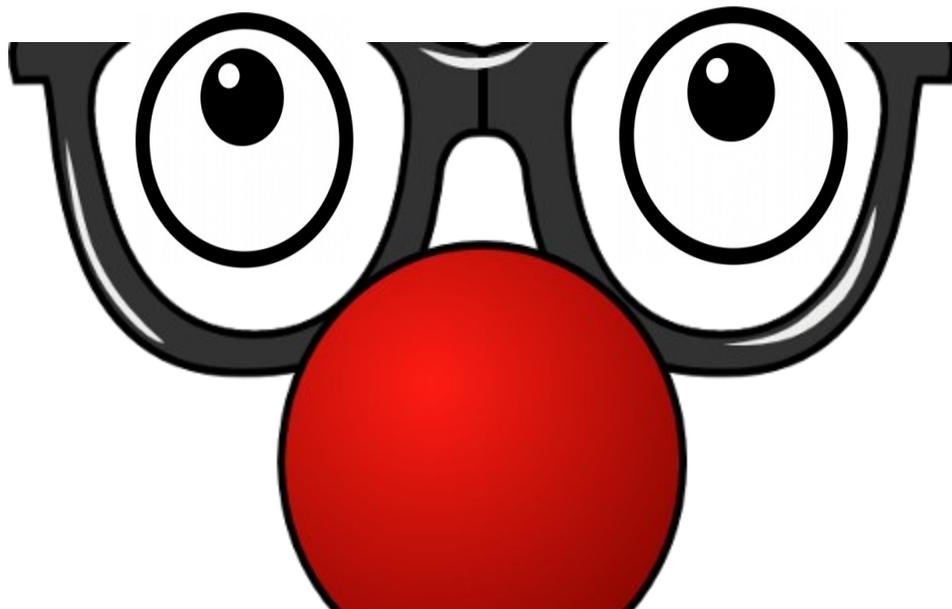
Hop on the bus to the 2017 MACA Convention!
Nov 9 - 12, 2017

Red Lion Hotel East Harrisburg, PA

Don't miss this great educational opportunity...new lecturers, new and repeat vendors, headliners

RICK AND MONICA CHANEY!

Check the website for up to date information.



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Pat "Pattycake" Stevenson
MACA President

Early

Spring and Summer are very busy times for clowns. There are circuses starting their seasons, schools and other organizations wanting "end of year" events, people start going out again, weddings, graduations, and all the family and friends stuff also.

While I am still waiting for some of our officers to compile a short profile for the Big Top, there is a lot of reading to do so you can meet the clowns in the group. If you haven't done so, please pass your bio on to the Editor as soon as possible... It will soon be convention time again and no one will know who you are!

And I open this up to all in the membership...If you want your name and bio out there? Send your picture and bio to the editor! This is part of what your dues can do for you!

This issue is long because we do have so many bio's listed...please take the time to read them.

I know some of you are wearing our badges. We are hoping you wear these to "advertise" our organization. We really want the entire membership to be "the face of the organization". Tell your entertainment friends and other clowns WHERE you learned a technique or saw a trick or shared some fun.

Ellen Gagnon is the Membership Committee Chair and will be working with Dave and the current membership to entice clowns everywhere to bring our numbers up!

Dennis Gesel just called me from NY! He is working with three alleys in his area to try and get clowns to attend the convention. djgesel@yahoo.com

Central PA Director is Jennifer Miller. jenniferfae@gmail.com

The convention is coming together.

Check out the convention page for all the information.

Be the person who makes someone smile today!

Pat "Patty Cake" Stevenson

Just before this went to press, Feld Entertainment announced that they have sold the elephants to a conservation group north of Jacksonville, FL .

Please keep the circus alive in your area and attend the mud show near you!

Keep the world laughing!



CHAPLAIN'S MESSAGE

By Bill "SHOBO" Schober
MACA Chaplain

Houston, we "may" have a problem!!!

I have the honor of writing an article for the MACA each time it comes out, but unfortunately I rarely get a reaction or comment for the members who read it. We are communal beings. And one of my pet peeves is sending an email or a text and not getting an OK or K or "you're off your rocker". Without communication there is no way to react if you're on the right path, and you depend on body language, looks, and gut feeling.

When we clown for events, the reaction we get is GOLD, most time more valuable than what pay you may require to get there. I know when our Laugh Clown Ministry goes into different Congregations you can actually physically feel the difference from a vibrate church than a church that is just going through the paces.

Are we as clowns, just going through the paces, or are we making a difference in the world. Do we go from convention to convention, or party to party, and not make a difference. Some of us are on the older end of the scale, and have seen just about everything. We did "A" so we get a reaction "B" and have done such for 20 years. I don't think we are alone in that thinking. Many churches are suffering in attendance because of the "same ole same ole" mentality.

Clowns have been strapped with a lot of the same ole stereotypes over the years, especially in the US, as evident from last year's Clown Scare. We need to do a better job. Just today while I was in a doctor's office the Nurse noticed my button I wear proudly. "I love being a clown". I could see in her eyes she started to freak out. I didn't say anything except "Hi. How are you" She didn't know me from "Adam", and yet a silly button made a difference in her perception. Once in the room, I was able to crack a smile from her by making fun about myself. Why is it when you slap the word "Clown" to Fun and humor, people have a different perspective to comedy?

I have always said that we make the difference. To be the best you can be. Learn how to properly apply make -up, as to not give anyone reason to fear. Learn how to react to different situations, and not stay in the same reaction as you did many years ago. Learn a new skill, just for fun. Open yourself up to failure so you can learn. Look at different ways you can react, and chat it up with fellow Clowns who may or may not have going through it. This year's MACA Convention is a GREAT way to "Chat it up" and to get a different view of this changing and challenging world of Clowning.

Bump a nose,

Shobo
shobodaclown@yahoo.com



Vice President of MACA Susan Saunders

Hello!

My name is Susan Saunders and I am the new Vice President of MACA. I have been a Clown since 1989. I have also been a member of COAI and Kapitol Klowns, Alley #6 since then. I have been a member and attended MACA Conventions since 2009.

My clown name is "SNICKERS" who is an Auguste clown. I have two other characters also; a Tramp character named "SMUDGE" and a Pirate character named "SQUIFFY." (I know...kind of strange that they all start with an "S", but that was not on purpose. It's just the way it worked out!)

OK, Here is my story:

My mom and my oldest daughter were clowns several years before me. I wanted NO part of it. When my Mom (Claire Crenshaw) aka "GEE WHIZ" retired from AT&T she started taking clown classes as she just wanted to visit and bring cheer to hospitals and nursing homes. She quickly recruited my oldest daughter Kristen who was about six years old and they began attending meetings and events together.

In late 1987, a gentleman in my mom's clown club (Bob "Bunky" Gretton, who was a saxophone player in the Washington Redskins Band and also a clown) was asked by the owner to gather area clowns for a Half Time show at one of the last regular season home games at RFK Stadium. I then became interested in giving clowning a try since I was a huge Redskin Fan!! I quickly made myself a basic clown outfit and joined my Mom and Daughter for what was the most fun I ever had. After the half time show was over they let all the clowns sit on the field with the players!! The Redskins went on a few weeks later to win Superbowl XXII. It was an experience I will never forget it.

The very next year, in 1988 my Mom's clown club had another invitation to be extras in a movie that was being filmed in Baltimore. The film was "Her Alibi" starring Tom Selleck. The filming took 9 days. There was one particular day where they needed more clowns than usual. My mom asked me if I was interested and I again jumped at the opportunity and took a day off work. Again, I had a blast being a clown for a day I hanging out with the movie stars!.

After those two experiences, I was hooked!! I started attending clown conventions with my mom to learn how to be a clown and found that I had always been a clown at heart. I loved it! When my younger daughter, Robyn was old enough, she started clowning with us. It was a family affair!

In October of 2004 I moved from Maryland to Gettysburg, PA. I still live there and I have 7 Miniature Horses and 2 full size horses.

I have been working a full time job for Montgomery County Public School for almost 30 years. I am hoping to retire in 2018. My plan is to use one of my miniature horses "Remington" with my clown act. He does tricks and I would like to take him to events, nursing homes and children's parties and perform a comedy show. We will see if it happens, but that is my plan!

My real talent is in Face Painting. I don't have a chance to do it much with working a full time job, but I hope to be able to really get going with it in my retirement.

I love the MACA Conventions and am glad to be a part of this organization. Please contact myself or any board members and let us know if you have suggestions on how we can make the club or conventions more beneficial to the membership.





Delaware State Director Renate McIntosh “snippydoodles”

I’m working on two balloon princesses as I try to think of what to write for this article. I’m searching through my balloons thinking about what colors I’m going to order this week. I have balloons all over my living room, because it’s been a crazy week. This month has been full of fund-raisers, festivals, school shows and parties.

I started clowning around twenty-three years ago. It was not my choice, and I had no idea what I was doing. My (ex) husband performed magic shows around the area and he kept getting requests for a clown. So I was his logical choice. My first appearance was at a grand-opening for a hardware store. They hired us as a team. I was scared to death, being a shy person, and refused to talk. I let my husband do all the talking. I made simple one balloon animals and thought that was all there was to it. I did not feel like a silly, funny, person. I was just there because my husband needed a clown.

My next appearance was at Hardin County, Tennessee’s Country Christmas. It was a community fund-raiser for under-privileged children. I was excited and afraid. This was my first time on a stage. My husband and I worked as a team; he did the magic and I kept messing things up for him. We made it into the local newspaper, and I thought that was awesome. I was not a very pretty clown. I was a white face with purple hair, and a Halloween costume. I still did not know much about clowning, but I was having fun. I still was not speaking.

A magician in our area retired. He sold us his illusions and his shows. We had a list of all the places he performed and contact numbers. We did shows in Alabama, Mississippi, and Tennessee. Our oldest daughter, Cathy, became my husband’s assistant.



I still refused to talk. It was hard enough for me to get out there and clown around. And then one day.. my husband did a disappearing act and didn't return. We divorced and I went on and worked odd jobs for a year or so. I started to miss being a clown. I was scared to do any kind of speaking. I would take an "F" for a grade in school before I would do a speech, but here I was missing being a clown. I had a problem. I had to get over my fear of speaking.

Over the years I had improved my appearance. I had found professional clowns in chat rooms and had joined Clowns of American, and The World Clown Association. I was reading anything I could find about children's entertainment. My daughters started helping me with shows. Tiddles usually performed with me while my daughter, Cathy, watched after my son.



We started going to the Baltimore Balloon Jams. We met many awesome entertainers by attending those jams. Then I found the Circus Magic Convention. We attended it back in 2004. Around that time I met John Kral and was invited to a local balloon jam. I continued to learn as much as I could. I was working as a school bus driver to make ends meet, and also clowning whenever I had the opportunity. I also took my entertainer's children to see other performances.

In 2007 my "Clowning Around 4-H." group participated in nursing homes, did some performed a skit in a small



daughter and I started We met once a week and juggling, and magic. Our local parades, visited fund-raisers, and even circus.

We found out about the Mid-Atlantic Clown Association. I think the first time we attended was back in 2010. My children loved it. Crystal (Tiddles) and I competed in some of their competitions and

won. It was pretty exciting. My son and daughter competed in the gong show. They loved every minute of it and were surprised when they won.

Eventually, my children grew up and moved on. My daughter, Tiddles, is still interested in clowning. My son doesn't want to have anything to do with it. That might change as he gets older.



At the 2010 MACA Convention with Bruce Kerr

My week is just starting. I'm thinking about tomorrow (my Tuesday night restaurant). I'm also trying to figure out how to pack for my two school shows on Thursday. This weekend means I'm back at the country club clowning, and soon I'll be making the weekly trip to clown at my favorite hotel. The school year is winding down and the summer gigs are here. I still have a fear of speaking, but I try to concentrate on the people in front of me. All I need is to see the excited faces of the children and soon the fear is forgotten.



Western PA Director Gerald A Yourich "Razzle"

1369 Blacks Hill Rd Boswell Pa 15531 814-629-5973

jyourich@comcast.net

Classic Clown Club of Johnstown (Treasurer and past Sergeant at Arms)

COAI

MACA (Western PA Director)

Caring Clown

Clowning for 15 years. Awards in single and multiple balloon and paradeability

50+ club gigs per year

Numerous private gigs with repeat venues

Maryland State Director, Diane Jones



For the first part of my life I was Jim & Audry middle child, then Bobby's mom... now finally ... Toodles the clown.

I am from Central PA, one of four kids. My brother and sisters always had their nose in a book and I was creative, curious and always in trouble. I can honestly say I was a handful for my parents. I moved to the DC area. 1976, got married and I wanted a whole house full of kids. Well I was only blessed with Bobby. He was born with a chromosome rearrangement. Bobby is mentally challenged and hearing impaired. Bobby is the reason I am a clown.

Most children with disabilities are sick a lot, Bobby was not. At 15, he got the whooping cough. From that he developed lung damage and was hospitalized 3 to 4 weeks at time at Children's Hospital in DC. He did not really understand being confined to his room and seemed very unhappy. Once or twice a week the ward would be visited by Big Apple Circus Clown Doctors. Bobby would perk right up and laugh along with them. Then be sad again. After many years and many hospital stays, finally he was better. I hoped that I would win the lottery, have free time and I wanted to find out how to go to hospitals and be a clown. It looked so easy. Ha Ha, Wow was I wrong.

In 2006 I was in a very bad motorcycle accident. I realized that life can change in an instant and wanted to do something different, exciting and rewarding. I tried a couple different things- but nothing seemed to make me really happy.

In 2008 I saw an ad in the local paper for Clown classes at a Magic shop. Immediately I signed up and couldn't wait until the class started. My family all laughed and said I was crazy. They thought that it would be like so many other things I try and soon I would lose interest.

The classes were taught by Kapital Klowns. We were taught all the normal clown things and Toodles was born, I was hooked. A few weeks later the Alley participated in a Holiday Parade. I planned to join up with the more established clowns to go to the parade. It was extremely cold that day. I was so worried that the group would cancel. At 7am. I called my clown mentor "CoCo", I thought she was going to kill me but she understood that I was excited and off to the parade we went. All I did was smile, wave and jump around to keep warm. After the parade I remember asking CoCo "when does all this excitement go away?" She had been a clown for many many years and her response was "I'll let you know".

After that I became very involved in Kapital Klowns, MACA, and now FreeState Clown Alley. I am a member of COAI, WCA, and CFA. I love all aspects of being a clown. I like doing skits, walk arounds, face painting and balloons but most of all I love a Parade, playing the Kazoo and seeing joy in the faces of kids, young & old. Toodles the clown, does a fair amount of volunteer work at events for people with differing abilities. Noodles (Bobby) joins me sometimes. I do open house and outdoor events and birthday parties to pay the bills.

In my non-clowning life, I am a Property Manager. I manage two buildings that house chronically homeless people. It is a challenge but we work hard at getting folks back on track. I began clowning in 2008. I took classes from Kapital Klowns. I quickly realized that I loved clowning and Toodles the clown came on the scene. The following year I attended Mooseburger Camp. I go to conventions whenever I can. I am a member and Treasurer of FreeState Clown Alley. We are active in local parades, circuses, open houses and volunteering for people with differing abilities. I am also a member of COAI, WCA and CFA. Bobby, aka Noodles the clown, joins me in parades and doing simple magic. Toodles and Noodles volunteer at several events a year for People with differing abilities. Noodles enjoys helping with magic and music. I love playing the Kazoo and being in a parade. I share my love for Clowning a Career day at local schools and Girl Scout Camps. I love to sew and make the majority of our clown outfits and props. We look forward every year to the MACA convention and seeing our clown friends.

Central PA Director Jennifer Miller

I am best know as Crackers the Clown. I have been clowning since the mid 80's, so at that is at least 10 years. I am an Auguste clown. Through the years I have performed mostly as Crackers and in more recent years as Mrs. Claus. For me clowning is all about the children. Performing the magic shows, face painting, singing silly songs it is all for the entertainment of the children (no matter what age) I also believe that even though clowns often mess up magic tricks the messing up should really be a well rehearsed mistake. As a professional clown I a charged with being fun loving and comical this is something that I try to do with much seriousness. When out in the public eye I try to follow a strict code of clown ethics. The bottom line is that I love the art of entertaining as Crackers the Clown.



Ellen Gagnon – MACA Membership Director
CLASSI the clown

I started my career in clowning with Bumper T in Hospital Clowning at Cooper Hospital, in Camden, NJ about 10 years ago. Then my husband and I bought a winter home in Florida. There I went to and graduated from the Villages Clown School and joined Alley 179 (150 members) I learned a lot and participated in many events: walk arounds, parades, face painting, balloons, reading to children, nursing homes, special occasions—all as a volunteer in Florida and also in New Jersey. I belong to Kapos Gang in New Jersey, Clowns of America International and of course Mid Atlantic Clown Association.

MEMBERSHIP BIOS



Want to add some funny, yet easy physical comedy to your clowning? Keith Karas, a fellow MACA member, recently attended a physical comedy intensive in New York City and is excited to share with you a few of the techniques which you could immediately incorporate into your clowning. Come learn how to trip on purpose and slap your partner without hurting their feelings (or their face). No theory - this is all practical stuff you can use right away in your next performance.

Keith is a lifelong student of the art of clowning and has attended the Red Skelton Clown School and the American Clown Academy.



Arlene Ogurick - "Toodles"
Freestate Clown Alley #30

My adventures going "down the road" began when I attended an introductory clowning class for children at our local zoo. (The clown said it was okay for me to attend). The all-time "clincher" for me was attending clown camp in La Crosse, Wisconsin in 1989 — total immersion was the way to go!

My evolution as a clown came with learning about humanity of the clown, bumbling along good-naturedly seeing life simply but with great heart — the clown's eye view of life — My wanting to share the sense of wonder & amazement with others grew, bringing smiles and "lightening" the load for others.

I learned from my alley-mates as they have grown and opened myself to new possibilities — more stretches of imagination, more playfulness, more whimsicality in manner and costume; I found new areas to take my clown — adapting to parades themes, entertaining a wider range of audience members & being placed in new situations (not always of my choosing). I have come to appreciate the physical goofyness & talents of performers who don't look like traditional clowns.

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 30+ years ago, The Keystone Klowns, made up of several clowns that many of you don't know and most of whom are no longer with us on earth, 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 (I am guessing on that number) the trophy award was purchased and given to a person chosen by the Keystone Klowns, but 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.

Over the past several years, the selection committee has consisted of Nellie "Muffin" May (a founding member of the Keystone Klowns and the MACA), Darlene "Daisy" Morgan and George "Porgie" Caban. 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 Clownatarians 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 Caban, John Kral, Sandi Smith, Bill Schober, and Mark St. Marie.

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 2017 award to me at dot-theclown@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

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. The 2016 year saw two scholarships for two very deserving clowns.

Keyia Nelson is from NJ. Keyia has jumped into the clown world and made friends up and down the coast...Jaquan, Sylvia and Kesha...you know who you are. Keyia was certainly paying attention when she developed her clown face and persona and now applies the grease. Congratulations on your 2016 scholarship!

Tina Coleman is from Millersville, MD. Tina has wanted to be a clown for sometime. She can juggle and has been in several parades including the Miss America Parade last September. Tina jumped into the clown world with her big white patent leathers! She belongs to the Freestate Clown Alley #30 and attended the MACA convention on their urging. Congratulations on your 2016 scholarship!

The learning and scholarship process should be flawless, but it is not...we agonize over the correct scheduling of classes so that we have balanced opportunities. We miss deadlines, we miss communications, but we try very hard. We get immersed in the daily needs of the convention. Message here is “Don’t ever give up” on something you really want and pursue your dream.

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



MACA CONVENTION NEWS



Hop on the bus to the 2017 MACA Convention! Nov 9—12, 2017

Red Lion Hotel East Harrisburg, PA

Don't miss this great educational opportunity...new lecturers, new and repeat vendors, headliners **RICK AND MONICA CHANEY!**

Registration remains \$185 before September 30th.

Hotel rates are \$88 for single and \$98 for double.

Make those reservations now!

Control button and click the link.

[MACA CONFERENCE SINGLE](#)

[MACA CONFERENCE DOUBLE](#)

Registration Thursday am, vendors and sessions begin at 1, buffet and theme party—Student's Rock.

Friday everything starts early am and continues until dinner buffet and the Teacher's Lounge.

Saturday continues the learning and fun until the closing banquet.

Don't miss the Sunday service.

34th Annual Mid-Atlantic Clown Association Convention **School Daze!**

November 9-12, 2017

Red Lion Hotel

4751 Lindle Road, Harrisburg PA 17111

To register, complete the form below by filling in the blocks on your computer, print out the form and send, with check made payable to MACA Convention, to: Sandi Smith 169 Buckingham Dr. Southampton, NJ 08088. Questions, call Sandi 609-801-2571 or email: dotthec clown@comcast.net.

Full registration fee includes dinner Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights.

Thursday theme - Student night...

Friday theme - Teacher night

Saturday banquet - Business Casual (continue one of the above themes) enjoy the presentation by Rick and Monica Chaney

Registration Fees:	<input type="checkbox"/> Full - \$185.00 thru 9/30/17	Daily Rates:	<input type="checkbox"/> \$60.00 per day (no meals)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Full - \$195.00 thru 10/31/17	Dinner Rates:	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50.00 Thurs. and/r Fri. each night
	<input type="checkbox"/> Full - \$205.00 after 10/31/17		<input type="checkbox"/> \$60.00 Saturday night banquet
		Total registration fees: \$	<input type="text"/>

Hotel room rate - \$88.00 single per night includes breakfast. \$98 double per night includes breakfast for two. Additional persons in room do not get breakfast tickets. You must reserve before 10/26/2017 to be assured this rate. If you make reservations thru Sunday and check out earlier, you will be charged a \$50 fee. (717) 939-7841.

Easy on line check-in available - control + click to go to hotel website

.Control + Click here to book: [MACA CONFERENCE DOUBLE](#)

Control + Click here to book: [MACA CONFERENCE SINGLE](#)

*****Please note*****

\$25 processing fee for cancellations before 10/01/17. No refunds after that date.
Face painting supplies and latex products will be used and sold at this convention.
All are welcome to attend, however, you must be an MACA member and have paid full registration to compete.

Name:

Clown Name:

Address:

E-mail:

City:

Phone:

State:

First MACA convention?: No Yes

MACA CLOWN ALLEY NEWS

Freestate Clown Alley
Presents:



Celebrating 44 years of Laughter



*Skootchee paying
a visit to a nursing
home*

Steve and Pamela Copeland



*Last time parked in
Baltimore train yard.*

BE THE REASON
SOMEONE SMILES



Jackie LeClaire and Chuck Sidlow

Ringling Blue



Did you participate ??

Red Nose Day...May 26, 2016

Red Nose Day is the universal symbol for fun and laughter! People across the country will be wearing Red Noses and are organizing FUN-raisers to help kids who need it most.

Buy your Red Nose and other fun items at Walgreens!

Red Nose Day is a fundraising campaign run by the non-profit organization Comic Relief Inc., a registered 501(c)(3) American public charity. Funds raised go to the Red Nose Day Fund and last year benefited children in all 50 states and 15 countries internationally through programs to keep children and young people safe, healthy and educated. Comic Relief Inc. in the US and Comic Relief UK are independent sister organizations that are joined by their shared vision of a just world, free from poverty and the mission to drive positive change through the power of entertainment.

IF you did celebrate Red Nose Day, the people you helped Thank You. If you missed it this year...May you can celebrate with us next year.



Moving?

Send both your new and old address to:

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



MID_ATLANTIC CLOWN ASSOCIATION INC.

2017 OFFICERS AND STATE DIRECTORS

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