

Grease Paint

February 2019



Privacy Policy

While researching materials preparing to launch Back Stage Magic, an online magic supply business, privacy rules and recommendations came to light. Though it is not required, it is a good idea to publish Grease Paint's policy on privacy.

Articles submitted, with the proper release documentation, will be considered for publishing. The release information can be read on the last page of this newsletter. Any articles submitted without the required releases will be returned to the author, unpublished.

An article published in Grease Paint is not considered to be exclusive. The author is welcome to submit the same article to other publications. However, they must send it to the publication. Grease Paint will not forward any writings to other publications.

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A Year of Grease Paint:

A DVD is has been published that contains all 2018 issues of Grease Paint.

Round Up 2019: Grand Rapids, MI. October 8-13

Pink Bird Skit: A one person skit that can be done on stage.

Handicapped and Other Situations: Tips on working with special audience members.

2019 Year of the Clown:

Making this year an educational event for the public.

Classic Magic Tricks for Walk-Around, Parlor or Close Up:

Special pricing on book Back Stage Magic will sell at WCA convention.

Magic Trunk: A way to carry your materials to/from a job in one trip.

Safety Messages: Add them to your clowning

2019 Midwest Clown Association --- 46th Annual Round-Up

“Disney Dreams”

WHEN: October 8 – October 13, 2019

WHERE: Crowne Plaza Grand Rapids- Airport
5700 East 28th Street SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49546
616-957-1770

★ Shuttle service available to and from Airport

Room Price: \$89.00 (Plus applicable fees and taxes)

In order to receive the “*Disney Dreams*” Room Rate
Reservations **MUST BE** received by the hotel on or before
Monday, September 2, 2019

YOU MUST INFORM THE HOTEL YOU ARE WITH the
MCA – DISNEY DREAMS

Look for our
2019 Mascot
“SNEEZEL”



Google Maps list Grand Rapids, MI as a 322 mile drive taking 4 hours 38 minutes. That is a very reasonable distance for what is considered a major convention in the Central Mid West. And if the Round-Up continues as it has in the past, it will be packed with good lectures, and presentations. It is also known for the variety of vendors that attend.

I will also add that the room rates are extremely reasonable compared to some of the other conventions. Couple the room rate with early registration and the Round-Up should be very attractive for all alleys that belong to the Midwest Clown Association.

Of course there will be competitions. And, even if you don't compete there are a lot of things you can observe. Many ideas stem from watching others perform and compete. And, you will make all kinds of new friends to stay in touch with through email and social media.

Time to start making your plans. Let others know who might also be interested in going. Sharing expenses can save a lot of money. If you need to make arrangements to get away for a while now is the time to start making those plans.

There is a possibility Back Stage Magic will be one of the vendors. Brian may also be presenting a couple lectures. Communications are in progress. No final decisions have been made. If he goes he will be looking for a ride and to share expenses.

Pink Bird Skit

A simple, easy skit one person can do. All you need is a paper sack, like a child would carry lunch in for school. You also need to go to the dollar store and purchase a feather duster. The color of the bird in the skit name will change to what ever color feather duster you are going to use.

Begin by opening the bag and inserting the feather duster inside. While the duster is in the bag use scissors to cut a few of the feathers off. Let them fall to the bottom of the bag. Remove the duster and carefully fold the bag up so it is flat. Take your time and move gently as you want the feathers to remain on the bottom of the bag.



You are ready to perform. While you are on stage stop and pretend you notice a pink bird near the edge of the stage. You can point it out to the audience while you pretend to sneak up on it. As you are moving open the bag and hold it in one hand. Reach down and pretend you pick up the bird and place it in the bag. Now twist the top closed. To the audience it appears you have the bird held inside the bag.

Time to get the audience involved. Announce that this is a very rare bird. They are extremely intelligent. Have the audience suggest a name for the bird. Then hold the bag close to your ear and ask “what is 2 plus 3”. Pretend the bird responded 5. Smile and remind the audience these birds are smart.

Hold the bag in front of you and ask the bird to do a summer salt. Gently flick the bag with the fingers holding the bag. Then respond with a big smile asking the audience if they saw it. Tell them this bird is fantastic. Smart and very athletic. Tell the audience you will have the bird stand in it’s head.

Hold the bag out, give it a moment, then bring the bag close as you tell it to stand on it’s head once more. You can repeat this again if you wish. When it becomes obvious the bird is not standing on it’s head tell the audience you will give it some help.

Turn the bag upside down. Then respond cheering that the bird stood on it’s head. In a loud voice tell the crowd “let’s give him a round of applause”. As you clap your hands, pop the bag. The feather duster feathers will puff out.



Act surprised, allowing the audience to laugh. Then pretend to notice another bird off stage. Tell the audience “I see another one”. Walk off stage as if sneaking up on the next imaginary bird.

Handicapped and Other Situations

As clowns we need to be aware of a wide variety of situations. Some we recognize, but others do not offer any clue. As an example, I used to pass out candy during parades. One little boy I gave candy to handed it back and told me he could not have it. His mom leaned over and said he is diabetic. I reached into my personal pocket and gave the boy a dollar. I told him he was doing the right thing by paying attention to his health.

Hearing is another issue. Have you worked in front of a deaf person? I was on walk-around when I stopped to speak with a lady who was sitting down. As I spoke her daughter began signing for her. I assumed a signing posture and continued to entertain. By signing posture I mean I paced my speech, allowing pauses at times to let the person signing catch up with me. When her mom signed back I paused allowing the daughter to relay her words to me.

When performing in front of someone in a wheelchair you might want to bring yourself to their level. They spend a lot of their time looking up. Usually they welcome someone who is willing to kneel so they are on their same level. Their wheelchair is considered an extension of their body. DO NOT lean on it or use it to help you stand back up. .

Cancer is something clowns need to be aware of. You may come across some shaved heads or balding hair. This is due to treatments. Most of these patients are very conscientious of it. Treat them no different than any other audience member you may be entertaining. If they talk about their condition remember to treat them as brave warriors. Remain positive.

As a clown you are also in a position to educate. When you see someone using a walker step up and hold that door open. If you notice they dropped something, pick it up for them. You are setting a strong example for others to follow. I was once asked why I stopped and held the door for a lady. I told the young person that it was the right thing to do. The young girl smiled at me and reached up to help me hold the door.

There are all kinds of conditions and situations out there. You will notice various wraps and braces on legs arms and some wear back braces. There will be people with severe hearing loss and have problems even with their hearing aids. Some people have vision conditions.

There may, or may not be evidence to make you aware. Walkers, canes, wheel chairs, leg braces etc. tip you off. But you will not notice someone with hearing aids until you get close enough to notice. Just be aware that these are people, they deserve our respect and have every right to be entertained as anyone else.



2019 Year of the Clown

There is a revolution growing. It started with a few individuals scattered across the country. Pricilla Mooseburger began to get those individuals organized in her “Clown Summit”. And those who did not/could not attend are picking up valuable information through her newsletter.

I’m sure COAI, MCA and WCA will also be splashing positive news about clowns as the year goes by. It began with the scary clown during Halloween season. The impact on the public was extremely harsh on the clowning industry. Scary costumes have been used in wide variety of career fields. But for some reason the scary clown impacts real clowns image in the eyes of the public the worst.

2019 is the year to engrave positive profiles of clowns. We all need to share the task of reminding the public we bring laughter and joy to our audience. The public needs to know that we follow a code of ethics. They need to understand that clowns take major steps to learn the craft. If members of the public is scared we need to move their level of fear to: “lets see what he does before we get too close”. Many are apprehensive when they first see a clown. But once they see the clown perform they understand clowns are not threatening.

This is not a political election speech or activity. This is nothing more than getting out there and making sure that our entertainment is family based and non-threatening. A scared child needs to see a clown back away to allow them space to relax. Even the child that is afraid of clowns can be happy once he/she knows the clown will not close the space between them. They can hold back and watch from a distance without panic.

As clowns we need to share safety information, display respect and demonstrate understanding with our audience. Time to concentrate on entertaining. Let them laugh and enjoy your face painting, balloons, or walk-around magic. Listen to their response to your skits. We have a full year before Halloween. Time to begin making those long term memories.

The goal is for the public to understand the value of clowns. At the same time they need to recognize the Halloween clowns as people in costume for the season. This past year I watched a young girl, once she flinched from being startled, yell at a scary clown “you are not real”. She continued telling him she liked clowns and knows what they do. She finished by telling him he was just a kid trying to scare people.

2019 is the year of the clown. We all need to set good examples. Let’s join forces to remind the public what clowns are really like.

\$15.00

***Classic Magic Tricks
for Walk-Around,
Parlor or Close Up***




*Easy to carry. Packs small.
Plays big. Flexible, you can
use any storyline you wish.*



Easy to perform and fun to do.

***Brian T. Lees
"Topper"***

Special Price Classic Magic Tricks Book

Brian will lecture during the WCA Convention in Albuquerque this March. One of his lectures will be on classic magic tricks.

These tricks are easy to carry and perform, pack small and can play as big as you want them to. His book, listed at \$15 will be sold at his vendors table.

The book goes into detail on what makes magic work. Introduces the classics and covers the Thump Tip, Hot Rod and Sponge Balls.

The manipulations are shown and suggestions provided to get your started working with them. The book concludes with additional sources one can reach out to for more ideas and tips. The book is 38 pages with a hard back, clear plastic cover and spiral bound.

Through the month of February, members of the Quad City Clown Troupe can purchase this book for \$10. That is a savings of \$5. If you need any of these tricks there are also available through his business: Back Stage Magic.

The books, thumb tips, hot rod and sponge balls must be ordered. Payment is expected when items are delivered/picked up. If you have questions, or want to see this magic performed then catch Brian so he can bring them to the meeting. He will take the time to show you the book and tricks to help with your purchase decision.

Order your books and tricks by sending email to: bsmagic2018@gmail.com, or magicwithbrian@yahoo.com.

The Magic Trunk

This article is about pack small/play big. Brian uses it with his magic act but it can very easily be converted to work for clowns. The major advantage of this trunk is the number one. It takes one trip into the performance area to go to work. When you are finished it only takes one trip back to the car.

The trunk came from a local home/hardware store. It is constructed with wheels and a handle that extends. This allows wheeling the trunk in/out very easy.. The trunk has a latch so it can be locked if needed. I taped my business card on the side under the latch.

I left the trunk the way it came, green. I didn't want any signage or colorful decals that might suggest "steal me" if I had to leave the trunk in a holding area. Besides my business card the trunk looks like a normal piece of luggage anyone would use.

There have been times I have unpacked what I wanted to use and then set the trunk upright again to use the top as a mini-table. Most of the time I use the trunk lying down so I can open/close it as needed. To make that happen I needed a stand.

The stand I use came from a restaurant supply house. It a folding bus stand. The waitress would grab one as she carried the food tray to the table. She unfolded it and set the tray on it. When the food was distributed she picked up the tray, folded the stand and took them back to the kitchen area.



I set up the stand and placed my trunk on top of it. Then I measured the height I wanted the top of my trunk to be. Using a pipe cutting tool I pulled the rubber feet off the legs, cut them, and put the feet back on. This completed the initial set up of my trunk as a working tool.

Anything I wanted to perform fit inside the trunk. I would wheel the trunk in carrying the stand.

Unfold the stand, set the trunk on top of it and I was ready to entertain.

Now the only thing left to work on was the interior of the trunk. That will depend on what you plan to do. I still carry magic in it.



Family based show, or kids show the only thing I need to do is load what I plan to perform. The trunk works well for my clown character, as well as my magic performances.

The first step was to paint the interior. As you can see I painted it red. From there I configured the inside. A compartment was made using a dowel rod and some wire shelving. The rod was secured with screws to the trunk. The shelving was cut to size and held in place with cable ties. The top of the shelving piece serves as a door for the compartment. A piece of Velcro is used as the latch to keep it closed.

Do not let the size of the interior fool you. I carry a two hour magic show packed as you see in this picture. There will be plenty of room as long as you plan what you wish to perform. A piece of fabric was glued on the inside top lid. Pouches on that fabric hold things. You set the pouch width as you want for the items you want to carry.

You don't even have to use the trunk to perform. The handle/wheel feature makes it easier to haul a bunch of props that would be needed for skits. If the alley is doing a show everyone could put their props in the trunk and 1 person bring it to the stage area.

From the accounting standpoint I have less than \$25 invested in the trunk, interior configuration and stand. I have used this trunk for areas that are restricted in stage space as well as other situations. It has been over 10 years and I still use it.



As some of you know I also have a full stage show I perform as a magician. When I do I have two more working tables. One is set on each side of the stage. The trunk is set up in the middle. I add a skirt, trapping it between the top of the stand and the trunk. It drapes and covers the front. With the front covered I set a box under the stand to dump items as I finish with them.

Over the years I have painted the outside of the trunk flat black. I have also made a few modifications in the interior to accommodate magic I have upgraded to. All in all this trunk remains a highly efficient, flexible tool. I have used it for magic shows, as a balloon station, with props I need to transport and with my clown version of my magic show.

This trunk will be on display for our January 21`st meeting. I will also answer any questions you may have through email: toperhtc@yahoo.com.

Safety Messages

During a walk-around you notice a young child clinging to mom's leg trying to hide behind her. We recognize the child is scared. So we do not close the space between us and the child. We might wave but do not take action to bring her into the primary focus of our actions. But do you pass along a safety message?

It does not hurt to acknowledge she is scared. And, to reinforce the need to be aware of strangers. This can easily be done by saying "that's alright". "Be aware of strangers as you grow up, it will keep you safe." Or, that is ok. "Hang close to mom, she will keep you safe."

Do not forget "Stop, drop and roll" if you get a chance to mention something about fire safety. Clowns have been known to verbally, in a loud voice to catch kids attention, say they are looking both ways before they cross the street. As clowns we know that kids are watching us. Passing along some safety information is always a nice thing to do.

If you are looking for safety information then research the following areas:

Anti-bullying

Good stranger / bad stranger

Bicycle safety

Fire safety

When to call 911

Stranger temptations

Stranger temptations are situations where the stranger plays on the child's emotion. They may show the child a picture of a cute dog and say they lose their dog. They may want the child to help them look for it. This is a play on the child's emotion. Bad strangers are trying to by-pass the safety rules of a stranger. They are playing on the child's emotion.

Stranger temptations are best handled if the child gets other adults involved. In the lost dog example the child should inform the stranger they will go get more help. Then run to the nearest adult, or house and begin knocking on the door.

You might even enjoy making a game with the kids. Challenge them to think of as many safety rules they can on bullying. Or have them name the meanings of the words "Stop", "Drop" and "roll". The more you can get them involved the more those safety messages will be retained.

Parents will appreciate you passing along safety messages. And, you never know when your short period of safety conversation helps keep a child safe.



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