

Grease Paint

July 2019



Red, White and Boom !

The Quad City Clown Troupe will walk-around for the Parks Department Red, White and Boom event at Schweiberts Park, down town Rock Island, As of this newsletter writing there has been no change due to high water.

Rock Island put a flood protection plan/project together in 1965 and the river front should be fine. However, I'm sure there will be a lot of gnats/bugs. So you might want to spray your costume with something. If you do not want to use a commercial bug chemical on your face then try Vanilla Extract.

This is a simple walk-around. Do not do balloons. There will be a very large amount of kids there and when you do one you will end up doing balloons all afternoon. This is a clown walk-around, not a balloon factory.

Stickers work fine. I would take a few on a small roll. That way you can run out and do not end up standing in one place passing out stickers for a long time. Just put your working roll in one pocket and the rest in another secured pocket. As you walk away you can "reload" with another small amount.

This is one of the events the clown troupe has to work in exchange for our free meeting room. The first was the Easter Egg hunt. This is an easy event. If we have new clowns joining us, the older members need to pair up with them. We do not want them to get bogged down where they cannot move.

Back Stage Magic: If you are looking for some good deals on sponge or DVD's visit mybackstagemagic.com.

Chick-fil-A: Chicken sandwiches were provided for our clown class. Thank you!!!

Clown Class of 2019: Meet the new clowns from our class.

Meeting Program Calendar: A listing of our programs scheduled through the end of the year.

Clown at First Sight: Get in character, stay in character when you are first noticed.

Ragged Old Flag: A tribute to old glory. Happy fourth of July.

Today's Choices Are: A sign makes balloon work easier.

Be Alert For New Members: A scramble to find a QCCT card to pass out.



BACK STAGE MAGIC

Finally Open

You will find the “tip of the month” on the front page. It uses a magic trick as an illustration, but clowns can relate to it as well. Play to the audience, not the person standing next to you. Also on the “Specials” tab you will find discounted pricing on sponge magic, DVD’s and a few other things. If you did not get to the site by the end of June, email Brian and he will share with you the materials that were discount priced. You can reach Brian at either email: topperhtc@yahoo.com or bsmagic2018@gmail.com

If you are looking for something special, or just want to ask for a few ideas those are the email you can use as well. There are many supply sites out there. Just about everyone is trying to sell something. Back Stage Magic is no different. However, we like to think that we are different in that we try to focus on performance.

Support is not limited to items you purchase through Back Stage Magic. The industry is packed with entities that only will work with you on materials you buy from them. One cannot claim to be a supportive, training service if a sale is required. If you have purchased items that you do not use and want some suggestions, please contact us. Let’s spend some time brainstorming. We might find the solution that will get that item into your performance.

FYI: Back Stage Magic is promoted through it’s monthly newsletter, “Abraca-Poof”. And, during lectures. If you send email, do not think that you are launching a consistent flow of email trying to sell you something. We may, from time to time, send out an announcement. But Back Stage Magic will never flood your email with marketing trying to sell you something.

Also, all customer and email contacts become the property of Back Stage Magic. No information will be released beyond the owner’s office. We do not share our contacts lists. If one of our customers wants to list something for sale or wants to post a question for other opinions that information will be communicated through our newsletter and website.

Back Stage Magic will stand as a contact point. Those responding will email Back Stage Magic and that email will be forwarded to the listing individual. If the individual wants to contact the responder directly he/she can do so. Back Stage Magic will only serve as a forward contact and not distribute email or other contact information.

Chick-fil-A
3831 41st Avenue Drive
Moline, IL 61265



A huge “Thank you” goes out to Chick-fil-A, 41st Street Moline, IL. The troupe voted for Brian to reach out to them for a quote for 20 sandwiches for our clown class. Brian has done a couple things for that restaurant in the past. So he spoke with John, the manager. There was not much discussion. Brian mentioned the class and asked for a quote.

John responded that he would provide the sandwiches for our class at no charge. When Brian was given the receipt to be used for pick up, the food was taken as a Promotional Discount. He told John that the troupe had budgeted money for the food and that it was not a personal request. John insisted that the troupe not be charged.

Nothing more was said. But Brian is asking, if you are satisfied with the food, please pass along a kind word. This is the restaurant near Walmart in Moline. John didn’t ask for any advertising or promotion of his restaurant. He just provided the food for the troupe.

Pockets

One thing new clowns do not think of is pockets. We all need pockets to carry our stuff in. But there is one special pocket that also must be considered. I am talking about the personal pocket. A pocket that is not used to carry magic, walk-around, props or other performance materials.

There are times when children try to reach into a clowns pockets. Usually we are able to stop that. But there are times when we have to retrieve something the child has taken out. The last thing we need is a personal item to be taken.

You need a pocket that is hidden or worn away from those inquiring hands. Most personal pockets are on the inside of the costume. That is where car keys, wallets, medication and other personal items are kept. If you do not have a personal pocket, then consider adding one on the inside of your costume.

Welcome Class of 2019 To Clowning.



A fine looking group of clowns. This picture was taken shortly after the makeup demonstration and the student application. Very nice class this year with real good clown faces. Special thanks to Jane Foust for leading and troupe members who were beside the students helping them.

The day began with a presentation on caring clowns. Next, we covered the basic history of clowning. Students were able to gather some ideas as we presented the different clown types. From that point it was time for them to get their hands into the grease paint and apply their first clown face.

We talked about their first costume. There were a few items on hand they could take with them. The emphasis was to get started. One does not have to spend a lot of money. The most important thing is to makeup, dress up and then go clown. We all evolve as our clown character develops.

After a break we talked more about clown activities before Dwight took over. He explained the different types of balloons available and then taught some basic balloon animals. The day then moved onto Brian as he taught some simple pocket magic using materials found around the house.

We demonstrated walk-arounds and then taught the Cow Herd skit. Students were teamed up and they all ran through it. We finished by passing out certificates and inviting them all to our meetings. It was a very good day. Everyone had fun and we might see some new faces in the troupe.

Meeting Program Calendar

The programs for our monthly meetings have been scheduled. Print this page, or mark your calendar so you know what topics we will host on which meeting.

June 17:	Walk-around
July 2:	Meeting cancelled
July 15:	Face painting
August 6:	Skits
August 19:	Balloons
September 3:	Senior center clowning
September 16:	Garage sale (members bring items to sell)
October 1:	Getting started with clown shows
October 21:	Working with a partner
November 5:	Clowning problems and working through them
November 18:	Physical comedy, movement and gestures
December 3:	Working with puppets
December 16:	Holiday party

Also the troupe will hold elections in October for President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and three Board positions. Members are encouraged to run for an office. Those who are nominated have the choice of accepting the nomination and being put on the ballot. Or, they can decline the nomination and their name will not be considered for the position.

There may be additional materials covered during these meetings. However, it was suggested that we publish our program calendar. The approach is to allow members to plan ahead for the meetings. Some, such as the face painting program, will require people to sign up ahead of time so materials can be on hand for them to work with. Watch the email system for those sign up announcements.

Clown at First Sight

Donna brought up a very strong point during our clown class. We all know that being afraid of an audience really happens. But we also have been told that once you get started those fears begin to melt away. Donna pointed out that when you are in makeup and costume you are a clown.

It makes no difference where you are. While driving people will notice you. Give them your best clown smile and wave. As you park your car you may notice children point to you and wave. Smile and wave back to them. If they start running to your car, be very careful as you park. Then once you open the door you can interact.

When you are in clown, you need to be a clown. Let your makeup and costume enhance your entertainment. The walk-around may be down the street or at another area of the park. But once you are in view, you need to be all clown.

Some of us drive in street shoes and change into our clown shoes before we step out. Children may run up and be standing around you while you change. That makes no difference. You can talk and gesture as a clown while you change. Just tell them the darn pedals are not large enough for your feet.

The same holds true when the event is over. You worked it as a clown. Now you need to remain in clown as you walk back to your car. If children follow you then stay in clown as you change your shoes once again. Give them one last clown smile, wave and carefully start to drive.

On the way home, just like on the way to the event you will see some people. Do not hesitate waving and giving them a big clown smile as you drive. When you are safe back home you can remove the makeup, costume and return to your normal self. Did I say normal? We all have a little clown in us, even when we are not in makeup.

As Donna pointed out, when you makeup and get in costume you are a clown. You need to stay in clown until you change back. This includes the drive, people who may call out to you as you park and other exposures that take place. Get used to those cell phone pictures and people waving. They are reaching out for a return smile to help make their day.



Ragged Old Flag by Johnnie Cash

I wondered through a country court house square.
On a park bench an old man was sitting there.
I said your old courthouse is kind of run down.
He said naw, it will do for our little town.
I see your old flag pole has leaned a bit and
that's a ragged old flag you have hanging on it.

He asked me to have a seat and I sat down.
He asked is this your first trip to our little town?
I said I think it is. He said I don't like to brag but
we're kinda proud of that ragged old flag.



You see it got a hole in that flag right there when Washington took it across the Delaware.
And it got powder-burned the night Francis Scott Key wrote those words "oh say can you see"
It got a bad rip in New Orleans with Paddington and Jackson tugging at it's seams.

And, it almost fell as the Alamo, beside the Texas flag but she waved on though.
She was cut with a sword in Chancellorsville and got cut again at Shiloh Hill.
There was Robert E. Lee, Beauregard, and Bragg the South wind blew hard on that old flag.

On Flanders Field in World War One she took a hit from a bertha gun.
She turned blood red in World War Two, hung limp and low a time or two.
She was in Korea and Vietnam, she went where she was sent by Uncle Sam.

She waved from our ships on the briny foam. And now they quit waving her here at home.
In her own good land she has been abused. Been burned, dishonored, denied and refused.
And the government for which she stands has been scandalized throughout the land.

She's getting thread bare and wearing thin. But she's in good shape for the shape she is in.
Cause she's been through the fire before and she can take a whole lot more.
So we raise her up every morning and take her down at night.

We don't let her touch the ground and we fold her up right.
On second thought I do like to brag. We are mighty proud of that ragged old flag.

America will always be the land of the free because it is also the home of the brave.

Happy 4th of July

Today's Choices Are

Doing balloons can be a lot of fun for new clowns. That is until someone in line starts asking for all kinds of things you do not make. Even the most experienced balloon artists have had that one kid that keeps asking for animals or objects they do not make.

What makes things worse is the kid does not move to the side. He just stands there naming more that you do not do. In that situation the best thing is to move the kid to the side and when he/she names a balloon you make, make it for them. The next best thing is to narrow the choices of things kids can ask for.

You can make things a lot easier, especially if you are just getting started and only make a few balloons, with a sign. You can get as creative as you want. I have seen signs where someone has taken a picture of the finished balloons. One person has used pictures she has captured off the Internet.

Still some clowns just list the balloons on their sign. The sign is usually done on poster board with bright colored letters. At the top of the sign, in big letters, is the phrase "Today's choices are". Kids in line then have to pick a balloon from your listing. If they ask for something else, you just need to remind them that those are today's choices.

Before you discount this idea let me tell you about a magician named Ricky. He was deaf and when he came to the magic club meetings, he always brought along someone to sign for him. He supported himself, beyond his disability income, with performances.

He did a magic show but most of his work was balloons. I watched him work many trade shows. People stood in line and would point to the balloon they wanted when it was their turn. This worked fantastic for him. And, when I first got started it worked great for me.

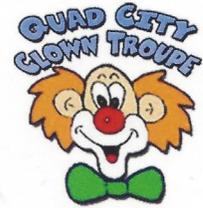
Ricky had a tripod he mounted his sign on. Others have just taped it to the wall or set it on a chair. I made a little pouch that I taped to the bottom of my sign. I kept my business cards in it. People who asked about my services received a card. Some picked up a card on their own.

I have even watched a highly skilled balloonist use a sign. When she took a break, I asked her why. Her comment was that the people who hired her wanted the line to keep moving. They were more concerned that the kids got balloons and moved along then the fantastic multi balloons the artist could make.

When you first get started the sign and today's choices works extremely well. As you learn more balloons you can add to the list. With enough experience you will be able to work without the need for a sign. But there may be times when you will use that sign again.

Be Alert For New Members

Quad City Clown Troupe



Website: qcclowns.com

Email: qcclowns@gmail.com

It was a rainy day during the Felix Adler event. Still there seemed to be a good crowd. Moms were close by as their children played games, rode the pony's, and played inside the museum. Bilbo walked up to Topper asking for a troupe card. It seems he spoke with a young girl that was interested in clowning.

After searching all pockets and his bag, Topper did not have one. Bilbo took his turn searching his wallet, pockets and bag. Finally he found one. He mentioned that was his last one and that he needed to get some during our next meeting.

This was a big awakening. Had Dwight not found that card we might have lost the chance a new person would come to a meeting. That is usually how it starts. We invite them to come to a meeting to see what the clown troupe is all about. That is hard to do when you cannot provide a website and email they can contact for more information.

The troupe purchased these cards to make it easier for members to pass out. If you need more, then please pick some up during our meeting. There is no charge for the cards. Use them to help invite people who might be interested in clowning.

We all need to carry a few cards. You never know when you have the chance to pass one out. It makes it a lot easier and no one has to sound like a sales person. Just hand it out and mention they can get more information by email or on our website. It does not get much easier than that.

CHALLENGE: Our next challenge will be during our meetings. We need to recognize the new people, introduce ourselves and make them feel welcome. Remember they came to see what the troupe is about, and to learn about clowning. In short terms, and more direct, the business portion of the meetings needs to be a lower priority than the program.

We need to discuss business, but we need to move through it and get onto the activities of clowning. If you want to volunteer to be a mentor for one of the new clowns that would be fantastic. Just give them your contact information and be there for them when they have questions. Or, be close when they get out to clown for their first few times.



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