

# Grease Paint

August 2019



## Email / Robo Call Problems

Unfortunately with new technology comes a few new problems. In the email world one might receive an email from someone they know. But the email does not look normal.

They write simple things such as: Hello Topperhtc, this is my new email". They are hoping you will open it and maybe respond. DO NOT! Someone has picked up a name from a website, newsletter or another source. They are emailing you under that person's name.

The best thing is not to touch the email. If you question if that person actually sent you the email, open your email program and use your own address email send them email asking about it. Just be sure you use enough information in the title they know your email is real.

For those sending real email, use enough information in the title to prompt the receiver that it is you. Brian has received nine of these so far. The best action is just to delete it. You can't mark it as spam as if the real person sends you email that is where it will go. Just read title and if it sounds like junk, delete it.

Robo calls are a national problem. What compounds the issue is that some of these calls are perfectly legal. You can download apps for your cell phone to begin labeling and blocking them. The government is working on ways to crack down on them.

However, there is a simple thing you can do. The first

Turned the Corner: The troupe has made a lot of changes. We have turned the corner and started to bring the fun of clowning back into focus.

### July 4th Parade and EMT

Red Light: Nice group for the parade. EMT and a red light.

### Mirror from Clown Class:

Someone left a mirror at our clown class.

Fear of Clowns: It is real and clowns need to know what to do.

Face Paint Class: July 15th class recap

Responding to Members Requests: Our programs are determined by the members interests. Let us know what you want to have presented.

Beginning Balloons: Aug 19 class to get started working events with balloons.

Clown Troupe Garage Sale: Tuesday September 3rd during the meeting.

step is not to answer any number you do not recognize. Also do not answer if the number shows as being hidden by the caller. Robo calls are computer generated. If you answer they mark your number as being answered. It makes no difference, and you should not, press any number to be removed, etc. The computer will register your number as being answered and the calls will continue to come.

If the call is from an unknown number, and the call is important, the caller will leave a voice message. An unfamiliar number with no voice message should be a red flag that you need to delete and block that caller. And do not fall for any fishy scare messages.

There is a call leaving messages the IRS wants to speak with you. The IRS will not call you. They communicate by mail. The IRS call is especially scary for our cherished seniors. Any time you hear from the IRS it usually is not good. But an unaware senior can be scared into providing all kinds of private information from these calls.

Along with the robo call problem, remember that as you call someone, they may not recognize your number. Do not hesitate to leave a voice message. Even if you do not need a call back, it is a good step to let them know who you are. A simple: "This is Brian. I just wanted to say hello. No need to call me back, I will try to catch you later", works well.

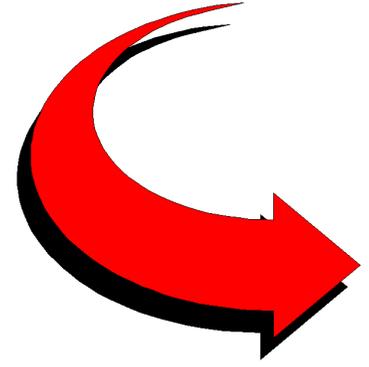
Protect yourself. Delete those suspicious email. Do not answer calls from phone numbers you do not recognize. If the email is important, the sender will email again hopefully with more information. Or they may call you. If the call is important the caller will leave a voice message for you. Until they find a way to stop robo calls and spam email, we need to take protective measures on our own.

## ***Programs***

The July issue of Grease Paint included a listing of all our after meeting programs through the end of the year. If you did not keep your copy of the newsletter it is also available on the website: [qcclowns.com](http://qcclowns.com). Go to the "Grease Paint" tab on the left side and click on the July 2019 issue.

Our programs are the result of trying to provide additional education to those who attended our clown class. The schedule was also set up to respond to our memberships requests. We also have a lot of talent in our troupe that will be stepping in and helping with these programs.

## *Turned the Corner*



I am not going into a lot of detail. But I will set this article up saying that in the past, the troupe has had many problems. Those problems ranged from frustration, lack of education, not pushing the fun of clowning and others. All those problems took their toll on our membership.

I am very happy to report that the troupe has turned the corner. This was not a one person effort. The officers, board and troupe members got together and made the changes. Today the troupe has a completely different meeting profile.

When improv was covered every person in the room got up and participated. The caring clown component of our troupe is growing stronger. Our programs are a mixture of education and work-shops. Laughter has returned to our meetings. And this is echoed beyond the meetings themselves.

Phone calls and email are starting to come in for more information. A few have contacted us through the website. They ask questions on where and when we meet. Some have asked to be informed when we perform. A call came in requesting information. When Brian returned the call it was a very good conversation. That person has been contacted by Karen as the caring clown activity was her main point of interest.

We have had a few from our class already join the troupe for one of the functions. During an event Dwight was asked for information about the troupe. One of the troupe cards was passed out and we hope to hear from that person very soon.

Prior to our clown class a young girl asked about the troupe. She is in the drama department at a local high school. She said a few of her classmates would be interested. Brian is planning to speak with the drama teacher before school begins. Another contact will be made with the boys/girls club. A couple members are reaching out to youth groups at a few churches.

If you attended during the dark ages when there was a lot of tension and frustration, you might want to check us out once again. The troupe has turned the corner. Negativity has been removed from the meetings and the troupe is focused on clowning once again. The troupe is as strong as it ever has been. We remain very active in the community. One can read about that on the website: [qcclowns.com](http://qcclowns.com)

## *July 4th Parade and EMT Red Light*



We had a very good group of clowns for the Bettendorf parade. A huge thank you to Archie for the use of his convertible. Between his and Sue Collins the clowns were able to ride. Sue could have, but she wanted to walk it.

The clowns were well received. The staging area was out in the open, no shade. It was very hot that day. Clowns spread out standing in shade from some of the other parade entrants vehicles. Many asked for pictures.

Along the parade route there were cheers and applause. Many took pictures as we rode by. Those who knew us called out by name to wave. A very little girl was waving until she saw the clowns. Each clown that waved back to her she blew a kiss.

### EMT RED LIGHT:

It was a very fun parade for everyone. That is also the case for an EMT Ambulance. Susie Q and Topper were in the car while Bobby drove. We were not on top. We were in route to the parade, stopped at a red light.

The Ambulance pulled up next to us and stopped at the light also. The passenger looked over and caught the drivers attention. We waved and they both laughed at us. Then as if nothing happened the Ambulance ran through the red light. No lights or siren. They just casually ran the red light while they were still laughing.



There was no other traffic there and Bobbi, Susie Q and Topper enjoyed a good laugh watching the EMT's casually drive through the red light. Of course we waited until the light changed. But were still laughing as we pulled into the staging area.

Topper mentioned it to another EMT Ambulance that was in the parade lineup. It was a shame that none of us got the number of the Ambulance. But we know there is talk among the EMTs about the incident.

## ***Mirror From Clown Class***

There was a makeup mirror left at our clown class. I made an announcement at the next meeting and no one responded. If this mirror is yours contact Brian: 309-235-4071 to make arrangements to pick it up.



As you can see it is a nice one. Lights on the side and the mirror surface can be turned around. The back side is a magnified mirror for those close up areas. It is electric but we did not have access to electricity during our makeup work.

It was sitting on the last table on the right as the students view of the demonstration. There is a slotted arm that folds down for the bar frame to fit into. That allows setting the angle of the mirror at various positions.

Again, if you left your mirror, contact Brian so it can be returned.

## ***Clown Troupe Meeting Programs***

We have our programs scheduled through the end of the year. They were published in July's issue of Grease Paint. The meetings in August are:

August 6th: Skits

August 19th: Balloons

There is also the potential for clown training with youth organizations. The Boys and Girls club as well as a church have expressed interest in someone coming to their organization and teaching the basics of clowning.

If you are interested in helping with remote teaching be it at a school, church, or other venue please let one of the officers know. We are getting some youth interested and when we get a chance to work with them we need to be able to step up and take it.

If you cannot reach an officer then email Brian at: [topperhtc@yahoo.com](mailto:topperhtc@yahoo.com).

# *Fear of Clowns*

Coulrophobia: The word means a persistent and irrational fear of clowns.

It is believed that it originated in Greece and the phobia is real. As we clown we may notice a few children that hide behind their parents, or reach up to them crying/screaming in fear. Some parents are worse. They may know their child is afraid but still pick them up and hold them in front of the clown. They usually say: "look at the clown". The result is the child goes into panic and the fear is multiplied.

Clowns need to take immediate action when they notice this. First they need to maintain the distance between themselves and the child. If you feel you are too close then you need to back up. The child must feel that you will not close that distance. In their mind that is their safety zone. Close the distance and you may spark a more violent fearful reaction.

The next step is to remove them from your point of focus. Simply turn a little and talk with others near you. When the child feels they are not in your target sights they usually start to relax a little. But they do not relax enough to eliminate the fear. Remember the phobia is real and cannot be erased.

There may be times when the child watches you with others and starts to warm up. But those situations will be very rare. Some may begin to talk with you as long as they are close to and in the arms of their parent. But do not be surprised if they just remain scared. Do not close that gap between you. That is their safety zone.

If the event the parent picks up the scared child holding them up to you, immediately step back. You need to move back to maintain that distance. I usually tell the parent that I am afraid of children and need to back up. I do not point out to them it is the child that is terrified. I also do not point out to them that they are magnifying the problem. Most parents will not understand if you try to educate them.

As entertainers we are responsible to recognize this condition. It is also our responsibility to take actions, if the parent is not. Two important actions help ease the child through the event. The first, as mentioned, is to maintain or establish a distance between you and the child. If there is already space then do not close it. If you seem to be too close then back up.

The second is not to hold the child as your focus. Work with others around you and let the child watch. If the child feels they are not your focus of attention, and that you will not close the gap, they may begin to relax. Just accept the fact the child has a phobia and be prepared to move on.

## ***Face Painting Class***

Anita Neal conducted a face painting class during the July 15th meeting. She began with information on products and materials. The next focus was on brushes their design and use. Members used their arms to practice on as she worked through different brush strokes.



Stencils were also demonstrated and a few worked with them. Each table had materials for members to work with. The meeting was well attended and many got their hands on face paint products that have never worked with them before.

Thank you Anita for a very good presentation.

## ***Responding to the Members Requests***

The face painting class, as well as others on our program calendar for the year stem from our membership. Members ask about different activities and the leadership tries to put together programs to meet those interests.

The programs in August are no exception. The first meeting, August 6th will be on skits. The goal is to teach two that evening. One will be a single person skit and the other a group skit. The skits will be demonstrated, taught and then members will have a chance to perform them.

As an added bonus, after the skit presentations the group skit will be taught once again. This time it will be taught as a single person skit. So those attending will leave armed with three skits to work with. The single, the group and the group done as one person.

Our schedule of programs is listed in the July issue of Grease Paint. If you missed it you can view it on the website: [qcclowns.com](http://qcclowns.com). Just click on the Grease Paint tab and then open the July issue. NOTE: when you are finished use the back arrow to return to the site. If you click the X it will close the browser.

If you have an interest that is not on our schedule, please email [topperhtc@yahoo.com](mailto:topperhtc@yahoo.com). We will see if we can add your suggestion to our calendar.

## ***Beginning Balloons:***

August 19th will be a special balloons presentation. There was a very successful deaf magician in our area named Ricky Roway. He worked many festivals and expo's. He used a sign that listed all the balloons he would make. Kids pointed to the one they wanted and he made it. He kept his line moving and was recognized as a very good balloon artist.

As clowns, we start with a few basic balloons. But when we try to do them in public we often get buried. You may only be able to do five or six different sculptures. But there is always those in line that keep asking for more than you know how to do. August 19th will address that problem.

A series of 10 different simple one-balloon sculptures will be taught. A sample sign will be on hand for you to view. This presentation will get you started if you want to set up to do balloons at an event. Of course the more experience you have the more sculptures you will be able to make. However, this class is targeted to get you started.

Brian will provide the balloons. You need to bring a balloon pump, if you have one. Unlike previous classes where the balloons were pre-blown, you will inflate the balloon. You need to learn this approach from start to finish. That means blow it up, twist it and present it. Be sure to bring something you can take notes with. If you wish to use your cell phone to record you are welcome to.

The balloons being taught are:

dog, mouse, rabbit, elephant, sword, pirate sword, turtle, swan, parrot in a ring, Indian hat and a flying mouse.

You may come up with others that you are able to do. If so, make a note and be sure to add them to your sign.

Two problems come up as you work. The first is the child that is not sure what he/she wants. The second is a child that wants a specific color balloon. Brian will address both these concerns. They are very easy to work with and handling the requests simple.

If you wanted to do balloons but were afraid of being drowned in requests for sculptures you cannot make this is the class to attend. The balloon will be demonstrated, and taught. The listing is flexible. If you cannot do one of the sculptures that is ok. You simple adjust your list to what works best for you.

## ***Clown Troupe Garage Sale***

Start gathering up your old props, accessories and other stuff. The clown troupe is planning a garage sale during the September 3rd meeting. The program that evening will focus on senior care facility clowning. But we will also have time for the sale.

This is an individual/optional event. If you have items you no longer, use or need, this would be a good time to sell them. Any items you sell and any money you collect remain with you. The troupe will not charge anything for this event. That also means that sellers/buyers are responsible for their making own change.

In the past this has proven to be a good source for clowns to pick up a few extra things at very reasonable prices. There have even been times when items were traded and no money exchanged. This event is an opportunity to clean out that closet.

Do not discount these garage sales. Brian picked up a simple kids magic trick for \$2.00. He added a few things and built it into a nice magic routine. He has performed the routine many times and the props are aged to the point no one else has them. That translates into a unique routine that no one can duplicate. Oh, did I mention he has been offered as much as \$100 for it? Of course he didn't sell.

Start now to collect those items you plan to sell that evening. Some of our new clowns might be interested in costume materials you may wish to sell. Of course you are not required to sell. If you wish just bring items for people to take if they need them, that is fine also.

A reminder will be mailed out as the event draws near.





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