

MIDWEST CLOWN ASSOCIATION PRESENTS:

# 3-Ring News

Volume II, Issue 1

January 31, 2019

## HEAR YE! HEAR YE! READ ALL ABOUT IT!!

*Important Changes YOU Need to Know!!*



### NO...YOU DID NOT DREAM IT!!

Due to some changes at our Host Hotel, the dates for the 2019 Round-Up were changed to **October 8-13, 2019**. Same location and same alley hosts.

So, mark your calendars with our new dates: **OCTOBER 8-13, 2019;**

and make plans to join Sneezel and the rest of your clown friends for a great time of fun and fellowship!

Registration rates increase March 1st, so get your registrations in today!

Get ready to live the "Disney Dream" and join us Oct. 8-13, 2019 in Grand Rapids, Michigan! You don't wanna miss it!!



### Disney Dreams

2019 46th Annual Midwest Clown Association Round-Up Conference



### DON'T MISS IT!!!

Our MCA Spring Meeting date was changed by an online vote of Alley Representatives! Join us on **Saturday, May 4, 2019** at 9:00 a.m. at the Crowne Plaza Grand Rapids-Airport, 5700 East 28th Street SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546, in Salon E/F.

*(The board will meet at 8:30am)*

There is a block of rooms set aside at the hotel at the Round-Up discounted rate of \$89/night. Call now to reserve your room:

616-957-1770.

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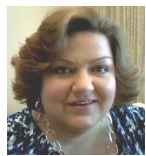
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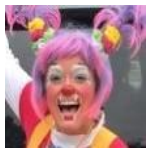
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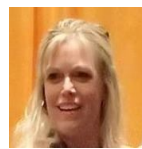
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**APPLICATIONS DUE  
MARCH 1, 2019**

Midwest Clown Association strives to recognize and reward not only those individuals who compete and win at conventions; but also those individuals, living and deceased, who have contributed time, effort and dedication to the Midwest Clown Association and the clowning profession in general. Since this is an MCA

award, special attention is paid to those persons who promote clowning at the local level in the midwest, and particularly with regard to the MCA in its perpetuation and growth. If you have someone you wish to nominate for this award, please check our website for all the requirements and forms needed to submit a name, and get them in to our LAA Chair John Joseph (contact information on page 2) NO LATER than March 1, 2019.



**DUES ARE  
OVERDUE**

Make sure to get your 2019 alley dues paid in time to have a representative vote at the Spring meeting!! Mail your alley's \$50 dues to:

**Midwest Clown Association  
Wayne Rongholt, Treasurer  
7719 34th Avenue  
Kenosha, WI 53142**

Questions? Contact Wayne:  
262-694-6143  
[jrongholt03@yahoo.com](mailto:jrongholt03@yahoo.com)



The MCA Hall of Fame Award recognizes those individuals in the Midwest who excel in competitions. For more information on Hall of Fame eligibility or requirements, contact Chair Sandi Christie (contact information on page 2) or visit our website. We have one application in so far for 2019...will you be joining them? Check your points and get your application in!! Deadline for application is **May 1st**.

**HAVE A PROPOSAL FOR  
CONSIDERATION?**

If you have a proposal you wish to present at the Spring Meeting for a vote, please forward that proposal/motion to the board at least 60 days before the Spring Meeting (by March 3, 2019), so that we can circulate it to the alleys for discussion with their members in order to take an official vote at that meeting.



# A Blueprint for Creating Skits

## Making Your Own Masterpiece

By Brian “Gunky” Waltman

(with contributions by Patti “Jazzi” Ummel, Darryn “Harvey” Chupp, and Lori “Lorelei” Jacobs)

I’ve had a few people come up and ask how my clown group comes up with the ideas for our skits. I am humbled and honored that people want to know where we get the ideas. The truth of the matter is: It comes from an *immense* amount of work: research, collaboration, writing, rewriting and practice. There you go, that’s the secret!!! Boy, that was a quick article! All kidding aside, but all of that is true! However, let’s break it down a little for those who want to dig a little deeper.

### RESEARCH

How do we come up with the basic premise? Try reading some clown skit books. Barry DeChant wrote some good ones, I also was fortunate enough to stumble onto a couple written by the last Chicago Bozo- Joey D’auria. There are many written resources, sometimes you have to dig a little to find them.

In addition to books, always look for ideas in your own life experiences. Often some of the most frustrating events in our lives can be made into a clown skit. Some quick examples: a trip through airport security, on the plane or going to a restaurant with troublesome wait staff. Sometimes even wonderful events like nervous new parents bringing a child home for the first time, can also provide joy and humor. Think about the parents trying to overly childproof the house to the point that the parents themselves can’t accomplish the simplest of tasks. Events like these can be fraught with antagonism & humor...take a step back and see them for what they are: clown skits in real life.

One of my favorite ways to research is to watch DVDs of Lucille Ball, Sid Caesar, Dick Van Dyke, Carol Burnett, SNL, Laurel & Hardy, Chaplin and Red Skelton, not to mention all the Youtube videos of Mr. Bean, clown and vaudeville routines. There is a treasure trove of funny material you can simply watch to get ideas.

Here is my warning: it is tempting to copy what they do! DON’T COPY it verbatim! Study it, find a small bit or gag in the routine you like.... But resist the easy way out to copy it word for word or action for action.

Here’s why: Those legendary routines are memorable to everyone!

If you try to do the *I Love Lucy* chocolate factory routine, chances are: you’re not going to measure up. Don’t get me wrong, YOU ARE A GREAT CLOWN, but you are NOT LUCY! She put her own style and rubber face into that routine. So, find small moments, -like when she stuffed the chocolate in her mouth, or wiped it all into her hat -that you like and build a routine around it using YOUR OWN CHARACTER. Maybe your clown is a bank teller and uses the same techniques trying to hide coins or money when a bank robber enters the scene. That is just a quick example of how you can change the scene, change the character, use the idea and still make it your own.

A quick side note: Lucy’s Vitameatavegamin routine is a spin off of Red Skelton’s Guzzlers Gin routine. Watch both of them, they are similar, yet different. Red coached Lucy when she was working up that routine. They are both comedy gold.

### COLLABORATE & WRITE

Next Collaborate. Find a friend and start bouncing ideas off each other. Write those Ideas down. Sketch them out. Meet regularly, review your previous ideas and strive for new ones. Walk through the physical comedy parts. Write out those thoughts, movements, prop ideas and concepts. Set your funny bits in a setting that is appropriate for your character....or not. Maybe put your character in a scene in which they don’t belong....put a SCUBA diver in a funeral home...but give him a reason to be there. Let your mind wander. This is the writing stage. JOT DOWN ALL OF THOSE IDEAS!!! Some will pan out, some won’t.

As you were tossing around ideas to your friend, ask yourself....were WE laughing as we talked about that concept or gag? Chances are: if you weren’t then your audience won’t either. [BTW, those ideas that you decide don’t work... don’t throw them out completely....keep them! They might make sense as a future concept or bit; they might not be right for this particular skit--I have a google drive with many partial skit ideas]

(continued on next page)

# Creating Skits (continued)

Ok, we are flying through this! You have your funny bits, you have your scenario and you have your dialogue (if needed) and you've written it all down.

## PRACTICE

Now the fun begins! PRACTICE IT! Walk through it with your script and rough props--actually walk thru the actions keeping in mind the audience sight lines and viewing angles. Pay attention to how you face the audience and how will they see the props and funny movements you've created.

Here is my *magic key*: VIDEO TAPE all of the practice sessions!! Record it, then watch it from the audience perspective. Can they see the subtle movement? Are your props, actions and reactions big enough to see from the back of the room? Does it fit in the time frame you need? Will it work for a show or will it work for competition time constraints?

If you can, edit the video and take out the boring parts or parts that take too long to develop or don't make sense. Sometimes during practice, you might accidentally stumble onto a funny bit or movement that you can include in the final skit. If you record your practices, you will have captured that moment on video so you can include it in your final script.

A word about props! **TEST your props**. Here's why: If you are using soap for pies or soap gag, or if your prop is abused during the skit, how long will the props hold up before they are no longer useful. Will it hold together for multiple performances? These are things you *need* to know before you start performing. You will also want to be prepared in case you need to create a set of backup props, should anything unfortunate happened to the ones you will be using during the performance.

This is also a good time to find background music for the skit and mix it in with the edited practice video so you can see how it will look and sound during a performance.

## CRITIQUE & REWRITE

Once you have rehearsed the skit a few times, It may prove wise to have someone from the "outside" (some "non-clown" family or friend), view it and give their feedback to see if they "got it" or not.

Then ask why or why not, AND **IF** it was funny?

Be open to this critique, as this is what will make you better. Try not to get your feelings hurt; feedback is a fantastic tool to help you grow in your clown performances. You don't have to change anything if you don't want; but listen to what people have to say. If several trusted observers say the same thing; consider changing it to make it better. In general, people want to see you succeed; therefore, their feedback will be heartfelt and meant to encourage you so you can perform at your best.

## FINAL RUNTHROUGH

Once you have it all together, runthrough it a again WITH PROPS & MUSIC and watch it.

RECORD THIS FINAL RUN-THROUGH!

This is THE FINAL template for your skit!. Of course, during a live performance, you may discover other funny gems which will become part of the routine in the future. This one last runthrough is the measuring stick which you can refer back to in later years *or* if you are going to perform this routine with a different partner.

(Bonus: it also provides some nice video if you are ever asked for an audition reel)

The biggest thing to remember is: you are CRAFTING an *experience* for your audience.

If you think about it, your skit is really a work of art. Much like a beautiful sculpture, it means you have to build and then carefully chisel away at your skit until it is refined enough to include in your show or competition.

I am looking forward to seeing what you come up with, **YOU are the next Rembrandt... of Skits!**

# 2019 Midwest Clown Association --- 46<sup>th</sup> 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



*When registered at the hotel with “MCA-Disney Dreams” you will receive a **FREE BREAKFAST***

Questions: Call Hazel Ovanin at 248-431-5794

NOTE: Any special needs **MUST** be made to Mark Ovanin **No later than July 8, 2019.**

Mark Ovanin: 248-431-5768

October 7 2018 - February 28, 2019 - \$150.00

March 1, 2018 - August 31, 2019 - \$165.00

September 1, 2018 and at the door - \$175.00

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Clown Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Meal Choice: \_\_\_\_\_ Meat \_\_\_\_\_ Vegetarian \_\_\_\_\_ Gluten Free

**Make checks payable to: “Midwest Clown Association”**

Send Check or Money Order to: **Mark Ovanin**, 4830 Fox Creek East #117, Clarkston, MI 48346

No Refunds after September 8, 2019

Returned checks will be assessed a fee of \$45.00



Look for our 2019 Mascot

“SNEEZEL”

**Special Guest:  
Sean Carlock**



## STEP RIGHT UP! DON'T BE SHY! NOW'S YOUR TIME TO SHINE!

The chance to HOST A MIDWEST CLOWN ASSOCIATION ROUND-UP is up for grabs!! Sound a little scary? We've got you covered! We have a handy-dandy convention handbook with lots of checklists to keep you on top of everything. We have a board and committee

chairs committed to fulfilling their duties, as well as leading, guiding, and helping you however we can. We're HERE TO HELP!!

If you have ever considered hosting, now is the time to STEP UP! We would love to have the 2020 Host and Location secured before the



2019 Round-Up! Contact Chief Joey Mark Ovanin (contact info page 2) for more information or with any questions.

## Program Book Advertising Rates

### Pricing for regular inside pages:

- Full Page (7.5" x 10") - \$100.00
- Half Page (3.5" x 10") - \$75.00 or Half Page (7.5" x 5") - \$75.00
- Quarter Page (3.5" x 5") - \$50.00
- Eighth Page (Business Card Size) - \$35.00

### Special Pricing for the Covers:

- Back Cover (Outside) - \$200.00
- Back Cover (Inside) - \$150.00
- Front Cover (Inside) - \$150.00

- ★ All ads must be camera ready or a set-up fee of \$30 will be charged.
- ★ All ads must be postmarked by September 1, 2019
- ★ Returned checks will be assessed a fee of \$45



**Make checks payable to: "Midwest Clown Association"**

Send Check or Money Order to:

**Mark Ovanin, 4830 Fox Creek East #117, Clarkston, MI 48346**

No Refunds after September 8, 2019

Questions:

Hazel Ovanin: 248-431-5794

Mark Ovanin: 248-431-5768

Email: [2019MCARoundup@gmail.com](mailto:2019MCARoundup@gmail.com)



The Midwest Clown Association is one of the oldest organized clown associations in the country. The MCA serves the educational needs of clowns and alleys in a 7-state region, including Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin. Each fall, one of our member alleys serves as host for a five-day convention, called the "Round-Up," where clowns from all over the Midwest (and some from outside the Midwest) gather to learn, educate, compete, share, socialize, energize, and promote the art of clowning. The 3-Ring News is now the official newsletter of the Midwest Clown Association and all rights and responsibilities belong to the organization.



**Visit our Website at:**  
[www.midwestclownassociation.org](http://www.midwestclownassociation.org)

For questions about the 3-Ring News, to submit an article, or to submit other information for publication, please contact the editor, Angie Gonzalez, at [angela.gonzalez@indy.gov](mailto:angela.gonzalez@indy.gov) or 317-840-1583. See below for submission deadlines.

**IMPORTANT DATES**

March 1, 2019—Round-Up Registration Rate increases  
 March 1, 2019—Lifetime Achievement Nominations Due  
 May 1, 2019—Hall of Fame Applications Due  
 May 4, 2019—MCA Spring Meeting 10:00a.m. (Grand Rapids)  
 Sept. 1, 2019—2nd Round-Up Registration Rate increase  
 Oct. 8-13, 2019—46th Annual MCA Round-Up (Grand Rapids)

**3-RING NEWS UPCOMING DEADLINES**

ISSUE DATE	DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS
March 29, 2019	March 22, 2019
May 31, 2019	May 24, 2019
July 26, 2019	July 19, 2019
September 27, 2019	September 20, 2019
November 22, 2019	November 15, 2019

**IF UNDELIVERABLE, PLEASE RETURN TO:**

Midwest Clown Association  
 c/o Angela Gonzalez  
 8419 Bermuda Drive  
 Indianapolis, IN 46219

Place Postage Here

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**Midwest Clown Association**