



3-Ring News

Volume IV, Issue 2

February 28, 2021

Indianapolis Restrictions Relax as Vaccinations Increase



Following the announcements that both World Clown Association (WCA) and Clowns of America International (COAI) have decided to hold virtual conferences for 2021, your MCA board and 2021 host alley are keeping a close eye on the lingering effects of the pandemic here in Indianapolis, our 2021 Round-Up city.

The roll-out of the vaccine has not remedied all of the fears about the virus or provided as immediate a relief as most of us had hoped for. However, we are making strides, and hopefully, 2021 will soon have

us returning to some semblance of “normal” (whatever that new normal turns out to be).

I know that this has been a challenging year for both alleys and individuals, as it is hard to engage in our unique art form with social distancing restrictions. This means funds are low for many of our alleys and also for those of us who rely on our clowning income for our livelihood. Many of you who perform as Santa, Mrs. Claus or elf characters, in addition to your clowning gigs, also suffered during this holiday season with cancelled bookings.

Here in Indianapolis, Covid cases are down substantially and most of our healthcare workers, elderly citizens and first responders have had their vaccine injections, with teachers and other public workers next in line before the general public. Capacity restrictions have been lessened considerably, and most stores and restaurants are open again, operating with regular hours, and at 50-75% capacity, with restrictions being further lifted in time for March Madness hitting the Circle City this weekend. We are on track for being fully open again within the next two

months, so that we can make an informed decision with alley representatives at the May meeting. Right now, we are still on track to hold the October Round-Up as planned, and will keep you updated as decisions are made. So, stay tuned as we keep you up-to-date on any new developments.

My son Warner, a UPS driver, shows off one of the first boxes of the vaccine to reach Indianapolis. ➔



ONLINE SPRING MEETING
SATURDAY, MAY 1, 2021
9:00 a.m. EST

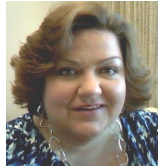


Inside this issue:

Board/Committee Contacts	2
2021 Round-Up Registration	3
“The Pivot” Article	4-5
2021 Round-Up Highlights	6
Spring Meeting Information	7
Sunshine Corner/Alley Dues	7
How to Grow our Members	7
Deadlines/Resources	8



CONTACT INFORMATION FOR MCA BOARD MEMBERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS



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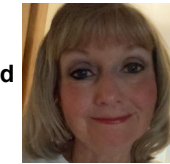


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NO PHOTO
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AT THIS TIME

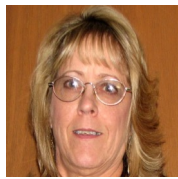
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AT THIS TIME



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2021 Midwest Clown Association 47th Annual Round-Up October 13-17, 2021; Indianapolis, IN



Questions? Call or E-Mail Angie "Q.T. Pie" Gonzalez (317-840-1583; angela.gonzalez@indy.gov) or Lynda "Kremepuff" Hayhurst (219-743-5278; haylyn2004@yahoo.com)

2021 Midwest Clown Association Round-Up Registration
(Separate registration must accompany each individual registering)

Name _____ Check here if you're a Jr. Joey

Clown Name _____

Address (include City, State, Zip) _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____ First Time at an MCA Round-Up?
 Yes No

Alley Affiliation (if applicable) _____

Banquet Meal Options
 Meat Vegetarian Gluten-Free



REGISTER TODAY!!

FULL REGISTRATION*:

EARLY BIRD til Oct. 30, 2020: \$145.00
 Nov. 1, 2020-Feb. 28, 2021—\$155.00
 Mar. 1, 2021-Aug. 31, 2021: \$165.00
 Sept. 1, 2021 and at the door: \$175.00

(*Full registration covers all classes, theme party, lifetime achievement luncheon, awards banquet, competitions and access to dealer's room.)

ONE DAY REGISTRATION: \$45.00 (does not include any meal tickets)

EXTRA MEAL TICKETS: Theme Party—\$25; Lifetime Achievement Luncheon —\$35; Awards Banquet—\$45

**FEATURING: Nicole
"Maggie the Clown"
Portwood
(Ringling Bros, Disney, Six**



Make checks payable to:
MCA 2021 Round Up**

Mail to: Lynda Hayhurst
23 Aster Street
Dyer, IN 46311

***Returned Checks will be assessed a fee of \$45.00.
No Refunds after September 5, 2021.*

Make your hotel reservation directly:

INDIANAPOLIS MARRIOTT EAST
7202 E. 21st Street
Indianapolis, IN 46219
Phone: (317) 352-1231

(\$109.00 per night plus applicable fees and taxes.)



Hotel rooms must be reserved before Sept. 1, 2021 to get the discounted rate. Mention MCA for discount.

*****Any special needs must be made known to the Registrar 60 days prior to the start of the Round-Up.**

YOU CAN MAKE RESERVATIONS ONLINE WITH THE \$109 RATE AT THE FOLLOWING LINK:

<https://www.marriott.com/event-reservations/reservation-link.mi?id=1606923250987&key=GRP&app=resvlink>

“THE PIVOT”...Pandemic Survival of an Entertainer

By Patti “Jazzi” Ummel

Wow! I can't believe it's been over a year now since the Covid-19 world pandemic was thrust upon us...and even though there currently is a vaccine being distributed, it is still causing our lives to change in many different ways! I like to think of the pandemic like this...that we are all in the same storm, just a different boat! No truer words were spoken! The entire world has been affected, but for each of us in our own, very specific, very personal, way.

As for me, I am a full-time entertainer. Yep...need I say more? I am not an “essential” business; I am a “luxury” item. I used to take great pride in the fact that I don't have all my eggs in one basket. My entertainment spans across many different venues, starting with an educational variety show (theknowitallsshow.com) I perform with my boyfriend Scott, for school assemblies, library shows, park districts, camps, churches, corporate events, and on a whole other side of entertainment, we offer face painting/airbrushing, balloon twisting, stilt walking, DJ shows, clown shows, etc., for block parties, corporate and family picnics, community events, private parties, festivals, fairs...you name it! (jazzientertainment.com) And you know what I found out? My enter-

tainment company, Jazzi Entertainment, is not pandemic-proof. It didn't matter that I was versatile in my entertainment. There is one com-



among everything I do...and that is I need people; groups of people that come together for an event. If I don't have that, I don't have work. There was a lot to start processing about that last statement very quickly. I think I went through the seven emotional stages of grief:

1. shock/disbelief; this can't really be happening!!!
2. denial; nope, this isn't happening. This will not, and can not affect me.
3. bargaining; ok, well if I can perform, I'll just be safe, keep my 6' apart and sanitize everything.
4. guilt; I can't perform and be with others...what if I get Covid, or spread it to others?
5. anger; I am so mad that Covid has taken my livelihood! What am I going to do? How am I going to make ends meet? This has stripped me of everything I do and everything I love!
6. depression; I can't do anything. I can't go anywhere. I can't perform and do my job. I have nothing to look forward to. Am I going to need to look for work?
7. acceptance/hope; I have to keep positive, as I am a positive person! I cannot let this keep me down...that's not who I am! I can't let Covid get the best of me. I am better than that. I just have to think, be creative and understand that even though this is happening to us, I can't feel sorry for myself. I have the power to change what I can do!

...and that's exactly what I did! I changed my business. I “pivoted”...like many other thousands of people. I knew I couldn't rely on performing for events, because there were no events happening; no gatherings of any kind. So what does one do?

Well, I'll tell ya! There were many balloon twisters that “pivoted” into balloon decor...including me. I jumped on that bandwagon and I am happy I did! Now I've done some limited decor; balloon columns, arches, table centerpieces, etc. But nothing on the scale of what I am doing now. My business has added “Jazz It Up! Yard Party Balloons” to my services. I'm sure you've all seen the balloons decorating someone's lawn to celebrate a birthday, anniversary, graduation, Mother's/Father's Day, and any holiday that comes up. And the nice part of that is that there is no-contact needed.



So it is a “pandemic-friendly” service I can provide, that not only brings joy and fun to others; but also to me! It also is a source of income for me, which is needed. Not only do I provide outdoor yard art balloons, but I make indoor balloon marques and balloon bouquets. I've made balloons to decorate cars for drive-by birthday “celebrations”, and for a senior

“THE PIVOT”...Pandemic Survival of an Entertainer

By Patti “Jazzi” Ummel (CONTINUED)

graduation parade in my hometown. I make ‘candy cups’

and drop them off at businesses, for birthdays and holidays. I’ve made bottle buddy balloons for my aunt to give to her neighbors at Christmas-time when she took it upon herself to be the secret neighborhood Elf! The skies the limit as to what people might want a balloon for...and it makes me so happy to be able to bring a joy into their lives! It’s a win-win! And guess what I’ve learned from this? That there is always room to grow!

I have expanded my business in a new direction, and the investment I made building up my inventory so I can do this type of decor, will just be an addition

to my already existing business! It won’t be going away...even when we are able to work events again. I also learned to have more faith in myself and to always be open to new thoughts and ideas. So, now...let’s keep this positive energy flowing! Let me introduce to you, my next balloon endeavor! They are called “Balloon Buddies”! They are



Bottle Buddies!



adorable, lovable creative balloons that I make for our seniors! Jazzi Entertainment has joined the nationwide campaign among balloon professionals of #AdoptAGrandparent. I partner with local care facilities to distribute a “Balloon Buddy” to every senior in their center. The idea is to spread Joy, Hope and Love to the seniors in nursing homes, assisted living and care facilities to show them that they are not forgotten and are loved! Giving back to our seniors not only lift up their spirits, but will lift yours up too! I arrange with the facility to get sponsors for every resident they have. Once I have enough donations to supply each resident with their own “Buddy”, I then make them and deliver them to my contact at the facility. They pass them out to their residents...and see all the



smiles! These balloon buddies have a way of brightening up anyone’s day! The last one I delivered to, was a senior home that our church’s youth group are very involved with. Usually the kids get to go in and visit with the seniors, hand out their homemade cards and donuts, etc. However, they haven’t been there for over a year, and I thought it would be a great idea to get the



youth group involved in helping me make the “Balloon Buddies” for the seniors...even though they couldn’t be there in person to deliver them. It was a huge success...both in the outpouring of kids that



were there to help us, to the seniors on the receiving end! I was overwhelmed by the whole process...especially to see some of the seniors through the glass windows receiving their “Balloon Buddies” waving and blowing kisses to us! And even though they had masks on, I knew they were smiling...and they knew I was smiling right back at them too!





THE “BUZZ” CONTINUES FOR THE 2021 MCA ROUND-UP!

Turns out that “Don’t Stop BEE-lievin’!” is an appropriate theme for this year’s Annual Round-Up Conference. It has been a difficult year, and way too many have lost hope and are starting to give up. But MCA members are known for their perseverance and finding ways around obstacles!! If you haven’t registered, you don’t wanna miss out on our featured instructor (see below) and all the other fun activities we have planned! Our 2021 Host committee consists of members from Indiana alleys Joyful Joeys 4 Jesus, Calumet Clowns, and Winner’s Circle Alley. See below for some exciting plans already in the works!

Exciting New and Returning Features for our 2021 MCA Round-Up in Indianapolis

- ☺ Pre-Round-Up Online Judges’ Certification Training
- ☺ Special Performance by our Featured Instructor, Maggie the Clown (see right)
- ☺ “Don’t Stop Bee-lievin’!” THEME PARTY on Wednesday evening hosted by Jesters, Jokers and Joeys Alley (John “Luther” and Luan “Lu-Cee” Hanewall and Wayne “Wink” and Joleen “Tiddly” Rongholt)
- ☺ Competitions in Make-Up; Alley, Single and Group Skits; Single and Group Paradeability, Face Painting and Balloons
- ☺ Special Outreach visit to local Nursing Home
- ☺ Friday Lifetime Achievement Award Luncheon honoring new (and pending) inductees
- ☺ Junior Joey Program and Showcase (pending registrants)
- ☺ First-time attendees Welcome/Mentoring program
- ☺ Special coupons and discounts for local venues and attractions

REGISTER TODAY ONLINE or by MAIL

A FULL Registration covers entrance to all classes, three meal tickets (Theme Party, Lifetime Achievement Luncheon, and Awards Banquet), eligibility to compete, complete access to the Dealer’s Room, and a goodie bag with lots of freebies! One day registrations can be purchased for \$45 per day (no meal tickets included, but additional meal tickets can be purchased). SEE PAGE 3 for more information and registration form. You can register by mail or register and pay online.



Nicole “Maggie the Clown” Portwood, our 2021 Round-Up Featured Performer/Lecturer, has over 30 years of clowning, at more than 4,000 events, both nationally and internationally, under her belt. A graduate of Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Clown College, Maggie spent four years with “The Greatest Show on Earth.” She has clowned with Disneyland, Disney World, Circus World, Six Flags, and International Clown Festival (India); as well as for companies such as Frito-Lay, Denny’s, March of Dimes, Goddard Schools and Krispy Kreme Donuts, just to name a few. She has served as an instructor at Clown Camp, World Clown Association, Clowns of America International, Northeast Clown Institute and All Things Clown. For more information about our 2021 guest, check out her website here: www.maggietheclown.com/



If you have alley members who are ill, hospitalized, have lost a loved one, or otherwise need a few extra thoughts and prayers coming their way; send their name and address along to the Sunshine Committee Chair and 3-Ring News Editor.

Sunshine Chair: Ruth "Poppyseed" Scheeringa, 5527 West 41st Avenue, Gary, IN 46408 (219) 616-9230
ruthkaluf@aol.com

We have had several MCA long-time attenders/members pass last year or experience the loss of a spouse. Watch for LAST WALKAROUND tributes in the next 3-Ring News.

Jane "Dotty" Swiggum
2204 14th Ave
Monroe, WI 53566
(husband Dennis passed away)

Former MCA Chief Joey Barb Porath passed away in December. If anyone has family contact information, please share.

Janet "Jelly Bean" Tucker
6334 New Hampshire
Hammond, IN 46323
(husband Larry "SloPoke" Tucker's passing)

Kathy "Noodles" Cottrell
12745 Lee Court
Elm Grove WI 53122
(husband passed away)

Bob "Sir Gibbs" Koepel
10537 Forest Lane
Chicago Ridge, IL 60415
(passed away April 2020)

HOW DO WE GROW OUR NUMBERS??



Let's face it: we were already dwindling in numbers BEFORE Covid-19 reared its ugly head. The pandemic has just exacerbated the problem, with members being discouraged and the lack of gigs and activities making it next to impossible to attract new members.

How can the MCA help local alleys increase their membership, thereby increasing alley participation and attendance at Round-Ups?

Here's where you come in! Does your alley offer annual/bi-annual classes in clowning? Do you individually teach clowning through a community organization, such as 4-H?

I would like to form a small committee to explore what MCA can do to help our alleys recover from the pandemic and grow again. If you'd be willing to participate in this effort, please let Chief Joey Gonzalez know of your interest.



Make sure to get your 2021 alley dues paid in time to have a representative vote at the Spring meeting!! You can find the dues information flyer online, can pay online by locating the Membership Page for MCA, or mail your alley's \$50 dues to:

Midwest Clown Association
Peggy Walker, Treasurer
5700 52nd Avenue
Kenosha, WI 53144

Questions? Contact Peggy: (262) 577-5251;
clownpepper@aol.com



Our **SPRING MEETING** will be held on Saturday, May 1st, beginning at 9:30 a.m. This meeting will be an **ONLINE** meeting. We will be using **ZOOM** technology to facilitate this meeting. If you are not familiar with Zoom, visit their tutorial page to see how it operates: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/206618765-Zoom-Video-Tutorials>. Prior to the Spring meeting, all alley representatives will receive an invitation to the meeting via e-mail, with a ses-

sion ID number and other instructions to help you connect to the meeting. We will also provide some protocols for the meeting, such as how voting will occur, how speakers are acknowledged/identified, etc. We are encouraging alleys to gather together in a common meeting place and "attend" the meeting together, where possible. It will allow alley members to confer amongst themselves in side conversations, as necessary, and then cast votes as one entity. It might also be helpful to alley members who maybe are not tech savvy or do not have a good internet connection. If you know of other individuals interested in "attending" the meeting who are not associated with an alley, but live in the 7-state region, please let Chief Joey Gonzalez know to send them an invite (or you can pass along the information to them yourself). Our hope is that offering this meeting online will encourage more members to "attend."



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

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 or 317-840-1583. See below for submission deadlines.

IMPORTANT DATES

March 1, 2021—Lifetime Achievement Nominations Due
March 1, 2021—Round-Up Registration Rate increases
May 1, 2021—Hall of Fame Applications Due
May 1, 2021—MCA Spring Meeting —Indianapolis, IN
Sept. 1, 2021—Round-Up Registration Rate increases
Oct. 13-17, 2021—47th Annual MCA Round-Up—Indpls.

3-RING NEWS UPCOMING DEADLINES

ISSUE DATE	DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS
March 26, 2021	March 18, 2021
April 30, 2021	April 22, 2021
May 28, 2021	May 20, 2021
June 25, 2021	June 17, 2021
July 30, 2021	July 22, 2021
August 27, 2021	August 29, 2021

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