Eight Years of Memories
By Julene Carberry

With 8 years of memories to sort thru I pulled out my Clown Camp notebooks to help me but even then my first year of camp is still a blur.

There was no first-timers meeting to help prepare me for the week ahead. I probably was going around camp with my mouth hanging open. I was in shock and in heaven at the same time. I had not known there was this clown education world. Learning never stopped. At meals, between classes, late late at night and yes even in the bathrooms we were learning. I was awed by the performances of the staff. They were the best. Surely they knew everything about clowning but yet, I was surprised to see those same teachers attending classes too. Everything I ever wanted to know about clowning was there for me to learn. My brain was crammed with so much knowledge but I knew I had not learned even half of everything so I returned to Camp the next year and the next and the next...

Thru the years I often saw teachers going "the extra mile". Like one year about 11 o'clock at night I had gone down to the basement of Hutch to do laundry. Dave Mitchell was down there helping one woman with the box of magic props she had brought to camp. I joined the little group and listened and watched while Dave would show her how to do each trick and then gave different ideas for possible routines. My laundry was done around 12:30 a.m. Dave was still there helping.

Another year I had taken a beginning yo-yo class with Terry Davolt. Class ended but we wanted to learn more so Terry offered to have a "class" after open mike that night. Our mini-class started out in the hallway of Whitney but moved to the dark outdoors where under the parking lot lights we practiced shooting the moon and round the world and more.

It was Tuesday, photo day and everyone was in the dorm putting on makeup when a tornado warning was issued and a voice on the intercom instructed us to go to the basement. I grabbed my makeup kit and mirror and went downstairs. In the laundry room I found I wasn't the only one with that idea. Makeup kits were everywhere.

Leaning against the washers, the sinks, the counters; clowns were calmly putting on their makeup.

A memory that stands out for me was one of the staff on stage. It was on a Thursday morning and many of the campers were half asleep. Randy Munson (Circles) was to be performing. We entered the darkened room and saw a projection screen had been pulled down and an overhead projector was in front of it. At each seat was a very serious looking sheet of paper with big letters on it saying "Lecture Notes". The sight of what greeted us changed the mood. We were expecting a fun show not a boring, serious lecture. Many people were wondering how they were going to stay awake. Some campers thought about going back to the dorm to sleep. People were sitting with their heads down on their arms on the desks. We quickly realized when Randy made his appearance that we were going to have fun. No sleeping through this class. Randy had people laughing so hard they were crying. Some were laughing and slapping the desktop. Others were laughing so hard that they were about to slid off their chairs. Our sides hurt from laughing.

Many of my memories involve the marvelous sound of laughter that I have been so fortunate to share with so many at Clown Camp® and I can hardly wait for Camp to begin. (Julene *C.T. Slicker* Carberry-Aredale, Iowa)