

Clown Clubs & Camera Clubs

By Rich Snowberg

Is your Clown Alley looking for a great fun activity that rewards both members and local amateur or semi-pro photographers?

In La Crosse, Wisconsin our local Coulee Clown Club has for many years been invited to be photo subjects for our local La Crosse Area Camera Club. This experience has been a 'win-win' one for both our clowns and the photographers. From our standpoint it provides us with opportunities to work on posing, and to create some interesting compositions with other clown members incorporating different poses. It is always a new challenge to try to come up with some props and poses that are different than ones we've previously used. Oftentimes we receive copies of some of the images that they shoot during the time we are together.

From the photographer's standpoint, they enjoy both directing the 'talent'-that's us, as well as experimenting with different lenses, exposure settings, lighting conditions and posing ideas. This fall our group received a unique opportunity. The North Central Camera Club Council met in La Crosse and they invited our group to be subject matter for their large group of photo enthusiasts. In this case they asked us to come to their conference prior to applying our makeup. They wanted opportunities to photograph us as we applied our makeup, as well as afterwards in our complete faces and costumes. It was a fun evening with over 30 photographers setting off flashes all over the room. We had both adults and children in our group. Additionally one of our members, Sharie Runde, crafted balloon sculptures for the cameras. Her full sized dress and sports cars were very popular with the photographers. Since that session I've received 2 CD's of images shot that evening, three emails containing photos as well as one or two mailed prints.

The photo on the cover of the North Central Camera Club Council's November issue is one of myself reading a copy of our WCA magazine. This image, shot, by Ken Johnson, was seen as unique to them, as the cover of the issue I'm reading also features a photo of myself. I thought it was quite interesting how Ken composed the entire cover, working the text, running in different directions all on the black background.

Check locally for a local camera club that might want to use you or your group as models. If you don't know if a camera club exists in your area, visit a local photo supply store and ask for advice in locating such a group. This is a great activity for your local club that creates a lot of interest on the part of your members. Give this idea a try, and if some great images result, ask if you can have permission to send them to our editor for consideration in future issues of Clowning Around.