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By Walter "Skeeter" Seavey, Education Director

We just completed an ISCA "Judges Seminar" in Oklahoma City. The clowns at India Temple hosted this event. They really made Oscar "Clyde" Cloutier and John "Applejack" Whipple and myself feel at home and I really want to thank Charlie Baker, J.D. Crawford and the rest of those fine Nobles for allowing us the pleasure of conducting this event.

Bill Lozon created this forum as a tool for education a few years ago. Through his skills and leadership, he developed this seminar so well that it has been sanctioned by all the major clown organizations.

We had been asked so many questions by our members prior to this seminar that we wondered if they knew what this seminar had to offer them. Here are some of the questions and our responses:

I just started clowning. Will everything be over my head? Will I learn anything?

This class is designed to start at the very basics. Although, it works its way up to some of the minute details of clowning, it is done in a way that even the most recent novice or the clown trouper can pick up on the information.

I really don't want to be a judge. I was wondering; could I use this information for competing?

YES! For the most part, the information in this seminar is delivered as if you are the clown competing. Using this method, it relates more closely to most of the people attending.

If you want to know the truth, I probably won't ever compete. What can I get from this seminar?

Plenty. There is some separation between "competition" and "working," but as time goes on you will learn the differences aren't that great. Competition is another learning tool to make the clown a better "working" clown. There are some rigid rules to follow in order to properly judge a competition that may not all apply all the time, but I don't know of a competition where I didn't pick something up that I could use when I was "working."

I have some friends that aren't Shriners. Can they attend the seminar?

Anyone is welcome to attend the seminar. Clowns from other types of clown troupes and friends, men and women alike are welcome. Many of the wives of the clowns have attended. The rules we use are the Shrine rules, of course, but all other organizations have rules so similar that the benefit is about the same.

When I finish this seminar, will I be able to go out and be a judge at any clowning event?

This course is one of the primary elements to being a qualified judge. Most people need several years as a clown with a number of competitions under their belts before striking out as a judge. I will admit there are people other than clowns that could make good judges, but they, too, need to have a long and extensive background with clowns and competition. For a list of people that have attended this seminar that are now certified juges willing to juge your competition, click here.

Who teaches at these seminars?

We use clowns with the most experience in clowning, competing, and judging to help us with these seminars. These people have a history of competing and winning in competition. For the most part, we are using the extensive array of talent available in the ISCA. That is not to say we aren't using some of the talent outside our organization, but our goal is to use our most talented and experienced nobles. They add the passion derived from one of the most important reasons we clown, our Hospitals.

If anyone is interested in hosting one of these seminars, let me know or one of the ISCA officers know. Remember, this is just one more tool we can use to make ourselves better clowns. Another tool is to come to a convention and compete.

Walter Seavy
"Skeeter"