Clown class: Learning art of making 'em laugh

By Greg Kowslaki
staff writer

Stan Tokarz decided he wanted to
be a clown, appropriately enough, at
the circus.

Nearly 40 years ago Tokarz took
his wife and daughter to the circus.
While they were watching the action,
armed clown Emmett Kelly came
through the audience doing his act of
cleaning the rall in front of the seats.
"He kept looking at my wife. Then
he just sat down on her lap," Tokarz
recealled. The happy response con"Ewer since then, I've been clowniced Tokarz to be a clown.
"Ewer since then, I've been clowning," he said, These days, Stan the
Clown, as he is known, sports an
orange wig, red Ping, Pong Ball-sized
nose, huge floppy shoes and a variety
of strange and colorful coast.

Tokarz takes his clowing seriously. He is a member of the World
Clown Association, Clowns of America and a variety of other groups. He
and assistant Caroline Brinkman
each a course of "How to be a Good
Clown" at the Orchard Ridge campuss of Oakland County Community
College. The eight-week course costs
\$150 (plus \$10 for makeup and ballows) and will teach you how to
"Exercised to run away with the
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ers and Royal Hanneford circuses. He has won numerous awards for his act.

Tokarz is not just another Bozo. He understands the philosophy of clowning. He has studied clowning at the Clown Camp at the University of Wisconsin, at Lansing Community College and at Redford High School. There are three kinds of clowns." he explained. "There are white-face clowns, who wear complete makeup so that no part of the skin shows (Remember Mikky the clown?). There are agust clowns, who wear partial makeup and there are hobe clowns, like Emmett Kelly."

Tokarz has tried all three styles, and prefers the august style. White face, with its complete makeup, doesn't let him be as expressive as he likes, he sail.

Incudentally, not all clown makeup sunnor.

doesn't let him be as expressive as he likes, he sail.

Incidentally, not all clown makeup sunique. While some clowns register their designs, Tokarz often varies his style slightly.

Makeup is critical. Tokarz often varies his style slightly.

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Makeup is critical. Tokarz often varies had around the mouth are the most important, the most expressionable. "The final design can be striking but not ghoulish. But there's more to a clown than just good looks. Tokarz's act combines music, magle, juggling and his spectally — making balloon animatomy."

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narrow."

All this helps build the clown's personality.

In fact, successful clowns project a "godlike" image. Godlike in the sense that clowns need to be a step shead of the audience, especially children.

Tokarz illustrates. "We have kid in the neighborhood who causes a lot of trouble I can look at him and say I know you've been in the more and tell him you can't [Job] a clown. They're like Santa Claus. They know when you've been had."

Most kids Tokarz entertains arrow't had. Clowning for them is a joy, he said Tokarz often performs made and plays the accordion at the latest them. Commander of the latest had a Clown of the control of the latest had. Clowning for them is a joy, he said Tokarz often performs made and plays the accordion at the Commander of the latest had a Clown on the control of the control of the Commander of the latest had a clown on the control of the Commander of the latest had a clown on the control of the Commander of the control of the Commander of the latest had been a controlled by the control of the Commander of the control of the Commander of the latest had been a controlled by the control of the Commander of the controlled by the con

Havinaria Center for handesappea kids. "There's one 12-year old boy there who is deaf. He can't hear the music but he comes over and puts his head on the accordion to feel the vibra-tions. They wanted to pull him off, but I said to leave him alone. It's





You may have said some of your college in-structors were clowns, but it's a guarantee they weren't as good as Stan, At left, Stan says too much makeup hides facial expressions, so he only goes with partial whiteface.

When the When the makeup is through, Stan slides on large red shoes over a pair of sneakers. Stan's goal is to teach clowning as the serious the serious skill it is. He is a member of the World Clown Clowin Association Clowns of Anerica and a variety of other groups. "How to Be a Good Clown" is offered at the Orchard Ridge campus of Oakland Community College. College.

When I walk away from a crowd of people and see a lot of smiles, I feel

good to get kids into the act."

At the other end of the spectrum, Tokarz performs before his favorite audence odder people. Tim 66 years old and I feel that people my age need to be entertained. "Tokarz vice shows to gursing bounes a menth He expectably enjoys playing j-dikas and other ethine favorites on his accordion. He tops off his performance.

es by cream but back to the ladies, with their jet a stacker that pro-claims. Disagonal closer. That Stat of the means Tekarra never has a detect in the said. As the state of the property of the said of people and to a said of saids. I because I because



Clowns have an obligation to play the straight and narrow while in costume, Stan says. It helps uphold the image of clowns.

WEDGWOOD 20-PIECE STONEWARE SET. \$39

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Jacobson's

police/fire calls

Listed below are some of the Farmington-area police incidents, fire calls and court cases reported during the past week

● APARTMENT FIRE
Clothing stacked too close to a water heater in a laundry room of a unit at Indian Creek, hardrinents, 22256 Indian Creek, is blamed for a tree at about 840 pm Feb. 25, that extinguished itself before Farmington fills Intelligiblers arrived, according to a fire report.

The pilot hight of the water heater caught the clothing on fire as well and year The door of the laundry room was closed and the fire apparently extinguished itself because of a Laundry come and the fire apparently extinguished itself because of a Laundry come and the fire apparently extinguished itself because of a Laundry come and £500 to contents, according to the report

cording to the report

• WINDOWS SHOT

Windows at two businesses in the Country Club Corporate Park in

Farmington Hills were shot out with a BB gan. Feb. 22-25. Damage was estimated at \$2.000 to a window at N. Allen Associates, 34348 Confts. Club Derec Damage also was continued at \$2.000 to windows at AlB Environmental, 2925a Conftry Club. Price, according to Farmington Hills police reports.

• COURT FIGHT

count Fight
Two people received to text affect
a field retupted in the parking lot of
the 47th District Court on 19 Milthe morning of Feb 23
A 23-year-old Farmington Hills
woman was tecketed for disorderly
conduct for arguing with a 39-year
old Farmington Hills man who
received a feeter for associal after
the incident
According to a Farmington Department of Public Safety report
the argument broke out between the
two after a decision in a court case
The woman was heard shouting at
the man and striking his vain with
her purse He then exited his vain and
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Phones from 10 Page 4

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