

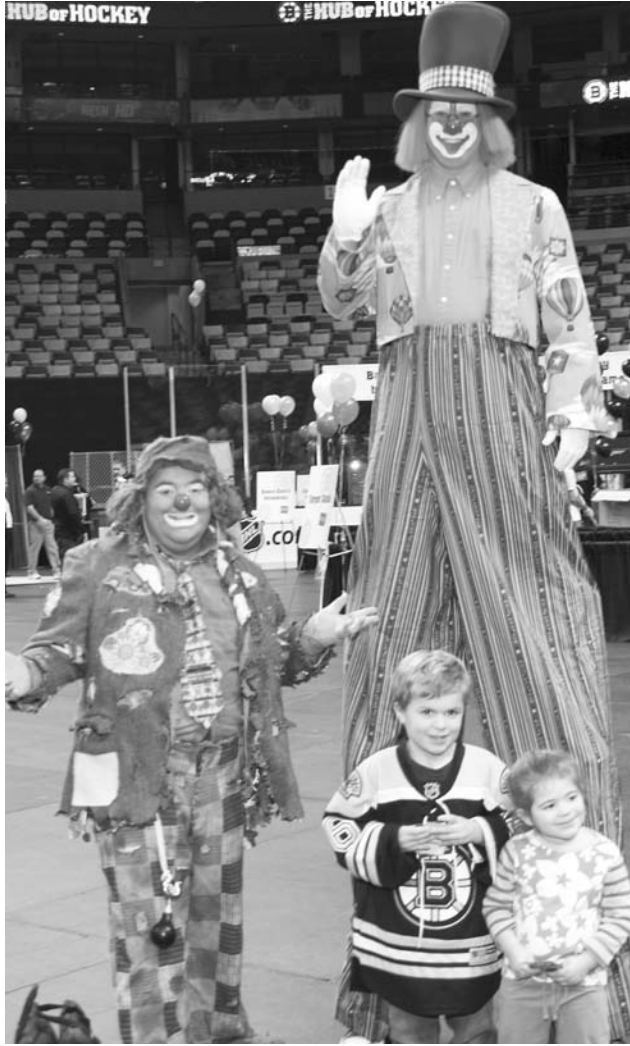
The Boston Bruins 18th Annual Wives' Charity Carnival

By DAVID "DO-NO" NEWCOMB

FOR eighteen years, the Boston Bruins have held a Charity Carnival to raise funds for local charities. Back in 1992, the event was organized to support the Shriners Hospital in Boston. That year, the Northeast Shrine Clowns Association was invited to entertain the crowds during the event and they have faithfully come back every year since. This year, it was held on January 6, 2008 at the TD Banknorth Garden. The 18th Annual Boston Bruins Wives' Charity Carnival fundraiser this year benefited the Cradles to Crayons organization. Their mission: to provide, free of charge, low-income and homeless children from birth to pre-teen the basic essentials they need to be safe, warm, ready to learn, and valued.

Each year, the Wives' Carnival has two sessions, each session lasting about three hours. Clowns from Aleppo, Kora and Anah have supported this annual event for years and this year, the Aleppo Clowns invited the clowns from Melha Shrine Temple to join in the fun, and they did. In all, 26 clowns participated in the event with Aleppo leading the way with 14.

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"A Humble Guy" Right Worshipful Ralph Kaplan

By HERMES BOYATIS

OUR wine-tasting wizard phoned from Delray Beach, Florida, resting in the warmth of the sun, while we were in the midst of nor'easters and snow. **Leon Golden**, your reporter, and virtually everyone who has sampled or purchased pinot noir or other nectars were eager to know more about **Ralph Kaplan** of Kappy's Liquors. "I'm just a humble guy," he had said. We found that to be true, very true. To make him talk about himself was like making grapes on vines rise up to become wines.

"I grew up in East Boston," he said, "and graduated from Boston English High School. Next I began studying at Boston University, but left to enlist in the U.S. Navy. For not quite three years (1943 to the end of 1945), I served as a Pharmacist's Mate."

We asked Ralph how, besides being humble, he describes himself. "I'm five foot six, have grey hair, wear glasses, weigh about 150 pounds, and try to exercise as often as I can mostly by playing golf."



RALPH KAPLAN

Before we returned to his after-Navy career, we asked about his parents. "My mother was Polish; my father, Russian. They died when I was young, and my brother died four or five years ago. My life in the past eighty-two years (I'll be eighty-three on January 25), has been filled with good times, sad times and hard work."

We returned to his education. "After my discharge from the service, I returned to B.U. and graduated with a B.A. degree in business administration." How well we know his know-how in raising money for the Children's Transportation Fund in the past four or five years!

His happiest times? "I married my beloved wife **Harriett Levine** sixty years ago in 1948. We were brought together on a blind date, a memorable meeting! We have been blessed with four daughters, four grandchildren, and a fifth is on the way. Daughter **Anne Selby** has three children; **Rosalyn** is a happy housewife; **Susan Kaplan** is a retired attorney; and daughter **Judy Mishkin** is a school teacher in Lynn." Ralph and Harriett are SO PROUD of their family album!

At last we reached our Right Worshipful's entry into Freemasonry. "I was raised in Hammatt Lodge in East Boston and served as Master there in 1954 and 1955. I became District Deputy Master probably in 1956. I'm Grand Representative to the Grand Lodge of Israel. In reverse, that Lodge is correspondent to my Lodge here. I've been to Israel twelve to fifteen times."

We pressed on, finding it difficult to pull resumés from him. Any honors, we queried? "Well, I've been Man of the Year twice for State of Israel Bonds; I was honored by the Jewish Theological School at a dinner in New York, and another at Ben Gurion University. My daughter Anne and I received tributes at a dinner in Boston; Harriett and I were honored at Cohen Hillel Jewish Day School."

Lest we forget, Ralph Kaplan became a Shriner in 1956. Among his many other memberships: Ben Gurion University in Israel; Anti-Defamation League; Cohen Hillel Society in Marblehead; and the Jewish Federation of the North Shore.

Aside from travels to the Holy Land, Harriett's and Ralph's favorite itinerary is Europe, especially Italy. It's great wine country!

There's much more, far beyond Kappy's Liquor Store! But he truly meant it when he said, "I don't like notoriety. I just want to retire to Florida, loving my wife and family, and working real hard to raise funds for the Shriners."

Right Worshipful Ralph Kaplan is like the big engine that could. He has and will continue to fulfill his goals!

The 19th Annual Northeast Clown Institute

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America. The Master classes learn skills, tricks and applications from COAI, WCA, ISCA and others in the clowning profession. The camaraderie among our attendees is one of the best parts of NCI. As such, students of this 3-Year institute come back year after year. One student, **Jappo** the Clown from Anah Shrine in Maine has come every year, 19 years in all since the first weekend in 1990. Several others, including Rollo and myself have 18 years attendance.

In addition to the classes offered at NCI, it's also common to find students and alumni set up in the lobby areas to offer their own brand of instruction. Informal balloon clinics and magic shows are happening throughout the hotel. As our people are gathered for the weekend, it's easy to find clown antics in progress in the restaurant, the lounge, the swimming pool area, hospitality suites and the main lobby, where each year we artfully enhance the lobby chandelier by shooting balloons into it. And, traditionally, there is an actual birthday party (class) held on Saturday night for all interested.

Our host hotel welcomes us every year with open arms and they accommodate our every wish and request. The staff is friendly, helpful and supportive of our philanthropy – The Sneaker Fund. Every year, the Radisson presents a check for \$1000 for the Sneaker Fund and they have done this for eleven consecutive years.

Since the beginning, the mission of the NCI has been to support Burns Research. Each year, when schedules are available, we invite the Shriners Hospital in Boston to give a talk to the students and educate them of the Shrine hospitals, and in particular, the Burns Unit in Boston. This year, we were honored to have **Bob Tibbetts**, Director of Volunteer Services and **C. Thomas D'Esmond**, Administrator of the Shriners

Hospital for Children–Boston, who spoke eloquently about the Boston hospital and the world renowned research programs that are ongoing in the Boston facility.

This year, NCI welcomed the President of the International Shrine Clowns Association, **Ken Taylor** from Missouri. Three additional ISCA senior officers from Georgia and Texas also attended. President Taylor was thrilled with the event and further promised to return next year with his wife.

The NCI is held on the third full weekend of the month every January. Registrations are limited to the first 200 and it's sold out every year. Classes are held throughout the weekend, starting midday on Friday. On Friday night, there is a buffet dinner with some form of entertainment. On Saturday, students attend classes, followed by competition and critiques. Sunday morning has entertainment, donations, auction and graduation. Further information can be found at the website, www.clowninstitute.com. Registrations for the Institute and hotel are both available only through the website. NCI begins processing the registrations in October.



Aleppo Temple's New Recorder

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Other achievements in Blue Lodge Chapters include Charter Member of Cawnacome Sunshine Lodge (1992); Master (1997); Secretary (2000). He served as Instructor of the 36th Lodge of Instruction in 1992; President of Weary Travelers Masonic Club (1995 & 1996); President of Weary Travelers Shrine Club (1999); President of the 36th Masonic Forum (1998); and President, All Cape Cod Past Masters Association (1998). His Weary Traveler friends speak highly of his taking on the hard jobs during clam bakes and lobster boils, cooking boiling, and dispensing food.

To sum up all of the above: He was raised at DeWitt Clinton Lodge in Sandwich in January 1991; Scottish Rite in May; Aleppo, in June. All this in one year! Incidentally, he is a 32nd Degree Mason, Valley of Southeastern Massachusetts in

Wareham. "In addition to being Recorder," he added, "presently I serve as secretary of Cawnacome Lodge and Secretary/Treasurer of the Weary Travelers Club in Pocasset."

In the midst of all these raising, rising talents - and he sure can keep his balance - we have watched Peter and Jeanne astride fancy steeds at our Shriners' events!

We guess that you and Jeanne don't have any time for pets. "We sure do! We have a golden retriever, Brandy, and an indoor-outdoor cat, Patches."

Hobbies? I play golf occasionally. Favorite foods? "Peanut butter and Prime rib" It would be better to call them: 'Peter Butter' and 'Prime Peter'!

Travels? "Jeanne and I love cruising. It doesn't matter where we go - mostly Shriner-related."

We're all waiting. Our Master Builder Man of Many Goals has years ahead!

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