

# ..... The Giggling Grannies

This is an email that Shobi received from Sharlene Stahl which prompted this article:

“With joy in our hearts we created the Giggling Grannies to specialize in clowning for all types of assisted living and extended healthcare facilities in our area. We cover a wide range of ages and health issues. We love what we are doing now and know that we chose the right path for ourselves. In the near future we plan on welcoming several more of our friends to join us. We truly are driven by Joy.”

The Giggling Grannies are: Sharlene *Pansy* Stahl who has Lavender Hair (see below); Claudia *Gracie* Hinkle has Yellow Hair (See photo to the right) and Teri *Jelly Bean* Dome has green hair. The three of them have been clowning together a little over three years.



Sharlene *Pansy* Stahl

## *We truly are driven by Joy*

### *From Sharlene Pansy Stahl*

Last summer we decided to create our little group and focus mainly on senior lifestyle venues. We started calling ourselves the “Giggling Grannies” because we are all grandmothers and love to clown around. *Gracie* works well with puppets, *Jelly Bean* enjoys working with balloons and *Pansy* is crazy about creative face painting. [Unfortunately the photos are in grayscale, *Pansy* has lavender hair, *Gracie* yellow and *Jelly Bean* has green hair.]

Most of the pictures I am sending were taken in the Life Care Center of Boise. It is rather difficult to take pictures in the assisted living facilities, etc. due to the HIPPA laws. These pictures provide a wide range of services including an Alzheimer’s unit. All three of us particularly enjoy working in that unit because every so often we’ll see the misty curtain in a patients’ eyes part ever so slightly and there is a spark of recognition. Wow, what a fantastic feeling. One day a sweet little lady who had been dozing

off, lifted her head, looked up at all six feet of me with my wig, bow, etc. and said in a very clear voice, “My, you ARE big aren’t you!” I was thrilled. On the other hand, I had a heck of a time while carrying my rubber chicken on a visit. A lady spotted the chicken immediately and was absolutely convinced it was her grandmother. I really had to think fast to get myself out of that predicament.

*Jelly Bean* had a very special moment when after placing a flower balloon in the hands of wheelchair bound lady in the skilled nursing unit, a nurse walked up in awe stating, “I have worked here two years and this is the first time I have seen her smile.” Another fond memory *Jelly Bean* has relates to her two carat diamond ring (two little plastic carrots hot glued onto a ring). While showing the ring to a bedridden lady, the lady became very excited and told her about a similar ring that her husband once placed in her Christmas Stocking. It really brought back a wonderful memory for the lady. On her next visit, *Jelly Bean* presented the lady with her very own two carat (carrot) ring.

In addition to senior facilities, we also enjoy participating in various community events. Last Christmas we particularly enjoyed entertaining at a Grandparents As Parents holiday party.



*Claudia Gracie Hinkle gets her hair done by Pansy*



*Teri Jelly Bean Dome*

Gracie had fun at a Sam's Club Party where a delightful gentleman kept asking her if he could take her home. His wife wisely told him, "no", but she would take a picture of them together!

When we are clowning at senior lifestyle facilities, we consider entertaining the staff every bit as important as entertaining the patients. We go everywhere from physical therapy, the beauty salon, the dining room and even administrators' offices. They seem to delight in the break from their routines. Gracie is particularly good with staff members.

Reading your newsletter has been a constant reality check for me and a source of inspiration. Thank you for reminding me of the universal nature of clowning. I am with you in spirit on all of the wonderful trips you take, the lessons you teach, and the joy you inspire. Sharlene Shal email: [SStahl186@aol.com](mailto:SStahl186@aol.com)



*Claudia Gracie Hinkle and Sharlene Pansy Stahl*