

Nowata kids clown around

High school students in Nowata, Oklahoma, have a chance to clown around with school approval thanks to the local Lions Club.

"In 1975 we were studying different kinds of make-up in speech class and two students became very interested. They put on clown make-up and did a skit. Everyone liked them so much we decided to develop a clown troupe," said teacher Linda Patton.

Each year students try out to become members of the troupe. They develop their own make-up, costumes and acts. A panel of teachers and Lions Club members selects the future clowns.

As sponsors, the Lions purchase the make-up and props, but the production is a result of the combined efforts of the students and Patton. Acts are as varied as unicyclists, magicians and jugglers and costumes run from traditional clown, scrub woman and hobo to Raggedy Ann. All of this is combined into a variety show of skits, magic acts and gymnastics for entertaining at nursing homes, classes, civic gatherings and parades.

Kevin Williams and Charley Gault agreed on what they like best about being clowns. "Parades, skits and magic tricks."

"I know it really helped me to come out of my shell," said Lynise Means, a

By Charlotte Anne Smith

former member of the troupe. "I never would have done things like that otherwise."

"Hidden behind that make-up, you can be anything," Patton added. **YA**



Members of Nowata High School clown troupe.

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