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AUGUST IS A MONTH TO LAUGH *Pataskala senior enjoys being a comedian and artist*

By Mary Anne White

Pataskala senior David Hussell doesn't limit himself when it comes to enjoying laughter. He has been enjoying life as a stand-up comedian and comic strip/cartoon artist for a few decades. His stage persona of "Uncle Hussell" recently entertained patrons at the Dafuque Beer Company on High Street in the Short North area of Columbus. The audience applauded when Hussell shared that, on that particular evening, he was celebrating the 22nd anniversary of the successful removal of a brain tumor. After his performance, he answered some questions about how his enjoyment of laughter developed into his performance as a stand-up comedian.

Senior Times: How did the character of Uncle Hussell develop?

Hussell: About a year ago, I acquired the nickname of Uncle Hussell from my co-workers. I thought the name sounded like a weirdly eccentric uncle who the family loves, in spite of his being a bit over the top and giving "noogies" to family youngsters.

Senior Times: What made you decide to venture into stand-up comedy?

Hussell: I have always seen the humorous side of things. Telling jokes was how I coped with problems or when things weren't going well. My co-workers and friends always said I should try stand-up; so, when the local Funny Bone Comedy

Club offered a workshop, I started attending. Eventually, I got enough nerve to try an open mic. The first time, I was very nervous and thought about sneak-

ing out the door; but I had invited a couple of friends and they showed up, so I couldn't sneak out. I was given 5 minutes, but I only had two minutes of material. My first joke got a little chuckle, and my second one got a big laugh.

It was like a drug that I took and was no longer nervous. At the end of the show, I came in 2nd place and won two dollars. The bug had bitten; doing stand-up is my heroin.

Senior Times: Who are some of your favorite comedians and why?

Hussell: I like different ones for different reasons. My latest fav is Jim Gaffigan, who has a direct humor. Another is Heywood

Bank, who has a spastic type of humor. I like the honey calm humor of Bill Engvall, who reminds me of a good old home boy that can tell you a story while sitting in a bar.

Growing up, some of my favorites were Tim Conway, the Smothers Brothers, and Rodney Dangerfield. I enjoyed watching old movies of Abbott and Costello; and what young man did not love the Three Stooges?

One of my fondest memories was my grandfather

taking me, when I was 5 or 6 years old, to see the Three Stooges at the county fair. I was ecstatic! It was equivalent to what I imagine I would have felt if he had taken me to see the Beatles when I was a teenager. I remember the sound effects when Moe would poke someone's eyes and the sound of a cuckoo clock when Moe got hit in the head and staggered.

Senior Times: Do you have a comedic role model?

Hussell: My top comedic role model was Charles Schultz. I loved his cartoons. A neighbor and I collected the Peanuts' books of past comics and shared them with each other. I remember reading some and laughing hysterically at some of the strips. Also, Bob Newhart and Johnny Carson come to mind. Even though I didn't do stand-up until I was in my 40s, I sometimes fantasized about going on Carson and becoming famous.

Senior Times: Did you have any training in stand-up comedy? If so, what are some of the elements involved in training?

Hussell: From time to time, a workshop will be offered at a comedy club—or sometimes even at a bar. Comedians will form a group and go up on a stage and try out their new material. Seasoned comedians will mentor newer ones and advise them on how to re-write a joke or comment on their presentation. This is good practice even for

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David Hussell, stand-up comedian and cartoonist



The Smoking Gun



One of the latest trends, Cat cafes.



Some of Hussells cartoon art

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