

## McHugh taps human comedy for his routine

<http://www.pioneerlocal.com/mundelein/entertainment/959820,dl-mchugh-052208-s1.article>)

May 22, 2008

By **DAN PEARSON** Contributor

When it comes to finding what's funny in everyday situations, Jimmy McHugh can do.

"I am living life just like everyone else," said McHugh, who returns this week to Zanies Comedy Nightclub in Vernon Hills for three nights of fun and frivolity starting with a public fundraiser on Thursday night.

"Part of what I do is observe life and a lot of it seems to be the aggravations of life where we all have a common thread," said McHugh, a Chicago Northwest Side native who has called Hoffman Estates home since 1990.

Aggravations such as a visit to the dentist, or driving a car, dining on some questionable mystery meat or supporting local sports teams that haven't won a World Series in one hundred years.

"A lot of my material is lived through and based on my life," he said. "It does get a little embellished, but a lot of times, I found that I wasn't the only one that had similar problems like that."

### **Sarcastic humorist**

The veteran entertainer, who describes himself as "a sarcastic observational humorist," will be sharing the stage Thursday with fellow Chicago Comedy All-Stars members Dobie Maxwell, Mike Preston and Patti Vasquez, who headlines at Zanies in Vernon Hills the following week.

Proceeds from this evening will go the Lake Bluff Baseball Association, the Equestrian Connection in Libertyville and their hippotherapy program for the physically challenged and Missy's Friends.org., which endows North Chicago High School students with "if I could" scholarships.

"After the fourth person has finished their individual set we may all stay on stage for another 40 minutes doing a round robin of material," said McHugh, one of the co-owners of the Chicago Comedy All-Stars.

McHugh first performed stand-up comedy in 1979 at the Comedy Cottage in Rosemont on a dare after making the mistake of telling his friends that he was funnier than the comedians performing that night in the showcase.

"And I felt I had to back it up so I went back the following week and I met comic Brian Schmidt, a guy there from my neighborhood, who took me under his wing."

At the time, McHugh was working for a Japanese-owned air freight company that operated near O'Hare Airport.

## **Incubating comedy**

"I stayed with them for 10 years incubating my comedy career at the same time," said McHugh whose day job offered unique opportunities for international travel.

"We used to do live cattle charters to Japan. We would get a 747 and it was cheaper for them to send the cattle over there live because the duty rate for live cattle was much lower than for processed cattle."

McHugh, who may be the only stand-up in Chicago with cattle wrangling experience, said the cattle couldn't be feed while on the plane because "the stewardesses had a hard time getting through the aisles."

But seriously, McHugh said that the worst part of his job as a stand-up is the travel that takes him away from his family, which includes two sports active teenagers attending Schaumburg High School.

McHugh also finds considerable material from his own interest in sports.

One of his classic baseball bits involves changing the rules to allow all infielders the option to pitch at the same time.

"If you are a batter, you have no idea where that ball is coming from," he declared. "Being a frustrated Cubs fan I was trying to figure out ways to help the Cubs. I actually think if you are a fan in the bleachers and you catch a home run ball that should be considered an out."

McHugh jokes that increasing steroid by players use could make the game of baseball more entertaining.

"As a consumer I want to see a guy hit a baseball 1,200 feet. I would like to see a guy swing so hard he actually corkscrews himself right into the ground. I would like to see a pitcher throw the ball 165 miles an hour and then watch his arm come flying off right out of the socket.

"If I am going to pay what it costs a family to go a game, I want to be entertained. Do I want to see a no hitter? No, I want see these guys swing and hit it as far as they can."

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