

VOLUME 106 • NUMBER 3

The Linking Ring

MARCH 2026



RACHEL LING GORDON

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF MAGICIANS

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Sindie Richison

13 Point West Blvd., St. Charles, MO 63301

(636) 724-2400 • FAX (636) 724-8566

office@magician.org

I.B.M. Website: www.magician.org

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5735 Joshua Point Ct., Las Vegas, NV 89120

(904) 838-9897 • simone@marrons.us

INTERNATIONAL TREASURER

Charles Arkin • carkinlaw1@aol.com

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Scott Cantrell • (423) 507-9469

Jeffrey Sobel • (850) 677-1436

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The Linking Ring

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The International Brotherhood of Magicians

EXECUTIVE EDITOR • BUSINESS MANAGER

Samuel Patrick Smith

E-mail: editor@magician.org

ASSISTANT EDITORS

Dale Salwak, Rolando Santos

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Gary R. Frank, Jason Goldberg, Scott Humston,

Chip MacGregor, Dr. Steven Schlanger, Ron Sylvester

RING REPORTS AND RING EVENTS EDITOR

Lauren Jurgensen

E-mail: ringreports@magician.org

ADVERTISING MANAGER

Dawn Hofmeister

E-mail: advertising@magician.org

WEBMASTER

Simone Marron

E-mail: webmaster@magician.org

GRAPHIC DESIGN

Jessica Friend, Matthew Sharpe, Reena Kamboj

PRODUCTION AND ART SERVICES

Tony's Studio

E-mail: tonyjadu@aol.com

OFFICIAL PHOTOGRAPHER

Michael Messing

THE LINKING RING (ISSN 0024-4023) is published monthly by the International Brotherhood of Magicians. Office of Publication, 13 Point West Blvd., St. Charles, MO, 63301, for members only. Annual dues, \$60.00, includes \$20.00 for 12 issues. PERIODICALS postage paid at St. Louis, MO and other places. ©2026 by the International Brotherhood of Magicians. All rights reserved under international and Pan-American conventions. Reproduction of THE LINKING RING magazine in whole or in part is forbidden without prior written permission. For airmail, address changes, and other official business, contact our International Executive Secretary (see above). POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE LINKING RING, 13 Point West Blvd., St. Charles, MO 63301.

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— **Michael Weber**, from his Foreword

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If you have any questions concerning the above, please contact our International Executive Secretary, Sindie Richison at office@magician.org.



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of this, the *second* of *three* magical mechanisms created by Steve Dobson, the "Dai Vernon of the Pacific Northwest." Take a peek:



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THE UNDERCOVER COPS, which is nothing less than a color-changing sandwich effect, powered by a transposition from Jennings' Visitor, built on a "cops and robbers" chassis.

And for those times when nothing else but raw deceptive power will do, Dobson designed **THE KING THING**, a simple, elegant mystery (two selections vanish from the table and appear in the deck) that leaves everyone in your rear view.

Innovators will be amazed by **FRANTIC LOCATION**, an impossible location effect with Dobson's inspired use of the Klondike shuffle gives this subtle mystery a dose of frenetic energy.

Performers will appreciate **DALEY REVISITED**, featuring new dual enhanced convincing displays, and a solid psychological sell. As a bonus, Steve adds his Triumph-based lead-in, with an insane cutting sequence in the middle.

We've included a vintage TV documentary piece called *Magic is my Business* in which Steve does magic and talks magic. Also incorporated are more interviews, in which Steve discusses the lessons he learned from Dai Vernon and Larry Jennings. And since this wouldn't be the Works without an abundance of extra features, we've included Steve's refinements on the *Erdnase color change*, the *Zarrow shuffle* and additional surprises.





From the Editor

SAMUEL PATRICK SMITH

“Before you criticize someone,” says humorist Jack Handey, “you should walk a mile in his shoes. Then when you criticize him, you’re a mile away *and* you have his shoes.”

The person we are most apt to criticize, however, is one whose shoes we’re already wearing. We all have areas of life in which we seem to be slow learners. We may ask, “How many second chances should I give myself before giving up?” The answer is simple: There’s no limit! Your goals may change, but give *yourself* a hundred chances if you have to; the only failure is in no longer trying.

Sometimes the wear and tear of life makes us want to quit, sends us into a state of dependency or depression. If you’ve slipped into this quagmire, hold on. There is always hope, even if you’re feeling hopeless. The greatest among us have had such moments.

A beautiful example is Bronson Alcott, a genius in his own right and the father of Louisa May Alcott, famous author of *Little Women*, *Little Men*, *Eight Cousins*, and other classics.

Although Alcott was brilliant, he found it difficult to earn a living, and the enterprises he attempted often ended badly.

After one particularly disillusioning failure – the collapse of the utopian community at Fruitlands and the damaging effects that communal experiment had on his family – Alcott fell into the deepest despair of his life. He took to bed and refused to eat or drink. He faced the wall, spoke not a word, and determined to die.

His loyal wife brought him meals each day. She begged, wept, reasoned, and prayed, but the next day, day after day, the tray of food was untouched.

Then an amazing thing happened. As Alcott neared the point of death, a rational, hopeful, unexpected thought slipped into his mind like a sliver of light entering a room through a crack. “My faithful wife, my little girls – they have not forsaken me, they are mine by ties that none can break. What right have I to leave them alone?”

Years later, in a passage which surely moved her to tears as she wrote it, Louisa recalled: “Too feeble to rise, [he] groped for the food that always lay within his reach; and in the darkness and solitude of that memorable night ate and drank what was to him the bread and wine of a new communion, a new dedication of heart and life to the duties that were left him when the dreams fled.

“In the early dawn, when that sad wife crept fearfully to see what change had come to the patient face on the pillow, she found it smiling at her, saw a wasted hand outstretched to her, and heard a feeble voice cry bravely, ‘Hope!’”

Alcott lived another forty-five years, raised successful children, and eventually attained a measure of financial peace. He befriended and encouraged a promising young philosopher, Henry David Thoreau, filled an enormous collection of journals with his deepest thoughts, and in his later years became the celebrity of Concord, Massachusetts. All because of that little word: hope.

Never give up, even in dark times. Give everyone, including yourself, a hundredth chance. If necessary, make it a thousand. When the first sliver of light comes in, you’ll see that it was worth it.



President's Page

STEPHEN LEVINE



The I.B.M. Board of Trustees just completed its Midyear Meeting at the site of this year's convention in St. Louis, Missouri. To say it was productive is an understatement. With only four-plus months left in my term, I would like to express gratitude to our organization for allowing me the honor to serve as your President. Each day I am thankful to work with a team of devoted, intelligent, creative, experienced, and committed individuals who are dedicated to the I.B.M. and its success. This Board is fantastic, and every individual shares a sincere desire to accomplish what is best for this organization and see it continue to prosper and grow.

I am amazed at the energy of this dynamic group and the outcomes we are accomplishing. The I.B.M. strategic plan introduced at the beginning of Mike Dunagan's term continues to serve as the roadmap for our collective efforts. The four cornerstone goals – Membership Growth, Strengthened Ring Relations, Diversified Revenue Growth, and Operational Improvement – remain the key issues of the organization and the primary focus of the executive team. Keith Fields and Lady Sarah have started the 1221 Virtual Group, which assists in membership growth through our teen members. If you have teens interested in magic, please let them know about this wonderful group which meets monthly. We have started a New Member Zoom Orientation spearheaded by Vincent Reres and Vincent La Padula.

We have continued our monthly Zoom leadership meetings with local ring leaders, interested members, and TVPs, and the meetings have been excellent. We consistently draw around thirty attendees and

we'd like to see this number grow. Please consider participating in the monthly Zoom meetings. One of the cornerstones of the I.B.M. is its members and through these Zoom calls, we can help local Rings with ideas, programming, and, most importantly, membership growth and retention. This program is an important part of our effort to provide more support and build stronger relationships with our Rings. I welcome all ideas with respect to how we can grow this program.

Johnny New York is reinvigorating the Ring Recognition program under his "Effective Ring Achievement Proposal." This is a no-cost recognition program only. We hope to recognize the first Ring recipients at this year's convention.

We have embraced social media and technology and since July, we have had four virtual lectures (so successful that we had to change our Zoom package), Ring 2100 (averaging thirty-plus members each month), *Nothing Up My Sleeve* with Michael Dardant, *The Amazing I.B.M. Podcast*, and the new five-minute web episodes with David Corsaro and Meadow Perry. All these programs are benefits of being an I.B.M. Member.

We've had great growth in our Lifetime membership program. We also had a virtual lecture by Shawn Farquhar and a Tour of Hidden Wonders in October, and we will have a virtual lecture with Keith Fields on March 3. Our new website is spectacular (thank you to Eric Schuster and the web team!) and is growing daily with new merchandise, new publications, lecture videos, and so much more. If you haven't explored the website yet, you're missing out.

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Pictures from the Past

THE LINKING RING



In 1947, Tom Osborne became the first magician in the United States to have his own weekly television show featuring magic. His programs on Philadelphia's WFIL-TV were called *Magic Made Easy* and *Black Magic*, inspiring other magicians throughout the country to promote a similar concept. Tom was a well-versed performer. He could step into the spotlight and become the emcee or featured performer for almost any type of event. He was considered by laymen, friends, and fellow magicians to be the consummate performer. To learn more, turn to page 145.



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RACHEL LING GORDON

From Mute to Magic

By Jason Goldberg

Perhaps you saw Rachel Ling Gordon at the last I.B.M. Convention: a polished thirteen-year-old performing her personal story deck and card manipulation in front of not just any audience, but an audience of magicians – perhaps one of the hardest crowds to impress. Her charisma and voice wowed the crowd!

You may not have known it at the time, but Rachel is also an experienced singer, actress, voiceover artist, pianist, and runway model. She has even toured with the national production of Broadway's *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* as Cindy Lou Who.

These are impressive credentials for any performer, much less a young teen. What's even more surprising is that just a few years ago, Rachel essentially had no voice – but magic helped give her one.

We have all experienced shyness at some time in our lives. For many of us, it's the momentary discomfort of arriving at a party where we don't know many people, or the butterflies that accompany us when we perform. Usually, it's something that passes, or at least something we can work

through. But what if you were unable to talk all the time?

When shyness becomes more than a minor inconvenience, it can affect the quality of one's life. Such was the case



Multi-talented performer Rachel Ling Gordon wows audiences of all ages.



Rachel performing on Penn & Teller: Fool Us, where she became the youngest magician in the show's history and earned a standing ovation. "We have seen the future of magic, and its name is Rachel Ling Gordon," Penn Jillette said.

for Rachel. Now a very vocal teen living in New York with her parents and brother, she has a lot to say. But it wasn't always that way. She was diagnosed with selective mutism when she was two and a half years old. Not talking with others outside of the home, especially for a child learning to socialize, can be painful.

"I could talk with my family at home. But I couldn't talk with anyone outside the house and was paralyzed with fear and anxiety. I couldn't even look people in the eye," Rachel said. "You'd think I was just a normal kid, but at recess I would always hang alone in the corner. Other kids would ask me why I wasn't talking. The words got stuck in my mouth. I felt down on myself and completely shut down."

In addition to the treatments and support she received, magic became an unexpected part of Rachel's road to recovery. "There was a magic club at my preschool. It really sparked me," she said. "I was also inspired by Penn & Teller and the other magicians I was watching on television. I started taking it seriously when I was eight. I found books and videos for kids





Rachel's journey with selective mutism inspired her to become an ambassador for the Selective Mutism Association and SMart Center, where she performs at summer treatment camps and participates on parent panels to raise awareness and show families there's hope.

and started practicing. I felt amazing and in a different world.”

Like many performers, Rachel learned early on the importance of personalizing her magic. “I wanted to make my tricks unique and to make them my own.” As her skills evolved, so did her magic library, where she singles out Jeff McBride’s *The Show Doctor* as a favorite. While many people in the performing arts choose one skill, Rachel has developed an impressive repertoire of theatrical talents. Even with all her other abilities, magic continues to hold a special place for her. “You can do so many things with magic. Like it would be so cool to be playing piano and singing while performing magic.”

When it comes to choosing a magic style, Rachel has honed an interest in stage magic, both for watching and performing. She especially likes props she has never seen before. It’s hard for her to pick a favorite performer, but she really likes Mat Franco for his stage presence and connection with the audience. She also enjoys tracing the lineage of legacy and inspiration that connects Randy Pitchford of the Cardini Family to Jeff McBride, then to Mat Franco, and now to herself.

Rachel performs wherever she can. As a full-time student, it can be challenging to balance school and performance but she

is already building an impressive magic résumé. Notable performances include the 2025 I.B.M. Convention, *The Today Show*, Pix11 News, the Blackpool Convention (virtually), Universal Studios for *The Bad Guys 2*, nursing homes, YMCA centers, her father’s medical practice, and even her school lunch table.



The torch of legacy, inspiration, and magic carried from Randy Pitchford of the Cardini Family to Jeff McBride, then to Mat Franco and now to Rachel Ling Gordon.



Rachel performing at Carnegie Hall during the Annual Youth Music Competition. An experienced pianist, she hopes to someday combine music, juggling, and magic in her performances.

Given magic's importance to her journey with selective mutism, Rachel is already using her talent to give back. In the sixth grade, her English teacher Tom Pesce – who is also a magician – worked with her on magic and ventriloquism. He invited her to perform live at Mohonk Mountain House, as well as volunteer as a guest performer at an event hosted by Win-Win Charity, an organization that arranges in-person and virtual visits by entertainers for children in hospitals. Her show continues to be available via streaming on demand for patients.

Rachel is very active as an ambassador for the Selective Mutism Association (SMA), a nonprofit organization that provides free resources and support for individuals with selective mutism and their families. She is also an ambassador for the SMart Center, which specializes in the treatment of selective mutism. At the time she was diagnosed, the disorder was still not well known, and it took time for her parents and physicians to identify her condition. Once they had the diagnosis in hand, the resources, strategies, and therapies she needed became clearer.

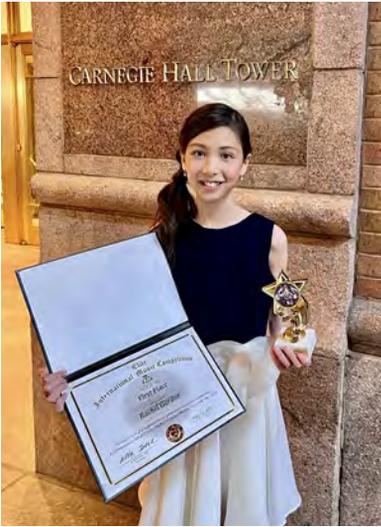
Rachel and her family are on a mission to bring awareness to selective mutism, which is often mistaken for shyness. As an ambassador for SMA and the

SMart Center, Rachel performs regularly at summer treatment camps for kids and families struggling with selective mutism. "I want people to know that anything is possible," she said. "I've had kids speak a few little words with excitement when I perform, and it brings me so much joy that they respond to my magic."

Rachel also participates on parent panels, where she shares what it felt like growing up with selective mutism and what helped her along the way. She also sings and performs for families to show there's light ahead for their children. Rachel speaks with pride about her journey.

"A lot of parents were in tears. It's remarkable to see how much I've changed with early intervention. I went from not speaking anywhere in public to getting on stage for an audience of five thousand people. But it wasn't overnight, it was a five-year process with a village of people that helped me throughout."

That audience of five thousand came during Rachel's first major break with the Broadway National Tour of *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*. "It was an open casting call, so there was nothing to lose," she said. "My parents put me into acting classes as part of my therapy, and while I still couldn't speak up, I was able to sing



Rachel has performed everywhere from Carnegie Hall (where she won a first-place award as a piano soloist) to nursing homes.

in public. My anxiety still made it difficult but I really wanted to do it. I felt really excited when I heard about it.”

Reflecting on the experience, Rachel notes how her relationship with performing has evolved. “Magic helped me find my own voice. At first, I wanted to be someone else and act like another character. But over time, I came back to being myself. I had to be in a different role before I could find myself. Now, as a magician, I want to

be with the audience. I don’t need to fool them. I just want them to enjoy my show and have an extraordinary experience. Being myself is really important. It makes people connect with me as a real person rather than seeing me as just an act. One of the songs I love to sing is “This Is Me.””

She credits Jeff McBride as her esteemed mentor. “My mom found him when I started regressing during Covid,” Rachel said. “I was having trouble speak-



Walking the runway as a young model, one of several performance skills in her repertoire.



Performing at the 2025 I.B.M. Convention, where she wowed the audience of magicians with her card manipulation. “I felt like a different person, like I could fly,” Rachel said of the experience.

ing with friends and teachers on Zoom. That’s when I really started working on magic. It helped me break the ice and perform for my friends.”

While Jeff usually works only with adults, Rachel impressed him with her talents, and he took her on as his youngest student after just one class. “He has such genius ideas and he brings out the best in me. He’s also super fun to work with,” she said.

Jeff has helped her refine her performances and given her real insight when it comes to buying every new trick that

catches her attention – a lesson many magicians can appreciate. Even so, Rachel continues to develop new ideas.

“I would love to explore mentalism. Even though I love stage magic, Jeff helped me explore coin magic and other close-up routines too,” she said. “And of course, I love cards.”

Jeff is highly complimentary of Rachel’s skills. “When I think of Rachel, I think of her ability to be a storyteller,” he said. “Her ability to tell her story and inspire people is remarkable for someone at her age. It’s a combination of her theatrical



Magic helped Rachel find her voice, so now she shares it with audiences wherever she can.

training – she’s one of the most talented young magicians, which is because she has movement, musical training, and more. It’s made a huge difference in her ability to express her message. Her work ethic is also extraordinary. When I give her a task to work on a routine, she will work on it and immediately send me the video. This work ethic of hers in getting feedback and willingness has made a real difference in her evolution as a performer and allowing her magic to move forward.”

Rachel also met David Copperfield during a visit to Las Vegas, where he gave her a personal tour of his museum. One of the highlights was standing inside Houdini’s library. David Copperfield says of Rachel, “A rising star who inspires us all with her magic and extraordinary talents. I’m excited to watch her shine!” He also motivated Rachel to continue his Project Magic work, taking the use of magic in therapy for patients to the next level.

In February 2024, Rachel became the youngest magician to perform on *Penn & Teller: Fool Us*. Her routine, featuring Crazy Dots and a quick change with a surprise twist, earned a standing ovation. Penn Jillette proclaimed, “We have seen the future of magic, and its name is Rachel Ling Gordon.”

Rachel was already a fan of the show, and was thrilled to be invited to audition. “The experience was a dream come true,” she said. “It was beyond amazing and even more special to have the episode named ‘The Youngest [Magician] in *Fool Us* History.’ When I was on stage, I remember taking my bows.”

She has many unforgettable memories. “I had incredible moments on tour. I did thirty shows around the country. In Vegas, I remember seeing all the rows of people at the Smith Center ... they were just in awe,” Rachel said, though some moments are more personal. “Recently, I performed a Torn and Restored Heart for my piano teacher. It was one of the first times I’d performed it, and her face just lit up. I



With David Copperfield, who gave her a personal tour of his museum in Las Vegas. Copperfield has called her “a rising star who inspires us all with her magic and extraordinary talents.”

think she’ll remember it forever. I know I will.”

She also treasures her work as an ambassador for SMA and the SMart Center. “It’s so meaningful to perform for kids who share the same struggles I once did,” Rachel said. “It reminded me of where I came from. But when they get excited, they can say a few words. Just hearing ‘black’ or ‘red’ during a card trick is incredible. It also gets the counselors and parents really surprised.”

Dr. Lisa Kovac, executive director for the SMA, said, “We are incredibly proud of Rachel and the dedication she has shown in overcoming selective mutism. Her magic continues to inspire, and at the SMA, we are deeply grateful for her ongoing support in raising awareness of selective mutism and empowering others to overcome this anxiety disorder. Her magic isn’t just about illusion – it reflects her courage, strength, and the hard work behind every step of her journey.”

Of course, Rachel still faces challenges. “When I do magic for kids, it can be difficult,” she said. “Once I did a sponge ball trick, they formed a line and they just kept coming. When I perform at school, they bring their friends, but I can’t repeat the same trick again and again. Sometimes I



As one of the youngest member of the world famous Magic Castle Academy of Magical Arts Junior Society in Hollywood, Rachel shared, “I want to inspire parents and kids to never give up and to chase their dreams.”

have to encourage my friends to just enjoy the magic and not take it too seriously.”

Balancing her busy school life and professional career also takes effort. “I try to make time for everything when I come home,” Rachel said. “I do my homework, work on my auditions, and then practice five-ball juggling. I would also practice

piano and magic every day, too. I love to keep improving all my skills.”

Now that she has found her voice, Rachel is enjoying exploring her long-term goals. “I would love to combine all my talents and skills. It would be amazing to blend music, juggling, and magic,” she said.

She also loves sports and adventure. She does track, soccer, and tennis at school, and enjoys ziplining, rock climbing, and surfing. She is also constantly trying to fool her brother, Jared, who has a knack for figuring out her tricks.

When asked for advice on working with others who have selective mutism, Rachel offers an important reflection. “What really worked for me was finding my passion. My passion was performing and magic. That gave me confidence and distracted me from my anxiety. Discover what you love and pursue your passion.”

Rachel encourages others to take chances. “When I was at the I.B.M. Convention, I felt like a different person, like I could fly,” she said. “Getting to



Behind the scenes of The Today Show with David Kwong.



“What really worked for me was finding my passion,” Rachel said. “My passion was performing and magic. That gave me confidence and distracted me from my anxiety. Discover what you love and pursue your passion.”

know other magicians has been the most incredible experience. Don't be afraid to take risks and put yourself out there. What's the worst that could happen? Taking chances can change your life.

“I've outgrown my selective mutism, but therapy at a young age helped me come out of my shell. Anxiety is still part of who I am, but I've learned strategies to manage



Rachel poses in front of her Tommy Hilfiger campaign.

it. I use my passion for performing to calm my nerves and build confidence. I want to inspire parents and kids not to give up and to chase their dreams. It took a lot of work for me to overcome this. It takes time, but there's hope. I found my voice and you can, too.”

More about Rachel Ling Gordon can be found at www.rachelingordon.com. More information about selective mutism is available at www.selectivemutism.org and www.selectivemutismcenter.org.

Jason Goldberg is an associate editor for The Linking Ring and volunteers as a magician and balloon twister at a local hospital.

Doves Are a Tricky Business

By Dan Stapleton

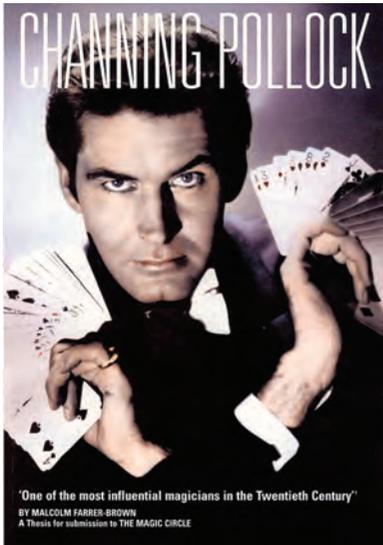
Legend has it that magician Channing Pollock (1926–2006) performed his famous seven-minute dove act with seven doves and seven decks of cards for seven years. Two out of three isn't bad: he did use seven doves and usually seven decks, but the act lasted fifteen years, not seven.

Most magic historians agree that Channing's name was synonymous with doves and playing cards. He changed the magic world forever with his lovely, unsurpassed act, which broke with tradition and earned him bookings at some of the world's most exclusive nightclub venues. The out-of-print biography *Channing Pollock*, by Malcolm Farrer-Brown, is a good resource about his life and work. This article is less of a biography and more of an overview of the way Channing and other magicians (including myself) have used doves in their magic acts.

Yes, manipulating “pasteboards” – also known as playing cards – was a huge part of Channing's act, but it was those beautiful birds that made the audience members *ooh* and *aah* as each one appeared from a silk scarf and then, as the orchestra hit a crescendo, vanished all at once.



Channing Pollock performs at the Hollywood Palace in 1966.



The cover of Malcolm Farrer-Brown's Channing Pollock biography.

In the late 1940s, Channing and his wife (who also served as his stage assistant) toured from town to town in a car pulling a small trailer. Caring for the doves was challenging, especially in winter and when performing abroad, where finding proper food wasn't always easy. But the doves became his “bread and butter,” creating a spectacular show that allowed him to survive the booming nightclub circuit of the postwar era. He treated them as family, understanding that the health of his birds was as important as his own.

After serving in the United States Navy, Channing, originally from Sacramento, enrolled in the prestigious Chavez Course of Magic in Los Angeles. He was a fastidious student, practicing his craft five days a

week for five hours a day, and even more at home. The idea of using birds came to him one day when he was visiting a farm. He was there to find a rabbit for his act, but after seeing a pigeon, he saw an opportunity to do something different.

Doves, he realized, were smaller than rabbits. That meant he could hide even more doves and create a truly audacious act.

“What I found out doing shows around my hometown was that the doves got more reaction and more applause than all my hard manipulation – the back palming and split fans [of playing cards], and the Billiard Ball and Cigarette [manipulation],” he said during an interview with Lance Burton at MAGIC Live! In 2001. “So it stuck in the back of my mind that something animated seems to draw more attention than my hard-earned manipulation.”

Channing’s big break came after appearing on Ed Sullivan’s wildly popular television show. His magic career took off, but he never forgot where he began: performing at strip joints, burlesque clubs, even a Chinese restaurant. His struggles seemed endless in the beginning but he was diligent in his quest to succeed.

As a seasoned traveling “dove-worker” myself, I can imagine the difficulties Channing endured while traveling with birds from one country to another, including many stops at customs and immigration. I dealt with similar challenges while performing aboard cruise ships. One time before I flew back to the United States, I had to slip the Jamaican “bird inspector” 50 dollars so I could speed up the process and access my plane. For me, the most difficult country to enter was Canada, where a bird flu had broken out in the late 1990s. As a result, birds had to be put in quarantine before entering the country. This spurred me to restructure my act by leaving my doves at home and replacing them with a non-fowl substitute whenever I performed abroad.

I’m sure the laws were less strict during Channing’s time. As he became more popular, improved modes of transportation provided more room to comfortably travel with his doves. His wife was equally knowledgeable about the doves. She understood not only

their importance to her and her husband’s livelihood, but also genuinely cared for their safety and wellbeing. The couple slept in the same room as their caged birds, which meant looking after them was their first and last duty each day. Like other magicians, Channing trained each dove through repetition, rehearsing the same motions until each dove mastered its particular trick.

In 2016, I managed to borrow ten doves from four different owners on behalf of the famous Japanese magician Shimada, so he could perform with them at a convention I and Ben Mason produced in Florida. He tagged each dove’s leg with a tiny piece of tape when rehearsing so he could remember the particular task each dove had. After many hours of rehearsing over two days, each bird executed its respective trick masterfully, earning Shimada a five-minute standing ovation from the audience.

Channing and his birds were a catalyst for many imitators to come. By the 1970s, well after Pollock had retired his act in the mid-1960s, it seemed that every magic convention was including at least one or more dove act. Some magic convention reviewers went so far as to describe the shows as “doves, doves, and more doves.”

It was only a few years ago that I retired my bird act, after nearly fifty years of performing with various doves. When flying from Florida to New York to board my first cruise ship in 1982, I was only performing with two doves, Mo and Zart. Not wanting to deal with all the red tape required to allow the birds to fly with me, I had two “dove pockets” sewn into my jacket and stored them inside, then wore it on the three-and-a-half-hour flight. I fell asleep on the plane, not realizing one of the doves had escaped its pocket and was perched on the headrest of my seat, staring at the passengers behind me. Luckily, the couple didn’t alert the flight attendant. They just tapped me on the shoulder and pointed at my feathered friend. I responded by putting my forefinger to my lips and mouthed, “Shhh,” then wrapped the dove in a white

handkerchief before gently placing it back in my pocket. Well, that must have been a story for the books when the couple returned home!

When I presented a lecture on Channing Pollock at the 2023 Florida Magic History Conference, an interesting question arose. Did he ever color-dye any of his birds?

The answer is no: he only used pure white Java doves. But soon after Channing had become a sensation, another young magician from Chicago, Ron Urban, appeared on the scene with different-colored doves. The unusual birds – and the fact that Urban performed while ice skating – made his act, *Fantasy in Color*, stand out.

Of course, even the best-trained animals can have a bad day. Unfortunately for Pollock, there was one occasion when his bird didn't end up where it was supposed to after vanishing. And wouldn't you know it, that moment was being filmed for television. Fortunately, the camera was at an angle from which the viewer couldn't really see the un-vanished dove. Most viewers never realized what happened.

In 1974 I was dating actress Delta Burke, who later starred in the television show *Designing Women*. Through Delta's contacts, she helped me book an appearance on the popular children's program *The Bozo Show*. Some magicians, including me, would trim the birds' feathers so they could fit into tighter spaces but also to prevent them from flying away. During a performance, one of my doves took flight to the ceiling where the studio's lighting equipment – caked with years of dust – hung from battens. That dove spent the rest of my act walking back and forth, disturbing the dust and making it look like snow was falling. The studio received several phone calls from viewers who wanted to know if there was a technical issue with their television sets or if it was just the broadcast. Ugh.

In the early 1960s, Channing's career

expanded to include European cinema. With his dashing good looks reminiscent of 1930s and 1940s swashbuckling adventurers, he landed several motion picture roles, sometimes incorporating dove magic into his performances. Back in the U.S., he appeared in several television shows, incorporating his doves into scenes on *Bonanza*, *Daniel Boone*, and *The Beverly Hillbillies* rather than performing them as a traditional magic act.

When Channing passed in 2006 at age seventy-nine, he was venerated as one of magic's finest – a living legend whose influence endures. Future dove magicians followed in his footsteps, including Lance Burton, Shimada, James Dimmare, and Joseph Gabriel.

While other magicians had performed with birds before Pollock, none matched his sophisticated presentation and stage presence in producing those beautiful, majestic birds of beauty.



Dan Stapleton in 1979.

A version of this article was published in the December 2025 issue of the American Dove Association magazine, *DoveLine*.

BOBBY WHO?

By Dr. Steven Schlanger

For their fourteenth annual Society of American Magicians dinner, 293 members and guests gathered on May 31, 1918, at the Hotel McAlpin in New York City. President Harry Houdini planned the event to be something special, a party equal to the level of his fame. “We want a big affair. I want this to be worthy of the Society,” he said. “It is the only time in the year we have the opportunity of meeting our friends and so many out-of-town members with their families.”

From the location to the talent, Houdini and his planning committees pulled out all the stops. The hotel was practically brand new, designed by Frank Mills Andrews in the Italian Renaissance style. It was the world’s largest hotel at the time, able to accommodate 2,500 guests, and rising twenty-five stories above Herald Square. It boasted innovations that included separate floors for women, a Turkish bath, a pool, and even a hospital. There were two ornate ballrooms and an in-house orchestra. It was everything Houdini hoped for, an elegant setting, perfect for the tuxedo-and-gown-attired magicians and guests. Houdini’s meticulous planning even included the design of the menus. Copies of woodcuts taken from the 1635 edition of *Hocus Pocus Junior* adorned the front and back covers.

In Houdini’s words, “Fashion, society, and beauty graced the occasion.” Among the guests of honor were Adelaide Herrmann, the Martinkas (who announced their retirement to the crowd), and L. Abrams, New York City’s District Attorney. Harry Kellar was invited but could not attend and Nate Leipzig sent a telegram to honor the gathering.

1918 was an event-filled year both in magic and the world beyond. In the spring Houdini completed a nineteen-week billing at the Hippodrome, performing his celebrated Vanishing

Elephant illusion. It was a time often referred to as the “Golden Age of Magic,” with Howard Thurston, Harry Kellar, and Alexander Herrmann among many amazing audiences far and wide. Sadly, it was also the year that William Robinson, better known as Chung Ling Soo, was killed on stage when a prop malfunctioned during the Bullet Catch. World War I was winding down (ending officially on November 11) and a young Dr. Harlan Tarbell was entertaining troops overseas. By late fall, the Spanish flu was beginning its lethal spread worldwide.

Inside the hotel, the attendees enjoyed a lengthy dinner replete with speeches welcoming the assemblage and celebrating “our boys abroad.” The tradition of reading the names of those members who had passed away included what Houdini described as “a weird incident,” when a church nearby tolled its bells at that very moment. (Surely Houdini’s nemeses, the Spiritualists, would see this occurrence as proof of a life beyond the veil.) Later, when representatives from the Hippodrome were introduced, Houdini, with typical bravado, stated they were given “three mighty cheers with such gusto that the roof of the McAlpin Hotel fairly quivered with emotion.”

There was music and dancing in one of the ballrooms while the performers and the platform were readied for the evening’s entertainment. And when Houdini’s brother Hardeen finally took to the stage as the master of ceremonies, he welcomed all to this “feast of mystery.” Despite the late hour, the guests were treated to performances of ventriloquism, rings, restorations, productions, coin work, slates, sleights, memory effects and more. D.M. Roth presented his handling of the Knight’s Tour while W. A. Ransom showed his Cut and Restored Turban. Julius Dresback

performed with silk handkerchiefs and G.G. Laurens gave his version of the Nest of Boxes. The magic continued until three in the morning.

The final act was announced by Houdini himself, who explained that the last performer had a bad case of stage fright. Nonetheless this mystery magician was a member of the Houdini family and bounded to the stage upon being introduced. It was none other than Bobby Houdini, a lively fox terrier that Mrs. Houdini purchased from a butcher. To the surprised audience, Bobby seemed to be no more than your typical dog, twenty pounds of energy and excitement, until his master had five cards selected by random audience members. The cards were retrieved, returned to the deck, shuffled, and then spread face down. Under the watchful eye of Houdini, Bobby then not only identified the selected cards, but brought them individually to his master.

The attendees were impressed, but Bobby was just building up to his bravura piece. Houdini brought out a specially made set of handcuffs (pawcuffs?) that were replicas of a pair of English model Darby restraints. Bobby waited eagerly as the cuffs were secured to his forepaws. And then as one would expect, “The Only Handcuff King Dog in the World” lived up to his billing, freeing himself to the delight of one and all. In describing the performance, Houdini said Bobby “was a dog-gone hit.”

Harry took great pride in Bobby. Over their eight years together, Houdini taught Bobby how to do somersaults and escape from a specially designed straitjacket. Ropes and miniature handcuffs were no match for this clever canine. (Most dog owners would be happy if they could

just teach their dogs to stop jumping!)

Clearly, social norms have evolved over the last hundred-plus years, and while animals still perform in a variety of shows and venues, the notion of restraining an animal for the fun of an audience is neither entertaining nor ethical. In fact, it’s cruel. Still, there’s no doubt that Houdini loved Bobby as well as all of Bess and Harry’s pets. The Houdinis were unable to have children and so filled their homes with a veritable menagerie of creatures. They had a talking parrot named Laura and another named Polly (one was taught to say, “Hip, hip, hurrah, Houdini’s home”), a turtle named Petie, a canary named Houdini, Rudy the rab-



Bobby and Houdini.

bit, and prior to Bobby, a Pomeranian named Charlie, a gift from the Grand Duke of Russia.

The Houdinis loved them all, but Bobby was special. Houdini said Bobby was “unusually sagacious,” and that his precocious pup was also deeply affectionate. He was a favorite

(continued on page 61)

Fourth Annual All-Asian Week at the Magic Castle

January 12–18, 2026 • Reported by Dale Salwak

PHOTOS COURTESY OF MAGIC CASTLE, LLC | LM CAPTURED



In 2023 the first-ever Chinese Spring Festival of Magic, held January 23-29 (Year of the Rabbit) on the hallowed grounds of the Hollywood Magic Castle, was such a success that we continued the tradition January 15–21, 2024, the Year of the Dragon, featuring acts from Mainland China, Japan, South Korea, and Hong Kong; and again, 2025, in the Year of the Snake, with stellar talent from Mainland China, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Japan. This time, the Year of the Horse, brilliant magicians from Mainland China, Singapore, Hong Kong, and Japan entertained a full week.

My gratitude extends to the eleven per-

formers, most of whom came from great distances and all of whom put much heart into every show; to Beijing's Hu Jinling (winner of the National Magic Gold Award and inheritor of China's National Magic Intangible Cultural Heritage), for her help again in bringing to fruition ideas that we have been discussing since 2018; to Randy Pitchford and Erika Larsen as well as Entertainment Director Jack Goldfinger and Assistant Entertainment Director Melody Robusto for their strong support of the project; and to the members and their guests who filled the Castle to capacity every evening.

As the accompanying photos capture,

each carefully selected performer was polished and stylish – indeed, professional to their fingertips and representative of the artistry, elegance, discipline, and seeming effortlessness that we have come to expect of Asia’s rich and magical talent.

From the Palace of Mystery (Bond Lee as emcee, Akua Shin, and Yanyan Ma) to the Close-Up Gallery (Max Li, Ming Da, Ponta the Smith); from the Parlour (Fukai, Kenji Minemura) to the Peller Theater (Albert Tam, Benny Li); from the Parlour brunch (Kenji Minemura) to the Library Bar (David Yee) – their entertaining and engaging work, filled with surprises and innovations, left a deep impression on everyone. I couldn’t be prouder of them.

Bond Lee returned as emcee for the Saturday and Sunday Palace brunch shows to showcase Wu Xuehui (Layla, 16) and Yuhao Chen (Mick, 17) – exceptionally talented, creative performers with wide open futures.

With her commanding, artistic touch, Xuehui presented with confidence and elan the classic billiard balls at an advanced level – with quick color changes, four-to-one-to-four transformations, multiplying and vanishing – along with sudden card productions and vanishes and scaling, climaxing with a costume change.

Yuhao began with a mirror which magically shattered into many pieces, one of which floated up to his outstretched hand. Highly skilled productions, vanishes, and transformations followed. He then stumbled upon a strange Chinese bookcase, and his curiosity drove him to embark on a journey of exploration.

Then the boy evolved into an ancient Chinese gentleman wearing a long gown. At the end, he returned to modern times, transformed into an astronaut as his table became in a puff of smoke a five-foot tall rocketship.



*Top down:
Fukai.
Benny Li.
David Yee.
Ming Da.
Ponta the Smith.*



(clockwise): Akua Shin. • Yanyan Ma. • Yuhao Chen (Mick). • Wu Xuehui (Layla).



(l to r): Akua Shin, Yanyan Ma, Maggie Marx (Stage Manager), Bond Lee.

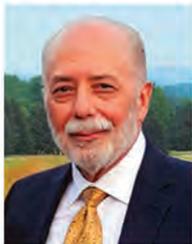
(l to r): Bond Lee, Dale Sabwak, Yanyan Ma.

By the end of the week, enthusiastic audiences had been introduced to talent they might otherwise never have had an opportunity to see. Especially exciting: once again the door had opened to younger performers who, because of their talent and hard work, had earned the opportunity to appear on the Palace of Mystery stage.

What better way to begin the Year of the Horse, associated with energy, movement, and independence? It was a refreshing start to the new year, setting a hope-filled precedence for a promising future of prosperity and good fortune as we start to plan for the next special event in 2027.

Did You Know?

By Joe Hernandez



Before Harry Houdini gained fame for his escape acts, Jack Sheppard was a renowned eighteenth-century English criminal famous for his daring prison escapes. Sheppard's exploits inspired an autobiographical "narrative" and several plays, including John Gay's 1728 *The Beggar's Opera*, which introduced Captain Macheath. Authorities, concerned about Sheppard's influence, banned plays featuring his name for forty years. His story reappeared in William Harrison Ainsworth's 1840 novel and was later adapted as Mackie Messer in Brecht and Weill's 1928 *The Threepenny Opera*. The song "Mack the Knife" was inspired by this infamous character and became an international sensation through artists such as Louis Armstrong and Bobby Darin, highlighting Sheppard's permanent impact on literature, theater, and music.

Anecdotal evidence suggests Houdini was formerly bound by Bastille irons that had held Jack Sheppard, along with cuffs that once restrained Charles Peace. The combined 131 pounds of restraints nearly matched Houdini's weight, yet he escaped in twenty-seven minutes, linking two legendary escape artists across eras.

Charles T. Aldrich is considered America's top quick-change artist. He appeared in the spectacular extravaganza *Everything* in 1918, a show that included Harry Houdini. His son, Radio Hall of Famer Charles T. Aldrich, Jr., better known as actor Gale Gordon, was the first to play Flash Gordon in the 1935 radio serial *The Amazing Interplanetary Adventures of Flash Gordon*. However, his most famous role was as Mr. Mooney on *The Lucy Show* and as the second Mr. Wilson on the American sitcom *Dennis the Menace*, succeeding Joseph Kearns after his death.

German-born Las Vegas illusionist Jan Rouven Fuechtener, age forty-one, who performed his show *The New Illusions* at the Tropicana Las Vegas, was sentenced on February 28, 2019, to twenty years in prison for having, receiving, and distributing thousands of videos and images of child sexual assault materials.

Joe Hernandez is the author of *Conjurer's Wisdom Volumes I & II*, *Magic Babylon: 1,001 Strange Conjuring Facts, Fallacies, and Tales*, *Phonetastic*, *The Foolosophy of Conjuring*, *Houdini: Reflections*, and his new book *Houdini: The Ultimate Trivia Compendium*. These books are available at www.booksbyjoe.com, magic dealers, and Amazon.



Ring Events

THE INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF MAGICIANS

Ring 5 (Dayton, Ohio) Celebrates A Magical Finale: Dayton Magic Club Celebrates the Season

The spirit of camaraderie and the wonder of illusion came together for a spectacular finish to the year as the Dayton Magic Club Ring 5 (Dayton, Ohio) hosted its final meeting of 2025. This wasn't just any monthly gathering, it was the annual Christmas Party: a night dedicated to good food, better company, and world-class magic.

Feasting and Fellowship

The evening kicked off with a warm period of socializing, allowing members and their guests to catch up on a year's worth of memories. The room was filled with the hum of conversation and the occasional "clink" of a holiday toast.

When it came time for dinner, the spread was truly a holiday feast. The Dayton Magic Club provided the centerpieces of the meal: succulent ham and roasted turkey. To complement the main course, members brought a diverse array of side dishes and drinks. However, the real showstopper of the buffet was the dessert table – a vast selection of cookies, treats, and a DMC cake that proved to be as much of a crowd-pleaser as the magic itself.

A Night of Enchantment

Once the plates were cleared, Ring 5 President Mike Bayer took the stage to host the evening's entertainment. The 2025 finale featured three performers who reminded everyone why Dayton remains a hub for magical talent:

Paul Burnham: Brought his signature style to the stage, blending skill and charm to captivate the room.



A custom cake celebrating the Dayton Magic Club's 2025 Christmas Party.

The Amazing Renzo (Larry Taylor):

Wowed the audience with his classic stage presence and mind-bending illusions.

Skilldini (Tim Wright): Closed the gap between the impossible and the real with his masterful technique and comedic timing.

The performances were a fitting tribute to the craft, leaving the audience both entertained and thoroughly amazed.

The Tradition Continues: DMC After Hours

As the official meeting drew to a close, the magic didn't stop. In what has become a cherished DMC tradition, a group of dedicated members reconvened at Archer's for the final "DMC After Hours" of 2025.

Away from the formal stage, the late-night session offered a relaxed space to celebrate the year's successes, share one last trick, and look forward to what 2026 has in store for the club. It was the perfect exclamation point in a year filled with mystery and friendship.

Mike Bayer

Ring 17 (Toronto, Ontario, Canada) Hosts Rick Holcombe Lecture

Ring 17 (Toronto, Ontario, Canada) recently hosted a lecture by Rick Holcombe. Before the lecture, April Carter showed us a trick that she uses to entertain kids at her school, asking us to adopt the mindset of ten-year-olds (which was not a stretch). A lovely red velvet bag was shown empty and then – using our collective magical efforts – a multitude of colourful handkerchiefs were produced. These were gathered with the help of Arey and returned to the bag. The handkerchiefs transformed into a long, rainbow-coloured streamer and the bag was empty. April was happy to show us this special bag, which she purchased in San Francisco at Joe Pon’s Misdirections Magic Shop. I had never seen one built like this and it was in fact a double change bag. Thank you, April, for an excellent, entertaining presentation!

Rick Holcombe started by taking a marker out of a purse that was too small to contain said marker. A coin was seemingly dropped out of the marker’s cap and then made to disappear. The marker turned into a coin and the coin back into the marker, which was then used to “draw” a coin on the palm of his hand for its reappearance.

Then with a wave, he transformed the coin into a steel ball. I was glad I sat right at the front to witness this! I could have watched this transformation on a loop for an hour. The ball changed into a coin, the coin rolled into

a ball, the ball flattened into a coin, and the coin expanded into a silver spring before turning back into a coin in a flash. This was Rick’s original routine “Recoil.”

During this fifteen-minute routine that Rick calls “Fusion,” there were many clever moments that garnered spontaneous applause from our group. It ended with all of our club members picking their jaws off the floor.

Next was a smooth Copper, Silver, Brass routine done while standing and without a table (as was the case for all of his offerings). Rick named this variation of Daryl’s “Elbow, Knee, and Neck” as “Triple Bypass.”

A phone was borrowed and the flashlight turned on. Rick then vanished three coins into the light, one at a time. He pointed the light at a person’s cupped hands and turned off the light, which triggered the coins to fall into their hands.

Arey then assisted Rick with his Copper Silver routine called “Captive Coins.” Based on David Roth’s “Fugitive Coins,” Rick’s version uses natural movements and logical handling (with no offense to Roth). In fact, Rick takes Roth’s advice to heart. Roth said it is beneficial to learn how to transition from one palm to another. Rick’s exercise follows this order: classic palm, finger palm, nowhere palm (ring finger), nowhere (middle finger), JW grip, edge grip, Downs palm, thumb palm, balance palm, back thumb clip.



(l to r): Member April Carter performs before the lecture. • Rick visits Ring 17. • Rob Fishbaum with Rick.



(l to r): James Alan performs on the show the night before the lecture at Canada's Magic Centre. • Rich Holcombe performs at Canada's Magic Centre. • Rick performs at Canada's Magic Centre. •

“Colour Blind” was next: a copper coin was sandwiched between two silver coins and, with a wave, a silver coin was suddenly between two copper coins. To end, all three coins changed into Chinese coins.

Dan Trommater helped Rick with “Cerebral Copper, Silver, Brass.” Dan named one of the coins and it transposed with the other coins in the purse.

“Gemini” was a clever routine wherein Rick demonstrated he could turn three silver coins into copper ones, then back into silver. The effect was ultra clean every step of the way.

Thank you, Rick, for coming to visit and presenting your lecture to our club. Also, thank you for the show you put on the night before the lecture, which was enjoyed by all!

If you want to be inspired by coin magic that can be done in close quarters with no



President David Peck and Rich Holcombe take a selfie.

table while standing, check out Rick’s book *Calico* and visit his website www.rickholcombemagic.com. You can subscribe to Rick Holcombe’s channel on YouTube. *David Sutherland*

Peter Wood Brings “The Right Tools for the Job” for Washington, D.C. Ring 50’s “Lecture of the Impossible” in January

Peter Wood, the Collector of the Impossible, captivated a full house of Ring 50 (Washington, D.C.) members at the January 7, 2026 meeting with a collection of routines, anecdotes, technical notes, and professional advice, much of which came from his book *The Magical Yard Sale*. Following some of his own advice to stay in his character’s lane, Wood, who styles his character as a nineteenth-century explorer (in the style of Indi-

ana Jones) who unearths magical items, presented slides on a television screen housed inside a wooden case with a speaker inside of a Renaissance Faire apparel metal box with an ornate crown.

“My general philosophy is to work hard before the show, as that means I can be more present during the show,” Wood told the crowd. The crafty Wood showed off numerous props he gimmicked himself. These



(l to r): Peter Wood speaks to Ring 50. • Peter demonstrates his Card Silk effect. • Peter’s “Wellington Switchboard” routine – in which he predicts which vintage light bulb a spectator will choose from across the room, then lights up that exact bulb – was featured on *Penn & Teller: Fool Us*.

ranged from Pop-Eyed Popper force decks to his famous innovation on the Wellington Switchboard (“Light”), one of Wood’s routines featured on *Penn & Teller: Fool Us*, in which he predicts which “old world” light bulb shape will be selected by a spectator across the room.

Wood, who has been performing magic shows since he was ten, opened with a stage and parlor card routine using items available to most magicians. The trick was a prediction effect where the crowd narrowed down its selection of a card as several members offered partial predictions (such as suit, color, and face card versus number card, followed by the exact card). Wood’s revelations involved handkerchiefs, change bags, and an appearing shovel that hit the floor with a loud clank.

Wood also showed the packed crowd a book test with a gimmicked version of Ian Fleming’s *Casino Royale* (saying he also gimmicked Jules Verne’s *Around the World in Eighty Days*, which better fits his character), an additional card routine with hand-gimmicked cards, and, of course, a

discussion of his lights. Elaborating on the genealogy of the trick that began in the twentieth century with Martin Gardner and was further innovated by Paul Bernhardt, Bill Schmeelk, and Klaus Peckhaus before Wood came along, he focused on the light bulbs’ shapes rather than colors and gave the routine a more fitting finale.

Wood, who grew up learning practical woodworking from his father, told the crowd it is important to do the hard work before the show so the show itself will be effortless, but also to continue innovating. “I am always hunting for a better way to do something,” Wood said while demonstrating some of his props.

Wood is also known as the “Collector of the Impossible” and currently takes his exhibits on the road for stage, family, and corporate shows. He finished his lecture by conveying that he is planning a “Museum of the Impossible,” an event space where the witnesses of the impossible can come to see magical exhibits. While the full museum is still a preliminary idea, the Ring 50 crowd left feeling they’d already seen a glimpse of the impossible. *Todd Eisenstadt*

Share the Magic! Invite a friend to a Ring meeting.

Dr. Lynn Miner Ring 398 (Appleton/Green Bay, Wisconsin) Annual Holiday Party

Eighteen members and spouses of the Dr. Lynn Miner Ring 398 (Appleton/Green Bay, Wisconsin) gathered at Luigi's Pizza & Pasta in Menasha on December 16, 2025 for our annual holiday party. The event began with socializing at 5 p.m. followed by dinner at 6 p.m. After an excellent meal of salad, pizza, pasta, and tiramisu, we began the ceremonial and celebratory aspects of the party.



Ring members gather at Luigi's Pizza & Pasta in Menasha, Wisconsin.

Ring President Daryl Rogers recounted the significant achievements of Ring 398 over the past year. We started the year with a new slate of officers, who meet every month to plan and strategize the Ring's operations and growth. We held both JAM (Just About Magic) and Showcase meetings every month except December, for a total of twelve JAM sessions and eleven Showcase meetings. The Ring gained three new members and its treasury has doubled!

In March, we hosted a Houdini's 151st Birthday Party celebration at the Appleton Public Library. The public event was followed by a private "members only" party at Monty's Secret Theater in Kimberly, our current meeting location. In July, Ring members performed for the first time at Kimberly PaperFest, a large local festival that attracts many visitors. We held our first potluck summer picnic in August, and in October promoted the Ring with performances at the National Railroad Museum in Green Bay.

After recounting the Ring's 2025 accomplishments, Rogers then conducted a Ceremony of Reflection. Using a modified version of the I.B.M.'s new member ritual,

members were asked to take a moment and reflect on the meaning of their membership in Ring 398 as well as the broader international organization.



Ceremony of Reflection table setting.

Then came special recognitions. First, Rogers awarded the "Magical Mom" award to Kendra Scherg for her significant contributions of delicious snacks and an amazing cake at the Houdini birthday party.



Ring President Daryl Rogers presents Kendra Scherg with the "Magical Mom" award.



Vice President Rick Morein accepts the "Guardian of Houdini's Legacy" award on behalf of Tom Boldt.

Next, local businessman Tom Boldt was recognized for his continuing support with a "Guardian of Houdini's Legacy" award, and thanked for sharing his Houdini memorabilia at the Ring's party in March. Rogers



(l to r): Secretary Kevin Koehne shares his magic and acting talents. • Tal Kuhniz asks a spiffy-looking Jason Ransom to “pick a card, any card.” • Past President Michael Schroeder shares his thoughts, both humorous and serious. • Lou Lepore uses his powers to amaze Kevin Koehne. • Ring 398’s own magic-maker, Marv Roth, demonstrates his incredible memory skills. • Monty brings some magic from Hawaii with his annual Christmas wish of “Mele Kalikimaka.” • Mike Desotell performs a mentalism routine so difficult it requires two assistants. • Rogers closes the festivities with a Merry Christmas Blendo.

personally gifted an unofficial award to Kevin Koehne who took on the position of secretary soon after joining the Ring, and he’s done a magnificent job taking meeting notes, regularly submitting Ring Reports, and cheerfully handling any other tasks requested of him.

With the ceremony over, it was time for the performances. Rogers served as emcee while seven Ring members – Koehne, Tal Kuhniz, Michael Schroeder, Lou Lepore,

Marvin Roth, Monty, and Mike Desotell – performed a variety of fun and engaging magic routines that kept everyone laughing and amazed.

As the party ended and members went their separate ways, everyone agreed it was a wonderful celebration and get-together. We’re already looking forward to doing it again after another year full of magic, friendship, and fun!

Daryl Rogers

Ring 401 (Barcelona, Spain) Annual Magic Convention Recap: Three Days of Art, Performance, and Connection



(l to r): Joshua Kenneth from Galicia, Spain. • Luchettino from Italy. • Merpin from Argentina.

The latest edition of the Annual Magic Convention, held on November 7, 8, and 9, 2025, and organized by Ring 401 (Barcelona, Spain), brought together artists, enthusiasts, and professionals from around the world for three full days of learning, performance, and camaraderie. The program was packed with activities, including four galas, special lectures, evening gatherings, and unique opportunities to interact with leading figures in contemporary magic.

The international lineup was one of the highlights of the event. Featured artists included Merpin (Argentina), Manuel Muerte (Germany), Dani DaOrtiz (Spain), and Luchettino (Italy), alongside many other performers who brought variety, personality,

and excellence to each presentation.

The carefully produced galas offered vibrant shows blending tradition and innovation. The lectures allowed attendees to delve into technique, theory, presentation, and artistic construction, fostering a constant atmosphere of learning. The evening gatherings – always highly anticipated – served as the perfect meeting point to share experiences, anecdotes, and new ideas among peers.

Once again, Ring 401’s Annual Magic Convention established itself as one of the most significant magic events on the calendar, offering three full days dedicated to celebrating illusion, talent, and the passion for magic.

Submitting Ring Events

Special activities, such as shows, banquets, conventions, or community fundraising projects sponsored by your Ring are considered Ring Events and should be e-mailed to Lauren Jurgensen at ringreports@magician.org. Type “Ring Event” as the e-mail subject.

Please note: Write-ups of your monthly Ring meetings are also to be e-mailed to Lauren Jurgensen at ringreports@magician.org.

Magic Down Under Profiles of Prominent Australian Magicians

By Kevin Casaretto

Tim Ellis

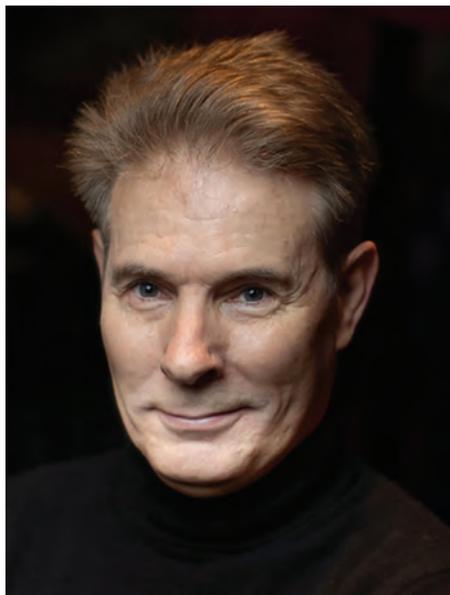
Tim Ellis was born on May 8, 1963. His love of magic and performing began at the age of nine after his grandfather gifted him a magic set. At fourteen, he became the youngest magician to be admitted into the Victorian Circle of Magic. Just two years later, he won four out of five annual awards, including the “Best Under 18 Magician of Australia” in 1980.

Ellis produced and edited one hundred issues of the magic magazine *Australian Magic Monthly*. He also wrote an ongoing column about the Australian magic scene for *Genii* magazine. In 1992, he purchased Australia’s oldest magic store, Bernard’s Magic Shop, in Melbourne. Ellis owned the shop for several years.

He has performed magic on television shows like *Good Morning Australia*, *Young Talent Time*, and *The Today Show*. In 1994, Ellis was awarded second place in “Micro Magic” at the FISM World Championship in Yokohama, Japan. This followed the Special Prize of the Jury Award he received at the 1991 FISM in Lausanne, Switzerland, for his “6 Card Rap.”

Ellis was a guest artist for the FISM Gala Close-Up Show in 2000. He was also a guest artist for the Stage Gala Show in 2003. In 2001, Ellis and his then-wife Sue-Anne Webster, a fellow Australian magician, were voted the “Most Valuable Performers” at the Fechter’s Finger Flicking Frolic in Batavia, New York.

Today, Ellis is the founder and artistic director of the Melbourne Magic Festival. He is also a consultant for another well-known Australian magician, Paul Cosentino.



Tim Ellis.



A Wonderful Tale

By Nelson Brookshire

On March 8, 2005, I attended a late-night lecture by Dr. William E. (Bill) Spooner in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, at the Winter Carnival of Magic. As Past President of the International Brotherhood of Magicians and the owner of arguably the largest collection of magic wands in the world (more than one thousand), it was not surprising that Bill's focus that evening was on wands, in particular a wand he'd developed and was marketing as "Spooner's Ultimate Coin Wand." He brilliantly shared a comprehensive history of magic wands and, following the lecture, offered his Ultimate Coin Wand for sale to those who were interested. The cost was \$75.00 for one wand and three special half-dollar coins, which Bill developed for the package.



Dr. William E. Spooner.

I was intrigued by two things: first, the fascinating lecture by one of magic's most highly decorated magicians, and second, the fact that Bill stated he had not yet developed a particular effect for his wand. Undaunted, I excitedly purchased Spooner's Ultimate Coin Wand, which Bill graciously autographed and dated for me.

Although I was a novice magician, my head started spinning as I walked back to my hotel room that night. I shared my excitement with my wife, Sue Ellen. Though the hour was late, I located a piece of paper and a pen and began writing. I can only describe that time as "inspired," because by 1:00 a.m. I had already completed a poem I call "A 'Wonderful' Tale." This poem became the foundation of one of the few magic effects I can claim as my own. Satisfied with the progress I had made, I finally drifted off to sleep. The next day I immediately began memorizing the poem and developing the accompanying "moves" I would use during a performance.

The poem relates how, while in a far distant land, I encountered a gray-whiskered wizard. He shared how he had been cursed by a witch he'd once conned. Her curse limited him to using the slender metal wand in his hand to produce only two coins each year! He demonstrated his limitations by producing only two coins. In despair, he handed me the wand and implored me to try and make a third coin appear. If this could be accomplished, he believed it could break the witch's spell. Though I questioned my ability to help, I cautiously took the wand and simply spoke the words "Sim Sala Bim!" To the surprise of us both, a third coin appeared at the end of the wand. This evidently did the trick, as the old wizard happily gave me the wand and, with the snap of his fingers, vanished! I concluded the trick by telling the audience, "I've used the wand wisely. I've used the wand well. Now here is the end of this little tale. I've offered you magic with this silver wand. Don't leave here tonight thinking you've just been conned!"

Although I was a charter member of the Dr. William E. Spooner I.B.M. Ring #392, I was just beginning to get to know Bill on a personal level. After many hours of practice and memorization, I felt the time had come to put my work to the ultimate test. I called Bill and asked if I could come to his home and share the effect I'd developed, and he graciously consented. So, in early April of 2005, my wife and I made the twenty-five-mile journey from Lenoir, North Carolina, to the resort town of Blowing Rock where Bill and his charming wife, LaRose, then resided during the spring, summer, and fall.

As expected, Bill and LaRose welcomed my wife and I enthusiastically and offered us light refreshments. I nervously asked myself if I could pull off my effect in front of the revered Bill Spooner. I had observed that Bill was a kind but direct evaluator of others' work, so I knew I would get straight answers that would be helpful in the future. Nothing ventured, nothing gained, I thought.

Once a sufficient visitation time had passed with many pleasantries exchanged, I took a deep breath and began my presentation. Despite the self-imposed pressure I felt, I was able to move smoothly through my routine. Although I felt I had done my best, I was still unsure of the impression I'd made on Bill.

Bill's first words were, "That was very well done! Even though I knew what you were doing, I could not detect anything except magic!" One can only imagine the excitement I felt from having been complimented by one of magic's most creative magicians, authors, leaders, educators, innovators, and, well, I could go on and on,



Nelson Brookshire.

but I don't think I have to explain something like this to another magician.

I later presented "A 'Wanderful' Tale" to Ring members and again was complimented by Bill when he said, "I think it is equal to any coin wand trick I've ever seen – maybe the best!"

Several years later as Bill was preparing to write a book about the history of magic wands, he asked me if he could include my effect in his book. I was very honored by this and gave him the information he would need. Unfortunately, the book did not come to fruition as health issues began to interfere.

I feel blessed to know Bill Spooner. Although his memories and health are fading, his many unique contributions to the world of magic will live on as long as there is magic. I will always be grateful to him and the memories he has given me. I'm blessed to have been able to give him "A 'Wanderful' Tale."



Get Thee Published in The Linking Ring!

The Linking Ring is always looking for new articles, including Parades with a theme, individual tricks, feature stories, biographies, historical essays, and other creative writing. If you want your work to reach as many people as possible, contact *The Linking Ring*. We have the largest circulation of any magic periodical in the world. Submit your articles or ideas to the Executive Editor at editor@magician.org,

What's in a Name?

By Murray Cooper

Juliet Capulet asked her beloved, Romeo, “What’s in a name?”

About 430 years later, and in a different hemisphere, the members of Ring 148 The Garden City Ring asked the same question. Their answer? “A lot.”

Consequently, the Ring voted unanimously for a name change to Adelaide Ring 148, in February 2025. What followed was to be no bed of roses, the process taking nine months.

The main prickly was having to find, re-format, and modernise our constitution in line with current legislation. Today, with an increased emphasis on financial regulations, our small club is subject to the same regulations as large organisations. Additionally,

our club needed to be seen to be giving all members a fair chance to be heard.

Fortunately, a draft sample was provided by the Consumer and Business Services – Associations department, and it was essentially a matter of following their template.

Member and lawyer Gary Edwards worked on the changes. Early in the process, Gary received an email from Tracey in Consumer and Business Services – Associations, the government department from which we were seeking approval. The email reminded Gary of an urgent deadline, which he was concerned he would not meet.

Amongst many duties, Gary runs a teaching programme for the department from which that email came. The afternoon of that



Members of Garden City Ring 148 Incorporated who voted to change the name to Adelaide Ring 148 Incorporated: Seated (left to right): Darren Schutz, George Stas, Drew Ames, Murray Cooper. Standing (left to right): Kevin Casaretto, Ian Riley, Steve Burford, Gary Edwards, Ari Farrell, Tom Weil, Richard Milne.

morning email, Gary noticed there was a Tracey in his class. Gary said to Tracey, “I think I received an email from you this morning.” Tracey checked and confirmed. Because of that chance, personal connection, the deadline was waived and all future correspondence was “rose-y.” Serendipity!

Many changes to our constitution did not need membership approval; they were regulated requirements. Additionally, our constitution reflected the International Brotherhood of Magician’s constitution, so we were able to show there was no conflict there.

But why a name change? Every generation has its own needs and beliefs, and in our seventieth birthday year – with significant prodding from Kevin Casaretto – we decided, “Let’s make it more obvious, geographically, where we are.” Ring 148 was originally named Garden City Ring in reference to its 1836 European beginnings. In 1836-37, Colonel William Light – surveyor, soldier, seaman, musician, artist, and maybe also magician with what he accomplished

against the odds – laid out Adelaide as a “garden city.” His concept later inspired a significant movement in town planning, worldwide.

Adelaide also has the distinction – in 1894 – of where women were first granted equal political rights.

Will Adelaide Ring 148 undergo another name change in the next seventy years? For the answer, I thought of Asking Alexander (www.askalexander.org). After all, he is The Man Who Knows. Whilst Alexander supposedly communicated with departed spirits for many of his answers, his alter ego, Arthur Conlin, has been dead for seventy-one years and there was no answer from him. AI is a possibility, I thought to myself, but is it too new? Would its answer be beneficial, detrimental, or slop? Perhaps Shakespeare’s Hamlet has the answer: “There are more things here in heaven and earth . . . than are dreamt of in [our] philosophy.”

With his “toil and trouble,” the Bard from Avon knew it all!

President’s Page – from page 13

As Co-Convention Chair, I am beyond excited to have such a wonderful line-up of talent for our shows and lectures. If you’ve thought about competing in the Stage or Close-Up Competitions, now is the time to submit an application and follow in the footsteps of other great magicians, including David Williamson, Oscar Muñoz, and Artem Shchukin. I’ve heard amazing things about Artem’s lectures and performances at Blackpool, and you’ll get to experience them firsthand in St. Louis. Plus there will be so many other talented performers, lectures, and panels, and a return of our well-received Open Mic Night emceed by Keith Fields and Lady Sarah. St. Louis’s Ring 1 is celebrating its one hundredth year and we’ll have some special events to honor it at the Convention. Tina, the I.B.M.’s First Lady, will be hosting some very special and significant events throughout, including a van trip to a local museum and a driving tour of St. Louis.

The I.B.M. still has a lot of work ahead of us. I believe the new initiatives and programs we’re offering are off to a great start as we continue along this amazing road. I am delighted by what we’ve accomplished so far during my term, and am exhilarated

Magically yours,
Stephen M. Levine



From Our UK Correspondent

BRIAN LEAD

Remembering Chris Wardle: 10 December 1973 – 31 December 2025



Chris Wardle.

It is said that mankind experiences three deaths: when the body stops, when it is consigned to the earth, and when a person's name is spoken for the last time. The funeral service for Chris Wardle, which celebrated a life full of achievement, gave ample evidence that his influence will last for many generations, inspiring magicians who are yet to be born.

Chris was no stranger to these pages, submitting many effects to *The Linking Ring* over the years and earning an Award of Excellence for his One-Man Parade. He recently took over the editing of the annual British Ring Parade from Ian Adair.

Chris was a teacher, and a book of drawings and messages compiled by his school

pupils showed the deep affection in which he was held. Teaching colleagues pointed out that although Chris would encourage pupils to use more adventurous adjectives than “good” and “nice,” these were in fact the words which truly expressed his character.

Chris's writing partner James Ward referred to the hundreds of books, articles, and effects which he had created, winning him countless awards and the admiration of top professionals.

Chris's husband, David, spoke movingly of their relationship, and British Ring President Moira Fletcher carried out the Broken Wand ceremony with dignity.

We heard about Chris's love of pantomime, writing one each year for performance in school, and his fascination with the British phenomenon of Doctor Who, the words of the first Doctor being strikingly appropriate as he transformed into a future existence, still present but in a different form.



Chris with lecturing colleague Alan Maskell.

We will treasure our memories of Chris and continue to be inspired by his ideas and vision.

Moving on to lighter matters, when I was a teenager at school in the 1960s I used to buy a lot of my early magic tricks from the British novelty firm of Ellisdons – primarily a mail-order business, although they did have a large shop in London’s High Holborn. Their motto proclaimed “A day without fun is a day wasted,” while purchasers were assured that “Our store is as close as your nearest pillar box.” Many countries around the globe will have had an equivalent, although Ellisdons claimed to have an international market: “Prompt postal service to all parts of the world.”



Ellisdons catalogues circa 1965.

I would take the colourful catalogue into school and order batches of items for my pals. Most of them were not interested in the magic tricks, but in practical jokes such as itching powder, black-face soap, and stink bombs. Ellisdons also did a line in “artistic studies” – a euphemism for young ladies who had forgotten to put on most of their clothes. They would appear on the backs of

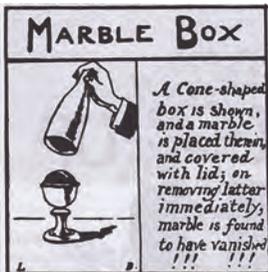
playing cards, or emerge from the bottom of drinking glasses and elsewhere. Buying them in this way meant that they would not be sent to the purchasers’ homes, where they could be intercepted by parents. It also allowed me a little perk on the side, as each individual item included post and package charges. When ordered in bulk this was a little less, so I made a few pence.

One of my own purchases was a set of small, plastic multiplying balls which I incorporated into my concert party act. Mine was the six-shilling version, while a “professional set” was available for twice that amount. I don’t know what it was doing on the floor, but I recall a dancer in the show stepping back and crushing one ball under the heel of her tap shoe. I was very annoyed and she was very apologetic. It was the first time I ever spoke to my future wife.

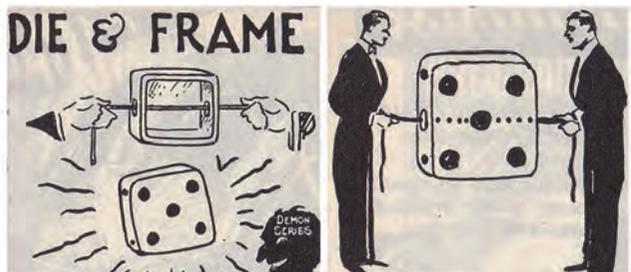
Another of my purchases, which I still have, is a “marble box” which was no taller than three inches, with a ball literally the size of a pea – an example of micro-magic if ever there was one. Now take a look at the dimensions as shown in the advertisement!

Similarly, a handheld “block-off-rope” effect using a die was reasonably illustrated in a Davenport’s catalogue of that era, but rather exaggerated elsewhere with two men handling it!

Of course, those were the days just before the much-needed Trades Description Act, which was introduced in the United Kingdom in 1968 and has been revised several times since.



Marble box advertisement.



“Die-off-rope” (when size matters).

Youth Trivia Contest



March's Question: *What father and daughter, from a family of magical performers, share the same birthday?*

Answers must be postmarked by April 20, 2026.

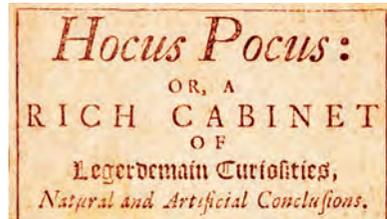
December's Question was: In May of 1972, a significant, influential piece in magic literature was started that would take more than thirty years to complete. *What was it?*

Several of our Youth members submitted responses to this month's question, but unfortunately, none of them submitted the correct answer. As is often the case, a few other members answered correctly, but these folks weren't exactly close to being "Youth members." Here are the basics of what we were hoping that you'd tell us ...

To say that the literature in the subject of this question became "significant" and "influential" is somewhat of an understatement. In London, in 1972, Neville Maskelyne had just assumed the position as editor of The Magic Circle's monthly magazine, The Magic Circular. That's when John Salisse, the long-time secretary of The Magic Circle and a magic authority in his own right, approached Eddie Dawes and asked him to write a few pieces on some varied and diverse magic topics. Eddie accepted the challenge.

While pondering a name for his new column, he recalled a booklet first published in 1651 by John White titled A Rich Cabinet With Variety of Inventions. It was subsequently expanded and rereleased as A Rich Cabinet of Modern Curiosities, and finally as A Rich Cabinet of Legerdemain Curiosities. Eddie decided to call his series of articles "A Rich Cabinet of Magical Curiosities." And in the May 1972 issue of The Magic Circular, the very first installment of the "Rich Cabinet" series appeared

at the bottom of page 142. The opening subject was Chung Ling Soo's effect, "A Dream of Wealth," and focused on the £5 note that Soo used in the effect.



The top of the title page of the booklet that inspired the column's name.

This well-researched and incredibly detailed column continued for more than forty-eight years. Eddie Dawes wrote 500 monthly essays for the feature and covered subjects as varied as playing cards, aviation, and the "bullet-catch." That's 500 chapters of magic history accompanied by rare posters, broadsides, and in some cases, previously unpublished photos and graphic images. Many of these were from Eddie's own collection.

Magic wasn't the only subject matter in which Eddie Dawes made his mark. To the rest of the world, he was Dr. Edwin A. Dawes, one of the planet's leading biochemists. He founded the Biochemistry Department and became the Dean of Science at the University of Hull, near the east coast of England. There, he researched and helped to develop eco-friendly plastics that were biodegradable and renewable.

card.

The method requires little explanation. Moving

the hope that it will prove helpful to those unacquainted with this very effective move.

A Rich Cabinet of Magical Curiosities

By EDWIN A. DAWES, M.I.M.C.

I. "A DREAM OF WEALTH"

CHUNG LING SOO's spectacular effect "A Dream of Wealth", which he apparently first introduced in 1912, involved the production of hundreds of £5 notes from a casket previously shown empty and culminated with the

appearance of an enormous note for £1,000, making an effective backdrop. In common with other stage performers of the time who needed to display their affluence, Soo used the imitation notes put out by Dunville & Company's Royal Irish Distilleries, Belfast. One of these notes was

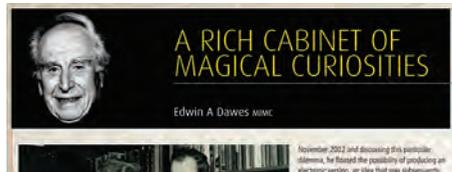
142

The very first column, appearing in the May 1972 issue of The Magic Circular.

But the impact he made on the world of magic is the reason we're covering him here, specifically, through his column, "A Rich Cabinet of Magical Curiosities." Sometime around 2002, Peter Scarlett began working with Eddie to compile a digital CD-ROM version of the first 322 columns. The Complete Rich Cabinet of Magical Curiosities was released by Peter Scarlett Magic in 2005, in time for the one hundredth anniversary of *The Magic Circle*. Improved graphics, expanded information, and a searchable format made these 1,500 pages, all on one disc, a real value. An updated version with more than sixty additional columns was made available in 2010. As the series continued, there were plans for a third edition of the digital compendium, but Peter Scarlett became very ill and passed away in 2018, before it came to fruition. However, during the few years when Peter was ill, magic historian Clay H. Shevlin began discussing with David Ben a monumental project: assembling a complete compilation of "A Rich Cabinet of Magical Curiosities" as a hard-cover book.

David Ben had been one of the founders of *Magicana*, a Canadian society dedicated to the advancement of magic as an art. (The name, "Magicana," comes from the first letters of "magic" and "Canada.") The *Magicana* organization had previously handled some high-visibility publishing ventures. In David Ben's words, "I pitched Eddie (whom I had known for many years) in person about the idea, when he and his son, Adrian, were

attending our Magic Collectors Weekend in Montreal." He also introduced them to Julie Eng, and explained that she would serve as the project's manager. The goal was a beginning-to-end assemblage of the entire series. But that goal assumed that the series would actually have an end. After some discussion, the number 500 just seemed "right." And so, "A Rich Cabinet of Magical Curiosities, #500" was planned to appear in the July, 2020 issue of *The Magic Circular* as the end of the series.



The title banner of the final installment as it appeared in the July, 2020 issue of The Magic Circular.

David continued: "There were many challenges that make it unlikely for a project of this magnitude to ever be repeated. All of the material had to be collected, updated, and edited. Hundreds and hundreds of images had to be sourced, scanned, and colour corrected. *Magicana* tapped its network of friends and collectors – and Eddie's friends and fellow collectors – to pull it all together, with Julie doing the brunt of that work."

With Julie Eng at the helm, the project moved forward. She described the earliest days of its development: "In 2017, I was invited to visit Eddie at his home – and what



(left): Julie Eng and Eddie Dawes reviewing digital proofs in 2019. (PHOTO BY ARTO AIRAKSINEN)
 (right): Eddie with his hands on the first volume. (PHOTO BY ADRIAN DAWES)

an extraordinary experience it was! I'd been invited to get a sense of the project, and to see some of the material that Eddie drew from for the 'Rich Cabinet' series. I was also there to gather, digitally, what I could for the first wave of ephemera to be added to the book chapters. Eddie, alongside his youngest son, Adrian, hosted me for a few days as we raided cupboards, opened filing cabinets, and climbed up ladders to reach more boxes. I sat in awe on the floor in the sun room of Eddie's cozy home, scanning and digitizing as much material as I could. I was amazed, inspired, and frankly, intimidated by the sheer volume. It was extraordinary stuff, and there were piles and piles of it everywhere! Boxes kept appearing from impossible and invisible spaces – a magic trick in itself.

"Eddie stayed with me in the sun room, sitting in his arm chair, quietly flipping through files. He opened books and read documents. He identified it *all*. And he not only identified the material, but he also identified the 'Rich Cabinet' issue in which it appeared. It didn't matter if it was from 1979 or 2014 ... he knew. It was utterly astonishing – and a *privilege* – to see Eddie's encyclopedic knowledge in action. The information was always there. Spot on. Memory like a steel trap.

"At one point, I looked up from my digi-

tizing station, and I saw Eddie sitting in his recliner. There was a slight furrow in his brow as he looked over a catalogue. Eddie looked up when he sensed me watching him, and the furrow immediately vanished. His face brightened into a gentle smile and he said to me 'You know, it's like visiting old friends,' as he gave a nod to the towers of paper and boxes surrounding us."

Eddie remained extremely involved, and was able to review all of the digital proofs for Volumes I through IV. When the compilation was complete, The Rich Cabinet Collection was published in nine hardcover volumes, with 3,543 pages and about a gazillion images (Julie Eng's unofficial count). It was limited to 250 sets and sold out quickly.

Over the course of his life, Eddie provided guidance and advice to hundreds, and possibly thousands of magicians and magic historians. He cautioned many authors that "a book without an index is a useless book." He counselled many writers that "no book is ever finished ... as soon as it goes to print, you'll think of something that needs to be changed or added." And he reminded the whole world of magic collectors to "collect, collate, and communicate."

To say that Eddie Dawes was "significant" and "influential," and that he left a tremendously positive and long-lasting im-

pression on the art of magic, would be another understatement. He has received no fewer than fifteen major awards and honors from the major magic organisations around the globe, including The Magic Circle, the Academy of Magical Arts, Fédération Internationale des Sociétés Magiques, and Magicana.

It's important to note that although the work in the subject of our question was written by Eddie Dawes, as were the dozen or so books that he authored, it was important to Eddie to mention that none of his work could have been completed without the assistance and partnership of his loving wife of sixty-four years, Amy Dawes. They were a team, in all parts of life.

We'd like to give a great big "thank you" to some of the nicest people in magic: Michael and Adrian Dawes (Eddie's sons); conjuror, author, and Magicana founder David Ben; and magicienne and Genii magazine Executive Director Julie Eng. We're incredibly grateful for their generous help and contributions regarding this month's subject matter.

You can find more information about

Eddie Dawes, his magic, his research, and his writings in books, including Great Illusionists by Edwin A. Dawes, and The Book of Magic by Edwin A. Dawes and Arthur Settington. There are also many pieces in past issues of periodical publications, including Genii, MAGIC, and The Linking Ring. And of course, in every one of the 500 issues of The Magic Circular from May 1972 through July 2020.

Dr. Edwin "Eddie" A. Dawes died in 2023. Amy Dawes passed away in 2014.

If you submitted an answer to this month's question, but you didn't submit the correct answer, please don't give up – keep trying! These questions aren't expected to be quickly or easily answered using Internet-based search engines like Google, Yahoo, or Bing. Take your issue of The Linking Ring to your local Ring meeting and ask one of the senior, more experienced members to help you find the answer. Let the whole world see how smart you are, get your name published in The Linking Ring, and win some great stuff from one of our finest brick-and-mortar magic shops. You'll love the prizes!

Hey there, Youth Members!

Do you believe that you have a question that's suitable for the I.B.M. Youth Trivia Contest? Then please, send your question and the answer, along with your name, age, membership number, telephone number, and address to:

I.B.M. Youth Trivia Quiz
c/o Don Greenberg
4450 Peace Valley Road
New Waterford, Ohio 44445 USA

Make certain that you include some references. If we decide to use your question, we'll send you either a whole bag of those little thingies that keep the ends of shoelaces from fraying or a really cool magic book – our choice.

See if you can win! Follow the Contest Rules on page 146 and mail your responses to the address above. Answers must be postmarked by April 20, 2026.



A Portrait of the Professional

DALE SALWAK

Consilience

*Make the most of yourself, for that is all there is of you.
Self-trust is the first secret of success.*

Ralph Waldo Emerson

*The journey of self-discovery is really the greatest journey to be had
during the time we each have on the planet.*

John Dahlsen

In the Chavez Studio of Magic along Sunset Boulevard, Hollywood, there stood two floor-to-ceiling shelves filled with the expected holdings on magic. But what caught the discerning eye were other books covering almost every subject imaginable, many of which I acquired before Marian Chavez's passing in 1978.

The image is a witness to the owners' mindset. As cultural cornerstones who trained a generation in the magical arts, both Benny and Marian had an insatiable curiosity reaching toward every person as well as every idea they encountered.

They trained their attention on the students' "inner lives," what Gertrude Stein called their "bottom nature" – where, as Joyce Cary argues in his dazzling *Art and Reality* (1958), real growth occurs. They believed that experiences apart from magic are one way of achieving that.

"When we walk onstage," Marian wrote to me early-on, "the events of our lives are tightly interconnected. We carry within ourselves since childhood everything we have read, every class we have taken, every experience we have had, indeed every thought we have considered. Nothing goes to waste.

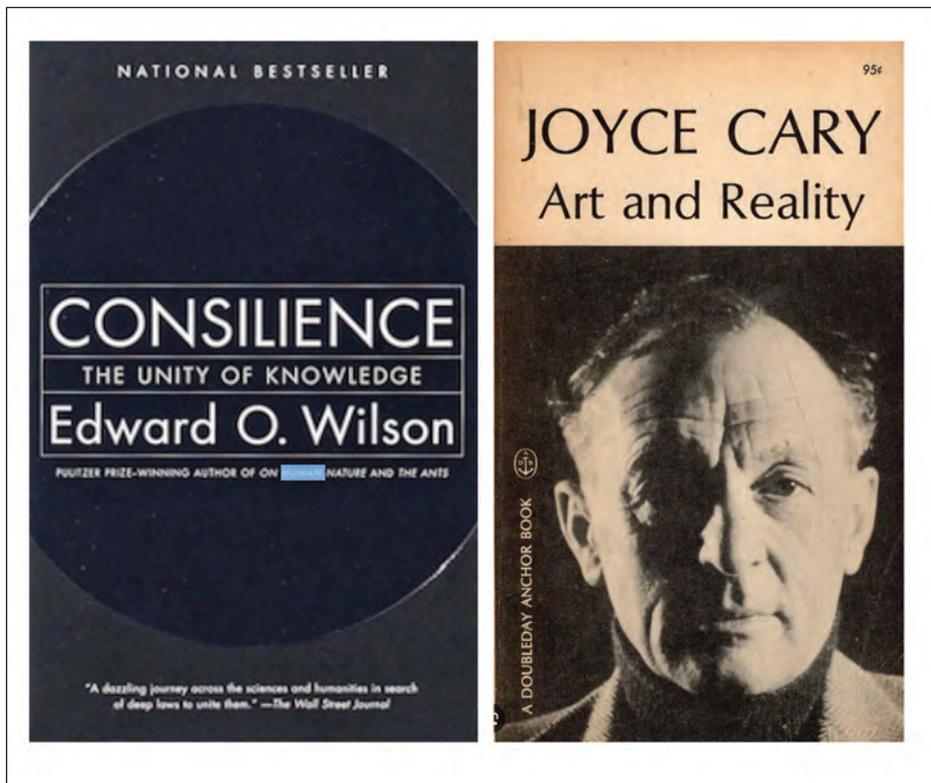
All that we are feeds into what is experienced by the audience – the most vital and often least considered element in the process. Trust that."

We might call this guiding principle of life "consilience," "jumping together," unified learning (see Edward O. Wilson's brilliant book on the subject [1998] as well as William Whewell's *The Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences* [1840]). Both Benny and Marian believed that it is at the core of all performers who come to an understanding of who they are onstage, and why.

I started thinking seriously along these lines during the summer of 1965 when, with my father's encouragement and deep-seated instinct, I enrolled as a high school student in the six-week course offered by Purdue University's Loeb Playhouse.

From that experience what I learned about the professional actor's almost devout passion for all knowledge, including good art – later confirmed and expanded upon during my years as a student of Marian Chavez and Neil Foster and Channing Pollock – eventually fed into my understanding as a magician.

How can immersing ourselves in history,



philosophy, psychology, biography, ethics, cultural anthropology, aesthetics, or theology (in its many manifestations) help us to think about and improve upon our magic?

At the risk of over-simplification, an answer offered by Channing, one of Benny and Neil’s foremost students, said with vivid force that other subjects direct our mind to something important which we might otherwise have missed. They lead to a deeper understanding of the unfathomable depths of both our essential nature and our place in the world – and therefore our art through which we express ourselves.

“Focus first on your soul, mind, heart, and body,” he taught during his January 1988 lecture at *The Magic Hands Congress* in Böblingen, West Germany, “and then the magic and your audience will follow.” He added: “Being a good magician does not start with the tricks. It starts with being the best human being you can be.”

Like his teachers, toward that end Chan-

ning lived in every sense a rich inner life with a longstanding, insatiable curiosity about everything. “Let us gather facts,” the French naturalist Buffon wrote, “in order to get ourselves thinking.”

Each time, at the end of an hour or more of casual conversation, I came away, stunned, to realize in a blinding flash that the subject of magic had hardly been discussed; and yet everything we had covered – from astronomy to Eastern religions to philosophy to classical music to miracles – somehow related, and I had learned more about the art even though we had never touched on it specifically.

So too with the consummate magical insider, Marian Chavez, who during private conversations apart from the classroom rarely brought up the subject of magic unless asked. She preferred to discuss a student’s readings, struggles and self-doubts, aspirations and passions. “Read about the lives of other artists,” she said with an impeccable

sense of what matters. “Read what they have written. Learn from the struggles of history. Let philosophy and psychology and theology guide you. The sole purpose of the written word is to help you get better at your art.”

She knew what many eventually discover – that a fundamental, deep-rooted love of other subjects expands the mind and opens doors to a deeper understanding of themselves and therefore of their performances.

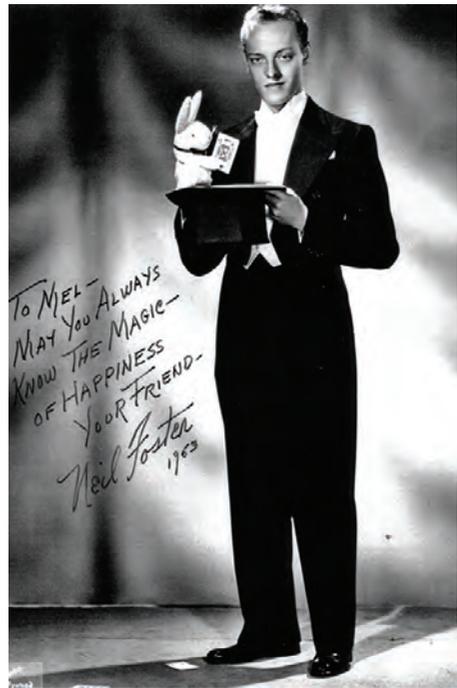
“These subjects, among others,” she said, “can be the source of endless joy and wonder for anyone, anywhere, of any age, and we bring those feelings to the stage.”

So too Neil Foster, who I met in 1963 and who first saw me perform in 1965. Nine years later, after he sensed that I had grown as much as I could on my own, he wrote (as he did to many subsequent students), “I think I can help you now.”

Neil saw the performer’s journey as a deeply personal quest for understanding of his or her deepest nature. “You never know where it will lead,” he said, “or whether that will be a reassuring or a threatening place.” But that doesn’t matter. We undertake a quest because the rewards of the process itself are so great.

“I have found that the more I focus on the questing nature of my work,” he rhapsodized, “the greater has been the joy, and indeed exhilaration, I have derived from it.”

Deeply conversant in many areas of study outside of the magical arts, Benny, Marian, Channing, and Neil made real use of their talents while sharing a fellowship of brilliance. They remained their entire lives fully responsive to all experience and interests, and they worked very hard to give expression to this in some of the most beautiful magic ever offered. We are the grateful beneficiaries.



Neil Foster.

Dale Salwak continues to perform internationally while directing (since 1978) the Chavez Studio of Magic in southern California. Currently he is serving as an International Relations Officer for the I.B.M. Special thanks to Ryan Salwak for valued input.

EDITOR’S NOTE: Each month this series on showmanship will feature a short essay on the magical performer’s art. We will alternate between the writings of Neil Foster and Dale Salwak, with added features by Benny and Marian Chavez. Send comments, questions, and appreciations to Dale Salwak at dsalwak@citruscollege.edu.

Moving? Please notify the I.B.M. Headquarters Office at least four to six weeks before you move. By notifying the office ahead of time you will receive *The Linking Ring* at your new address and avoid paying a five-dollar per issue charge to resend the missed issue to your new address. Please see page four of every issue of *The Linking Ring* for the contact information for the Headquarters Office.

Conjurer's Foolosophy

JOE HERNANDEZ



I've learned that all magicians carry within them a vibrant inner child. This inner child embodies a sense of wonder, creativity, and curiosity that fuels their craft. It's not just a matter of distinction between being childlike and childish, but the joy of nurturing a childlike spirit. This spirit means embracing innocence and awe, and the ability to perceive the world with fresh eyes and an open heart. This perspective fosters imagination and enables magicians to captivate their audiences, making them feel engaged and connected to the magic.

I've learned that the truth is that magic is a lie.

I've learned that speed and tempo, often overlooked, are crucial aspects of delivering a captivating, magical presentation. The pace at which you speak and move can significantly influence how your message is received, understood, and perceived. It's vital to consider these elements for each part of your presentation carefully. A well-timed rhythm not only helps the audience absorb information more effectively but also keeps them visually engaged. Adjusting your speed can emphasize key points, making them more memorable to your audience. It can also allow pauses that give listeners a moment to reflect or misdirect their attention. Mastering the dynamics of speed and tempo can significantly enhance a presentation's overall quality and impact.

I've learned that often, the solution to a problem you have worked hard to solve suddenly appears while you are engaged in something unrelated; sometimes, it even pops up in a dream.

I've learned that magical stories function as mirrors, reflecting intricate fantasy worlds that delve deeply into the complexities of human experience. Through their imaginative narratives and the enchanting art of deception, these tales let us explore profound themes such as hope, love, and resilience. They capture our imagination and uplift our spirits, allowing us to connect with the emotions and challenges that define our lives. In this way, fantastic narratives serve as escapism and insightful explorations of the human condition.

I've learned that when practicing, you must be in the moment if you expect new neural pathways to form.

I've learned that hecklers are a special breed: they don't let their ignorance get in the way of their stupidity.

I've learned that magic is a vocational art filled with deception, illusions, misrepresentation, slights, dishonesty, and manipulations, disguised as branches of psychology, literature, and philosophy. How wonderful!

I've learned that the essence of conjuring is a total disregard for the truth.

Joe Hernandez is the author of *Conjurer's Wisdom Volumes I & II*, *Phonetastic*, *Magic Babylon*, *Houdini: The Ultimate Trivia Compendium*, and the just-released *The Foolosophy of Conjuring*, from which excerpts are taken for this column. Books can be purchased at www.booksbyjoe.com, magic dealers, and Amazon.com.

Magic and

Memories

David Ginn



Fantasio and Me

In January 2025, I wrote about the magician Fantasio as seen through the eyes of Bruce “Sparkles” Johnson, who handled his cane and candle mail-order business while Fantasio was off performing around the world. This month I want to share how Fantasio affected me personally.

I saw Fantasio on *The Ed Sullivan Show* before I ever met the man himself. The first time I met him was at the 1968 I.B.M. Convention in Chattanooga, Tennessee. That’s the event where I saw him perform canes and candles for the first time, including the Color-Changing Cane, which I purchased and included in my act at the Tivoli Theatre during the Convention.

It started when I decided I wanted to ask Fantasio how to prevent the nylon loops of my dove holders from slipping down into my load pockets. After the Convention contest, I made my way backstage, found Fantasio, congratulated him on his performance, and asked him how.

“Oh, it’s easy,” he said. “I use a small piece of Scotch Magic Tape just inside the pocket to fix the loop where I want it.” He showed me this on his coat, which he was still wearing. You can see a drawing of this in **Figure 1**. “When you pull out the dove holder with a silk, the tape stays right there.”



After that I had a workable answer to my question, and I’d made a new friend.

The next time I saw Fantasio was in the summer of 1969 at the I.B.M. Convention in Cincinnati, Ohio. Three Atlanta magicians won awards that year: Mark Merchant (Best Junior Magician), Robert Orr (Mentalism), and me, David Ginn (Manipulation). The image nearby shows Mark and David in an *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* article about the awards.



A story in the Atlanta Journal-Constitution about the 1969 I.B.M. Convention awards, featuring David Ginn and Mark Merchant.

In Cincinnati I talked with Fantasio again. I was happy to learn he’d already bought a copy of *Colorful Magic*, my first book published in June that year. He liked the book because he loved the silence-to-music visual magic.

That’s when he uttered these off-the-cuff magic words, directly affecting my life: “*Maybe you could write a book about my canes and candles.*”

With hardly a second thought, I said: “I probably could, except I’m going into the army in February, six months from now. But we could start gathering material for it.”

“That’s good,” he told me. “I have some effects magicians have sent me, plus some of my own. I will send them to you, and you work on it when you can.”

That conversation eventually led me to writing six Fantasio cane and candle books, which sold in the thousands and helped promote his products.

Six months later when Lynne and I were taking our January 1970 road trip (see my January 2025 *Linking Ring* column), I met up with Fantasio in Miami while visiting Sarah and Bruce Johnson. One night, I asked Fantasio: “Three years ago, in July 1967 I believe, I watched you do the silk act on *The Ed Sullivan Show*. Have you done that act anywhere else?”

“No,” he said. “Never. The *Ed Sullivan* people asked me if I could create a colorful magic act that would show well on color television. So I made that act just for the one show, and I’ve never done it since that time.”

“Really, just once? So how did you make the big 12-foot silk?”



Fantasio and Monica with a twelve-foot Silk Rabbit in Hat.

“Well, I bought four 36-inch Rice rabbit in hat silks and one 6-foot version,” he explained, “then added those other silks and Monica sewed them all together.”

Monica, Fantasio’s wife, sewed the entire 12-foot by 12-foot silk you see pictured above.

“What did you do with the silks, especially

the big one, if you never did the act again?” I asked, since I like knowing details like this. “Did you sell them?”

“No, no,” Fantasio explained. “They are still packed away in my house.”

At the time, I’m sure I wanted to ask, “Can we go open up the big one and look at it?” But I didn’t.

In fall 2025, I watched Fantasio’s performance on *The Ed Sullivan Show* again. After doing a Cane to Parasol, then producing a second parasol, Fantasio performed the Double Dove from Silk production (à la Channing Pollock). But instead of doves, he produced twin silk fountains in keeping with the colorful silk theme. You can watch the performance on YouTube at www.youtube.com/watch?v=W15VQ6hYDo. The notes on the YouTube clip state this was the first silk production magic performance to appear on color television. It was taped in New York City on April 16, 1967, shown a few months later in July, then aired again on June 22, 1969.

So where did Fantasio’s silk act end up? When he passed away in October 2017, his good friend David Copperfield bought everything “Fantasio” from his daughter Jackie. Now the Fantasio material resides in Las Vegas at the Copperfield museum and warehouse.

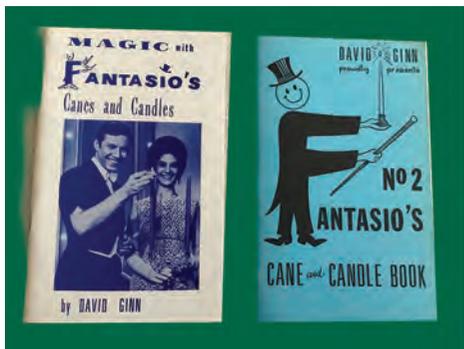
Sometime around 1972 when I was out of the Army, I flew to Miami to visit Fantasio and Monica. Bruce and Sarah had already moved to Kentucky, so I stayed in the Roucaus’ (Fantasio and Monica’s real last name) spare bedroom. By that time we’d published his first cane and candle book and it was selling well.

When I got up to eat breakfast, something I assumed everyone did in America (not considering the Roucaus grew up in Argentina and were “night people,” not breakfast people), I told them I’d love some cereal and milk.

Monica and Fantasio looked at each other. She said something to him in Spanish, mentioning their daughter Jackie’s name.

“You can eat some of Jackie’s cereal,” Fantasio told me.

What do you think Jackie liked at the



The original covers of Fantasio's first and second books.



Fantasio's first and second books, updated with matching covers.

time? Count Chocula! That's the only time in my life I've eaten chocolate-flavored fruit loops cereal! At least they had a banana to chase it down.

We were already gathering materials and tricks for a second Fantasio book when I realized this might become a series. The first book was forty pages, and the second book was fifty-two. The covers were different. That's when I suggested to Fantasio that we use his cartoon logo on the front covers to make all the books match.

He readily agreed. As far as I know, he drew the original art himself.

The first picture above shows the first two books with non-matching covers. The second picture shows the same two books with matching covers and professional artwork. I still think the series covers look pretty sharp.

We published book three in January 1978, and the length jumped to sixty-four pages. Magicians kept sending Fantasio and me more tricks to appear in future books.

Then something else happened. In the spring of 1974, Fantasio's father in Argentina became very ill. At the time Monica and Fantasio were doing an eighteen-month run at a casino in Freeport, Grand Bahamas, presenting a dove act, Zig Zag illusion, and Sword Basket with Jackie popping out of the basket as a surprise at the end.

Fantasio called to ask me if I could break away from my school show schedule for three weeks in April to fill in for him while he and his family traveled to Argentina to see his father.

It was an opportunity of a lifetime to make my first appearance as a magician in a review with singers and dancers. Lynne and I discussed it and we said yes. It would involve two ten-minute shows a night, at 9:45 p.m. and midnight.

Fantasio told me I would need my own ten-minute dove act using four of his own birds, plus two changes of costumes. He also had a parakeet I could use if I had a trick for it. The band would play his music for me, and in the second half of the show I would perform his Zig Zag and Sword Basket illusions using one of the show girls, whom he and Monica would teach. Since I was already performing the basket (which I bought from him the year before), that was not a problem, and he would teach me the Zig Zag.



David with Chu's Sword Basket.



Fantasio.

The reason Fantasio sold me his Chu's Sword Basket was twofold: One, it was a tight fit for Monica to get into the basket, and two, he wanted to add Jackie as the extra ending. He sold me the Chu's and bought himself a larger basket, a wicker version similar in size to the Abbotts fiberglass model. Jackie could hide inside the basket the entire time, Monica could go in and come out, and then Jackie could appear at the end, posing for applause between her mom and dad.

I would be paid a reasonable weekly salary, plus Fantasio would cover my airplane flight from Atlanta to Miami and Freeport. Lynne and I would stay in the Roucau's apartment just five minutes from the casino and use their car for transportation during our stay.

The plan was simple: Lynne and I would fly to Miami, then fly to Freeport. Fantasio would pick us up, settle us in, then take us to the casino so we could watch both of his Sunday shows – first from the perspective of the audience, then from backstage. Because the show “went dark,” or closed down, on Monday nights, we'd spend that afternoon at the theatre learning the Zig Zag, practicing the basket with the show girl, and going over my dove act. Starting on Tuesday, I would then begin performing two shows a night for

six nights a week. The Roucaus and their dog would depart for Argentina on Tuesday morning, leaving us there to perform for the next three weeks.

Our flights to Miami and the Bahamas were smooth, and Fantasio was at the airport to greet us. Once settled, we ate a light snack and headed to the theatre at 8 p.m. Fantasio found us comfortable seats at the back of the room, and the first show began at 9:45 p.m.

The seventy-five-minute revue consisted of singing, dancing, Fantasio's two spots (a dove act and illusions), comedy skits, then more music and dancing. Watching the entire show from the audience's perspective that first time was important to me because it gave me a sense of the full picture. Lynne and I watched the midnight show from backstage, giving us an education of how backstage worked and how we would fit into the whole.

We were thankful to be there and have this life experience. And boy, did we get an experience!

Once we learned what to do and how to do it, we settled into a routine. At 7:30 p.m. each night, Lynne fixed us supper. Then we left for the theatre at 8:30, a five-minute drive. We left the entire act and costumes locked in our dressing room, along with the five birds. By 8:45 we were setting up backstage. We did the silk folds, exercised the doves, checked the props, and set up my Abbott's Dove Cage Vanish. Lynne applied light makeup to my face.

Then we did the 9:45 p.m. show. I went on about 10 o'clock, did my ten minutes, and took a half-hour break. During that time, Lynne and I took the four colored doves (red, yellow, green, and blue) out of the tabletop and put them in their dressing room cage. I changed into my second outfit to perform the illusions and set up the dove act for the second show.

At 10:45, I performed the Zig Zag and Sword Basket in about seven minutes, changed clothes, then went out at 10:59 to take a bow with the entire crew. The show was over by 11 p.m.

With a one-hour break, we did the same show again at midnight, ending at 1:15 a.m.

The birds now fed and put away, Lynne and I left the theatre at 1:20 a.m., and by 1:30 we were in bed. We slept until 8 a.m., then lived a normal day until 8 p.m. that night. We maintained that schedule because the day after I returned home, I'd resume early-morning school shows and Lynne would return to work at her editorial job.

“BAM! BAM! BAM!”

That was the sound of the Bahamian stagehands playing dominos backstage before and between shows. They constantly slammed dominoes on the tabletop. It was a macho thing, quite irritating to some of us. Even in 1974, a government edict required the theatre to hire local workers, even if they were unqualified, to be stagehands. That often led to clashes with the performers or management.

One night as I changed the live canary to Bruce Posgate's Cascading Jewels via Abbott's Cagey Canister, I went to hand off the jewels and can (with a live canary hiding inside) to Lynne. But instead of finding my wife waiting for me in the wings, I found a Bahamian stagehand standing in her place, blocking me from the hand-off. In dozens of shows, *no one* had ever stood there other than Lynne, so he was out of place.



David with jewels flowing out of can.

With no time to argue and the show music playing, I shouted at him: “Move!” And he did. Then I quickly handed Lynne the canister, she went off to unload the little bird back into his cage, and I returned to the main stage for the Dove Cage Vanish, sort of an encore.

After the show, the stage manager or producer came back to our dressing room and

asked what happened. When I told him, he scowled and said, “It will never happen again!” And guess what? Somebody got a scolding, or worse, and it never happened again.

In general, the two nightly shows went fine. I liked doing the dove act the best, but the thirty-five performances of the Zig Zag – and experience using a different model sword basket – educated me. Of course, I had to change back into my dove act costume before returning for a final bow with the other performers.

Notice that I said thirty-five shows, not thirty-six. Two shows a night, six days a week, over three weeks sounds like it would be thirty-six shows – wrong. The theatre had a house rule that if fewer than sixteen people attended the midnight show, it would be cancelled and we'd leave early. That happened twice, both times on a Sunday night. Per the rules, we cancelled the first time it happened, but the second time it happened, it was a single party of fourteen people who evidently had a personal friendship with the producer or director (or tipped big). We had to move forward with the full, seventy-five-minute show for just fourteen people in a house that seated three hundred. Boy, was that difficult.

Yes, we learned a lot during those three weeks, and we'll always be thankful to Fantasio for trusting me to take his place. I think the biggest thing I learned is that I am a morning person and school shows, not nightclubs, are my niche. But it took that experience for me to understand that.

Fantasio and I stayed in touch over the years, produced six cane and candle books together, and worked some conventions together. Once I drove him from the Winter Carnival in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, down through the mountains after a recent snow to Cherokee, North Carolina, and all the way to the Atlanta airport. What a trip, and we talked magic all the way!

Fantasio was always a friend and a gentleman to me. He loved silent, visual magic because it could play for any audience in any language. If you ever saw him perform or watched clips of him performing, you know what I mean.



David with a Vanishing Candle, 1971.



David with a Vanishing Cane.

The canes and candles he produced – which I used my entire career – revolutionized that field of magic. One of my assistants, Susan Blankenship, even used the vanishing cane like a baton in a high school twirling competition, then ended by changing it to silks. That really impressed Fantasio when I told him.

One other thing I told him really made him

laugh. After a school show where I tossed a silk into the air and it changed into a red Fantasio appearing cane, I received a letter from a boy who enjoyed the show. He wrote:

“I love the trick where you throw the rag into the air, and it changes into a *stick!*”

Thank you, Fantasio, for your friendship, and for making all those “sticks” for us magicians to entertain our audiences.

Bobby Who? – from page 29

of the neighborhood kids, who would ring the doorbell and ask if they could play ball with him. When Houdini praised Bobby, “he would signal his delight with quivering all over his body and wildly wigwagging his tail.”

Sadly, Bobby Houdini died on December 15, the same year as his historic performance at the SAM banquet. Surely, the loss was heartbreaking for Bess and Harry. This talented and loving member of the family had passed on, and in the days that followed, Houdini penned and published a moving eulogy for Bobby that read:

*With eyes upraised, his master's looks to scan,
The joy, the solace, and the aid of man,
The rich man's guardian, and the poor man's friend,
The only creature faithful to the end.*

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Marketing MAGIC

KENT CUMMINS

Communication

“Communication is the magic word for building long-term relationships with clients.”

– Cris Johnson

When I read the above quote in Cris Johnson’s weekly newsletter (www.theprofession-almagicianclubpro.com), I thought, “I need to write a ‘Marketing Magic’ column about communication!”

Many years ago, in the introduction to a military management publication, I wrote:

“Communication. Almost all problems can be traced to problems with communication ... therefore, communication is an essential management skill.”

It is also an essential skill for magicians and other entrepreneurial entertainers.

Some Initial Information

My 1965 Bachelor of Arts degree from Louisiana State University was in communications, with a major in speech and a minor in journalism. My 1972 Master’s in Business Administration degree from the University of Texas was all about entrepreneurship.

I am a Certified Military Community Executive (CMCE), which is an internationally recognized certification. (I’m also a Certified Juggling Instructor, but the initials “CJI” don’t really mean anything!) I wrote the certification manual for the International Military Community Executives Association (IMCEA) and dedicated an entire chapter – Chapter 14 – to communication.

My point is that I should be spending more time communicating about communication!

Google It

The “magic of communication” refers to its transformative power to create understanding, build relationships, influence behavior, and foster creativity by effectively conveying messages, using psychology, practicing empathy, and mastering verbal/nonverbal cues like tone and body language, turning simple words into profound connections and shared realities. It’s about being intentional with language, actively listening, and understanding communication styles to navigate conflicts and inspire action, making ordinary interactions extraordinary.

Could you tell that the above paragraph was generated artificial intelligence (AI)?

ChatGPT started a new wave of AI that is both exciting and terrifying. Generative AI gives everyone the power to create almost anything. I have used it to help me come up with ideas, advertising, articles, illustrations, and videos. My daughter Carolyn uses ChatGPT as an unpaid consultant.

Can it also be used in ways we don’t approve of? Of course. But so can the printing press. Every new technology creates possibilities for creation, including abuse. Johannes Gutenberg, the inventor of the movable-type printing press, died in relative poverty and obscurity.

Three Things I Learned in College

Dr. Wesley Wiksell, professor of speech at LSU, was my favorite teacher (and that would have been true even if his wife had not been a puppeteer!). I took Dr. Wiksell's Face-to-Face Communications classes and learned three things that I still use more than sixty years later.



Dr. Wesley Wiksell.

Lesson #1: On the first day of each new class, Dr. Wiksell walked around the room to introduce himself and shake hands with each student. Then he surprised us with a “pop quiz,” asking us to write down the first few sentences we might use to initiate a conversation with him.

Nobody earned an “A” on that first test. That’s because none of us noticed the lapel pin he practically thrust in our faces as he shook our hands. The pin was unique and would have been a logical way for us to start a meaningful conversation and connect with him.

Instead, we all said things like, “How long have you been teaching at LSU?” or even worse, “What do you think about the Tigers’ chances this season?”

What I learned from this is that I should find a meaningful way to start the conversation whenever I meet someone new. I also use this principle in reverse by typically wearing a shirt with a magic logo, yet most people never even find out I’m a magician unless I mention it myself.

Lesson #2: Our next assignment was to list three topics that interest us and three that do not, then write a paragraph about each. I think I listed magic, puppets, and circuses as

the three topics that interest me and golf, race cars, and opera as three topics that don’t.

When we turned in our papers the next day, Dr. Wiksell gave us our next assignment: prepare a presentation about one of the three topics that don’t interest us!

What I learned is that there’s no such thing as a topic that isn’t interesting, we just choose to limit the topics we care about. I still don’t play golf, race cars, or listen to opera. But I understand that those topics are interesting to other people. I also learned that anything can be interesting – even opera – when I’m with someone who cares deeply about it!

Lesson #3: One of the most useful things I learned from Dr. Wiksell is a magical phrase that invites conversation instead of confrontation. That phrase, to be uttered before sharing an opinion, is: “It seems to me ...”

It takes the edge off an opinion that could otherwise make the listener want to argue because they disagree. Your opinion could still be wrong in another person’s eyes, but the phrase invites a meaningful conversation rather than an argument.

Try it. It seems to me that you will find it useful!

Speaking About Communication

One way we communicate with other people is through public speaking. As a legacy member of the National Speakers Association, I have been exposed to countless best practices for presenting your ideas in public.

Are you afraid of public speaking? Surveys consistently show that – although many people are afraid of flying, poverty, and death – even more people are afraid of public speaking!

This means the ability to verbally communicate ideas is a significant competitive advantage, and the ability to express oneself clearly is a tremendous aid to success. Almost anyone can become an effective speaker once they have the confidence to begin.

I think my desire to entertain with magic made me far less afraid of public speaking. When I improve my ability to speak in public, I also improve my ability to entertain.

Here is the IMCEA Certification Manual's fifteen basic principles that can help you succeed as a speaker:

1. Be yourself.

Don't try to emulate that speaker or performer you admire. You cannot be as good at being that person as you can at being yourself. Be proud to present your own unique style.

2. Write down goals.

As with any project, start by knowing and understanding the "why" of the project.

3. Dress for success.

This means different things to different performers. I wear a tuxedo with a cape and top hat because that says "vintage magician" to audiences. What does your performing outfit communicate?

4. Don't start until they are paying attention.

It's called "planting yourself" in center stage and making sure you have their attention before you start speaking.

5. Don't open with a joke.

Sorry, Bob Orben, but unless you are actually a stand-up comic, it is better to start with something meaningful.

6. Embrace the KISS principle.

That's right, use the Keep It Simple Strategy to make your presentation less risky ... and therefore more consistently wonderful!

7. Offer precisely three points.

Why did the genie offer three wishes?

Why were there three bears, three little pigs, three blind mice? People are used to organizing things in groups of three.

8. Script it.

I don't care how good you are at improvising. Your performance will be more effective if you have a polished script from which to improvise.

9. Use outline notes.

Audiences can tell if you are reading or simply reciting a memorized speech. Use notes to keep your authentic self on track.

10. Use visual aids.

As magicians, we have some of the best visual aids imaginable (far better than PowerPoint slides!)

11. Use your eyes.

We learned this when we studied misdirection. The audience will look where you look.

12. Don't apologize.

Don't ever apologize for anything that doesn't go the way you planned. Make whatever happens the best it can be.

13. Stay on time.

It doesn't matter if you are hired for a thirty-minute magic show or an hour-long keynote speech, make sure you keep your act on time.

14. Practice, practice, practice.

I call this the "Third Rule for Magicians," but it applies equally to speakers.

15. Handle hecklers gracefully.

There are plenty of heckler-stoppers in those joke books, but you are usually better off treating even unruly audience members with respect.



(l to r): Kent Cummins promotional photo. • Explaining the self-eating watermelon to National Speakers Association (NSA) meeting attendees in Austin. • Pontificating for an audience of NSA members.

Communicating With Clients

Go back to the top of this column and re-read Cris's comment. He is talking about building long-term relationships with clients, which is what "Marketing Magic" is all about.

If you want to perform magic (or any other performing art), you have to consistently find people who want to watch. You need an audience, then another audience, and yet another.

How do you build relationships that result in the audiences you need? Consistent Communication.

I Heard That!

When selling your products and performances, you will be far more successful if you understand the needs and wants of your prospective clients.

Learn to listen first, then speak. Most people want to be heard. It's a matter of respect to listen to them.

Here are my tips for being a good listener from the IMCEA Certification Manual:

1. Give your full attention to the person speaking.

This is harder than it sounds, because we tend to think about what we are going to say next. But it really helps to focus on the other person.

2. Avoid distractions.

This can be hard with everything that's going on around us, but it really helps if we can achieve some level of genuine focus on the conversation.

3. Maintain eye contact with the speaker.

Remember what we learned about misdirection?

4. Focus on content rather than delivery.

Of course it's distracting when the person we are listening to stammers, hesitates, or uses incorrect grammar. But remember that none of that matters as much as what they are trying to say.

5. Listen for the main ideas.

Many people wind up telling shaggy dog stories instead of making their points succinctly, but remember why you are listening.

6. Ask questions.

Asking questions shows you care about what the other person is saying, and also helps you make sure you understand what they are trying to convey.

Sometimes, effective communication is hard!

"What we've got here is failure to communicate!" – Actor Strother Martin, as Captain, in the 1967 film *Cool Hand Luke*.

It seems to me that no matter how hard we try, sometimes the best-meaning attempts to communicate fall flat: an intended compliment inexplicably offends, a suggestion to make things better only makes things worse, stating the "obvious" starts a bitter argument.

What can we do when our attempts at effective communication fail?

Try, try again.

The Secret

Is there a secret to effective communication? I believe that there is, and although it is easy to understand, it is often difficult to implement. My friend Peter Hinrichs, better known as "Peter the Adequate," says it at the end of every show:

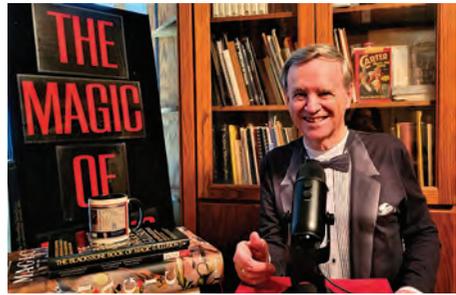
"It's not always about you. In fact, it's never about you."



Kent with Peter the Adequate.

It's about the audience, whether that audience is hundreds of people in a theater, a few dozen people at a birthday party, or one prospective client. To communicate effectively, the focus must be on them.

We all know the Golden Rule: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." But there is a variation that can help us communicate more effectively. Created by Tony Alessandra, it is called the Platinum Rule: "Treat others the way they want to be treated."

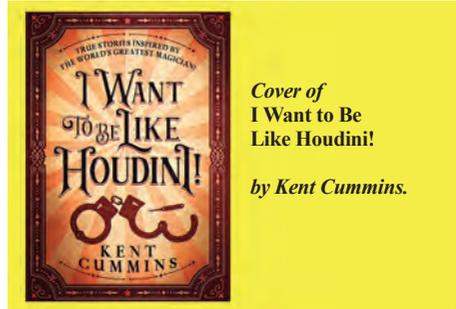


Kent records an episode of his podcast.

The Bottom Line

Communication matters! Share your stories and ideas: kent@kentcummins.com.

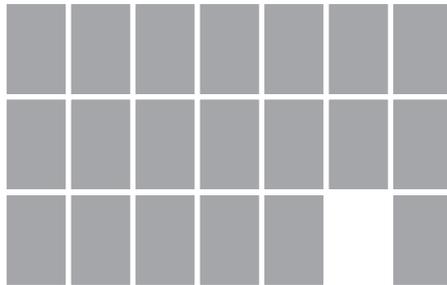
Listen to "Tales from the Fantastic Magic Center" at www.fantasticmagiccenter.com. There's a new episode every Monday morning at 8:00 a.m. CST. You can also check out my new book *I Want to Be Like Houdini!*, in celebration of the centennial of Houdini's untimely death, at www.likehoudini.com.



*Cover of
I Want to Be
Like Houdini!*

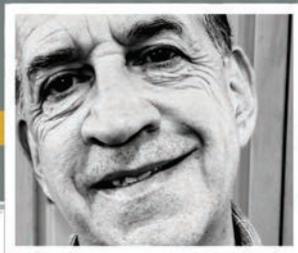
by Kent Cummins.

Missing Linking Rings?



If you are an I.B.M. member in the United States and have not received your issue by the 21st of the month, please contact the office for a replacement. If you are a member outside of the U.S. and have not received your issue by the 30th of the month, please contact the office for a replacement.

To receive a replacement copy of *The Linking Ring*, please contact the Headquarters Office by the required time. It is the responsibility of members to notify the Headquarters Office within 90 days of a missed issue in order to receive a replacement. If we do not receive your notification within the 90 days we will be unable to resend the missing issue/issues. To help keep the cost of membership fees down it is necessary to place a time limit on the resending of missed issues. Thank you for your help in controlling the cost of membership fees. The contact information for the Headquarters Office can be found on page four of each issue of *The Linking Ring*.



As we approach the end of the school year, now is the time to reach out to your local library about doing a ninety-minute or four-day magic workshop. A longer workshop could include your students taking part in a magic show on the last day. Libraries love these workshops because they bring families into the library. Along with magic, you can offer workshops on origami, balloon twisting, juggling, and more.

This month, I thought it would be nice to create a column on calendar magic. Calendars are all marked down now, so buy a dozen and you will have a lot of fun. All you need is a marker, a calendar, and our trusty calculator.

EFFECT: Hand your helper a calendar and ask them to open it to any month – maybe their birthday month or an anniversary. Ask them to draw a square around four numbers. Now they add up all four figures. All you need to know is the total, and you can tell them all four numbers. But let's go further than that and have them draw a square around nine numbers. This time, you tell them the total of all nine numbers. But why not go further than that and have them draw a square around sixteen numbers – four across and four down? This time, you end by making a prediction. Ask them to circle any number and then cross off all the numbers in both the horizontal row and the vertical row their number is in. Do this again two more times and you will have four numbers left. When those four numbers are added together, they match your prediction.

You are doing a whole show with nothing more than a calendar. Martin Gardner, Royal Heath, and Aldo Colombini have written extensively about calendar magic. Below, I share examples of my favorites.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION: *Four Square*

Take the sum of the four numbers they give you and divide it by 4. Now subtract 4 from that number, and you have the first of the four numbers in the square. If you add 1 to this number, you get the number to its right. Now you know two numbers. Add 7 to each of them, and you know the following two numbers.

Example:

$$\begin{aligned} 48 \text{ divided by } 4 &= 12 \\ 12 - 4 &= 8 \\ 8 + 1 &= 9 \\ 8 + 7 &= 15 \\ 9 + 7 &= 16 \end{aligned}$$

8	9
15	16

Nine-Number Square

You ask them for the first number in the square. Now add that number to 8. Now multiply that number by 9, and that number is the total of all nine numbers added together.

Example: $5 + 8 = 13 \times 9 = 117$.

By the time they're adding their numbers, you already have your answer. You can say, "Knowing that first number tells me your nine numbers added together will be X."

5	6	7
12	13	14
19	20	21

(continued on page 106)



Inside the Wizard's Workshop

BILL WINTERS

I became a huge fan of Okito-built props after hearing Dr. Robert J. Albo speak about them at a magic collector convention in the early 2000s. I was able to see several props up close and fell in love with the Oriental look. I was immediately drawn back to happy memories of my time serving in Japan while in the United States Air Force. One day while checking eBay, I ran across a “Silk Cabby” decorated with oriental decals in the style of Okito. I won the auction and later found out the builder of this beautiful prop was none other than Michael Baker, who I would have the pleasure of meeting a year later at another magic collector gathering.

Michael began building props as a child with the help of his mother, who was an adept artist and crafter. His interest in building props continued into his teenage years. From his magic mentor Robert Chadwick, Michael received crucial tips that helped him take his work to the next level. His expert skills at woodworking and metalworking came in handy when Michael landed a recurring role in the late seventies on a local TV show in Peoria, Illinois, called *The Captain Jinks Show*. It was the most-watched and longest-running local children's show in the history of the Central Illinois region. This forced Michael to come up with new tricks every week but being on a limited budget, he couldn't afford to buy new effects. Michael had no choice but to get into the workshop and build them himself. The constant need to produce new effects helped him hone his building skills and develop new techniques, such as turning an old crate into a magical production box or a rabbit dematerializer.

In the 1980s, Michael moved from Illinois to Alabama to become a professional chef and restaurant owner, making magical, mouthwatering dishes appear before customers. Despite a career change, the magic bug had bit him so hard that he worked at Tricks 'N Treats Magic Shop, in Birmingham, during his spare time. This magical escape would provide him with an up-close look at the construction and design of various props hitting the market. Some were good, most were not. Michael knew there were performers and collectors who desired high-quality props that lived up to the standard he believed in. He began selling a few items on consignment in the 1980s, eventually giving up his career as a chef to become a full-time magic craftsman. He began by offering his finely crafted effects to the world via eBay and later his own business website, The Magic Company. A quick look at his website makes it abundantly clear Michael has two other interests that complement his love of magic: old horror films and Halloween.

While his early pieces were basic in design, lacking embellishments and painted in contrasting colors, a few caught the eye of collectors who recognized his quality craftsmanship. They encouraged Michael to add decals to his pieces in the style of Okito. He now makes the finest effects on the market with an Oriental design. His craftsmanship is of such excellent quality that it has been highly praised by none other than Mel Babcock, who at ninety-two years young remains one of the premier builders of wooden props.

While Michael has produced runs as high as twenty-five, space limitations at his home workshop usually limit him to creating only



*Nosferatu,
a spiker block penetration.*



*The Three Boxes Mystery:
Michael's version of Stratosphere.*



*The Crystal
Prison of Serica.*

a half-dozen items at a time. He just doesn't have the square footage needed to hold a large supply of materials and stock. Despite a low output, the variety of his effects is astonishing. Classic effects put out by Michael include familiar names such as Block-O, Silk Cabby, Dagger Livestock Vanish, Card Dice, and Vampire Block Escape, featuring the image of the vampire Nosferatu from the 1922 silent film of the same name. His Crystal Prison of Serica, which is Michael's version of Silkola, is advertised as "The World's Most Beautiful Silkola" and I would have to agree. Another one of his classic props is the Astro Ball Cabinet, made in a design reminiscent of the Milson Worth effect, along with a whimsical Halloween version featuring a smiling skeleton and a rubber ball in place of the eyeball. Michael also releases several miniature versions of his effects, made to the same exacting standards.

One collector was so impressed by Michael's craftsmanship that he assembled 250 of his props. The collector, Bill Trotter, went on to order an absolutely stunning Checker Cabinet designed with a traditional Russian Fairytale theme. This one-of-a-kind piece is Michael's most challenging piece to date.

As mentioned earlier, Michael loves old

horror movies and Halloween, which he reflects in several of his props featuring Dracula, ghosts, and other creatures of the night. One classic item is the old, severed finger in a box gag, which Michael has upgraded to a miniature coffin. A more recent addition is "Dr. Zirkus and The Haunted Dungeon Present ... FLOWERS FOR GRANDPA'S GRAVE," an effect in which a table with a flower vase turns into a skeleton. This effect would make a great addition for anyone doing a Spook Show performance.

Michael can occasionally be found in the dealer's room at a convention or two, but the high cost of shipping his finely crafted creations to distant conventions keeps his appearances relatively close to home. One place you may have seen him is on the cover of a Stevens Magic Emporium catalog a few years ago. Michael, along with several other top builders, were brought together by Joe Stevens to recognize their outstanding craftsmanship and bring their products to the attention of the collectors and performers who demand the best. Several of Michael's creations can be found on the Stevens Magic Emporium website today.

Entertaining Tweens

By Bruce “Charlie” Johnson

I think that family entertainment is the most difficult of variety arts because you must entertain all age groups simultaneously. The hardest group to entertain are those around the age of ten, the age group that is commonly referred to as tweens.

In the Disney film *Bedknobs and Broomsticks*, these children are described as having entered the age of not believing. They have matured enough to know the difference between fantasy and reality. They know that the presents they receive from Santa actually came from their parents. They know that Mickey Mouse at Disneyland is really a person in a costume. They know that magicians use tricks to make you think they have non-existent supernatural powers.

Not only have they reached that level of maturity, but they want everyone else to know it as well. They may refuse to participate in anything they think is childish. They blurt out how they think a magic trick is performed. They do not care if they are correct. They just want people to know they understand that there is a secret method.

Your opening is vital when entertaining this age group. Children’s entertainers may start off with an audience interaction bit that is perhaps a little silly but gets the audience excited. That can be very successful with young children. If you start a family performance with such a routine, you will immediately lose the tweens because they will judge your show as being too childish for them to enjoy.

You need to earn their respect right away by proving your entertainment is for more mature audiences. The best way is through some demonstration of skill.



Bruce “Charlie” Johnson.

For the first half of my career, I started my act by demonstrating my juggling skill. For approximately the last thirty years, I usually start off with a plate spinning routine. I began with a few flourishes with a plate. Then I hold my left arm straight up, and look at the audience. Without looking at the plate, I flip it from my right hand at waist height and catch it in my left hand. Audience members immediately recognize that as being something that requires skill to accomplish. I leave my arm extended. I place a cane against the bottom of the plate. I start the plate spinning. Holding the cane by the bottom in my right hand, I tilt it back and forth a few times. The plate remains spinning in a horizontal plane. Then suddenly the cane

turns into a giant foulard. (It is a one-handed vanishing cane.) I catch the falling plate with my left hand. I gather up the material proving that the cane is gone. I put the cloth away and get out a stick to use in some simple spinning routines. I get a second stick and do some tricks that look increasingly skillful. Then I select one of the tweens and invite them to join me on stage. I transfer the spinning plate to their upraised forefinger. I lead the audience in applauding them. Now not only have I gained the respect of that age group, but I have proven that I will not make them look foolish on stage.

When I am doing strolling magic, I often start by performing Quadriflex, a closeup effect created by Ted “Suds” Sudbrack. At a recent event, a tween ducked behind his father. His mother said, “He is not afraid of clowns. He just decided that he was going to have an attitude today.”

I performed Quadriflex. I showed his younger sister a one-dollar bill. I folded it into eighths. I snapped my fingers. Then I unfolded the bill revealing that it was now mismade with the corners in the center. When the boy heard his sister and parents gasp, he peaked around his father’s legs. I made sure that he saw the strange condition of the bill. I folded the bill in eighths again. He watched from a distance as I snapped my fingers and unfolded the bill. Now it was back in its normal condition.

Next, I performed a sleight-of-hand coin routine. A half-dollar changed into a giant penny and back again. Then I vanished and reproduced it twice. I finished by stretching the coin so it looked like a guitar pick. By the end of the routine, he was standing next to his sister watching me closely. He enjoyed my other routines, including ones that I had created specifically to entertain young children. When I did my finish trick and the family realized that I was moving on to entertain another group, his mother looked at me over his head and mouthed “Thank you.”

I won’t reveal how Quadriflex works since it is a dealer item. However, I will say that the benefits of the effect are that the bill stays in audience view throughout the trans-

formation, a minimum number of moves are made, only the bill is used, there are no other props that might help you perform it. and the result is immediately obvious. Decide what in your repertoire seems to display skill and has a strong impact. Then use that as your opener when tweens are present in your audience.

After you gain their respect, tweens will enjoy the same routines that younger kids enjoy. I originally thought it was because they relaxed after you earned their respect. However, there is an even stronger psychological principle at action.

“Confirmation bias” means that once you form an opinion you pay particular attention to things that confirm your opinion and overlook things that contradict it. That means if a tween decides that your entertainment is childish, they will focus on other things in your show that they consider childish and ignore your demonstrations of skill. You may never be able to change their initial impression. However, if they decide that your entertainment is suitable for older audience members, they will concentrate on your demonstrations of skill and ignore things that might be more suitable for younger audience members.

Another important thing to do when entertaining tweens is to recognize their newly acquired knowledge. Tweens will often tell somebody appearing as a clown, “You are not a real clown.” They are not displaying displeasure with the entertainer. They are just announcing that they know it is a person playing a role. I have seen some clowns try to use an elaborate argument to try to prove to a tween that they are a real clown. I have never seen anybody convince somebody at that stage in their mental development that they are a real clown. I believe that recognizing the intelligence of an audience member is more important than trying to satisfy my ego by convincing them of something that is not true.

It is much better to acknowledge how smart the child is. One of the best responses I have witnessed was how Richard Snowberg handled the situation. When a child announced that he was not a real clown, he

(continued on page 74)

Charles Edwin (“Tennessee Eddie”) Lake



September 21, 1937 - January 27, 2026

A Tribute by Dale Salwak

Such a dear and good man: these are the first words that came to mind when I learned on the morning of January 27 that “Tennessee Eddie” Lake had passed away. He was eighty-eight.

A Chavez graduate himself, for more than two decades he played a central role in the Studio’s success as he befriended and mentored and encouraged many of my students, a few of whom have posted an appreciation below, while taking them to the Magic Castle and other Southern California historic sites.

As the accompanying photos suggest, Eddie – who for many years worked with Southern California Edison as a service man – lived to the end an extraordinarily rich life with an insatiable curiosity and passion for so many subjects including magic, Western history, music, virtual reality, and Ham radio for which he was licensed.

He was born on September 21, 1937 to James (Jim) and Marion, a devoted housewife. His father, like Eddie, led a multifaceted life filled with a multitude of interests. He owned a restaurant, was an actor, booked shows in Tennessee, and knew and hired many country artists from the Grand Old Opry.

Eddie was predeceased by his wife Linda (*née* Martin); he often referred to her as “an angel on earth.” He cherished his family, to whom our hearts goes out, and adored his

friends. Survivors include a sister Holly Hildebran, daughter LuAnn Nicosia, and granddaughter Holly Jacks.



Eddie and Linda were married September 1, 1960.

LuAnn Nicosia

I feel so incredibly blessed to have had such wonderful parents for so many years filled with such precious memories. Some of my earliest were of my dad building for me a life-size Old West Town in our backyard complete with a hotel, saloon with swinging doors, and boardwalks. It even had a water line run along the roofline so that if I wanted “rain” in my town, I could turn it on! A hill

next to it was built of little boulders to climb on; and I can't forget to mention a custom stagecoach with my name on it as well as a fake mechanical horse to ride. He also bought bales of hay that he spread under a large walnut tree with a rope onto a large branch. For hours my friends and I would all swing on it and fly out and land in the piles of hay.

We went everywhere together – from attending swap meets to building robots, even deep sea fishing for a baby shark. He continued, through the years, to build three more Old West Towns, the last and greatest when he was eighty-seven, complete with boardwalks, flickering lanterns, and a full stage with singing bears. He had a little stage set up in his front room, too, with all his magic show to the day he died. One of my last adventures he was so much a part of was a short film that he helped me to produce and he appeared in. I never could have accomplished this and so much more without him.



Eddie created four Western towns, the most recent when he was eighty-seven. Eddie's love for music included a recreation of the Bear Jam-boree.



Eddie in formal attire after graduating from Chavez. Ventriloquism was another of Eddie's interests.

Holly Jacks

He loved being a part of such a kind magical group of men and women. They brought him so much joy.

Bond Lee

So sad to lose Eddie. He was amazing, taking us everywhere, and making everything fun. A truly wonderful soul.

Kabir Khan

This is such heartbreaking news. Eddie was a scholar and gentleman. Very sad to hear this.

Roman Baselgia

I am deeply saddened to hear about this. I knew Eddie since 2003 and enjoyed several great trips with him including to the USS Midway in San Diego.

Michael Butt

I have such fond memories of Eddie. I recall him introducing me to Billy McComb one night, which led to a very funny and memorable evening.

(continued on page xx)

Sebastian Castaneda

My heart is swirling in a hurricane of motions. I have all the gratitude in the world for Eddie. He shared so much magic and even more how to be a good person. His heart was immense. He was a defining moment in my life. He always had a funny story, always bringing up smiles in anyone near him, even strangers we would meet on the street. They were immediately charmed and enthralled by his charisma and kind nature. Eddie will always be in our hearts.



Eddie is pictured right, second from the front at one of Chavez's many splendid dinners following graduation ceremonies.

Diego Winburn

One of the greatest men ever. Such inspiration, an amazing friend. Thank you, Eddie, for all the incredible memories and lessons.

Entertaining Tweens – from page 71

replied, “You’re right! You must be really smart. But I heard there is going to be a clown here. I just love clowns. So, when you see the clown let me know so that I can watch them.”

The kids would always respond that he was the clown. Then they relaxed and enjoyed his entertainment.

If a kid catches what I am doing while performing magic, I admit it. For example, during my sleight-of-hand coin routine, I perform a French Drop to make a coin vanish. If a kid says that it is in my other hand, I respond, “Of course it is. What do you think I am, a real magician?”

Admitting that I am not a real magician defuses the need to discover the method. Then I perform something like a card trick where I know they will be completely amazed without any clue to how it is performed. That way I have immediately regain my credibility as an entertainer.

If somebody asks me how I perform my magic, I tell them, “It takes lots of practice.

If a child shows any interest in how I am performing my magic, and the circumstances are appropriate, I say, “I started learning how to perform magic when I was eight years old. I went to my public library and the librarian helped me find books on how to perform magic. I checked them out many times. Now I make my living by performing magic. If you really want to learn to perform magic, your librarian can help you out. If you want to learn anything else, your librarian can help you find books that will teach you how to do that.”

I have performed at the same annual community event twenty-four times. One year an excited family approached me. They said they came to the event specifically to find me. They said that I had told their son when he was young to go to the library to learn how to perform magic, and he followed my advice. They said that he decided on a different career, but he began performing magic professionally when he was in high school. He continued performing magic while in college and managed to graduate debt free. They thanked me for starting him on that path.

I look forward to the challenge of entertaining tweens. I know that I have succeeded when a child approaches me after a show and exclaims, “I know there is no such thing as real magic, but that was magic!”

I am always interested in your questions and comments. You can contact me at clownjuggler@comcast.net.

NOMINATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL OFFICES



In accordance with the I.B.M. Bylaws, Article VII, the Board of Trustees has nominated candidates for the international offices. Should these candidates be challenged by petition candidates, making an election necessary, the prevailing candidates would take office in July 2026 in St. Louis.

These nominees for Board of Trustees are listed below. The terms of office are one year for international officers, except for members of the Executive Committee, whose term is three years.

Additional candidates may be nominated by petition. By May 1 (the "Closing Date") following the publication by the Board's nominations in *The Linking Ring*, any qualified member may be named for any elective office on the International Board by a petition signed by at least one (1) percent of the total membership.

The Executive Secretary and two members who shall be appointed by the International President, shall verify the authenticity of said nominating petitions as coming from qualified voters within six (6) days following the Closing Date. In the event there are two or more petitions for the same office on the Board, the nominee named on the petition carrying the greatest number of signatories shall be the candidate for the office named in the petition, with the exception of nominees for the Executive Committee, where up to two petition nominees carrying the greatest number of signatories are permitted in addition to the two persons nominated by the Board.

Nominees of the Board for elective offices shall be elected without balloting provided that no other nominations are made by petition. However, in the event of a properly petitioned nomination for any elective office on the Board, an official election ballot, bearing the seal of the organization, shall be distributed to all eligible qualified members.

All election ballots shall be returned to the indicated address by the date required by the ballot. Such election ballots shall list the Board's nominated candidates as well as candidates nominated by petition.

The Board shall establish rules for the conduct of such elections by ballot and shall afford all qualified members the privilege of voting.

The following candidates are the Board of Trustees' nominees for 2026/2027:

International President Elect – Mr. Keith Fields

International Vice President – Mr. Jeff Sobel

International Treasurer – Mr. Charles Arkin

International Secretary – Ms. Simone Marron

Executive Committee Member 2026-2029 – Mr. John "Johnny New York" Smith

Executive Committee Member 2026-2029 – Mr. Ben Young



Polishing the Rings

SKIP WAY

Auriga

During ancient Roman triumphal processions, a slave known as an auriga would stand behind the victorious hero whispering the phrase *memento mori* (“remember you must die”) into his ear. This practice was meant to ground a great leader’s ego with a steady reminder of human fragility.

Do you have an auriga – that one guy or gal who keeps you grounded? That person you can reach out to anytime and say, “Can I run something by you?”

Last week I was about to start an exciting new project. At the last minute, I sent the project proposal to a close and trusted friend and asked if it would be a foolish thing to take on at this time.

He replied, “Yes.” Then he listed half a dozen very good and rational reasons that I hadn’t considered. I reluctantly, but wisely, thanked him and shelved the project. It is so important to have people we can trust to shout “Stop!” when we’re running toward the brink of stupidity.

In a similar example, I had a killer idea (I can say that with confidence because you’ve never read about it) involving clever content with the potential for future growth. Then I asked this trusted friend who knows me and understands my penchant for new projects, several of which sit unfinished in my various rolltop desk cubbies, for his angular perspective. He let me have it and he was right to do so. Fortunately, I had a spare cubbie available.

Do you have people who can quickly and honestly give you an assessment of something you plan to say, write, or do?

Not only within your Ring, but within your job, your family, or your life in general? People willing to risk our ire, disappointment, and irritation to provide thoughtful, unvarnished feedback when asked?

I’m not talking about the Ring know-it-all who is convinced she’s the smartest person in the room or the Ring busy-body who is always poking his nose into everyone else’s business while his goes astray. Nor those who monopolize conversations, ignore criticism, address others in a condescending tone, or mansplain things the rest of us already understand.

I’m talking about the exceptionally rare and mature truth-tellers in our lives who hold their thoughts until asked. Those wonderful friends, peers, or mentors who, if you ask, you had better be emotionally and intellectually prepared to hear the unadorned truth from their point of view. The kind of person who will give you a verbal Leroy Gibbs slap to the back of the head, or the real thing if called for, and a sharp, “What were you thinking?”

They may be the masters in their field who help others fine-tune their skills. The trusted advisors and coaches adept at identifying our blind spots or resolving personal or professional dilemmas when asked. Or the mere day-to-day lifeguards we trust to come to our aid when life’s waters become confusing and chaotic.

We’ve all been fortunate to have one or two of these inspired guides throughout our lives. I suspect, without hesitation, that your greatest mistakes occurred when you

allowed your ego to override their very direct and accurate advice. Adversely, your greater achievements likely occurred when you heeded their advice.

A few may be managers and leaders. Others are average Joes and Jills without formal authority yet blessed with exceptional knowledge and worldly experience. They help us to focus on solving challenges immediately rather than allowing them to dominate our day, drain our energy, and fester within our thoughts. They lead by example, guiding us through action rather than a litany of wordy instructions.

We all need a Gandalf, Yoda, or Dumbledore in our lives providing valued input and feedback that pushes us past the limitations of our own shaded perceptions. The kind of person who watches us silently until we specifically ask for their unfiltered feedback. Be as honest and open with them as they are with you. Trust and sincerity is a two-way path. Nurture it.

Their trusted perspective points out blind spots we may fail to see as we struggle with important leadership, business, or life decisions. We all need that one person who can honestly review a difficult email you're about to send out to the Ring, your in-laws, or your boss. The one you can drop in on to discuss your exciting new Ring project idea. Who you can bare an irritated rant to before posting the damaging outburst to social media.

We've all seen or heard "it" from others. When they proudly delivered their "it," we all muttered to ourselves, "They clearly didn't think this through." Don't be that leader.

Find that reliable guru, strong shoulder, or blunt ally who will expose your spontaneous errors before it is too late. Better yet, develop a group of steadfast, outspoken counselors, who may offer their unique and thoughtful perspective on an idea, plan, or project when asked. Those who can look you in the eye and say, "Your idea has merit, but I have some concerns about" That person who has the experience to foretell the likely consequences of our decision and isn't afraid to share it. That person for whom we willingly drop our defenses, set aside our ego, and to whom we can confidently say, "Lay it on me, brother."

Whether he or she is a dedicated mentor, a coach, or just someone you share a cup of coffee with now and then, these sages are a vital component of becoming the best version of ourselves. They share wisdom, lead by example, provide constructive criticism, and offer unwavering support. Seeking and embracing their guidance is essential to personal and professional growth and success.

Find your auriga and take their whispered *memento mori* to heart. Avoid the missteps that can harm your Ring and your life.

Skip Way has served our magic youth as a member of the Youth Committee since 2007. He is the Director of Magic Youth Raleigh, the I.B.M. Youth program sponsored by the Lee-Snavely I.B.M. Ring 199 in Raleigh, North Carolina. Skip welcomes your comments and inquiries via IBMYouth@magician.org.

Sign up 1!

The more members we have the more we can do to advance magic and serve you.

Heath's Di-Cyphering Dice Revisited

By Thomas Henry

Many times, a magic prop from the past is so old it comes across as new to modern audiences. Such is the case with Royal Vale Heath's Di-Cyphering Dice, which will celebrate its centennial anniversary next year. Despite becoming all the rage in the 1930s, with a resurgence in the 1960s, they're nearly forgotten now.

This clever set of numerical dice was originally concocted for presentations of lightning calculation, but later found deeper mystical employment in mentalism and mental magic. Great thinkers from our craft, such as Theodore Annemann, Verne Chesbro, Reinhard Müller, T. A. Waters, and Bob Cassidy, among others, found them ideal for startling demonstrations of psychic powers, so maybe they deserve a second look.

While not so commonplace nowadays, reissues are indeed still available from a couple online sources. Even better, though, would be to craft a custom set; it requires but an evening or two and some readily available materials. In that way you can take advantage of several improvements described herein.

What They Are

Five dice, in assorted colors, comprise the canonical Heath set (Fig. 1). If a participant rolls the dice out, then five random three-digit numbers shine upward. Described baldly, while the participant is just beginning to tot them up (with a calculator, no less), you'll almost instantly know the impending sum. Two seconds at worst, and that's no exaggeration!



Fig. 1

And lest your participant suspects some sort of memory machinations at work, you might point out that with five dice, each sporting six values, there must be 7776 conceivable totals ($6 \times 6 \times 6 \times 6 \times 6$) ... which is a lie, but more about that later.

The numbers, though outwardly humdrum, are ingeniously intertwined (Fig. 2). Let's try an example to see how they behave. After casting the dice, imagine the numbers in the top row of this figure turn up.

Yellow	Green	Black	Red	Blue
642	558	168	971	483
147	855	663	377	285
840	657	960	179	780
741	459	366	872	186
543	954	564	773	384
345	756	267	278	681

Fig. 2

While the participant is slaving away summing 642, 558, 168, 971, and 483, you merely glimpse and sum the rightmost digit of each die. In this case we have $2 + 8 + 8 + 1 + 3 = 22$. Then mentally subtract that from 50 to arrive at 28. Finally, juxtapose those two halves to form a grand total of 2822, which the participant eventually arrives at by conventional means.

For convenience, call that first subtotal *lower*, 22 in our example. Subtracting this from 50 results in *upper*. Going forward, the number 50 itself will be referred to as the *pivot*.

Rather pleasant is that with this secret scheme, only easily tamed numbers arise; you'll never add beyond 39, so the procedure is a cinch to prosecute.

Despite that intrinsic simplicity, always lurking in the back of any thinking person's

mind is that if just one die had taken a ninety-degree detour, an entirely different total would have transpired.

A Bit of History

Before seeing how this mathematical novelty can rise above a dull arithmetic exercise, let's investigate its heritage a bit. In what follows, for any citations, refer to the bibliography for publishing details and relevant page numbers.

According to Martin Gardner, this prop began life as an item marketed in 1927 by the aforesaid Royal Vale Heath (1883-1960). The first magazine advertisement I've spotted appeared in a 1933 issue of *The Sphinx* (Fig. 3). This is probably a good moment to mention that over the years the name of the prop has assumed several variant spellings.

**ROYAL HEATH'S
MYSTIC
DI-CYPHERING TRICK**

Now anyone can be a lightening calculator with Royal Heath's new Mathematical Mental Trick.

It will take you a second to give the total of five three figure numbers, freely selected by the audience, and will only take you a second to learn how to do it.

No mental worker can be without this effect. An excellent press stunt, and pocket trick. It is so mystifying that it is almost unbelievable.

Complete with five beautifully engraved colored dice and full instructions.

\$1.10

Dealers Write for Wholesale Prices.

R. V. Heath 120 Broadway New York City

P. S. I will be at the Convention in Boston to autograph copies of my book, "MATHEMAGIC."

Fig. 3

Now Heath was an amateur magician of some note (and member of our organization), earning his livelihood in New York as a stockbroker. Significant is that he credited Edmund Balducci (1906-1988) with the numerical underpinnings. Balducci (also an I.B.M. member) is more famed nowadays for a deceptive card force as well as a self-levitation.

As for published expositions, the earliest reference I've found was penned by Max Franz Hahn in the June 1935 issue of *Magie*

(a German language publication). Rather startling is that somehow Hahn managed to unearth the main mechanism behind the dice, detailing the rules which permit the design of new sets for further purposes. The only drawback to his groundbreaking work is that he was a trifle negligent in honoring Heath by name, referring to him only as *unbekanntem Manne* ("unknown man").

A decade later, readers on this side of the Atlantic learned of it from the inventor himself in the compendium *My Best*, edited by J. G. Thompson, Jr. But it perhaps found its largest audience in 1956, thanks to that popular classic by Martin Gardner, *Mathematics, Magic, and Mystery*.

Bring on the Mind-Readers

So, just a tyro's pocket trick, eh? Well, Theodore Annemann ventured to disagree in his "Dice and a Book" of 1936. Taking it well beyond lightning calculation, he noticed how the Di-Cyphering Dice could be pressed into service as a decent ranging force suitable for a book test. What's more, he came up with a cunning scheme to further reduce the required outs. It's really quite brilliant, but ...

As mentioned above, it would seem to onlookers there must be 7776 totals possible. Annemann claimed the range in actuality spans but twenty-seven outcomes. However, more careful analysis shows the true number to be thirty-five (Fig. 4).

1139, 1238, 1337, 1436, 1535, 1634, 1733,
1832, 1931, 2030, 2129, 2228, 2327, 2426,
2525, 2624, 2723, 2822, 2921, 3020, 3119,
3218, 3317, 3416, 3515, 3614, 3713, 3812,
3911, 4010, 4109, 4208, 4307, 4406, 4505

Fig. 4

That erroneous claim was twice repeated by Verne Chesbro, and much later recapitulated twice again by Bob Cassidy. Curiously, in another piece by Cassidy published in between, he inaccurately noted there are thirty-seven outcomes, which errs on the high side.

Whoa! These were three lucky chaps not to have hit the doomed combinations in their

performances. It appears the first person to set matters straight was Rudolf Braunmüller in his extensive treatment of 1987.

You might suppose a book test requiring thirty-five outs would be too unwieldy in practice. Annemann suggested a good way to trim the fat. The participant's total is guaranteed to be four digits long, composed of a lower and upper pair of two-digit numbers. As an outwardly helpful convenience, he had the participant consider the larger pair as the page number, and the smaller as the word on that page. In effect, this shrinks the list to the more economical twenty-one (Fig. 5).

2525, 2624, 2723, 2822, 2921, 3020, 3119, 3218, 3317, 3416, 3515, 3614, 3713, 3812, 3911, 4010, 4109, 4208, 4307, 4406, 4505

Fig. 5

Reinhard Müller really went to town in the 1960s with a series of articles in the German journal *Magische Welt*, layering the dice with billet switches, the Center Tear, envelopes, placards, and even a technique normally reserved for a Living or Dead experiment. His creative work serves as a reminder that it truly pays to think beyond a prop's "intended" purpose.

Moreover, simple stagecraft can further propel this humble method into the realm of convincing mind-reading. See T. A. Waters' sly innovation in *The New Phoenix* for instance. And the prolific U. F. Grant explained how it can easily become part of a two-person act.

Patterns, Patterns, Patterns

It's long been my contention mental magicians can benefit from Sherlock Holmes's admonition: don't just see, but **observe**. You never know when some pattern might turn up which at first blush seems inconsequential only later to open the floodgates.

Look back at **Figure 4**. Do you notice any regularity? These numbers increase by ninety-nine from one to the next. Note too that the totals alternate even and odd, just like the pages of a book.

What's more, the *checksum* of each entry

is either five or fourteen. (A checksum is simply the sum of the digits). And since those two values are nine units apart, they're in fact equivalent when stepped along the circumference of a wheel divided into nine sectors. See my "The Mysteries of Modulo-Nine," *The Linking Ring*, Volume 106, Number 2, February 2026, pp. 70-74 for particulars.

Iterating the checksum process until but a single figure remains terminates in the *digital root*. Providentially, this will be five for every possible sum, a fact which could prove handy in routines themed around numerology.

Dig deeper and you may detect a further pattern. Grabbing the digits in the thousands place and the tens place for each total (except in three uncooperative instances), you'll see they almost always add up to four. The official lingo is to say these are *four's-complements*.

For example, in 1832 we see $1 + 3 = 4$, and in 2129 it's $2 + 2 = 4$. There are three exceptions however: 2030, 3020 and 4010. Within these oddballs, the digits are in fact *five's-complements* of each other. Rudolf Braunmüller came up with an elegant way to deal with this disruption for an effect of pure telepathy.

In an analogous fashion, the digits in the hundreds place and the units place of most totals are *ten's-complements*. Once more, 2030, 3020, and 4010 break up the waltz. But given that there are only three exceptions (and fortunately the same as before), it's possible to account for them in a practical routine without too much finagling.

With the canonical dice, the total – whatever it may be – always lies between 1000 and 5000. That is, the leading digit must be one, two, three, or four, and nothing else. Not so obvious is that these pop up with distinctly different frequencies (Fig. 6). Add 'em up and you'll get 7776 as expected. Were I a gambling man, next time the participant casts the bones, I'd know which to bet on!

Fig. 6

	Frequency	Probability
1	534	0.07
2	4347	0.56
3	2788	0.36
4	107	0.01

Designing a Custom Set

It's quite feasible to create new sets of dice for extended or special purposes. It all hinges upon two cardinal principles. Refer back to **Figure 2**. You'll note that the *central digit* of the numbers is fixed within each color. So, Yellow = 4, Green = 5, Black = 6, Red = 7, and Blue = 8. Further observe that $4 + 5 + 6 + 7 + 8 = 30$. Keep that in mind for a moment.

Now look at the sum of the first and third digits of each number within a color category. With yellow, for example, you'll see $6 + 2$, $1 + 7$, $8 + 0$, $7 + 1$, $5 + 3$, and $3 + 5$. These are all eight's-complements. Call that the *key number* for yellow. A quick check shows that the sum of all the key numbers is $8 + 13 + 9 + 10 + 7 = 47$.

One more thing, for both practical and aesthetic reasons, it's perhaps best to avoid a leading or central digit of zero in the numbers. With that proviso, we can now state the two rules to be obeyed should you'd wish to design your own customized set of five dice:

- The sum of the five central digits must be either twenty or thirty.
- The sum of the key numbers must be either forty-eight or forty-seven.

Specifically, twenty goes with forty-eight, and thirty with forty-seven. The proof of these claims requires only elementary algebra, but is too lengthy to relate here.

Let's put these two rules into practice to see if we can improve upon Annemann's book test. After a little bit of numerical juggling, a workable set emerges (**Fig. 7**).

Yellow	Green	Black	Red	Blue
115	156	178	389	994
214	255	277	587	895
313	354	376	686	796
412	453	475	488	697
511	552	574	983	598
610	750	970	785	499

Fig. 7

The modus operandi remains the same as before. But now the total span of outcomes rings in at thirty-one, four less than with the canonical dice (**Fig. 8**). Moreover, it can be

demonstrated that this is the best possible. But if you apply Annemann's artifice of rearranging the pairs so the smaller is always on the left, then the range shrinks still further to a rather pleasant nineteen possibilities.

1337, 1436, 1535, 1634, 1733, 1832, 1931,
2030, 2129, 2228, 2327, 2426, 2525, 2624,
2723, 2822, 2921, 3020, 3119, 3218, 3317,
3416, 3515, 3614, 3713, 3812, 3911, 4010,
4109, 4208, 4307

Fig. 8

Incidentally, there's nothing especially sacred about the pivot Heath decided upon. My rationale for allegiance to it is that I find it easier to subtract from 50, not some weird number. However, Gerhard Küter suggested 51 might camouflage the innards a bit more. I'm not convinced that gain is worth muddying the mental computation, though.

A Built-In Peek

It's easy to tweak Heath's Di-Cyphering Dice to incorporate an additional gratifying feature. So easy in fact, I have to wonder why Heath didn't include it from the get-go, for it doesn't impose any extra expense (**Fig. 9**). With this improvement you're now able to determine the sum of the faces hidden from view.

Yellow	Green	Black	Red	Blue
126	137	148	259	469
621	731	841	952	964
225	236	247	358	568
522	632	742	853	865
324	335	445	556	667
423	533	544	655	766

Fig. 9

Here's the deal. We'll label the dice so the back and front of each are reversals. For example, if 126 is on the front of the die, 621 appears on its back, i.e., the outer digits are swapped. During the performance, you'll invoke the same rule as before, except now secretly sum the hundreds digits of the faces you do see. Then proceed as ever to arrive at the total of the hidden faces.

In practice, you might have the participant stack the dice in a single column. She'll be

gazing at the fronts, of course, while the reverse sides telegraph the needed info to you. Since the related pairs are opposing, the deceit is well disguised. Yet you're able to instantly divine the total of the numbers only the participant can see.

Onward

For the sake of brevity, this article has only considered sets of five dice. But similar patterns hold for groups of three, four, six, eight, and ten. For example, see my write-up on the Tri-Ciphering Dice in *The Linking Ring*. This is a sextet which additionally integrates the built-in peek arrangement.

As for turning an ephemeral idea into a physical reality, as a first stab, kids's blocks and sticky-back labels from the local dollar store come to mind. Or you could go with water-slide decals and blank colored dice, both of which are inexpensively available from Amazon and other suppliers. Incidentally, the set shown in **Figure 1** was fabricated at home in just that way.

Or how about dispensing with the dice altogether? Ernst Schipper suggested large placards bearing the mystic numbers for cabaret or stage use. I crafted a set on colored card stock for close-up work, even minting a phony box to suggest this was some sort of commercial game (**Fig. 10**).

Along these lines, Helmut Meißner employed cardboard triangles, layering the Heath business with a parity ruse for a double whammy. Doug Canning even refashioned the quantities as prices and turned it into an amusing shopping list routine.



With the following bibliography as a guide, why not spend some time at the bookshelf? You might be surprised at the umpteen ingenious and unexpected ways the Heath Di-Cyphering Dice have been recruited to demonstrate telepathy, clairvoyance, and precognition. And with so many untapped possibilities waiting to be discovered, this principle may just weather another hundred years!

_____ *You may reach Thomas Henry by email at everett.ritland@gmail.com.*

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Becoming the Un-Magician: The Unlearning

Part One

By John A. Palumbo

*“The magician must eventually learn
that the real illusion is the need to impress.”*

When people ask me what it takes to become a truly great magician, I tell them this: “You have to become an Un-Magician.”

That usually creates a pause. Just like I once said the secret to becoming a powerful speaker is to become an Un-Speaker, the same applies to the world of magic: because the path to mastery is not paved with more tricks, more speed, or more sparkle. It is paved with less.

Less need, less noise, less pretending. And more presence.

Whether you are a fifteen-year-old practicing your first coin vanish or a seasoned performer commanding stages for decades, the real journey begins when you stop asking “How do I get them to like me?” and start asking “What happens if I show them the truth instead?”

The Illusion Behind the Illusion

Magicians, no matter their skill, age, or style, carry a secret weight that audiences never see.

A quiet, persistent pressure. The need to prove. The need to dazzle. The need to earn applause with cleverness.

That is the real illusion behind the illusion.

For many of us, it begins long before we are conscious of it. Before we ever learn a sleight or stand in front of a mirror rehearsing lines that don’t quite sound like us, we absorb it from the room. From the way applause is treated as currency, the way silence is treated as danger, and the belief that if they are not reacting, we must be failing.

The Un-Magician begins by questioning that belief.

The Boy in the Magic Shop

When I was twelve, I practically lived inside Mehr’s Novelty and Magic Shop in downtown Birmingham, Alabama. It was the place where I first met local magician Robert Chadwick. I spent so many Saturdays there that the magicians began to wonder whether I actually had a home.

I carried a small wooden case with the word

About the Author

John A. Palumbo grew up inside Mehr’s Novelty and Magic Shop in Birmingham, Alabama, where he informally apprenticed under magician Robert Chadwick. A lifelong student of the art, he now integrates magic’s principles of timing, silence, and psychological astonishment into his work as an international speaker and the author of fifteen books on influence and persuasion. His writing explores the deeper side of the craft, the kind of magic that happens in the space between words. You may reach him by email at john@johnpalumbo.com



MAGIC stenciled on the side. The letters were crooked and the edges were chipped. The case had more pride than polish.

I was not there just to buy tricks. I was there to watch, listen, and absorb. To breathe in wonder.

Chadwick did not know he was teaching me, and I certainly did not know I was learning. But I was. Every flick of his hand, every pause before a reveal, every moment of silence he allowed to exist without filling it.

Those Saturdays became my education long before I ever walked on stage.

One morning, the young magician who usually worked behind the counter could not come in, so Chadwick asked me if I would help out. To me, it felt like being invited backstage at the greatest show on earth.

I was not performing.

I was not talking.

I was not trying to impress anyone.

I was present.

And without knowing it, that was my first lesson in becoming the Un-Magician.

We Begin by Trying Too Hard

Most magicians never outgrow the early instinct: *Please like me. Please clap. Please see how good I am.* We have been conditioned to tie our worth to the spectator's reaction, as if mystery only matters if someone jumps to their feet.

But the Un-Magician learns something deeper. The value of a moment is not measured by applause, it is measured by connection. Connection is quieter than approval. It does not rush to the surface. It lingers. It settles.

You cannot manufacture it with polish. You cannot force it with speed. You earn it by being real enough to stay still.

Beyond the Scripted Smile

To become the Un-Magician, you must begin to unlearn. And that is where most performers become uncomfortable. You must unlearn the habits that once made you feel safe: the polished banter, the forced charm, the smile that performs even when you do not feel it.

Technique is useful. Armor is not.

And here is where many women in magic

will nod with a deeper knowing, because their path has often meant working twice as hard for half the recognition: told to be smooth but not too bold, mysterious but still likable, strong but soft.

Forget all of that. The Un-Magician has no prescribed costume. She can walk on stage in combat boots or ballet flats. He can wear eyeliner or none at all. They can wear silence like a crown.

Because the Un-Magician does not follow a script – they follow truth.

The Danger of Being Too Good

Here is something no one warns you about: being too polished can work against you. The more perfect your performance becomes, the more the audience feels the distance. They may admire you, but do they connect with you?

Audiences can sense hunger, and they can also sense honesty.

The Un-Magician does not beg for attention. They invite it quietly. They let their presence, not their perfection, do the work.

Mystery Has No Volume

You cannot shout someone into wonder. You cannot talk them into awe. You cannot control the way your magic lands. You can only prepare the space for it to unfold.

Mystery does not require your voice to go up. It requires your ego to step down.

Let the card fall. Let the silk drift. Let the audience complete the thought.

The Un-Magician does not slam the door. They leave it slightly open, just enough for curiosity to wander in.

The Moment You First Let Go

Every magician has one moment, early or late, when something shifts.

A moment when a mistake is not a failure, but a doorway. A moment when silence feels stronger than patter. A moment when the room leans in, not because of a move, but because you finally stopped trying to control it.

That is the moment the Un-Magician steps forward. Not the version of you rehearsed in the mirror – the version of you that is alive. *(continued on page 101)*

Remembering Hiawatha Johnson Jr. Magician, Storyteller, and Friend

By Vince Wilson



Vince Wilson welcomes Hiawatha to Poe's Magic Theatre in Baltimore, Maryland.

Sometimes you write because you must. When you do not have enough time, in the middle of packing, planning, with one thousand things and more to do, you write. Because if you do not put your thoughts, your heart, and your mind into words, they will break, and the tears come out.

The first time I saw Hiawatha Johnson Jr., I was a kid sitting too close to the television, watching PBS in the late 1980s. That detail matters to me. He wasn't doing tricks at the camera, he was talking to you. The magic happened, sure, but it arrived wrapped in story, rhythm, pause. It felt human. That moment lodged itself somewhere deep and stubborn, and years later, it became part of how I understand what magic can be when it actually means something. That magician

was Hiawatha Johnson Jr., and learning of his passing has left a hollow place that words don't neatly fill.

Hiawatha was found in his home in Lynchburg, Virginia, after a wellness check. Details are still unfolding, and I won't pretend to understand them yet. What I do understand, with complete clarity, is the scale of what we've lost. This was not just the passing of a performer, but the quiet extinguishing of a particular kind of light, the kind that warms and demands attention.

Calling Hiawatha a magician never felt sufficient, but it was true. Calling him a storyteller felt closer. Calling him a Renaissance man might sound like hyperbole until you actually watched him work. He lived across disciplines the way most people move

across rooms. Music, dance, theater, writing, history, teaching, directing, choreography, composition, scholarship. None of it felt bolted on. Each discipline spoke to the others. I found that when Hiawatha performed, you could feel those conversations happening in real time, like multiple lifetimes politely taking turns inside a single body.

He once called himself a “Conjurer of the Arts,” and I never heard a more accurate self-description. He didn’t stack talents; he braided them. A gesture carried the weight of a dancer. A line of dialogue landed like a musician knew exactly when to let silence do the work. The magic itself never shouted. It didn’t need to. It arrived quiet, confident, ancient in the best way. He had a gift for making old skills feel alive again, not preserved, not nostalgic, just present.

Watching him perform as an adult, long after that PBS moment, I realized something that stuck with me. Hiawatha didn’t perform at audiences. He invited them into the room where stories live before they get polished. That takes courage. It also takes generosity. You could feel that generosity in every choice he made onstage, and off.

This is the part that’s hardest to write without wanting to pace the room. Hiawatha was not only someone I admired. He became a mentor. He became a collaborator. He became a friend. He performed regularly at Poe’s Magic Theatre at the Lord Baltimore Hotel, and every time he did, the space felt smarter, warmer, more intentional. He reminded all of us why storytelling magic exists in the first place, not to fool people, but to connect them.

I keep thinking back to that kid watching PBS, not knowing any of this yet, just knowing that something important was happening. That feeling never left. It only grew context. Now it carries grief, and gratitude, and a responsibility I don’t yet know how to name, but I feel it sitting there, waiting.

Hiawatha taught me, and many others, that magic doesn’t need to be loud to be powerful. It needs to be honest. It needs to listen. It needs to remember that wonder is a shared space, not a conquest.

I don’t know how to end this cleanly. He

wouldn’t have wanted it tidy. I’ll just say this. The stories he told are still moving through us. I can feel them when I step onstage. I can hear them in the pauses. That’s not nothing. That’s a kind of immortality most people never touch.

A Life Woven With Magic and Meaning

Hiawatha understood something early on that a lot of magicians spend their entire careers circling without landing. Magic is not the trick. It is the story you trust the trick to carry. For him, illusion was never the point. Story was. Culture was. Community was. The effect existed to serve the narrative, not the other way around. Whenever Hiawatha performed, I wasn’t watching a sequence of moves, I was being walked somewhere. Familiar folklore, half-remembered legends, personal history, all of it softened and reshaped until it felt intimate, like a story being told just for you, even in a full room.

He had an uncanny ability to make people feel something before they ever realized they had been fooled. That mattered to him. He cared deeply about how magic landed emotionally. You left his shows remembering a feeling, not a method. A sense that you’d been invited into a small, human truth wrapped in wonder. That was the spell.

His devotion to that approach earned him national attention long before it was fashionable to talk about storytelling magic as its own discipline. When he appeared in the PBS documentary *The Art of Magic* in the late 1990s, it felt like the rest of the world finally caught up to what he had already been doing for years. I remember watching him again on PBS and feeling that same childhood sensation, that quiet pull of being inside the story rather than outside the trick. Years later, when I told him how much that moment shaped me, he smiled in that way he had, gentle and a little amused, and said he was glad the work traveled.

His presence in *Magic Camp* and later *Desperate Acts of Magic* captured something essential about him that live audiences

already knew. He was never just performing. He was teaching, even when he wasn't trying to. As artistic director of Tannen's Magic Camp, mentoring young magicians felt less like a role and more like a natural extension of who he was. He didn't hand out answers. He asked better questions. His scenes in those films carry the same warmth, patience, and quiet authority he brought to every live performance.

What truly set Hiawatha apart, and what I think will matter more as time passes, is how deeply cultural storytelling lived inside his magic. He didn't paste identity onto his work. It was already there. Afrocentric history, folklore, rhythm, and philosophy moved through his performances organically, without explanation or apology. Representation wasn't a talking point for him. It was simply a fact of presence. In a field that has not always made room, Hiawatha didn't ask for space. He occupied it with grace.

People called him a trailblazer. He shrugged that off. Accolades never interested him much. What interested him was connection. Healing. The idea that art could stitch people together, even briefly. He used to say the arts can heal us, and he meant it in practice, not theory. Every show was an offering. Every performance an act of generosity.

That generosity followed him everywhere. From Lynchburg to Baltimore to stages and classrooms far beyond, he became family to the communities he touched. At Poe's Magic Theatre, he wasn't just a guest artist. He was one of us. A presence that steadied the room. A reminder of why we do this at all.

Mentor, Teacher, Creative Force

Away from the spotlight, which he never chased anyway, Hiawatha Johnson Jr. was doing the work that actually lasts. Teaching. Mentoring. Paying attention. Long before I ever met him, he was already moving through the deeper currents of magic, the places where ideas mattered more than applause. He was part of the world that gath-

ered around the Invocationals in the 1990s, those legendary, half-mythical gatherings in bizarre magic where performers, thinkers, and storytellers rubbed elbows not to impress each other, but to wrestle with meaning.

The Invocationals were not conventions in the modern sense. They were salons. Ritual-adjacent conversations. Late nights where magic bled into philosophy, anthropology, folklore, and personal myth. They drew people who believed magic should unsettle, provoke, and linger. Hiawatha belonged there. He wasn't a tourist. He was family. He spent time among luminaries whose work shaped me before I ever knew their names, people like Eugene Burger, whom I was fortunate to know briefly before his passing, and Tony Andruzzi, whose shadow still stretches across the art form. Hiawatha wasn't just present in those rooms. He contributed. Collaborated. Shared ideas. Those relationships mattered, and they placed him squarely inside a lineage of magic that treats wonder as something serious, even sacred.

That same depth carried into his teaching. Since the mid-1980s, he had served as accompanist and artist-in-residence for the Department of Dance at Randolph College in Virginia, although that title barely scratches the surface. He didn't simply play music while dancers moved. He taught them how to listen with their bodies. How rhythm lives in breath. How intention reshapes motion. How meaning sneaks in when you stop forcing it. People who studied with him didn't describe classes so much as moments, experiences where something aligned internally and refused to unalign afterward.

Before that, and alongside it, he taught at the Virginia School of the Arts, developing and sharing his own movement technique built around breath, balance, rhythm, strength, and intent. It reads abstract on paper. In practice, it was grounding. Students came out changed. More themselves. Less performative in the shallow sense. More honest in the dangerous one. He had a way of pushing you further than you thought you

A Pillar of the Arts Community

could go, then standing close enough that you didn't shatter while you got there.

In the magic world, his mentorship carried that same quiet authority. At Tannen's Magic Camp, where he served as artistic director, he became a formative presence for generations of young magicians. Many of them are professionals now, and almost all of them trace something essential back to him. Not a move. Not a trick. A way of thinking. A question that never stopped tapping on the inside of the skull. He could look at someone and see what they hadn't given themselves permission to become yet. Sometimes that meant challenging a student who had retreated behind the scenes to step back into the light. Sometimes it meant simply listening long enough for them to hear themselves clearly.

What mattered was that he cared. Fully. If you were nervous, he noticed. If you were lost, he didn't rush you. If you were talented and hiding, he gently refused to let you stay there. He mentored by example, by patience, by showing up curious every single time. There was no hierarchy in the room with him. Only work worth doing.

Collaboration came just as naturally. Hiawatha had the rare ability to make other people's work better without trying to make it his. That is why major artists sought him out. In the mid-2000s, he consulted on *Siegfried & Roy Presents: Darren Romeo*, bringing narrative and emotional cohesion to a large-scale illusion show that could have coasted on spectacle alone. He later served as magic and artistic consultant for illusionist Elliot Zimet's tour, and by 2011, he was working with David Blaine, contributing to some of his most talked-about feats.

What I always admired was how seamless this all felt to him. Performing, advising, teaching, listening. It was one practice. One purpose. He was just as content offstage shaping someone else's moment as he was delivering his own. People knew that if Hiawatha was involved, the work would be smarter, truer, more human. Not louder. Not flashier. Just better, in the ways that matter when the lights go down and the audience actually feels something.

In Lynchburg, Hiawatha wasn't a footnote or a novelty. He was infrastructure. He believed, deeply and stubbornly, that art could change a city not in theory, but in practice, block by block, room by room. He put his time where his beliefs were. He helped build things that stayed standing. The Ellington Fellowship Playhouse, where Black performing arts and community theater were not treated as side projects but as essential. Riverviews Artspace, which took an old warehouse and turned it into a living, breathing center for exhibitions, studios, and gatherings. These weren't vanity projects. They were acts of faith in people.

In 2007, the city of Lynchburg recognized that work by awarding Hiawatha the Mayor's Award of Excellence, the first time it had ever gone to a full-time artist. It wasn't just about his talent. It was about his presence. He showed up. He stayed. He made the place better and then kept going.

His commitment to the local arts didn't end with founding organizations. He also served as special programs coordinator for the Africa House Gallery and Studio, curating events that honored African and African American history, art, and storytelling. He treated cultural work as something alive, not archival. Whether he was organizing an exhibition, directing a community play, or advising another artist, he gave it the same care he gave his own performances. People trusted him because he never half-did anything.

One of the things I admired most was how easily he crossed boundaries. Musicians, dancers, actors, magicians. He didn't see silos. He saw conversations waiting to happen. It wasn't unusual for him to bring wildly different artists together for a single project, because to him they were already speaking the same language, just with different accents. Lynchburg's arts community loved him not only because he inspired them, but because he showed up for them. He sat in the audience. He clapped loudly. He remembered your name.



Hiawatha performing at Poe's Magic Theatre.

That spirit carried with him to Baltimore. In recent years, Hiawatha became a beloved regular at Poe's Magic Theatre at the Lord Baltimore Hotel. He was recently honored with the inaugural Award for Excellence in Storytelling, which felt less like a ceremony and more like a statement of fact. His work reminded people why storytelling magic exists at all.

I had the privilege of sharing that space with him, sometimes onstage, sometimes watching quietly from the wings. His performances, often under the banner of *Life Magic Fables*, were intimate in the truest sense. He didn't project wonder outward, he drew people inward. Myths, memory, personal history, all braided together with illusion that knew its place. The magic never elbowed the story aside. It listened.

It hurts to know he was scheduled to re-

turn in just a couple of months. There is now a space on that stage shaped exactly like him. You don't rush to fill something like that. You let it echo for a while.

I didn't meet Hiawatha in person first. We met the modern way. Ran'D Shine, my dear friend and co-performer, shared his phone number with me. We started with texts. Then calls. Long ones. The kind where you realize halfway through that introductions are already obsolete and you're knee-deep in ideas. By the time we eventually met face to face, we already knew how each other thought.

The first time I actually saw him perform and met him in the flesh was in Baltimore, at Poe's Magic Conference, just after we reopened following the pandemic. That moment mattered. Everything felt tentative then. Fragile. We were all relearning what it

meant to gather in rooms again. Hiawatha stepped into that space with the same grounded calm he always carried, and I finally got to watch him live, not as a kid through a television screen, but as a fellow performer standing a few feet away. It was exactly what I hoped it would be. Quiet. Intentional. Deeply human. After that weekend, friendship wasn't something we were building toward. It was already there.

From the beginning, he didn't keep things shallow. We talked. Constantly. About routines and structure, yes, but also politics, philosophy, art, history, current events, the state of the world and the strange responsibility artists inherit whether they want it or not. The art of magic. The history of magic. Why some ideas age like wine and others spoil fast. Most of the time we agreed. On the rare occasions we didn't, maybe once or twice over all those years, it never felt like a fracture. It was a narrow disagreement with a bridge already built inside it. Even then, there was connection.

At some point along the way, Hiawatha told me I was messed up in the head – though he used a sharper word than that.

That sentence needs context. To most people, it sounds like an insult. Coming from him, I quickly understood it was the opposite. It was one of the highest compliments he could give. He valued artists with complicated interiors. People who thought sideways. People who carried philosophy, doubt, empathy, curiosity, and a refusal to flatten the world into something neat and marketable. To him, being messed up in the head meant you were doing the work. Thinking deeply. Feeling too much. Asking the wrong questions on purpose. When he said it, it landed like recognition.

And I knew he meant it kindly, because he recognized the same thing in himself.

We brainstormed routines together. We talked ideas to death until they fell apart and reassembled themselves into something honest. He never tried to dominate those conversations. He listened. He nudged. He asked the one question that made you stop

pretending you already knew the answer. I remember pacing once, stressed about a show, spiraling the way performers do when they care too much. He smiled and said, "Just tell the story. The magic will follow." It sounded casual. It wasn't. It stayed.

He came back to Baltimore several times after that. Sometimes to perform. Sometimes just to be here. The most recent visit was this past November. We walked the city together. Ate at a wonderful vegan soul food place. Took in historic sites and the spookier corners Baltimore wears so well. We talked magic and wonder. Places and memory. The long echoes cities carry if you listen closely.

Saying goodbye to Hiawatha doesn't feel like closure. It feels like learning how to carry weight differently. His presence is still threaded through the lessons he gave, the conversations we shared, the pauses he taught me to trust. You can see his influence in performers who understand that authenticity matters more than cleverness, that story outranks method. His legacy lives on through his daughter Meeka, through the students he shaped, through dancers still moving to rhythms he once played, through young magicians who found confidence because he noticed them when they were unsure.

What I feel most strongly now is gratitude. Gratitude for the time. Gratitude for the arguments that never turned cruel, for praise that was never cheap, for a friendship that was real. He gave his full self whether he was on a stage or sitting quietly in conversation. That consistency is rare.

I can still hear his laugh. I can still see that smile when someone tried to compliment him and he gently deflected it. He never performed for status. He performed to connect. That was always the point. Connection. In that space between people, that's where his magic lived.

I miss you, Hiawatha. I miss you.

You were a great man. A good man.

And you were messed up in the head, too, in the very best way possible.



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JOE M. TURNER 2985 Feathers Chapel Dr., Somerville, TN 38068 • jmt@turnermagic.com

Send Mail To:

Paul Barton, 4706 Mount St Helens Way, San Diego, CA 92117-3029

Richard Bohlman, 201 Hickory Circle, Live Oaks Place, Pearl, MS 39208-8081

Philip Vanderbilt Brady, 215 Cannon St., Georgetown, SC 29440

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Chuck Welch, 4855 N. Loudon Rd., Bloomington, IN 47401

Hocus Pocus Parade

THE LINKING RING



Ian Baxter ONE-MAN PARADE

The Hindu Shuffle Scrapbook

*Written by Ian Baxter • Edited by Lauren Jurgensen • Illustrated by Tony Dunn
Special thanks to Past International President Joe M. Turner
for his assistance with this Parade.*

“Hindu Shuffle! Even the name sounds mystical. I must confess ignorance as to its birth.”

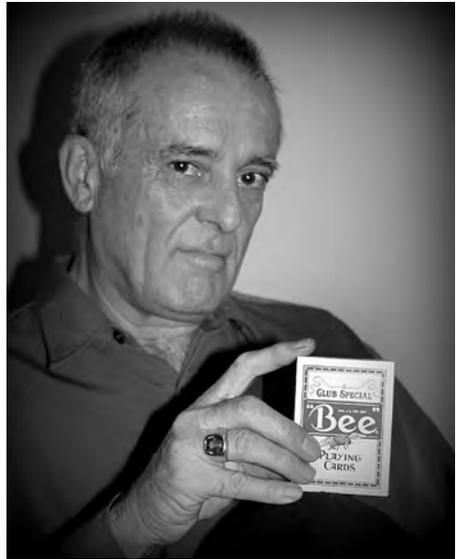
And that is just how Theo Annemann introduced *Light On The Hindu Shuffle* in his magazine *The Jinx* No. 56, May 1939.

However, the birth of the Hindu Shuffle had its beginnings years before. It was none other than Jean Hugard who was responsible for introducing the Hindu Shuffle to the magical fraternity.

Hugard, in his popular book *Modern Magic Manual*, coincidentally published the same year as Annemann’s article in *The Jinx*, mentioned a Hindu magician named Hassan performing the shuffle “...some thirty odd years ago” in Australia. This would date such a sighting to around 1909.

I checked the internet. Yes, magician Hassan was here in Melbourne for a season at the Tivoli Theatre in 1909 and Jean Hugard was performing at the Gaiety. Further confirmation surfaced through checking Charles Waller’s *Magical Nights At The Theatre*, a superb text edited by Gerald Taylor covering magic in Melbourne during the first half of the 20th century.

It appears almost certain that Hugard and Hassan, having first met, would have got together for a friendly session. Hugard, obviously dazzled by the Shuffle, had absolutely no reservations about naming it after Hassan. This is the earliest known sighting of the Hindu Shuffle mentioned in available texts.



Hugard eventually described the Shuffle and its potential in *Card Manipulations Part 1*, first of a series and published by Max Holden in 1933. This further confirms that Hugard coined the title we know today and it appears he was solely responsible for both naming and introducing the Shuffle to the magical fraternity.

The upshot of all this – Melbourne, Australia, is my home town! My interest therefore, is understandably a little more than casual.

What follows is a pastiche of moves and ideas of my own, coming to you from Melbourne, Australia, as did Jean Hugard's first encounter with the Shuffle. Since those days, entries galore have been published in various books and magazines. It seems the Hindu Shuffle has not and will not, lose its popularity.

As for this material, I am resisting any claims of originality. This is not a tutorial on the Hindu Shuffle, but a modest assortment of twists and turns I have used since first learning the Shuffle back in 1961. Everything presented here has emanated from well-established moves and sleights.

Credit-claiming can often reach ridiculous heights, with magicians publishing miniscule differences to moves already in print and then lobbying for recognition. I am keeping a respectable distance from prattle such as this; it is demeaning.

An even dozen Hindu Shuffle entries now follow and if just a paltry one or two prove worthwhile to the reader, then this Parade has served its purpose.

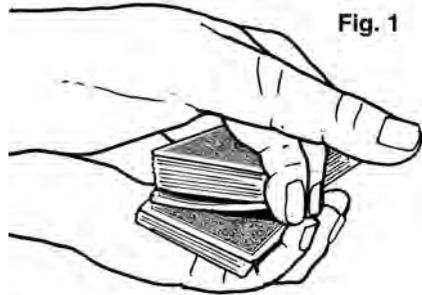
(1) Standard Card Control

The Shuffle as described in various texts, reveals two different techniques for the essential pick up of a card or cards being controlled. Jean Hugard in *The Royal Road To Card Magic* for example, champions the use of the right thumb in picking up cards from the lower packet held in the left hand.

Theo Annemann favours the use of both thumb and second finger, the pad of the right second fingertip being more effective in facilitating a pick-up of cards from the lower packet.

My suggestion, use the right *third* finger instead of the second, with the thumb assisting (**Fig. 1**). I find this is a more positive handling because the right thumb tends to be somewhat awkward in grasping card edges and can induce fumbling. Try the third finger for positive results, with the thumb assisting.

Hugard recommended this exact same technique in his very first description of the Hindu Shuffle in *Card Manipulations Part 1*. Oddly enough, by the time *Royal Road* was published in 1948, he had changed his mind – favouring the thumb for picking up one or more cards.



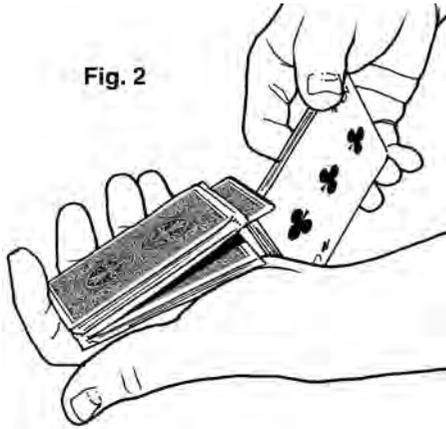
(2) Rapid Card Control

A popular move with the Hindu Shuffle Glimpse is rapping the inner end of the shuffled cards held by the left hand, using the front end of the unshuffled right-hand portion to do so. Glimpsing the bottom card normally occurs at this moment, but this unexpected move allows for a Rapid Card Control.

Shuffle off about half the deck and have selected card returned in the usual way, extending left hand holding the balance. Keep the Hindu Shuffle moving, the next portion in-jogged a little, another two or three shuffles immediately following. (See *The In-jogged Packet*, No.11).

As right hand rotates its cards for the

usual Glimpse move, use the forward left corner to lift the untidy cards for a fleeting moment, left little finger folding in and acquiring the usual break (Fig. 2). The packet in right hand now retreats, rapping the cards as the break is acquired. Finish the Shuffle and cut to the break. Selection is now on top.



This simple manoeuvre enables the cut to be carried out instantly, the break already there, waiting to be accessed; no hit or miss with an in-jog. Selection is brought to the top at lightning speed. Easy, deceptive, quick.

For the cut at the end, I favour the Spin Pass. Flashy and convincing, this popular flourish has been doing the rounds for decades. The legendary John Scarne used it all the time. Author Bruce Elliott gave it a very keen write-up in his book *The Best In Magic*. Recommended without reservation.

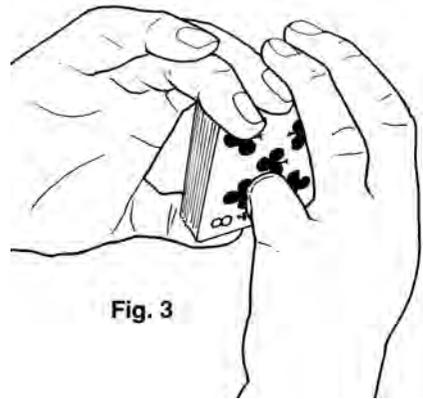
(3) Bottom Card To Top A useful utility

A move with the Hindu Shuffle is to quickly bring the bottom card to the top of the deck. This may sound elementary, but the handling about to be described just might open other doors.

Deck is in left hand ready for the Hindu Shuffle, right hand positioned above, gripping the deck as usual, thumb holding left side, second and third fingers opposite. En-

sure right third finger is at extreme inner right corner of the pack; this is important.

Meanwhile, left fourth finger is curled inwards resting against the underside of the deck, the almost flat portion between the two knuckles contacting the bottom card (Fig. 3). With very little effort you can slide the bottom card towards you about half an inch (Fig. 4). This 'Ceiling In-jog' has many possibilities. Right third fingertip can now easily contact the edge of this in-jogged inner right corner. With right thumb on opposite side, the bottom card is now firmly gripped.



First option: Begin the Hindu Shuffle and complete in the usual fashion, the last card, the in-jogged bottom card, being casually dropped on top.

Second option: Hindu Shuffle a good half of the deck then drop balance on top.

Right thumb pushes down on the in-jogged card, acquiring a break; now simply cut or double cut, either in hands or to the table. Bottom card is now on top.

(4) Centre Hindu Shuffle

This is an extremely useful tool employing the Hindu Shuffle for retaining either top or bottom stock, depending on whether the deck is face up or face down.

To retain bottom stock, deck is face down in left hand as right hand seizes a generous portion from just below *centre* of the deck, bottom stock remaining in left hand. Start the Hindu Shuffle, left hand taking small packets until finished. Bottom stock remains intact.

The exact same technique is applied to retain top stock. Only difference, the deck is face up throughout. Visually just a shade more convincing perhaps, because spectators see the card faces being mixed. Either way, a very handy ruse.

(5) Hindu Shuffle Force No. 1

An essential entry in this package is the Hindu Shuffle Force. Two techniques are in vogue and both are worthy of your attention.

Card to be forced is on top of the deck as you begin the Hindu Shuffle in the usual way, drawing a sizeable packet into the left hand. In drawing another portion, right third finger and thumb pick up one or more cards from the top of the packet just pulled, maintaining the break as described in *Standard Card Control* (No.1). Now continue drawing off small packets, asking spectator to call stop. When prompted, bring the front end of the top portion flush with the lower packet and against the left forefinger.

At this very moment, left little finger folds into the gap held by the right third finger alongside, clasping retained cards as right thumb and third finger release their hold. Immediately *lower* your left hand a couple of inches, keeping right hand with its packet perfectly still, extending left hand and helpfully thumbing off the card for spectator.

(6) Hindu Shuffle Force No. 2

Card to be forced is on the bottom of the deck. No picking up of cards, as used above, is required, but the force itself is equally convincing.

Begin by addressing spectator, asking for a card to be chosen at random. You demonstrate by executing a *Centre Hindu Shuffle*, deck face down and stopping after three or four shuffle movements. Raising the packet held in your right hand, call attention to the bottom card then slap the packet on top and square the deck. Tell spectator to ignore card shown – just a quick demonstration.

You offer to repeat and with spectator now primed, commence the Shuffle once again; this time the bottom card *will* be forced. Commence the Shuffle, pulling off less than half the deck and when spectator calls a halt, flash the bottom card, making sure you turn your head away at that moment. No delay as you bring the two halves together and either acquire a break and control the selection, or square up and hand out the deck for a shuffle with disclosure following.

Why the demonstration run-through first? Simply a matter of conviction, ruling out the possibility that the chosen card ‘might’ have come from the bottom of the deck. No double thinking here, simply a precaution.

(7) The In-jogged Packet

This clever adaptation devised by Jean Hugard and included in *Expert Card Technique* was modestly titled ‘Hindu Shuffle Variation’ and has been overlooked by the magical fraternity for too many years. A remarkable addition to well-known Hindu Shuffle moves that should have received wider attention. This one has ‘slipped through the cracks.’

Hindu Shuffle commences as usual, left hand pulling off about a third of the deck. Selected card is added, then left fingers pull off a small packet, falling on the others in left hand and in-jogging it about half an inch. *It is the packet itself which is in-jogged.* As more packets join others, allow

them to fall with their outer ends slightly irregular, covering the in-jogged packet. Finish the Shuffle and square up, acquiring a break under the jogged packet, preferably *not* by lifting but *lowering* the packet held in left hand. Cut to the break; selected card is now on top.

This entire approach is of special benefit if you find yourself using a borrowed, worn, sticky deck. The usual Hindu Shuffle Control can let you down in a case such as this – cards not separating, difficulty in the pick-up and release, and so on. However, pulling a packet then in-jogging it, rather than just a single card, is considerably easier. Worth keeping in mind.

(8) Optical Hindu Shuffle

The Optical Shuffle is well known to most card handlers and again, it is one of those moves that has been doing the rounds for many years.

Jean Hugard described the Optical Shuffle in *The Royal Road*, explaining that it is quite simply an optical illusion at work. Starting a regular *Overhand* Shuffle, left thumb draws off almost half the deck from the right-hand and continues. *However, the cards are not actually shuffled!* All the left thumb does is stroke the back of the top card following the right hand drawing off cards to start. The shuffle action is repeated a few times, left thumb pretending to pull cards, but all it is really doing is engaging in leg-pulling! At the end, the deck is restored by returning the half held by the right hand to the back of the deck. Anybody within viewing distance will be taken in by this bold, deceptive ‘Shuffle’ such as it is.

The reader can almost sense the smirk on Hugard’s face as he describes the Shuffle at work: “At first thought this pretence of removing cards with the left thumb appears to be too audacious, but when it is smoothly done the illusion is perfect, as a few trials before a mirror will show.”

The same principle works equally well with the Hindu Shuffle, an idea which I stumbled on well over sixty years ago. I have never been caught out with this very handy ruse.

Start by drawing off about half the deck, into the left hand as usual – but this is where reality ends. You *pretend* to pull off another packet, left thumb one side, second and third fingers the other; *no* cards come away. *The action keeps going, briskly*, with both hands pantomiming the proper Hindu Shuffle action three or four times. However – nothing happens!

Following three or four shuffle movements, a final slap on top of those already shuffled (?) leaves you with a full deck that has simply been cut. Should you wish to restore the deck, all you do is in-jog the half, acquire a break and either Double Cut or Spin Pass. The ‘Shuffle’ is an absolute con job.

A valuable tip: During the Shuffle, *do not look at your hands!* Instead, make eye contact with your audience. This will enhance the level of deception.

Try this out in front of a mirror and see for yourself. Repeating Jean Hugard’s timely advice, this time with a smirk on *my* face, “...when it is smoothly done, the illusion is perfect.”

This is a fun move in every respect and it never fails.

(9) End Tap Control

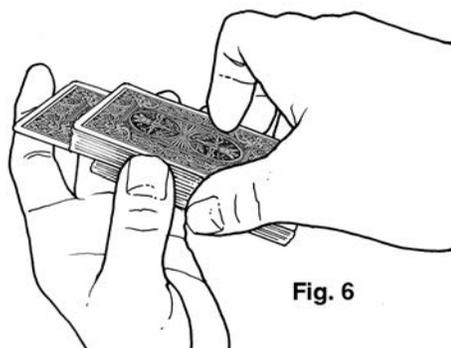
Another easy control that is virtually fool-proof, utilising the familiar handling of a Multiple Card Control, but employing it for just one card.

Selection is with spectator and deck is face down in dealing position left hand, as right hand accepts face down selection, inserting it into the deck from the front end. Left thumb assists, riffling left corner to about the half way mark (**Fig. 5**).



Slowly slide the card in by half of its length, keeping cards squared as you rotate the deck to the right, left side upwards, backs of cards facing audience; a familiar position used in readiness for a Multiple Shift. Both hands hold the deck, but in this case the right thumb and fingers are a little more advanced than usual, up near the front end. Right first finger steadies the front edge of top half.

Left first finger at front end and out of sight behind the selection, slides bottom half inwards by half an inch. Right hand continues to hold the deck as left first, second and third fingertips reach out and slide the selected card in a little further, to within an inch of being flush (**Fig. 6**), then giving two gentle taps that send the card in and square with the top half of deck. Left fingertips now add a brief rubbing motion at the front end; a little window dressing.



Hindu Shuffle position once again as left fingers and thumb seize top half near front end, right fingers stripping out the bottom half. Hindu Shuffle three or four times then drop balance on top.

Selected card is now on bottom of the deck, ready for action.

This control is equally effective if performed with the deck face up at the start; perhaps even more so. Selection is inserted into the deck and above procedure carried out, chosen card ending up on top. The bonus here is that following the card being slid into the deck, spectators witness the cards being thoroughly mixed as the Hindu

Shuffle takes place. Obviously, this approach can only be worked if the selected card was previously revealed to the performer.

(10) Hindu Tip Over Change

Also known as *The Drop Sleight*, this useful utility move enables a single card to be instantly switched as it is tipped face down onto a packet held in the left hand. The following handling allows for this switch, incorporating the Hindu Shuffle.

Deck is in left hand in readiness for the Ceiling In-jog, (No.3 above). Bottom card is slid inwards and corner break acquired with right third fingertip. Start the Hindu Shuffle, stopping at about the half way mark and extending your left hand for face down card to be returned.

Once selection is flush with the lower half, right hand lowers the top portion, left long side meeting the right side of the lower half in left hand. Left thumb deals off top card just enough for it to be tipped face up onto the bottom half, using the available length of the top half to do so. You will not be able to use the entire left side of top half, because right thumb is taking up space holding the inner end.

In making the tip-over again, returning selection face down, right third finger adds a little pressure to the edge of in-jogged card, dislodging it. Now release the grip, allowing switched-in card to easily drop to the bottom half *during* the tip-over action (**Figs. 7-8**).

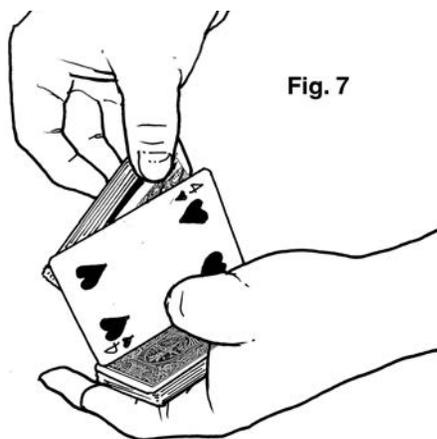




Fig. 8

Right hand remains steady as left hand now *lowers* its half a couple of inches, smoothly moving forward as left thumb once again deals off top card, this time to either the table or spectator's hand, depending on the routine.

Continuity of movement is important and will help obscure any small irregularity. Onlookers watch you flip spectator's card face up, then face down and dealing it to the table. The card is switched instantly.

(11) Thumb Jog Control

The wrinkle here, an attachment to an existing sleight, is one that I have habitually used since the 1960's. This is a fast, easy expedient to almost any jog-based card control; I still use it today, with positive results every time.

Read again *The In-jogged Packet* (No.7) described above, acquiring a break under the in-jogged portion. Right thumb tip, at this moment touching the top card of the lower half, slides this card towards you about half an inch (**Fig. 9**). The small amount of movement needed for the thumb to do this is never seen; once done, immediately square the deck. In-jogged selection is now there, ready for use.

Several options present themselves: Shuffling or cutting the jogged card to top or bottom, executing a Side Steal with or without palming, crimping, key card use or whatever the situation demands.

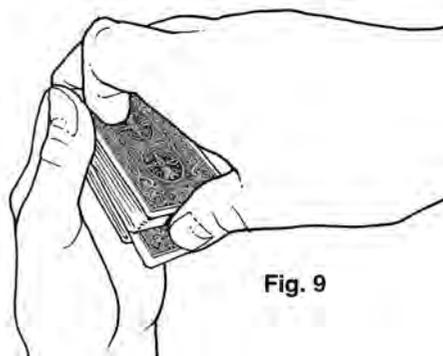


Fig. 9

(12) Multiple Card Control

The Third Edition of *Expert Card Technique* included Dai Vernon's Multiple Card Control. Authors Hugar and Braue gave it a ringing endorsement: "Mr Vernon's method allows great freedom of handling and when well done is so undetectable, it will bewilder the keenest onlooker."

It is unquestionably a fine addition to the Multiple Card Control collective. Over the years I have used it occasionally, along with Vernon's own very popular Multiple Card *Pass* where cards are brought to the top of the deck all at once.

On offer, a couple of ideas which might encourage further use of the Multiple Card Control. If Vernon's technique has a fault, it is lack of speed – losing four Aces in the deck one at a time is repetitive and can become tiresome to watch, no matter how adept the performer might be.

Firstly, dispense with the crimped stock as mentioned in *Expert Card Technique*, with four or five cards waiting at the bottom of the deck in readiness for what seems an unnecessary false cut at the end. The crimped stock can be scrapped because the Control works perfectly fine without it. Need I add, there is an absolute litany of straightforward false cuts already in print. Choose one you like and stick with it.

Secondly, add visual improvement by running through Vernon's Multiple Card Control as written, *faces up!* Give this a try and you will appreciate what your spectators are witnessing – four face-up Aces lost

in the deck one after the other and spectators see for themselves, the entire deck being genuinely mixed.

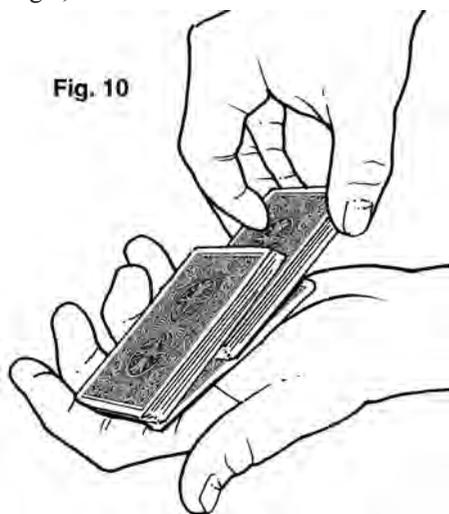
The one, obvious exception which would preclude this option, is if the routine at hand involves several *undisclosed* chosen cards being returned to the deck.

If you cannot access a copy of *Expert Card Technique*, here is an abridged run-through of Vernon's Control. Changes as mentioned above, will apply. In keeping with Hugar and Braue's instructions, we will assume that the four Aces are the selected cards, face up on the table in C-H-S-D order.

Reach for the AC and riffle front left corner to the half way mark, inserting the card from the front end. In squaring, secure a left little finger break under the AC. Undercut at the break, drawing out the packet below and lightly slapping it on top. As you do this, overlap the top packet by about an inch at the outer end.

Deck still in dealing position as you undercut the lower half, the bottom card (AC) being retained in the left palm by friction (**Fig. 10**). As this portion is pulled out, the packet above is slid inward using left first finger, until it is flush with the bottom card.

Fig. 10



There is a knack in making this undercut. Begin with a slight forward motion of the left hand, steadying the upper packet

until it clears the right thumb and fingertips. The undercut portion can now be pulled out much easier. Once clear, shuffle these off onto cards remaining in left hand, using the Hindu Shuffle.

With the AC now on the bottom of the deck, reach for the next card, the AH and again, insert it into the middle of the deck from the front end. Proceed as described and the AH will end up on bottom of the deck under the AC.

Two Aces remaining and for the third and fourth occasions, the same process is adhered to. At the end, all four Aces will be on bottom of the deck, in order.

Vernon's carefully worked out technique certainly gets the job done; it is only the lack of pace which hinders this otherwise ingenious procedure.

Ed Marlo, in his *Revolutionary Card Technique* series, devotes a full chapter to *The Multiple Shift*, a forty-page discourse on this very topic. If the reader is at all interested in further investigation of the Multiple Shift and/or Control, along with kindred moves, then Marlo's detailed work is highly recommended.

In closing, here are details of my own Multiple Control, a greatly simplified rendition that has stood me in good stead for many years. It is easy to work, rapid and angle proof.

Four Aces will again demonstrate the run-through. Lay them on the table in a row, Clubs, Hearts, Spades and Diamonds. At the end, all four Aces remain in this order. Deck is face down in dealing position, left hand.

Working in reverse, pick up the AD first and using the *Standard Card Control* (No.1) bring it to the top of the deck. Reaching for the AS, slowly turn it over face-down on top of the deck, then start a Hindu Shuffle, undercutting about half the cards and proceeding with *The In-jogged Packet* (No.7). Finish with a Double Cut, bringing the two Aces back to the top.

Ace number three, the AH is likewise flipped face down on top of the deck, with another round of *The In-jogged Packet* following.

Again, a Double Cut and now three Aces sit together on top of the deck.

Pick up the AC, last of the four, and hand it to the spectator. Suggest this one be left face up, with deck also face up, as it is returned. Hindu Shuffle off about half the cards into the left hand.

For this last round, if possible, stop the Shuffle with a spot card showing. Avoid stopping at a court card because they are too conspicuous. The reason for this will be made clear as you work through the closing moves.

Accepting the AC from the spectator, have it placed face up on top of the shuffled packet in left hand. As right hand adds its half, left thumb *fractionally* deals off the AC just enough for the left little finger to acquire a tiny break. Packet in right hand is now added, deck is squared then Double Undercut at the break. No pausing as you run through one more *Centre Hindu*

Shuffle.

It will now be apparent that the card under the AC will be spotted twice during this last phase; therefore, do not delay the Double Undercut. A forgettable spot card is best in view, rather than the King of Spades for example, waving his sword and drawing attention.

Square the deck and turn face down, left hand dealing position. The four Aces are now on top in C-H-S-D order, ready for use.

This wraps up the Scrapbook and I sincerely hope you have enjoyed working through these twelve entries. Perhaps now you can add one or more moves to your Hindu Shuffle armoury. If any details need clarifying, feel free to drop me an email and I will be happy to assist.

Ian Baxter

ibaxter1946@hotmail.com

Becoming the Un-Magician – from page 85

When Impact Replaces Impression

There comes a time when a magician no longer wants to impress, they want to impact. They want the silence between the moves to speak louder than the moves themselves. They want someone in the back row to forget their phone, their inbox, their worries, for just one breath. They want to remind the world that wonder is still possible. Not because of technique or clever mechanics, but because their presence is so rooted and so quiet that even the ordinary begins to shimmer. That is when you know you are becoming the Un-Magician. Not when you fool them. When you free them.

No One Claps for Stillness, But They Remember It

Here is a secret: The most powerful moment in any performance is the one they do not applaud.

It is the breath that lingers, the pause that bends time, the glance that says more than words ever could. It is subtle, it is quiet, and it does not need fireworks or fanfare. But *it is* the moment they carry home with them.

The Un-Magician lives in that space. Not in the ovation, but in the echo.



The Card Corner

MIKE POWERS

This month's column comes from Ray Andrews. "Coloring Rebecca" is inspired by Paul Harris' "Unshuffling Rebecca" from Vol. 1 of the *Art of Astonishment* series. Ray has kept a "triumph" feel to the routine but has added a kicker ending that should really blow some minds.

There's a video performance of the routine at www.mallofmagic.com/cardcorner, scroll down. I recommend watching the video before reading the description of the routine below. Moves marked with a * have instruction videos available at www.mallofmagic.com/themoves – use password marlo7d to access the videos.

Coloring Rebecca

By Ray Andrews

EFFECT: A card is selected and returned to the deck. The magician turns half the deck face up and shuffles it into the face-down portion a la Triumph. The two halves are not pushed together but remain telescoped. With a flick of the hand, the face-up cards turn face down.

Face-up cards are again shuffled into face-down cards. This time all the cards visibly turn face up. The deck is then spread, revealing there's one face-down card in the otherwise face-up deck. Of course, the card is the selection. But for the big ending, it is found that the deck has changed from blue to red! All except for the selection, which remained blue.

SET UP: You'll need a red-backed deck with two blue cards added. The blue cards are face down on top of the face-down red deck. The deck should be cased in a blue card box. To avoid a potential problem, you should remove the red duplicates of the blue cards. Let's say the blue cards are the 9D and 3S with the 3S on top.

OVERVIEW: You will have to be careful throughout the routine that no red back shows. This will require care and precision

on your part. Also, there are two places where you will be performing a partial **Faro Shuffle***. You'll only need to be sure that the top three cards interweave perfectly. After that, discrepancies are not a problem. Since the written description will likely be a bit difficult to follow, I have made a "hints" video to help. The link is found just below the video performance of the effect.

PROCEDURE: Remove the deck from the box. It will appear to be a normal blue deck. The handling is designed to really sell the "blueness" of the deck. Take the deck face up in left-hand dealing position. You are going to begin a *face-up Hindu Shuffle Force** as follows: **Buckle*** the bottom (blue) 3S, obtaining a left fourth finger break over it. Use the right thumb to pull the top fifty-one cards up a bit, opening a gap of about a quarter inch. See **Figure 1** (with right hand removed). Rotate the left hand a bit so that your right hand can grip the inner short edge as shown in **Figure 2**. Note the position of the left hand's second finger and thumb at the outer short edge. Hold the uppermost ten cards or so between the left second finger and thumb as your right hand

pulls the larger group at the bottom away. This keeps the 3S in position and allows your left hand to then let the small group of cards fall onto it. This is the beginning of a **Hindu Shuffle***.

Fig. 1

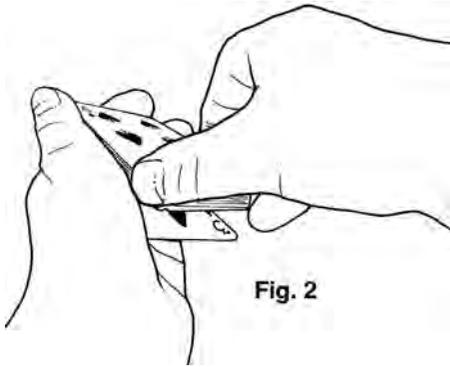
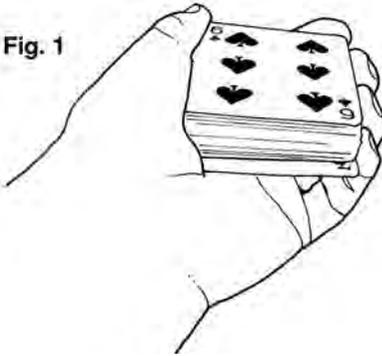


Fig. 2

The right hand now brings its packet over the cards in the left hand so that the left second finger and thumb can pull another small packet free from the top of the right hand's group. Allow this packet to drop onto the cards in the left hand. Ask the spectator to say "stop" at any point as you continue the **Hindu Shuffle*** procedure.

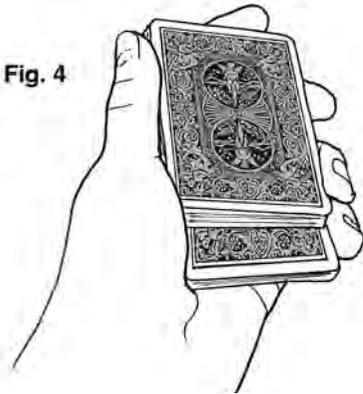
When she does say "stop," place the right hand's remaining cards outjogged onto those in the left hand as in **Figure 3**. Now turn everything over end for end bringing the outer packet to the inside and ending as in **Figure 4**. The top card of the now injogged packet is the 9D, your force card. Pull that card inward and free from the deck as you simultaneously push the cards below it flush with the upper portion. You must be sure that no red shows. Hand the 9D to the spectator and ask her to show the other spectators.

While their attention is on the selection, get ready for **TILT***.

Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Take back the 9D and insert it, face down, into the **TILT*** break. As you push it flush, pull up on it at the last second so you now have two cards above the break. Use your right thumb to slide the top card (3S) off the deck while maintaining a **TILT*** break below the 9D. Show the face of the 3S as your left hand turns palm downward, flashing the bottom card. Say, "So your selection is somewhere between the 3S and the XX (name the bottom card)." Turn your left palm upward again and insert the 3S into the **TILT*** break. Allow the break to collapse. The selection is now on top of the deck.

Riffle up the inner short edge with the right thumb to create a breakpoint about seventeen cards from the top. Momentarily hold a right thumb break there as your left hand flips the cards below the break to a face-up condition, sidejogged to the left. You must

use the cards above the break to shield the red backs as the cards flip to face up. Place the face-down group injogged an inch or so. Maneuver the cards into position for a **Faro Shuffle*** as in **Figure 5**. (NOTE: Don't worry, the shuffle doesn't have to be perfect.) This is the starting position for an in-the-hands **Faro Shuffle***. You can tap the short edges to tighten things up. Just be careful not to flash any red backs.

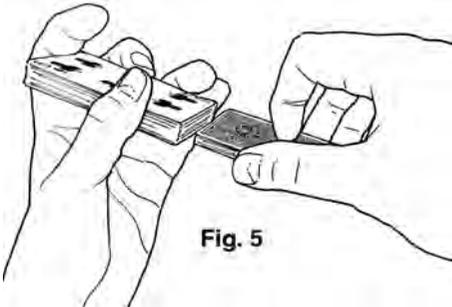


Fig. 5

Luckily only the top three cards of the right-hand, face down, packet must weave perfectly. Ideally, the top blue card would be the top card after the shuffle as in an **OUT Faro Shuffle***. And the other blue card would go to the third position. Since I Faro from the bottom up, I find this requirement a little elusive. Here's an alternate way to go:

You can **Faro*** the face-down group such that the upper blue card is slightly below the upper face-up card as in **Figure 6**.

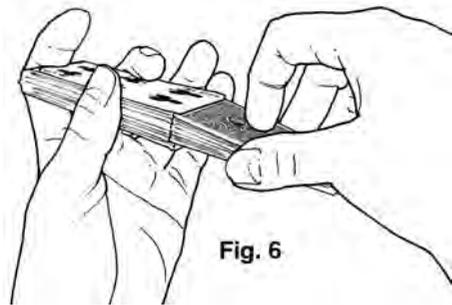


Fig. 6

Here there are about four face-up cards above the upper blue backed card. Push the face-down group inward until about one inch protrudes to the right. Now take the entire telescoped deck into a modified dealing position as in **Figure 7** where your right hand can remove the face-up cards that are

above the uppermost blue card in a **Biddle Grip***. Insert the right hand's packet into the face-up group about halfway down and push the cards square with the rest of the face-up cards. This ploy avoids the need for precision in the placement of the top card. Now it's time for the first of the visual changes.

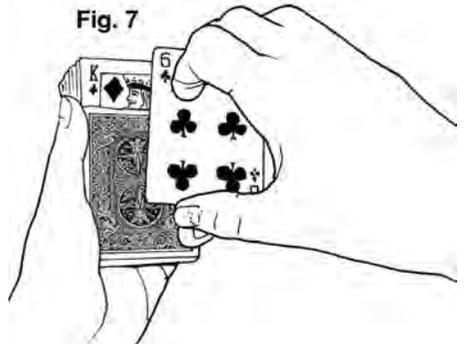


Fig. 7

Hold the telescoped deck as in **Figure 8**. Note that the left first finger is at the outer short edge and the left thumb is about 1 inch from the outer short edge of the face-down blue card. The idea is to use the left thumb to push the top blue card forward and flush with the face-up cards. You will have to experiment with the finger positions to make this work. The cover for this move is a forward and backward shaking motion. Look at the video to see what it's supposed to look like. If you have very dry hands like mine, you'll probably need to use some Golden Touch Oil or O'Keefe's Working Hands to get a bit of tackiness on your thumb.



FIG. 8

Apparently, the face-up cards have turned face down. You now need to strip out the

inner packet of face-down cards from the outer mostly face-up group. This must be accomplished without flashing any red. **Figure 9** shows this action in progress. Sometimes the bottom card of the injogged packet moves forward a bit which may cause its back to flash when you do the strip out. You can use your right thumb to pull it back flush if you see this happening. Whew! It gets easier from here.

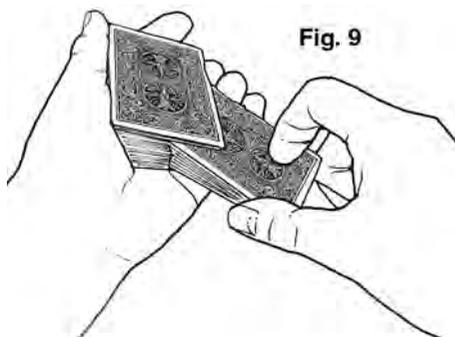


Fig. 9

Place the right hand's cards face down and injogged on top of the left hand's group. Now take the injogged group with right thumb on top and fingers below and turn it over, replacing it injogged, but now face up. Take the two packets, one in the left hand and one in the right hand, again as in **Figure 5** only this time the cards in the right hand are face up. Weave the right hand's cards into those in the left hand but allow a few of the face-up cards to end up on top of the face-down card. You will now get the visual change in an easier way.

Hold the telescoped deck as before similar to **Figure 8** only with face-up cards under the thumb and the seemingly face-down cards outjogged. Now move your left hand forward somewhat quickly as you release pressure with the left thumb and fingers. When you stop the forward motion, the face-up cards above the blue backed card will move forward and cover the blue back making it seem that the face-down cards have turned face up. We're in the home stretch!

The bottom card of the injogged section is a blue card. The selection is in the outer section face down under a few face-up cards. You will now centralize the selection and, at

the same time, move the bottom card of the injogged group to the bottom of the deck as follows:

Begin to push the two groups together but as you do, lift up a bit on the bottom of the inner packet (blue card) and grab a left fourth finger break under it as the packets come flush. Now spread the cards by pushing the top eight or so cards to the right as a block. This hides the blue back. When you come to the break take the cards below the break into the left hand as you split the spread. Say, "Look. All the cards are now face up." Place the left hand's group on top and square everything up.

STATUS CHECK: The bottom card of the deck has a blue back and the selection is reversed about fifteen to twenty cards down.

Continue with, "All face up except for one," as you spread to the reversed selection. Outjog it in place and square the other fifty-one cards. Now raise the deck to a vertical position (**Figure 10**), showing the selection in an apparently blue backed deck. Pull the selection free and toss it on the pad. Take the deck in face-up left-hand dealing position and double cut the bottom blue card to the face for the clean-up. The big surprise is waiting to happen.

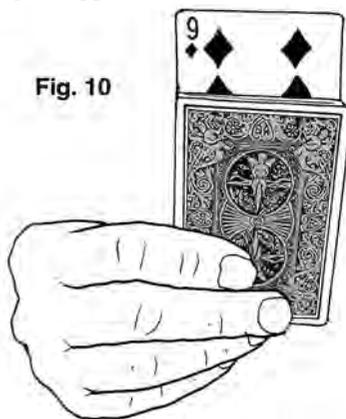


Fig. 10

If you want some context for the color change, you can say something like, "Your selection has remained a 'cool' blue as the other cards have heated up with all that shuffling. In fact, they have become 'red hot.'" Flip the deck face down and spread the

cards, keeping the bottom few cards together to avoid flashing the blue back on the bottom. The color change is totally unexpected and seems impossible.

CLEANING UP: Hold the deck face up in dealing position as you obtain a left fourth finger break under the face card (3S). Place the selection face up on top as you move the card box closer to you. Pick up the two blue backed cards above the break in right-hand **Biddle Grip*** as you hand the deck to a spectator for examination. Put the two cards (as one) into the card box, close it, and put it away. There shouldn't be any heat on the blue card(s). The heat is on the deck. How

did it change? When you're finished with your set, you can put the red deck into the box and you're reset.

FINAL THOUGHTS: You will have to play with the handling for a while to get comfortable with it. But the time will be well spent. This is a solid routine with a lot of very visual magic.

Stay tuned – next month's selection is much less complex. I'll be featuring a routine from Ryan Pilling in which you'll learn two cool, yet easy to do, moves and a trick that uses them. See you in April!

Mike Powers

mpowers@mallofmagic.com

Teaching Magic – from page 67

Sixteen Square Matrix

When you look at the block of sixteen numbers, add the four corner numbers.

$$4 + 7 + 25 + 28 = 65$$

The sum is your prediction. Now ask your helper to circle any number. They draw a line through the other numbers in both the horizontal line their number is in and the vertical line. Now do this move two more times. This will leave four numbers left on your sixteen-square matrix. Add these together and they will match your prediction.

Example: $5 + 14 + 18 + 27 = 64$.

The circled numbers, when added, will equal your prediction.

4	5	6	7
11	12	13	14
18	19	20	21
25	26	27	28

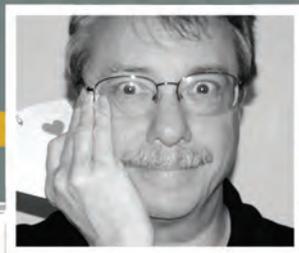
Enjoy your magic,

Bob Durante

bobdurante55@gmail.com

Parade Contributions Wanted From Rings and Individuals

Sharing your original magic in a Parade builds your reputation, establishes your contributions to the art, and adds value to our journal. Getting published also means your work will be considered for a *Linking Ring* Award. Names of winners are announced at the Annual I.B.M. Convention and published in *The Linking Ring*. Submit your Parade or individual tricks to the Executive Editor at editor@magician.org



Before we hop into this month's awesome routine, please allow me a bit of shameless promotion. Within the next couple of months my magnum opus will be released. *Know Brainer* is a 475-page book loaded with my best comedy mentalism routines. Almost forty of 'em: fully scripted with detailed descriptions, explanations, and psychological rationales as to why and how the effects work. The book is brilliantly laid out, beautifully printed, and large enough to be a child's tableside booster seat. The splendid folks at H&R Magic Books are publishing it, so you already know the quality will be nonpareil. It'll be extremely reasonably priced, making it accessible to all who want to explore this type of quirky mentalism.

Richard Osterlind once wrote: "Michael always has a strong eye on powerful material. The audience is laughing like crazy one minute and speechless the next!" Be sure to pick up a copy wherever good magic is sold! Now, on with the show!

You all know Nathan Kranzo. An incredible magician, creator, magical thinker, and writer. Nate is also a thorough student of the art, and extraordinarily kind and generous to those who want to learn *real magic* but for modern tastes. I would urge my readers to zip over to Nate's website and check out his awesome products, tutorials, incredible collector's items, and cool blog. It's all there at kranzomagic.myshopify.com.

Nate also has a knack (a "Nate-Nack"?) for taking magical classics and simplifying the methods, thus allowing all levels of magicians to explore these masterpieces and *refine* them to fit their style and approach. If this ain't Auto-Magical, I don't know what is!

The Kranzilla has graciously offered up

his take on the classic "Ring on Stick" with what I call:

Simplex Ring on a Wand ***("SIM-ROW")***

By Nathan Kranzo

EFFECT: The effect is direct and baffling. The performer borrows a ring from an audience member and then wraps it in a handkerchief or small scarf to keep it safe and protected. The lender can even feel the ring within the folds of the scarf. Meanwhile, a borrowed pencil, pen, Sharpie, chopstick, or even a magic wand is displayed and examined. The helper is asked to grasp both ends of the stick as the performer holds the scarf holding the ring over the stick. The helper can again briefly assure her ring is safe in the scarf by releasing one hand and feeling the ring within the scarf. She returns her hand to the stick after being assured everything is as it should be. The performer quickly makes a magical gesture and then snappily whips the scarf away. Amazingly, the assistant's borrowed ring is spinning on the center of the stick she holds! This is nothing short of jaw-dropping, breathless magic! Indeed, a classic!

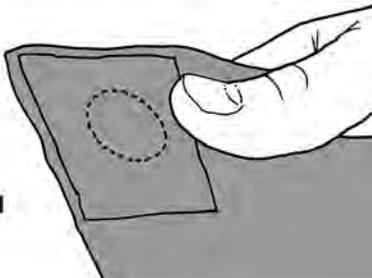
A Classic With a Classical History

Ring on Stick (or Wand) is one of those magic landmarks that can trace its ancestry as far back as Reginald Scot's *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584). The more modern interpretation as we know it today first appeared in Professor Hoffmann's seminal book *Modern Magic* (1876). Here, it goes by the catchy title, "To Pass a Ring invisibly upon the Middle of a Wooden Wand, the Ends being held by two of the Spectators." There have been countless versions and iterations since including Dai Vernon's beau-

tiful “The Ring on the Wand” (in *Stars of Magic*, 1950, Vol. 6, No. 1), Charlie Miller’s “Ring on Stick” (one of my favorites, found in Miller’s 1967 lecture notes and subsequently in his “Magicana” in *Genii Magazine*), Michael Skinner’s brilliant *Ring on Stick* Video (1988, available as a download at www.mymagic.com), and too many more to mention.

Nate’s method simplifies the whole thing and strips it down to the foundations, allowing you to build it up to your needs and style. Here is his description:

You prepare by having a cheap ring sewn in the corner of a pocket handkerchief. Alternatively, you could use a small piece of soft fabric tape and simply tape the duplicate ring to a corner of the handkerchief. (*Mike here: That is what I have done. It is easy to find cloth tape that matches the color/style of your handkerchief or scarf.*) See **Figure 1**.

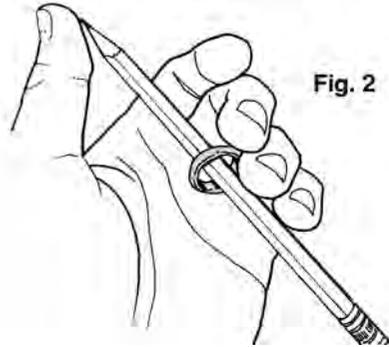


Borrow and hand out a thin wand, pencil, pen, chopstick, or Sharpie for examination and proceed to borrow a wedding ring. Wrap the ring in your scarf or handkerchief. As you do this, under the cover of the folds of the cloth, it is easy to let the ring drop in a hand and easily *finger palm* it.

At the same time, you will grab the duplicate ring attached to the corner and substitute that for the borrowed ring. It’s very easy to grab this corner and position it in the center of the scarf. You can now ask your volunteer to feel the ring through the scarf to verify it’s

there. The audience, meanwhile, can see the *shape* of a ring in the handkerchief – the duplicate sewn into the corner, now wrapped up in the center – so they are not aware of the steal.

As you take back the stick, slide the palmed ring over its end. Holding the wand with your hand hiding the ring in the middle, tell a spectator to grasp both ends (**Fig. 2**).



You now throw and wind the handkerchief, which supposedly contains the borrowed ring, around the center of the wand while removing your hand. The spectator is now holding both ends of the wand with your handkerchief covering the middle. All that remains is to yank away the handkerchief, exposing the borrowed ring spinning on the center of the wand. You will want to give the scarf a smart “snap” as you pull it away from the held stick. The small friction of the scarf pulled against the ring will cause the ring to spin on the wand nicely – quite a wonderful and baffling image.

This effect is quick and startling. A true classic that has stood the test of time. It can be performed in any type of setting from strolling to close-up to parlor. It probably isn’t ideal for stage unless you somehow ring up a much larger version – perhaps using a borrowed hula-hoop?

Ring me at mbreggarmagic@gmail.com.

When a Magic Friend Dies

Please take the time to send us a short note and copy of any obituary notice. Don’t let a fellow magic lover slip away without notice. Send a short note and copy of any obituary notice to Editor or Headquarters Office. Addresses on page 4. Thanks.

Broken Wand

"...ANY MAN'S DEATH DIMINISHES ME BECAUSE I AM INVOLVED IN MANKIND..." —JOHN DONNE



ROY V. BARNES

Roy V. Barnes, 91, of Rochester Hills, Michigan, died December 30, 2025. He held I.B.M. number 12641 and had been a member since 1951. He belonged to the Order of Merlin Excelsior (sixty years of continuous membership). Roy was a native of Royal Oak,



Michigan, where he first did magic in grade school as a show-and-tell presentation. Later he met and literally “carried the bags for” Harold Sterling, a professional magician who later became the owner of a Detroit magic shop and the original Sterling Magic Co. Harold was Roy’s mentor while Roy was in high school, performing under the name “the Balmy Swami.” After serving in the United States Navy during the Korean War, Roy returned to Michigan and attended Wayne State University before entering the broadcast field as a TV director, with later roles as a DJ, program director, and a radio and TV newsman. He worked for stations in Michigan, Indiana, and Iowa. He came back to the Detroit area to finish his degree work at night. During that time he was the manager of radio and television and the assistant director in the public relations department of the Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village in Dearborn, Michigan. While working for a Birmingham, Michigan, public relations firm, Roy met and eventually became a partner with magician and author Ron Bauer as they developed a program for teaching TV techniques to people and attempted to create a feature program for commercial TV. Roy eventually returned to PR, becoming vice president of public relations

at two major Detroit-area advertising and communications firms before meeting his second wife and moving to her home in the Washington, D.C. area. For more than two decades he worked as a sales representative for North American Precis Syndicate (NAPS), a national firm that distributes news and feature stories to all of America’s newspapers. Roy also attended meetings of Detroit’s Wand Wavers club, which had such notable members as magic dealer Roy Hall, Roy Kissel, and Karrell Fox. Roy developed a program of mentalism called Mind Trek. He presented variations of that show for more than twenty-five years for organizations throughout Southeastern Michigan. He presented his Mind Trek program for groups in Northern Virginia. Roy is survived by his children Pamela, Rebecca, Roy, and Diana.

BERGETTA DEICH

Bergetta A. Deich, 51, of Leland, North Carolina, died January 23, 2025. She held I.B.M. number 78521



and had been a member since 2023. She belonged to Ring 248 (Wilmington, North Carolina). Bergetta was born in Camden, New Jersey, to parents Frank and Bergetta Anne Sylvester. She was a ballet dancer, a magician, and a clown who performed as a children’s entertainer under the name “Patches.” She had a master’s degree in business and worked for several years as a human resources executive. Bergetta later became a hospice nurse. She is survived by her husband, Don; her sons, Drew and Devon; her sisters Kathryn, Amanda, and Rose; and her brother, Frank.

LOWELL FORBES

Lowell Wendel Forbes, 93, of Tiffin, Ohio, died January 22, 2026. He held I.B.M. number 17299 and had been a member since 1959. He belonged to the Order of Merlin Excel-sior (sixty years of continuous membership) and Ring 216 (San Jose, California). He also lived in Lima and Columbus Grove, Ohio. Lowell earned his Eagle Scout award in 1948 and was a 1952 Columbus Grove High School graduate. He served in the United States Army stationed in Puerto Rico. He married Nancy J. Harter on July 5, 1958, at Grace Methodist Church in Lima after they met on a blind date arranged by his cousin. He attended Ohio Northern University in Ada, Ohio, where he studied accounting. He worked at Shawnee Local Schools and the Elida School District as the clerk-treasurer before retiring in 1986. After moving to Tiffin, he worked at Traunero Funeral Home and Crematory as a funeral assistant. Lowell began performing magic in high school. He and Nancy later became the magic duo of Najef and Nancy, and then later as Floral Fantasies. They entertained audiences all over Ohio, across the US, and abroad. In 1972, he won Ohio's top award for Magician of the Year in 1972. He was also a storyteller with a deep interest in Native American culture. Lowell was a sixty-three-year member of the 32nd Degree of Masons in Grove, Lima, and Tiffin. He was also a member of the Order of Scottish Rite, Tiffin Kiwanis, and the Trinity United Church of Christ in Tiffin. He was a seventh-great grandson through the Forbes line of Abigail (Dane) Faulkner, who was accused in the Salem Witch Trials. He enjoyed camping, boating, travelling, and spending time with his family. He is survived by his wife, Nancy; a daughter, Andrea (Richard) Traunero of Tiffin; a grandson, Robert L. (Shelby) Traunero of Plain City, Ohio; a granddaughter, Cassandra (Thomas) Miller of Tiffin; a sister-in-law, Ruth E. Kramer of



Seal Beach, California; a nephew, Samuel M. (Sue) Kramer of Long Beach, California; a niece, Leah (Brian) Wilson of Frisco, Texas; great-nieces and great-nephews; and cousins in the Lima area.

JOEL KAHN

Joel Kahn, 73, of Matawan, New Jersey, died January 14, 2026. He held I.B.M. number 24095 and had been a member since 2019. He belonged to Ring 26 (New York, New York). Joel was a retired teacher. Joel last performed at the Ring's December 2023 lab, entertaining everyone with a beautiful "Scotch and Soda" coin routine ending with a "Coin through Dinner Plate." Even as a teen member of a youth magicians' group, Joel used to bring in magic books he no longer needed and offered them to members. He enjoyed watching others perform and sharing constructive critiques and suggestions to help improve other magicians' performances.



JOHN "DALLAS" SMITH, JR.

John "Dallas" Smith, Jr., 60, of Jacksonville, Florida, died December 29, 2025. He held I.B.M. number 69045 and had been a member since 2025. John was a lifetime resident of Jacksonville and a successful estimator in the construction industry. He had a lifelong love and passion for magic. Whether performing tricks or simply sharing his passion, Dallas had a gift for making the ordinary feel extraordinary. He loved fishing, boating, walking on the beach, and traveling. Dallas is survived by his only daughter, Loryn Smith; his parents, J. Dallas and Brenda Smith; his sister, Jodi (David) Goodson; his niece, Rachael (David) Senokossoff; his nephew, David Goodson; and extended family and friends.



Ring Reports

THE INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF MAGICIANS



Ring Reports **must** be received by the 15th of each month to appear in the second following issue (for example, your January report will be published in March or April). Please e-mail reports to ringreports@magician.org with "Ring Reports" in the subject heading. You will receive confirmation of receipt. Please limit the length of your report to 650 words or less. Reports of excessive length may be edited to meet space requirements. Please notify the Reports Editor, Lauren Jurgensen, at ringreports@magician.org, if changes need to be made to your report's headings (e.g., changes to addresses, meeting times, or officers' names). We regret that we are unable to publish photographs in the Ring Reports section of the magazine.

RING 1, ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI – Spirit of St. Louis

Meets 1st Wed. of month, Parkway United Church of Christ 2841 N. Ballas Road, St. Louis, MO 63131 / Web Site: www.IBMRingOne.com
SANDY WEIS, Treasurer and Scribe / E-mail: ibmringone@gmail.com
1755 Elkins Drive, St. Louis, MO 63136

Ring 1 began the new year with a milestone worthy of celebration: we officially outgrew our previous meeting space. With membership steadily rising and enthusiasm at an all-time high, the Ring stepped into its new venue on January 12th — and what an inaugural night it was.

The evening marked our first gathering in the new location, the Parkway United Church of Christ, and we christened the space with a lecture from none other than Mark Strivings, one of the most influential mentalists of the modern era.

Mark, who hails from the Denver area, has been a full-time professional mentalist since 1995. His career has taken him from Monday Night Magic on Broadway to the world-famous Magic Castle in Hollywood, and his contributions to the art are nothing short of foundational. His groundbreaking work in Mobile Mentalism helped ignite the worldwide movement of strolling mentalism, and his creations — including the legendary Sight Unseen Case — are used by thousands of working pros across the globe.

With over 80 published books, nearly two dozen video features, and more than 100 commercial releases, Mark's influence is woven deeply into the fabric of contemporary mentalism.

In preparation for this last-minute event, Michael W. McClure coordinated with Mark, shaping the evening into something truly special. Mark's lecture notes thanked Michael "for taking the lead and making this event happen." Michael had created a special surprise for Mark's introduction to the club. He wrote his own lyrics, sometimes satirical but always assuring, and created a song that heralded Mark's incredible career and expertise. Mark was shocked and delighted by the unique tribute and claimed that this magic club will

be one he never forgets.

The lecture, titled "St. Louis Secrets – A Lecture for My Friends at I.B.M. Ring 1," was crafted specifically for our members. Mark shared that he custom-tailors every lecture he gives — a rare and refreshing approach that made the evening feel intimate and uniquely ours.

Almost 50 magicians filled the room, eager to learn from a master. Mark emphasized that every effect he teaches is designed to be powerful, easy to learn, practical, and deeply deceptive. His philosophy was clear: miracles should be within reach of every performer.

The lecture notes, offered at a very modest \$15, contained 12 fully developed effects, each explained with Mark's signature clarity and generosity. Most routines required nothing more than everyday objects — business cards, ESP symbols, dice, and other simple tools already found in any magician's drawer. True to his character, Mark credited the creators who inspired earlier versions of each of the effects, while showing how he refined and elevated them through decades of professional experience.

Before the event, Michael had emailed attendees a copy of Mark's 426-page catalogue ... a testament to the sheer breadth of Mark's creative output.

Sandy Weis

RING 2, YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO – Filips-Tutter-Doeright Ring

Meets 7:30 pm 2nd Fri., Valley Christian Church, 7155 Glenwood Ave.,
Youngstown, OH
PETER LUCKE, Secretary
E-mail: IBMRing2Youngstown@me.com

Our January meeting was opened by Vice President Bob Gurdak. He commented on various upcoming club events and plans. The following members and friends were present at our meeting: Fritz Coombs, Bob Gurdak, Larry Henderson, James and Eric Killmeyer, Jim Klayder, Peter Lucke, and Gary Morton. The theme of the evening was "Cups and Balls."

Gary Morton opened with Cup-a-Rubba. He invited Larry to assist him. He began by putting a cap on Larry's head as well as some "glasses." Gary also donned a cap and glasses. He gave Larry a device, about the size of a flashlight, that made a variety of beat sounds when certain buttons were pushed. The "cups" were in fact small plastic flower pots, and the balls were sponge balls. Gary began by reciting a poem, and as he recited, he performed his cup and ball routine. At times, he signaled Larry to change the beat sounds.

Peter Lucke followed with Einstein's Favorite Trick by Richard Vollmer, from Steve Beam's volume 2. Peter invited James to assist him. He gave James a deck of cards to shuffle. Following that, Peter counted off ten cards and placed the remainder of the deck on the table. He gave the packet of ten to James to shuffle again. Peter then turned his back and asked James to discard 1 to 5 cards onto the deck, and then show the audience the bottom card of the packet; it was the AS. Peter next asked James to take a card from the top of the packet and place it on the bottom while he spelled Einstein. Finally, James was instructed to take the top card from the packet and place it on the deck, and then place the next card on the bottom of the packet repeatedly until only one card remained. The final card was the AS.

James Killmeyer continued with Chest of Yore. He showed us a small chest inside of which was a gold ring and a rubber band. He removed the ring and band, and as he recited a poem, he linked and unlinked the ring and band in a variety of ways.

The magic continued with Larry Henderson and Movie Quiz by Jamie Williams. Larry invited Gary to assist him. He began by showing us some special cards that had famous phrases from popular movies on them. Larry recited a phrase from a card, and Gary identified the movie. He then had Gary mix up the cards. To select a card, Larry dealt cards to the table until Gary said "Stop." And, Larry set aside the chosen card. Larry then identified a paper on the table as his prediction. He held it up and Gary read "I can't read." This was repeated several times. Finally, Larry held up the paper and it now said Star Wars. And, the card on the table was indeed the Star Wars Card. Larry then placed the 12 other cards face down on the table in a 3 by 4 rectangle. The backs showed a scene from Star Wars.

Bob Gurdak amused us with Devious Dan from Ron Franks. The patter for his effect was in the form of a poem. He spread five jumbo cards in his hands; they were all aces. Upon

showing the backs, we saw that four were blue and one was red. So he replaced that card with another; the KS. Bob laid the cards face down on the table, revealing that four of them now had pictures on their backs.

Jim Klayder closed members' magic with a Cups and Balls routine attributed to Dai Vernon. He began by placing three inverted cups on the table and a white ball on top of each one. Jim picked up a ball, waved his wand over his hand, and the ball vanished. He repeated this for the other two cups. Jim then tipped each cup to show the ball was underneath. He then asked Larry to choose a cup; he chose the middle one. Jim pretended to remove the ball, it was invisible, and place it in the rightmost cup. Upon lifting the cup, two balls were revealed. The middle cup now had no ball. Jim repeated the effect so that the middle cup lost its ball and the rightmost cup now had two balls under it. He concluded by removing each ball from under its cup. A peek under the middle cup revealed all three balls. Finally he turned over all three cups to reveal a baseball under each one. The evening concluded with general discussion of various magic effects.

Peter Lücke

RING 9, ATLANTA, GEORGIA – Georgia Magic Club

Meets 3rd Mon. of month, 7:00pm, Mt. Vernon Presbyterian Church,
471 Mount Vernon Hwy, Sandy Springs, GA
Ring 9 Website: www.gamagicclub.com
BILL PACKARD, Secretary / Email: billpackardmagic@gmail.com

Georgia Magic Club (Ring 9) meeting
December 15, 2025

TIP (To Improve Performance) LECTURE: "Making It Up: Improvisation for Magicians" by Jason Kresner. Jason discussed the art of improvisation in regard to Adaptability & Flexibility, Active Listening & Audience Interactions, Quick Thinking & Problem Solving, and Storytelling & Character Development. It helps cover mistakes, leads to more engaging and unforgettable performances, and allows for creativity by thinking outside the box. Jason even did a quick storytelling workshop with two volunteers. Recommended books include Improvisation for the Theater, by Viola Spolin, Truth in Comedy, by Charna Halpern, and Improv Comedy, by Andy Goldberg. From the Q&A, we learned that local improv classes are available at Dad's Garage and Whole World Improv Theater, and why Carisa Hendrix is so successful.

BUSINESS MEETING: President Clark Kjorlaug greeted 25 members and one guest.

Steve Goldstein and Steve Langston gave some great comments about TRICS in Charlotte. Jason Ladanye is performing at Helium Comedy Club on December 20, and

Justin Willman is performing at Atlanta Symphony Hall on January 17.

Steve Langston is looking for suggestions for the next book to read in the Georgia Magic Book Club – it might be *Modern Magic*, which is available at discount at the IBM.

Eric Schuster was complemented on the new IBM website.

Mark Hatfield commented that every time he performs for Project Magic he learns something new.

Steve Goldstein suggests January 3 for the next Magic Meetup — check for notifications.

No one present celebrates a birthday in December, and fortunately there were no new reports regarding Health and Welfare.

The annual Holiday Banquet is scheduled for January 24. Jason Michaels has been invited back to headline, since his appearance was cancelled last year.

Secretary/Treasurer Bill Packard will be emailing Magician of the Year criteria submissions from the five nominees to all Georgia Magic Club members, to be followed by a ballot to choose two to be included with Atlanta Society of Magicians' nominees on the final ballot.

Fill out a form at <https://www.gamagicclub.com/circleofhonor> to log your participation in GMC activities in 2025. There will be a gathering at the Atlanta Museum of Illusions to celebrate all those who qualify.

Vice President Zach Ivins revealed the list of themes for next year:

January: Off the Cuff February: Go Sports March: Webmaster Magician April: April Foolery May: May I Reach Your Mind June: The Magic Television July: Storytelling Sorcery August: Purely Prestidigitation September: Macabre Magic October: (Auction) November: New to You December: Holiday Feast

Zach is still looking for TIP lecture volunteers for next year.

When pressed for information, Lecture Chair Debbie Leifer announced that we have an exciting lecturer coming in May or June, but with the date not confirmed, she only teased that the lecturer is from Australia.

THEME MAGIC PERFORMERS: “Giving Season: Perform magic that leaves the audience with a gift or features a gift. (Thanks to Patrick Buchen for the write-up!)”

President Clark Kjørlaug opened the night’s “Giving Season” themed performances by inviting two spectators onstage. A card was selected—the five of diamonds—which was promptly lost in the deck. A second spectator chose the eight of spades and pushed it into the middle, its back remaining visible. Moments later, Clark

revealed that the card protruding from the deck had traveled back in time, transforming into the five of diamonds, gifting the audience the previous five minutes in one elegant reversal.

Once the applause subsided, Ross “the Hat” DeMocko arrived with four identical, save for color, perfectly wrapped presents. He invited five brave volunteers to participate in his twisted ‘Secret Santa.’ Four were guided stage right, while the fifth remained behind and given a card sealed in an envelope. After some festive banter, Ross equipped the card selector with a golden ornament and explained that the remaining gift boxes each held red ornaments. While the others turned away, the selector secretly swapped the gold ornament into one box. The remaining four volunteers then each chose a gift. Without seeing the switch, Ross deduced who held the golden ornament by listening to each volunteer’s best Santa-style “Ho, Ho, Ho.” He then reminded everyone of the sealed envelope, which was opened to reveal the message: “You may think it is the first person, but really, the third person is holding the golden ornament.” The correct spectator was rewarded with a commercially purchased magic trick.

Eric Schuster followed by seating Walter Fields for a lesson in the progressive dinner. Using a deck of food-themed cards, Walter freely selected hot tea, a Caesar salad, lobster tail, and tiramisu—choices individually delightful, though questionable as a single meal. Eric revealed that each card carried a unique dollar value on the back. With unprompted assistance from the audience, Walter’s total came to \$42.00, aided significantly by a \$13.00 salad. Eric then presented Walter with a sealed fortune cookie, which predicted—unsurprisingly and impossibly—that he would spend \$42.00 on dinner.

Lynn Fox took the stage next, immediately handing a volunteer a brand-new tan rubber band. After demonstrating its familiar properties, Lynn explained how compression could make it appear to vanish. His own band disappeared completely, though the volunteer failed to replicate the feat. Lynn confessed the band had merely traveled up his sleeve, through his jacket, down his pant leg, and onto his ankle. When he retrieved it and handed it to the volunteer, she discovered she was now wearing a gold-plated bracelet instead.

Steve Langston followed with an effect that began with a freely selected queen of hearts that was accidentally lost. Apologizing for missing a pinky break, Steve recovered the card—only to transform it into the three of diamonds. The three was torn, the queen rediscovered, and with

a touch, the torn three restored itself while the queen lay in pieces. The fragments were signed, fused into a mismade card, and gifted as a souvenir.

Aryeh Rabin presented a sneak peek of The Aryeh Gameshow, inviting three participants and introducing a gift-wrapped prize. Volunteers named five-letter words, with Steve Goldstein choosing the word 'mules.' Impossibly, one word appeared written on a billet inside a jewelry box: mules. The prize—a stuffed animal—bore a tag reading, "This animal belongs to Steve Goldstein," earning Aryeh the coveted blue pin.

Steve Goldstein remained onstage to close the themed performances, inviting Ross back to assist with a curious stick featuring colored holes. A toothpick placed in the red hole jumped impossibly to blue, repeating the miracle for a room full of trained professionals. The enchanted toothpick was gifted to Ross.

The evening concluded with Michael and Lisa Varon. After spectators thoroughly shuffled the deck, Michael briefly flashed the cards to Lisa. A random number—twenty-two—was called. Lisa confidently named the nine of spades, accurately predicting others along the way. We thanked her politely and avoided eye contact as she departed for what was almost certainly a government black site, leaving the rest of us to our coins and silks.

There were three winners of magic products in the Wheel o' Names Giveaway.

Winner of the Coveted Royal Blue Pin was Aryeh Rabin and the theme for next month (January) is "Off the Cuff" – Perform a piece of impromptu magic.

Bill Packard

RING 12, BUFFALO, NEW YORK – Gene Gordon – Karl Norman Ring

Meets 1st Mon. each month at the Screening Room Cinema & Café, 3131 Sheridan Dr., Amherst, NY. Web site/E-mail: Ring 12.org

TODD NELSON, Secretary,

(716) 480-4757 \ 24 Majestic Circle, Amherst, NY 14226

Welcome to 2026. We kicked off the New Year with Buck MacLeod. But, first, as usual, we had our teaching table. This month we had Todd Nelson. He taught us his sponge cube routine. Many use sponge balls, it's a nice change to see cubes, and there are some things you can do with cubes but not balls. One example of this is counting the corners, as well, cubes can't roll away. We were all given a set of sponge cubes to practice what was taught. There were multiplying cubes, cubes transferring from the magicians hand to the volunteer's, as well as disappearing them. It is so nice to come away with props.

Now, it was time for our lecture with Buck

MacLeod, another talented Canadian magician. I believe he is also a member of our ring. It's always good to see him, even when he's not lecturing. There are so many Canadian members, including myself. I'm still a Canadian citizen. Buck had so much knowledge to impart, even with nary a deck of cards in sight. He started out with an introduction and his name on the screen. It all hinted at the fun we were going to have. He discusses the idea of using props that were meant for a short trick and elongate the production. He also had a video of how he sets up his props and other magic items for a show. He also makes a lot of what he uses with a 3-D printer. There were many useful ideas on how we can use space management when we pack. Another discussion point was the use of volunteers. The more people involved the more fun it will seem. He also had many items for sale. The quality was excellent and the prices were very reasonable. I went home happy with my new toys, such as a pom-pom stick and many other well crafted toys. It was a great lecture and I look forward to seeing more Buck in the future and what new products he can craft on his 3-D printer.

Shlomo Birkan

RING 13, PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA – Tampa-Greenberg Ring

Meets 1st Thu., 7:30pm, Dee Jay's BBQ Ribs and Grille, 1155 Washington Pike, Bridgeville, PA

MARK ZAJICEK, Secretary

E-mail: ibmring13@gmail.com

Web site: www.ibmring13.org

In January, we cancelled our regular Ring meeting, since our normal meeting day (the first Thursday of the month) fell on the New Year's Day holiday this year. But there was no shortage of other magic for our members to enjoy. Our new Ring officers continued to plan events for later in the month, including a dinner and a special guest lecture by visiting magician Paul Vigil, who was in Pittsburgh during his month-long residency performing at Liberty Magic. Members also continued to get together on the third Thursday of the month for an informal, monthly dinner, a tradition that we started after the COVID pandemic disruption. Several of our members prepared to attend the Magifest convention in Columbus, Ohio, January 22-24. We continued plans for our upcoming, annual banquet and magic show to be held at The Fez on Sunday, April 12. Some members were already making plans to attend the annual I.B.M. Convention in St. Louis in July. And our officers also continued to consider ideas to celebrate the upcoming 99th anniversary of our Ring, which was chartered in December 1927. We look forward to seeing all the magic that this new year brings!

Mark Zajicek

RING 16, MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE – Society of Memphis Magicians

Meets 1st Tue., 7:00pm, Germantown Presbyterian Church

JEFFREY DAY, Secretary

Web sites: www.ring16.org

January 2026 brought in a New Year and Ring 16 had one of our largest attended meetings in years. Many old and new faces eager to begin a new Magical Year! Our President Joe M. Turner presented our first Front Table of the year. A Front Table is where a member presents a theme of magic and expounds in a teaching session. Joe's Theme was the Elmsley Count (ghost count). He taught 3 different methods of the count and how to use them. He followed this with Dan Garrett's 4 for Spot Routine. Joe, once again proved that he is a Great Teacher as well as a Great Performer!

Our business portion of the meeting was mostly concerned with Our Big Charity Show on February 21st for the Church Health Center. One of the show's sponsors, Mr. Bill Stegbauer spoke with the Ring about the up coming show. Everyone is very excited and they are anticipating a complete sell out of approximately 400+ seats. The remainder portion of the business meeting moved along very quickly. We have many members performing around the Mid-South in the next few weeks. Joe is a very well organized President and kept everyone on task.

Now for the Magic Portion of Our Meeting!!!

Our first performer of the evening was Dr. Jon Stanford. He performed his version of "Color Monte" followed by a very unique routine where a spectator signs a small piece of blank Photography Paper. This piece is placed between 2 Half Dollars. A card is chosen from a deck of cards. When the Half Dollars are separated the signed piece of paper is turned over showing a printed miniature playing card that matched the chosen card.

Our 2nd performer was Lucio Martinez. Lucio won the Stage Contest at the Winter Carnival of Magic a couple of years ago. He performed an original routine that he titled "Your Card Is." He had 5 printed envelopes displayed at the beginning. He asked a spectator to call out red or black referring to the card suit. He asked for a number to go with the suit. Then he asked another spectator to pick one of the numbered envelope. Inside the envelope was a match as he stated "A Perfect Prediction."

Our 3rd performer was Jeffrey Day. He is a well known Victorian Era Magician. Jeff performed a beautiful Coins Across Routine utilizing a gold nugget that he found while living in Alaska for 15 years when he worked for FedEx. He followed this with a great rope routine where

knots would appear and disappear at will. The routine climaxed with a cut and restore effect. Jeffrey is a Master!!!

Our 4th performer was Martin Seiler. Martin is one of our star Mentalist in the ring. He performed a routine that he calls "The Magic Chinese Restaurant." Martin had 4 spectators choose menus from different restaurants. Each person chose a different part of the meal from appetizer to desert. The prices of each selection was totaled and just happened to match that amount that Martin had predicted previously. Martin is a Tax Attorney by trade and that is why his numbers always add up perfectly.

Our 5th performer was Joe M. Turner. Joe is probably our busiest member. His talents range from playing piano at the World Famous Peabody Hotel to performing magic all over the South. This week he was performing in 3 states in 2 days. His magic portion tonight expounded on the Elmsley Count aka the Ghost Count. He performed Alex Elmsley's "Original 4 Card Trick." The routine has a Queen journeying through 4 blank cards to end up at the end with a different colored back. Joe is always amazing!!!

Our night ended with Paul Frankel. He is known as Professor Q Ball. He is a Master Billard Player as well as a Master with Cards and Coins. Tonight he performed a routine that he calls "A Memory Test" where Queens and Aces change place in the spectators hand. He followed this with a great copper/silver transition routine. He did a superb job.

After the formal part of the meeting everyone gathered in small groups to either talk or perform some more magic. It was such fun that no one wanted to go home. *Dr. Jon Stanford*

RING 19, MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA – Carl Jones Ring

Meets 2nd Mon. each month, 7:00 p.m., via Zoom and in person 2nd

Sat. (location TBD)

ANDREW SELBITSCHKA, President / Web site: www.IBMRing19.com

Each New Year brings new officers, new members and with hope, new magic! We accomplished all three at our January 2026 in-person meeting.

Newly established President Tyler Erickson started off the meeting with a magic pep talk. The topic was Sharing Magic - Old and New. Tyler quoted Sherlock Holmes - "Omne ignotum pro magnifico" - "everything unknown is in the place of a magnificent thing" or more simply put, "a thing that is not known is imagined to be a lot better than it really is." Many of us hold back on performing magic because we assume that everyone knows about the magic we might be performing. Yes, we've all seen Cups and

Balls or Professor's Nightmare or a myriad of card tricks, but not every one knows every trick, so don't let the fear of assuming that someone knows a trick prevent you from performing and sharing magic. Others may offer suggestions, enhancements or feedback that you didn't expect. And, who doesn't want help making their magic better! Bottom line - just perform!

Dan Norat, with participant Bennett Sholl, performed a trick using osteomancy, the ancient form of predicting the future using animal bones. Dan performed a card trick with a surprise finish - the chosen card showed up imprinted on a horse jawbone!

Bennett Sholl shared a new paddle trick, that he has been working on, with Paul Laidig.

Paul Laidig, the Vintage Magician, then performed with his ventriloquist dummy, Clyde. Funnily enough, Clyde was dressed exactly like Tyler! Paul provided a vent demonstration with tricks and tips for making the figure appear 'alive' and how to instill a personality in the figure. It was very entertaining and informative.

Roger Oman, new to our group, also works with puppets and shared some humorous thoughts with the group. He passed out small finger puppets, had us share stories, some quite funny in various voices. We didn't get to keep the puppets (sad face).

John-Robert, with an assist from Paul Laidig, shared some of his 'bizarre' magic in the form of a card trick. The story that accompanied the trick dealt with a French spy, Marie DuFre, the Psychic of Lyon, who had escaped seven assassination attempts. Using the finger bone of Mlle. DuFre, Paul was able to divine her escape and eliminate all of the attempts on her life. John-Robert, based the trick as an homage from a TC Tahoe effect, "Sipping the Moon". It was very inventive and we provided feedback from an audience perspective.

Tyler provided a lecture on Trick Structure. He pointed out that when structuring routines ask yourself "What would I say when performing the trick? What story would I tell and is it worth the effort?" We need to say what is necessary, not what is interesting. We often build more interest with what we leave out of the script. Compressing the script, often allows us to bring the action to a close faster and hence a faster reveal at the end.

Rich Hinrichs is always ready to share his magic with the group. He impressed us with his Ring and Rope routine. This is comprised of several phases and we provided feedback re: appropriate numbers of phases to condense and make the effect more compelling.

"Fast" Eddie Olson performed a Victorian

mind-reading card trick using five volunteers. This trick is a baffler and was made all the more enjoyable by "Fast's" humor and comedic timing. I cannot wait for next month's meeting, when the method will be revealed!

Blake Sholl performed a card trick with John-Robert using an invisible deck to visible deck to an all backs deck to the revealed chosen card. Our young magic members are so talented and creative.

Dan Koopmanns shared a card trick with AnnMarie Thomas and Dan Norat assisting.

Gary McKibben shared his version of Miser's Dream. He has perfected the routine for his use with his personalized "bucket" and gimmicks. We discussed how reactions seem bigger when coins are produced from "somewhere" as opposed to "from thin air" and how this plays theatrically.

We broke in to small session groups. Tyler did a workshop on using a Faro shuffle to get in to Si Stebbins stack from a new deck. Tyler emphasized that when working with the Faro, in general, you don't have to have a perfect Faro shuffle for the deck to be useful.

Our Monday night Zoom meeting was small but impactful. We carried over several discussions of the magic that we enjoyed at the in-person meeting.

We waxed philosophical at times. We discussed that our job, as performers, is to choose the best phases of routines and know which ones to let go of and which ones to keep. We also talked about setting good examples - knowing your audience to avoid offending them and keeping yourself aware of how audiences will receive your magic. Just because the participant may have been receptive to a specific joke or comment, may not feel the same is a 'live' environment.

Tyler Erickson talked about his new show "The Visitor". It's a show performed in a home setting where guests enjoy magic presented with props/objects provided by attendees. These are one-off performances that are never recorded and therefore never repeated for the same group again. They are "live, in the moment" experiences.

We discussed how some tricks take time to get to the finish, if you don't create texture (fast, then slow) moments, the trick may fall flat, especially if you don't think about the trick in the big picture of a routine. We talked about never putting two slow tricks together. It slows momentum. Another tip, once you've earned an audience's attention, you can put in a slower piece. Let the story drive the trick instead of the reverse - too many people do a trick using patter that doesn't fit the presenter or the presentation.

Jennifer Graham

RING 20, HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA – Eddie Clever Keystone Ring

Meets 2nd Thur., at 6:00pm (order off the menu), meeting 7:00pm at John's Diner 146 Sheraton Dr., New Cumberland, PA 17070
MARK KROTULSKI, Secretary / E-mail: eddieclever20@gmail.com

November Meeting Location: Beacon Hill Diner (formerly John's Diner) 146 Sheraton Drive, New Cumberland, PA 17070-2440

In Attendance: Stephen Smith, Michael Reist, John Sergott, Al Bienstock, Wayne Shiflet, Jack Ritter, Robert Beard, Maria Tellez, Richie Matthews, Mark Zagursky, Victor Orriola, John Fortino, and Dan Scully.

President Smith opened the meeting at 6:30 and welcomed members and guests. He also thanked all the Veterans.

Reports: The Secretary's and Treasurer's reports were accepted.

Old Business: The President thanked all who helped with the Veterans Dinner.

New Business: The new business conducted was the election of officers. The officers as elected are:

Secretary: Michael Reist

Treasurer: Al Bienstock

VP: Victor Orriola

President: Stephen Smith

Good of Order: Our Christmas Meeting is at 5:00 at Marzoni's

John was at Bob Little's. Great turnout. Dan Harlan did a great job entertaining and there were a lot of vendors. John also Talked about the House of Magic. Father Leo's show was postponed. The meeting adjourned at 7:03 PM. Instead of each member doing a magic trick, we instead had a Dealer Demo by Wayne from Mingus Magic.

December Meeting Location: Beacon Hill Diner (formerly John's Diner) 146 Sheraton Drive, New Cumberland, PA 17070-2440.

In Attendance: Stephen, Genevieve, and Rebecca Smith, Rodney and Maureen Ries; Michael and Kathryn Reist, Al Bienstock, Jack Ritter, Maria Tellez, Mark Zagursky, Victor Orriola, John Fortino, Berne and Betty Smith; Dave and Beth McDade, and Maryann and Mike Gelehrter.

This was our Christmas Party Program so we did not have a formal meeting. Everyone chatted, and ordered dinner. After dinner, at approximately 6:45 President Smith opened the meeting and welcomed members and guests. He also thanked all who came and noted that several could not make it because of other obligations. After that, the magic began. The following members performed on behalf of the club:

Al Bienstock, Rodney Ries, Michael Reist, Victor Orriola, and, Stephen Smith.

Michael L. Reist

RING 21, HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA – Caryl Fleming

Meets 1st Thu. at Holy Virgin Mary Orthodox Cathedral auditorium, 650 Michelorena St., Los Angeles, CA 90026 / Web site: www.IBMRing21.org
GERRY SCHILLER, Secretary
P.O. Box 246, Newbury Park, CA 91319 / (805) 499-8921
E-mail: geraldsschiller@gmail.com

This month's meeting was a year in review for Hollywood's Ring 21, as we celebrated the coming holiday season and said goodbye to 2025 with a wonderful club dinner the only way Hollywood knows how...spectacularly magical! Lois Lave provided an unbelievable spread of delicious food for our holiday dinner and many members also brought some yummy goodies pot-luck style. The celebrations were well under way with magic performances themed to whatever lifted your holiday spirits.

The night was full of the usual camaraderie as all of our members in attendance brought out their best to bring out the holiday spirit. Bob Weiss also announced the upcoming themes for our next year's performance awards competition which include children performances, bizarre performances, and strolling Magic. Our raffle was totally awesome as usual where I (Manny D'Mago) brought the latest and greatest from Tenyo Magic as prizes which were super-duper hot and full of value! Needless to say, lots of members had to have a piece of that and the winners couldn't have been more thrilled.

After our delicious dinner, some drinks and the recognition of some new members to our club, it was time for our holiday magic show. We presented some very original performances using lots of original and new stuff from the best Ring 21 has to offer.

The performances kicked off with the one and only Gerry Schiller, who performed a book test that had involved about 5 members' chosen words and he correctly named every word! A new member named Brandon performed a prediction card trick comprising of a business card reveal and a rising card effect that was very visually appealing. Our next performer, Elroy Conning performed a card effect with 4 kings, 4 aces and 4 queens that seemed to take a new twist on the McDonald's Aces. David Cotelesa performed a card trick with a selected card that was placed back into the deck and amazing revealed with the assistance of Mark Anthony Petrucelli and Rachel Slocombe. Next up was The always graceful Wendy Sobel, who shared a wonderful story of an elderly lady with warm wishes and desires of dreams about humbleness and peace using a special tube with pieces that did not seem like much until they magically connected with no way to see how they actually could stick together and connect. Maybe it was the love in her heart! Next, another new member, AJ Bernah, performed a

mentalism type of card magic involving the 3 of hearts and somehow finding it in a shuffled deck with the assistance of the delightful Ellen Stien. Reed Eckman was up next to perform and as always brought something very original and always pleasing to the eyes which utilized a box with different color blocks and shapes presented as a game with a penguin being revealed fitting neatly inside from a randomly selected card. The finale was out of nowhere, as Reed gave the penguin a Rudolph red nose to end his performance with a bang. Our Vice President, David Martinez performed a very original routine using Christmas movies as cards with a prediction, asking the spectators, (us) to either 'stream or skip' with David correctly predicting the selected film as the Grinch from a notepad that seemed to melt away the incorrect guess written to the correct one, WOW! Next up was yours truly, Manny D'Mago in which I described the first magic trick I had learned and shared how grateful I was to be able to share my story and magic with everyone at Ring 21. A card selected by one of our audience members was correctly revealed after I had told everyone I would correctly predict 'your card' which is what was written on the post-it note pad... totally hilarious cheap gag! However after a quick finger snap, the selected card very visually appeared on the same post it note. Very cool!! John Engman was up next with his performance of a torn and restored newspaper which was held together by a rubber band, torn into pieces and then transformed into a paper mache ladder; very original and totally visual. Last but not least was our president Bob Weiss in which he performed a phone trick with his flashlight and using Harry Potter spells. Then he used his phone again, this time using 2 volunteers, one typing gibberish on his phone and the other thinking of a word between 4 and 8 letters in which the tech didn't seem to cooperate with him very much which made for more of a fun time than magic.

After all the formalities and magic performances, it was raffle time to help bring the event to a close.

The holiday dinner spread was truly one to remember as more significant memories were made and without a doubt, the best for ending 2025! Tune in next month where I'll be bringing more Ring 21 shenanigans and entire routines, exciting raffle prizes and making sure Ring 21's new year of 2026 starts off with a boom!
Manny D'Mago

RING 23, CLEVELAND, OHIO – Blackstone Ring/ Cleveland Magician's Club

Meets 1st Wed., (occasional changes); 7:00 p.m. at Pleasant Hills United Methodist Church 13200 Bagley Rd., Cleveland, OH 44130 / www.ring23.org
DAVID NEUMAN, President / E-mail: neumand77@gmail.com

It was cold and windy outside, but warm and energetic inside as 35 members of Ring 23, The Blackstone Ring, gathered on January 7th for the

first meeting of the New Year. The new Recording Secretary gamely took notes despite years of medical training having rendered his handwriting largely interpretive and drolly forewarned the club.

President David Neuman opened the business meeting, noting that an executive meeting had been held on 12/27/25. Program Chair Sergio Castro presented a full schedule for the year, with copies distributed to members. Highlights included the magic competitions in June, several date and location changes, and the Annual Awards Banquet scheduled for April 25. Planned visiting lecturers and potential lectures were also discussed.

Sharon Martynowski was thanked for updating the roster. Bruce Averbook, Recording Secretary, asked members to complete a new meeting activity roster to track participation. David Sarian, Administrative Secretary, is working on a new Ring website. Vice President Bryan Gerber shared information about the Whiz Bang venue for magicians, while Robert Durante noted a Kiwanis group is interested in the Ring presenting another fundraising show. New and reinstated members were acknowledged. Treasurer Dave Boyce presented his report, which was accepted.

Six past presidents were present along with the current president and were acknowledged and presented with IBM Ring Past President pins: Jerry Jay (1985), Neil Rozum (1986 & 1992), Sharon Martynowski (1987–90, 1995–96), David Mark (1993), Jim Hathy (1994), and Dr. Bruce J. Averbook (1997–2013). Dave Neuman has served as President since 2014. The business meeting was then adjourned.

The evening's initiation show was performed by Mike Donegan, introduced by Jim Hathy, Sgt. at Arms and Membership Chairman. Mike opened with John Kennedy's Fickle Nickel as popularized by Doug Henning, featuring a one-handed vanish and reappearance. He added a whimsical touch by transforming the nickel into an unwrapped lollipop, which then instantly became wrapped. He continued with a One Coin Routine, Two Coin Routine, Coins Across, and concluded with a Three Card Monte variation based on Color Monte. The performance was well received and earned enthusiastic applause.

Next was the "Presidential Podium," with Dave Neuman demonstrating the commercially released "AI" card trick, Teacan 3000. In this clever effect, a spectator inserts a card into a spread deck, and the two surrounding cards designate a specific card that is ultimately located using instructions written on the inserted card. Dave also showed an effect from Magic Dream called Infinity, a visual water-to-wine transformation that can be repeated multiple times in the same glass. While impressive, he noted it still needs a strong routine.

The main theme of the evening was poker chips. Bryan Gerber performed a one-chip routine featuring vanishes, reappearances, transpositions, and a final disappearance. Bob Cervas followed with *Apré Poker*, a mentalism effect using four poker chips and four spectators that culminated in a precise prediction of the final chip's outcome. Dave Neuman then discussed the use of PK rings with poker chips, including how to construct metal-core chips and a practical poker chip stack for a Ramsay-style coin-and-cylinder effect. Marv Leventhal closed the segment with *Poker Chip Poker*, where a spectator freely selects chips for both themselves and the magician, only to reveal that both "hands" match a prediction displayed from the beginning in an envelope.

The final portion of the meeting focused on *Ambitious Card* and *Omni Deck* routines. Robert Lapp shared practical, marketable tips, including placing contact-information labels on signed cards and preserving them in plastic sleeves to make it special and encourage return business. He demonstrated a "half double lift," add-on techniques for switching the top card, and clever uses of misdirection, including the strategic placement of a Sharpie. He recommended Daryl's *Ambitious Card Omnibus* by Stephen Minch as an essential reference.

Sergio Castro performed a multi-phase ambitious routine where a selected card repeatedly appeared between two jokers, ultimately changing back color and transforming the deck into clear plastic cards except for the selection! Bryan Gerber discussed Darwin Ortiz's use of the pinky count for double lifts, supported by Dr. Bruce Averbook, who studied with Darwin. Bryan also demonstrated a highly visual ambitious card using a pass. Rod Whitlock highlighted Gaëtan Bloom's *Escalator Card*. Bryan added a humorous interlude with a frog origami card fold, a nod to Michael Close's *Frog Prince*. Adam Bell concluded the evening with *Monkey in the Middle*.

The meeting ended promptly at 9:30 PM, and members headed back into the cold night warmed by an excellent evening of magic and camaraderie. *Dr. Bruce J. Averbook*

RING 26, NEW YORK, NEW YORK – Harry Roz-On Ring

Meets Last Fri. each month at 7:00pm at The Mountain House Gallery, 702 9th Avenue (corner of West 48 Street) New York, NY 10019
CARRINGTON "ACE" GREENFADER, President
E-mail: carrington.greenfader@gmail.com / Website: www.80-20.org/meeting

Our last meeting for 2025 was the Bornstein/Clement Lab. As usual, the lab was well attended and filled with enthusiasm and holiday cheer. Past president, Frank Reyes, and

Robert Wallner donned Christmas caps. Guy Crowl dressed in a tuxedo and was accompanied by his sister, Susan. We even had a visitor who joined us. Many who could not attend were fortunate to have gigs for this night. Never turn down a paying gig.

After the meal and raffle, it was time for some magic. Frank demonstrated his recent purchase, *Wand to Ball*. Guy paddled around with some flies and caused one to appear in an ice cube that was in a glass of water. Robert did a prediction effect involving three digit numbers. Adrien Pierard entertained with cards having audience selected cards meet symbiotically. The cards were the Ace of hearts and Ace of diamonds. Francois Xavier, aka FX, performed a beautiful Chinese Coins off of Ribbon.

The evening rounded off with a cake purchased by the club for the members. Once sliced and served the evening and year ended sweetly. Thanks to all who attended. Thanks to all the members for their support throughout the year and here's to an even better 2026. Please visit us on our Facebook page, *ibm ring 26*. *Frank Reyes*

RING 27, NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA – Earle J. Christenberry, Jr., Ring

Meets 1st Thu. each month, 7:0pm, Knuckleheads Sports Bar & Grill, 3535 Severn Ave. Ste. 10, Metairie, LA 70002. Optional meal anytime after 6:00pm - brief business meeting around 7:00 - 7:15 - followed by magic.
KEVIN CARNEY, Vice Presiden / E-mail: kmcarney@charter.net
101 Rue De LaPaix, Slidell, LA 70458 / (985) 643-3611

December Meeting: In attendance at Knuckleheads were Kevin Carney, Barbara Carney, Barry Fernelius, & Allen Boudreaux. It was Kevin's Birthday, Barry brought cupcakes for everyone. We ate dinner and socialized, much discussion and storytelling was done, including tales of meeting Dai Vernon, Doc Eason, as well as stories from the history of Ring 27 about Earl Christenberry (Past International I.B.M. President) etc.

Barry Fernelius performed John Bannon's take on Simon Aronson's "Shuffle Bored", letting Kevin and Allen shuffle a deck freely and yet predicting the number of cards in each stack and then the number of cards of each color. Barry performed a JC Wagner card trick "Band O Rama", in which a chosen card is lost in the deck, which is wrapped by a rubber band, and then the card is revealed when it pops itself out of the center of the deck. Barry showed Hanson Chien's "Scotch and Whiskey", displaying two keys and disappearing one in full view... and then generously giving out easy-opening key chain rings for all of us to use for our own key effects.

Kevin Carney showed us a deceptively simple trick marketed by Patrick and Mia where a

ring jumps from a colorful elliptical plastic pill box into a heart shaped box. Then he presented a skeleton key, where the teeth of the key mysteriously move around and down the length of the key, a gimmick by George Robinson/Viking Magic.

Allen Boudreaux presented a couple of newer Tenyo gimmicks - Jailbreak, where solid objects pass through the metal "jail" bars in a plastic frame, and Erase Away, a clever coin disappearance with a close-up pad and an eraser. He then performed an effect matching a card secretly turned over in a packet by a spectator to a card turned over in his own packet - "Synchronous" by Javier Natara.

Kevin then ended the meeting and distributed a few more books and magazines from the collection of former member Milton Scheuermann.

Allen Boudreaux and Leonard Bertrand

January Meeting: Lenny "Tricky Trainwreck" and Darlene Bertrand, Allen Boudreaux, Craig Boudreaux, Kevin and Barbara Carney, Jim Hussey, Herb Miller attended.

Jim Hussey marvelously produced various coins from thin air as the crowd in Knuckleheads thunderously cheered. The jubilant applause was probably due to something related to one of the football bowl games, but how Hussey physically directed each coin production, like a symphonic conductor, to a football play in progress was not something he learned from his voluminous magic books. Even his coin vanishes were poetry that elicited "oooohs and awes" from us and the crowd. Honestly, his most excellent exploits of Joshua Jay's "Triad Coins" and Greg Wilson's Split Focus were worthy of standing ovation.

The always proficient Craig Boudreaux updated his card deck Christmas printings by one by one hanging an ordinary card into one much more eye-catching. His takes on Jay Sankey's "Measles" keep this effect highly interesting and versatile. Then, after sticking a Pen Through Card and leaving the card undamaged he showed how presentationally powerful the Sauve Links of Milo Belamorte can be.

Kevin Carney unlocked his vast security vault for another lock & keys presentation. This one left spectator Darlene Bertrand smiling. Carney had us all peering closely as he suavely presented what looked like some "ole tyme" hand printing gear. He displayed a rectangular 6"x3"-ish piece of ordinary white paper for printing. He placed it onto the ink blot while giving us all a conspiratorial gaze and seconds later waved a crisp \$100 bill for drying. He gave us all a cautious raised eyebrow look and gestured "Shhhh"

before handing out the now dry bill for inspection and quickly putting away the press. Carney replaced the press with a spinning Rattleback/Celtic Stone that would suddenly reverse its spin upon command of his hand.

Allen Boudreaux had Craig examine some finger rings that defied logic by physically linking and unlinking (Nova Rings by Carisa Hendrix). Allen introduced us to Emran Riaz' Shinobi Control and also performed (and taught) some mentalism using a center tear technique.

Lenny "Tricky Trainwreck" Bertrand showed how mind reading could be much harder than it looks. However, if perhaps you break it down into steps under proper supervision you might achieve impressive results (John Bannon's "Rock the 'Voque"). The Train kept a-rollin' with a Si Stebbins Tryptich including Doug Edwards' "Houdini Casts a Spell" (from Harry Lorayne's "Doug Edwards Packs a Wallop!"), Ned Rutledge's "Sympatico" and a four-handed poker game (Jack Merlin's "Master Poker Dealing" from Merlin's Master Manipulations: Section One of "And a Pack of Cards").

The evening included more performances and fun; a great start to our magical new year.

Leonard Bertrand

RING 29, LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS – Little Rock Magic Ring

Meets 1st Thur., 6:45 pm., First Community Bank, 17820 Central Parkway, Little Rock, AR. / Web site: www.LittleRockMagic.org
MARK MULKERIN, Secretary

Little Rock Magic Ring 29 met Saturday, January 3, 2026 at the First Community Bank Community Room. President Marty Haughn presided.

The meeting began shortly after 1 pm. Marty began the meeting with official business soliciting performers for the annual show in May, discussing Nathan Kranzo's lecture in February, and updating members on the status of the challenge including the addition of color to the design.

Business completed, Marty welcomed a young magician, Joseph Sentany, who was attending with his parents. Joseph developed an interest in magic after visiting Branson and seeing a magician there. He then shared tricks and banter with Ring members including an appearing flower, a color changing silk, and a coin from a box.

Bob Bullock was the first member to perform sharing a story about two parrots and two cages on paddles that he had made himself followed by a demonstration of the Gemini Twins card trick for Joseph.

Sid Salman followed with a silk through

smart phone a cup and dice prediction with Bob assisting. Mike Curtis then had Joseph's mother, Alyssa Sentany, mentally pick a card that was then discovered a specific number down.

Mark Mulkerin employed spirit slates to contact the spirit of his late grandmother to help identify a chosen card. Shawn Miller offered his take on Topsy Turvy bottles followed by a grains of sand prediction that ended with the sand transformed to seashells.

Melvin Brown then performed a number of comedic card shuffles before having Joseph pick card. After a few humorous diversions, Melvin then revealed the card in a surprising way. Melvin continued on to demonstrate a cork penetration followed by rope tying feats.

Next, Marty solicited Joseph for his signature on a blank using an oversized Sharpie. Jim Henson concluded the performances with a mentalism feat involving the discovery of a chosen item or person.

The meeting concluded with more of Jim's generosity as he demonstrated then gave away tricks from two card monte to spoon bending to bounce no bounce balls and more. *Charleen Stokes*

RING 32, ALLENTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA – Allentown Society of Magicians, Inc.

Meets 2nd Mon. of the month, at 7:00 p.m., at Hops Restaurant, 1945 W. Columbia Ave., Allentown, PA.

Web site: www.ring32.rhometownpage.com.

JOE KEPPEL, President

Our January meeting was missing a few members due to illness and travel obligations. But the members on board brought along some impressive magic and lively conversation. We also had a guest, Adam Ferrante, who impressed us with some nifty card tricks. Adam lives in the Lehigh Valley area, and we hope he continues to return to Ring 32 meetings.

Discussion of a road trip in the Spring to "Smoke and Mirrors Magic Theater" seemed of interest to all members. We also discussed a summer picnic in July. Last years picnic was a great time and well attended.

Any type of magic was the theme tonight, and some great card and coin magic was presented. Don Severn did a clean coin routine, with nice patter, and a unique climax. Joe Keppel did some amazing card manipulation and tricks that emphasized that this is an art form. Jeff Stortz, our long time treasurer, did something with a string and metal nut that I'm still trying to figure out. And Tom Yurasits, back from knee replacement surgery, had a new card routine that was a fooler.

Happy New Year to all, and hope it's magical.

Al Grout

RING 43, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS – Harlan Tarbell Ring

3rd Fri. except July and August, 7:00 p.m., at Magic, Inc. 1838 W.

Lawrence, Ave., Chicago, IL

MIKE KAMLET, President / E-mail: kamlet@ameritech.net

175 E. Delaware #8502, Chicago, IL 60611 / (312) 266-2129

Web site: www.ring43.org

Pedro Nieves kicked off the December meeting by showing some new effects in the shop. Tenyo's new Erase Away was a very clever vanish of a coin. Pedro later demo'd the other Tenyo new releases in the shop. Shine 3.0 is a very cool remote-controlled lightbulb, and Pedro shared the differences in the versions as well as some ideas for use. Finally, Pedro showed Color Changing Chips where a white and black chip changed places. The routine ended with both chips having different colors on each side.

Pedro also started the teach-a-trick segment by sharing his handling of Red Hot Mamma. With the use of a simple gimmick, it makes the forcing of the card and the double lift VERY easy to do.

Next up was Terrence Hunter who showed his take on Richard Sanders 30 seconds to Stun. Using a very cool jumbo indexed deck, Terrence turned his back and rifled the cards to have one selected. When he turned around, the selection was found in Terrence's mouth. Terrence also asked a series of questions which led to asking for a color and a tool; a psychological force of a red hammer.

Asher Stuhlman wrote a prediction and had Jay Collen shuffle a deck. Ian Murray was invited to come up and cut to a card, which was not the prediction. Ian cut deeper also not to the prediction. All the face up cards were shown not to be the prediction, and some cards were set aside face down. Ian continued to eliminate cards until the final card dealt was shown to be the predicted card.

Jay Collen was up next to share a very clever handling for a stripper deck. After a card was selected, Jay removed it from the pack in a flourishy way that automatically reversed the card.

Ed Vargas shared a nice routine where a small object changed in Kristen Kaniewski's hand as Ed waved a small paddle (using paddle move) over Kristen's hand.

Closing out the evening was Mike Kamlet who taught Brother John Hamman's Twins routine using the Gemini Count. With only 4 cards, there were lots of changes and a cute story. Mike also shared Daryl's Untouched where the spectator plays the magician and finds a selected card without the magician touching the deck. Folks liked the solution Mike shared when the "something" needed to be adjusted.

John Hutsebaut

RING 46, OKLAHOMA CITY – Seymour Davis Ring

Meets 1st Mon. of month, New Beginning Fellowship Church, 15601 S. Pennsylvania, OKC

LEE WOODSIDE, Secretary
E-mail: WoodsideLee@hotmail.com
Ring Web site: www.okcmagic.org

Jim Green kicked off our January meeting by causing a pistachio nut to penetrate a drinking glass. He then generously explained how to perform this miracle.

Cassidy Smith brought along a bag of tricks that he recently received. He began by demonstrating his TaeWANDo, where a magic wand turns into a set of numchucks. He then invited Cassandra Crowe “onstage” and handed her a magic wand, which immediately broke apart in her hand. He invited David Teeman to take a magic wand, but every time David did so, Cassidy still had a wand left in his hand. Meanwhile, David was running out places to hold a wand. Cassidy finished by showing a deck of ESP cards and inviting audience members to select a card. He missed the symbols just often enough to make it seem that ESP was a plausible explanation.

Cassidy asked the members to consider what their magical New Year’s resolutions might be. Cassandra Crowe said that she plans to perform at every meeting. Mark Christiano wants to work up a good “Professor’s Nightmare” routine. Grant Vinson wants to expand his show from 20 minutes to 40 minutes. Lee Woodside wants to work up routines with the props he already has. Rick Johnson wants to avoid burnout. Bruce Rodesney wants to unload magic he no longer uses. Justin Teeman plans to cross-reference his library of card magic books. Jerry Bowzer wants to attend more local magic shows. Rick Martin wants to remember the tricks he already knows.

Cassandra Crowe led off the member performances. She cut a deck of playing cards into four talons in her hands and a queen was showing on the face of each talon.

Lee Woodside showed a playing card box with a sword stuck through it. He reminded everyone of the legend of King Arthur and Excalibur. He withdrew the sword from the box and then dumped a solid block of metal from the box onto the table.

Bruce Rodesney showed a chain and a lock and asked Jim Green to bind his hands. Bruce had Jim place a handkerchief over his bound hands and in just a second Bruce was free of the restraints.

David Teeman showed several necklaces of different colors made of small beads. He asked Ashlee to name a color. Using the chosen necklace, David made her a small poodle dog, which

looked very much like a miniature balloon animal. When he cut the tail shorter, the small dog squeaked. David said that the smaller beads get a much bigger reaction than the larger ones.

Cassidy Smith put the names of the performers in his hat and asked Rick Martin to draw out two names. Bruce Rodesney won a crystal cylinder and Lee Woodside won Tom Burgoon’s “Snake Eyes.” *Lee Woodside*

RING 49, HAMILTON, ONTARIO, CANADA – The Doug Henning Magic Wand Club

Meets 2nd Tue., 7:00p.m. (except July and August), Ryerson United Church, 265 Wilson St. E, Lancaster, ON

DOUG HUNT, President, / E-mail: stiltrecord@yahoo.ca (519) 750-4703
Web site: ring49magic.com

January 2026 and we’re off to a great start! I usually think of January as a slow month with people still getting over the Christmas season, but this month’s meeting was one of our best turn-out in quite a while. We had to put out extra seats.

After some basic announcements, including President Doug Hunt discussing his charity project and some assistance Scott Hood has been providing for a past member’s widow, we started as usual with our Teaching Table – this month lead by our own IBM TVP Scott Hood. Scott demonstrated and then discussed a very effective marketed trick called Prestige (well worth looking up). Scott combined this with an inflating bear prop to create a very effective and entertaining routine.

Then on to the main event. Our theme was loosely a follow-up on our December Christmas meeting with people bringing in holiday effects and table magic, but basically anything they wanted show. Since the turn-out was so high we had a steady stream of performers. A new visiting member, Joseph, started us out with a couple of card tricks: a one ahead effect with a marked deck, and an effect using the Stebbins stack.

Victor Staniewski did a Christmas themed Temple Screen effect that could be customized for any special event. Calvin Cutts performed with a Merlin puppet (again, that could be event themed) to ‘find a card’ as well as a lollipop effect for children’s parties.

We had a lot of fun (both at the meeting and at the pub later) with a bill thru the rollers prop brought by Barry O. Ken McCreedy demonstrated the Chicago Opener effect.

Peter Wiltshire, who builds great props, demonstrated a couple of versions of an effect where he drops dice, or the other version, a ball bearing through a tube in a magical way (like a Strat-O-Sphere effect).

Rick Rossini finished up with a fabulous ‘invisible purse’ coin effect. Just listing the

effects really doesn't do justice to the benefit of the member interactions on evenings like this – especially with the turnout of talented performers we had, all adding wisdom and advice to advance follow magi's skill. Thanks everyone for making this a great night. *Rene Chouinard*

RING 59, NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT – Frederick Eugene Powell Ring

Meets 1st Mon. each month, 7:00 p.m. at River Valley Retirement Community, 101 Oakview Drive, Trumbull, CT
CJ MAY, Secretary / E-mail: cyril.may@aya.yale.edu
Web site: www.ibring59.org

TREASURE TROVE! Much magic was shared by magicians last Monday January 5th, the first meeting for the Greater New Haven Magic Society for 2026. But the greatest wonder was the trove of ancient magic books displayed by Jay. He had several original 19th century books by Robert-Houdin and Professor Hoffmann. Join in the fun whether you are a seasoned sorcerer or have never even picked up a deck of cards. We meet on the first Monday of each month at 7 pm. *CJ May*

RING 64, LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY – Okito/Lance Burton Ring

Meets 7:00pm various dates at Kosair Charities, 982 Eastern Blvd., Louisville, KY 40217
MICHAEL A. RAYMER, President
Web site: www.louisvillemagicclub.com

The Louisville Magic Club, Ring #64 Okito/Lance Burton Ring held its first meeting of 2026 on Tuesday, January 13th at its usual meeting place, The Kosair Charities Center, 982 Eastern Parkway in Louisville, KY 40217. There were 25 members and guests in attendance. The theme for tonight's meeting was 'New Year, New Magic' Members who may have received new magic tricks or effects or even if they learned a new trick or effect over the holidays were invited to 'show us what you got' as they say. Club President Brett Sohl called the meeting to order and after a few brief announcements regarding recent club and/or member activities, as well as with upcoming events or lectures we were underway. Mike Woodward, a member of the Executive Committee of the I.B.M., and Chairman of the Life Member Committee spoke at length regarding the many benefits of becoming a member of the I.B.M. Which includes access to all past issues of *The Linking Ring*, teaching videos, educational programs and so much more. Very informative. 'Thanks Mike' Past LMC President Dennis Alm, owner of Denny's Magic Shop announced his huge inventory reduction sale by bringing several items available for purchase at equally huge discounts. Dennis demonstrated

one of the items entitled, 'Multiplying Sponge Hearts' just in time for Valentine's Day. Who needs rabbits when you can have hearts? Sid Marvelous gave us a review of his production of 'A Slice of Magic' that featured several members of the club performing their best magic to a 'Sold-Out' audience! Sid is looking forward to another show next month. Sid performed a 'Happy Birthday' card trick with the help of an assistant from the audience, namely Jim 'Uncle Red' Harris. Sid correctly produced several assorted values of playing cards, then arranged them to correctly show Jim's birth month and date. Sid also performed a 2-dollar bill effect very similar to Michael Ammar's '2-Dollar Bill Tear' effect. A guest at the meeting, Christian Charles entertained us with his effort of 'Professor's Nightmare' a true classic of magic. 'Well Done' Next to the front was the always unpredictable, most unusual, but always entertaining Terry Kaegin. We never know what Terry is going to surprise us with and that may be a good thing. He began by reciting a poem entitled, 'The Great Flydini, Jr.' a parody of comedian Steve Martin as he performed 'The Great Flydini' on 'The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson' many years ago. Terry employed a volunteer to the stage and strongly encouraged him to think of and pick any card in the deck. Of course, Terry was wearing a pair of glasses with the '6 of Hearts' on each lens. After several minutes of hilarious shenanigans, and Terry humming the tune of 'The Stripper' Terry first produced a pair of men's briefs from a very private location of his body. After more humming and dancing he eventually produced the spectator's thought of and selected card, the 6 of Hearts' from the same place to the delight and relief of everyone. Steve Martin's performance is available to be viewed on YouTube which is highly recommended to give you a true appreciation of Terry's efforts. Cody Clark used a very nostalgic item from long ago, namely a ViewMaster to perform some mentalism. Remember them? Cody had a volunteer from the audience, and had him think of and imagine an ideal vacation spot anywhere in the U.S. The helper looked through the ViewMaster as Cody called out what he was seeing through the viewer. When all was said and done, Cody correctly and amazingly predicated that he was thinking of Mount Rushmore. Cody also performed a 'Triumph' card trick and also explained and demonstrated how to perform a 'Slop Shuffle' Jim 'Uncle Red' Harris was next. Jim brought with him an Imp Bottle, a very staple of magic. One individual from the audience however did not know the working of the item, but Jim was

more than happy to reveal how it is performed and then ‘re-gifted’ the item to the appreciative spectator. Lastly, but certainly not least, the team of ‘Smoke and Mirrors’ performed ‘Perfect Match’ to perfection. This brought the curtain down on another awesome club meeting. Everyone did a great job! Congratulations everyone! And see you next month.

Carl Loud

RING 68, TOLEDO, OHIO – Toledo Society of Magicians

Meets 2nd Tues., each month, 6:30 p.m. Location varies.

PATRICK PRZYSIECKI, President

E-mail: patrick@patrickmagic.com

Ring 68 (Toledo, Ohio) met on Tuesday, January 13, 2026, at Ye Olde Dirty Bird in Toledo, located downtown on St. Clair Street. Six members (George Magill, Martin Jarrett, Patrick Przysiecki, Johnny New York, Boomer Reynolds, and Doug Ferguson) were in attendance. After a brief discussion of upcoming lectures (February 26 Javi Benitez and May 14 John Carey) the magic portion of the meeting began.

George performed excellent versions of Oil and Water including all three phases of Juan Colas’ H2O. Johnny shared an impossible location routine, The Sting version of Oil and Water published in Apocalypse by Harry Lorayne, and several other card routines with packets. Doug showed his abbreviated version of H2O with further ideas and tips. Martin performed a Morgan Dollar four-coin routine that employed a glass. Boomer shared a faro-assisted location effect, and Patt offered a “show and tell” of new plastic decks with amazing quality. The meeting ended with an interesting discussion of card gambling performers.

Doug Ferguson

RING 70, TACOMA, WASHINGTON – Great Virgil and Julie Ring

Meets 4th Sun., at LeMay Car Museum, 2702 E. D St., Tacoma, Fife, WA.

RICK ANDERSON, Ring Contact,

501 S. 43rd St., Tacoma, WA 98408 / (253) 473-5456

E-mail: rickandersonmagic@gmail.com

Our November 23rd, 2025 meeting was called to order by Ring President Rick Anderson. In attendance were John Villareal, Tony Smith, Adria Ehart, Michael Ehart, Ron Hudspeth, Fred Turner, Grayson Lockerby, Gordon Kirkpatrick, and Mike Fraidenburg.

Announcements:

Our next meeting will be the Christmas party at Round Table Pizza on Hosmer St., Sunday, December 28th, 6 PM. Guests are encouraged to bring a magic-related item of \$10 or so value for the white elephant gift exchange.

The line-up has been announced for the 2026 Portland Magic Jam, March 13th – 15th, including Daniel Garcia and David Kaye. Many of us have already pre-registered.

Louie Foxx will join us for our March 2026 meeting to present the lecture he gave at PCAM earlier this year.

Fred Turner passed around a roster template to collect contact info. for attendees.

Our January 2026 meeting coincides with the RV show next door at the Tacoma Dome, so plan ahead for traffic that day!

Fred Turner showed us Miraculous by Doc Docherty, a card trick with the Three of Spades, Hearts, and Diamonds. He turned them over as he went through them, and turned them into mirrors with blank backs, quipping “I do it with mirrors,” a reference to magicians working with “smoke and mirrors”, adding “And that’s a reflection on you.”

Adria Ehart followed with her own card trick, in which Grayson picked a card, then every card turned over but his after he put it back in the deck. She frames this with memories of her grandmother from the Bahamas telling her stories of Anansi, the spider and trickster demigod of several West African cultures, and how you should “never play cards with Anansi.”

Ron Hudspeth had Grayson draw a card from a deck in which some were blue on the back and some red, then asked him to imagine it. Grayson chose a black Ace, then Ron claimed to have the other one. The cards were fanned out, and both aces were flipped up. The cards were turned over again, and the rest were now Jokers. This is based on Duplicity by John Bannon, and can even be examined by spectators afterwards. Ron remarked on different ways of doing the Elmsley (Ghost) Count.

We were joined by Gordon Kirkpatrick, who is selling much of his 50-year magic book and prop collection (pictured). We went through after the meeting and bought a few items. Rick suggested selling some of the rarer books online.

Gordon also did a card trick based on 8 Kings, in which Rick cut the deck, then took the top card out, and Gordon guessed which one it was.

Rick Anderson did the Crooked Card trick for us. Tony picked a card, then it was flipped over to show the King of Spades, with the picture and numbers on the card crooked. Rick rubbed the card, straightening the King out! The card was then placed on the table for all to see.

The highlight of our meeting was John Villareal performing the Straight-Jacket Escape! Grayson strapped him in, and he gradually worked his way out, giving plenty of historical background about straight jackets and the history of the escape along the way. He bought this particular jacket from Monkey Dungeon, and

performed it according to the book by Dixie Doolie. Ron noted that he once did it hanging upside down; the escape went horribly awry, and he ruptured his appendix (reminiscent of the way Houdini died).

Rick Anderson showed us a classic of magic, the Torn & Restored Napkin, which he once did for a pilot's show. John did another version, in which he gave a second napkin to Adria; they both tore them up, but Adria's was restored, while John's was not. He once did it for kids at a friend's wedding; the kids then ran around the event hall, tearing up all the napkins.

Grayson Lockeby brought out his Houdini Deck, with a hole drilled in the corner through each card. A spectator picks one card, a lock is put through the hole, then the card appears in the magician's pocket.

Grayson then treated us to the routine that won the IBM Teen Seminar at this year's meeting in Houston: A version of Craig Penny's Chop Cup with a Starbucks cup, a Sharpie, and Post-It Notes. Fred signed a Post-It Note, which was then crumpled up and used as the ball. Using the Sharpie for a magic wand, Grayson repeatedly made the ball appear under the cups. At the end, the Post-It Note that Fred signed was shown to be very much intact! Grayson's performance was excellent, and his showmanship fluid!

The next Club meeting will be our annual Holiday Party on December 28th, 6 PM, at the Puget Sound Pizza on South Hosmer. *Tony Smith*

RING 76, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA— Honest Sid Gerhart Ring

Meets 7:00 pm 2nd Mon. of the month at Immaculate Conception Church located at 2540 San Diego Ave., San Diego, CA 92110
MAGIC MIKE STILLWELL, President / Web site: www.ring76.com

On Monday, December 8th, the club held its annual "Holiday Potluck Banquet". This year's dinner-theater event was adroitly coordinated by Jonathan Gold. He was assisted by Librarian Gary Salisbury and other helpful members. Of the 74 who attended, 41 were guests. Spread upon the long row of serving tables were entrées, salads, side-dishes, and desserts... all of them delicious.

During the meal, of the few club business items mentioned, Tim Wise announced that he will be producing and hosting his third magic show at the New Village Arts Theater. On December 29th, "Hollywood Stars of Magic - At The Village" will star the legendary Terry Lunceford (who is a Life Member of Ring 76).

After dinner, Librarian Gary Salisbury directed a delightful "white elephant" party activity. We all had fun watching the table-reps carefully choose or lose one of Gary's ten gift-bags of goodies.

The dining tables were cleared and the house lights lowered. Entertainment VP Paul Dwork introduced the star of the night's entertainment: a one-hour/two-act stage show by Los Angeles-based magician Steve Owens.

For Act 1, Steve performed visually-stunning "silent" routines. He masterfully manipulated colorful flowers, silks and balls, lit candles and cigarettes, ribbons and ropes, and playing cards. His routines included "Ball Manipulation", "Card-Frame Transposition", "Fountain of Silks from Newspaper" and "The Diminishing Deck". He also tore-and-restored a picture postcard.

For Act 2, Steve performed his signature "Shadow Act" which we watched in awe as he formed recognizable shapes on a backlit scrim. To music and sound effects, by using only the shadows of his hands, Steve created images of land and marine animals, human figures, action heroes and the profiles of familiar faces.

Steve Owens' "shadowgraphy" deserved the applause that we gave him during our 3-minute standing ovation!

Max Long

RING 79, BINGHAMTON, JOHNSON CITY and ENDICOTT, NEW YORK – Southern Tier Magic Circle Inc.

Meets 1st Mon. 7:00 p.m., Binghamton General Hospital's Russell Room, 40 Arch St., Johnson City, NY 13790
NATHAN HICKEY, President
Web site: www.stiermagic.com

Members gathered on a cold January 5th with a nice turnout of 10. We started the meeting with a little surprise for our esteemed member, Doug Welch. Mark Zayac, who grew up in our area but now lives in Boston, was in town and asked if he could share a story. He explained how at age 11 (50 years ago) Doug did a show for his sister and afterwards taught Mark a rope trick. Mark explained how this was his starting point in magic and he wanted to let Doug know how that one small connection led to a lifelong love of Magic for him. It was heartwarming to see Doug get the recognition he deserves for all of his years promoting magic.

Our business meeting commenced with David confirming that members would help him at his event Feb 7th where we would be teaching children magic tricks. David also proposed purchasing a banner for the event to promote our ring and try to attract new members. A motion was made to approve the purchase and the motion passed. The banner will be the Ring's and can be used at other events. Then Doug gave a report on last month's holiday party. There were 38 people in attendance from 2 Rings and 1 SAM. The dinner was excellent, the magic spectacular and the fellowship epic. Everyone gave thanks to Doug for arranging this event. Then folks discussed upcoming

magic events like MagiFest in Columbus, Ohio, an exhibit of magic in NYC at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts and a small magic theater in Pittsburgh, PA called Liberty Magic. The business meeting then adjourned.

Performances: I did 4 Flush by Nick Trost which is a neat packet trick with 6 cards where 5 start out blank and when passed near the normal 4 of spades card they all become 4 of spades. Next Gary Freed showed us 2 tricks. First was "This and That" which was a nifty whole deck effect where a card is chosen and then he shows other cards in the deck having the word "This" on the backs and in fact all 51 other cards are this way but when the chosen selection is turned over it has "That" on the back. His second effect was "Instant paper to Money" where pieces of paper suddenly turn into \$20 bills, very cool. Then Chris Sablich performed "Triple Impact" by Alakazam magic. Doug Welch pulled out his wallet and showed us his new credit card which had a hole punched right in the magnetic strip but then he covered it and moved the hole over to the side so that card was usable. Of course nowadays people use a chip or a tap. Next up Mike Stanley showed us a marked deck which started a conversation about different types of marked decks which is interesting since I recently created a Boris Wild marked deck. John Maceli then did a neat card trick based on a story of going to Card College. To graduate with a PhD he had to first name the number of cards a spectator handed to him, then name a number of cards taken but not looked at and finally name every card held by the spectator. Well, he got his PhD! Tim Cleary found the aces one by one "without any sleight of hand" which was very cool and then using the same deck he went into a nice poker deal. I didn't catch the name of these but I think it was something he made up himself. Jon Harris then did an effect from Sean Hayden's self working card trick where the spectator takes off a packet of cards, looks at the bottom card, then spells out the name with one card for each letter three times and voila the chosen card is on top of the pile. Up last was Warren (a guest who is in the area for a few years doing his internal medicine residency) who did well to perform a variation of Eddie Fechter's "Be Honest, what is it", an effect where the red aces are switched for the black aces in the spectators hands, also called 2 Card Monte. He used a quick snap change toward the end that I was not expecting. Great night of magic.

Dan Young

RING 81, SARASOTA, FLORIDA – Inez Kitchen Blackstone

Meets 1st Thu., 6:00 p.m. "Social Gathering," 7:00 p.m. start time.
Trinity United Methodist Church in Haley Hall, 4150 South Shade Ave.,
Sarasota, FL

STAR NEWMAN, President / (651) 491-1050

E-MAIL: prettymagical@gmail.com / Web site: www.ibmring81.com

Hello 2026! We pushed our meeting back one

week (or we would have been gathering on New Year's Day), and that proved helpful as we had 17 enthusiastic members gathered and ready. We will be doing a public show for our host church on the last day of the month featuring five of our members on stage, and many helping behind the scenes.

Our theme for this evening was either "Dangerous Magic" or "What I Got for the Holidays" (other than the flu). Ten of the members performed, so we will keep the write-up brief for space reasons. Opening was Bob Banta who went to the refrigerator, and he came back with a jewelry box that had a bloody stub of a finger inside – and it looked great. Our new Treasurer, Dan Walsh, presented a new and fantastic looking illusion: a floating chair. While similar to the Floating Table, this one is fresh and visually stunning. Brian Zimble had a box with lock and chains and miniature dynamite... and this was dangerous looking...as his assistant Ed del Castillo found the correct key moments before the timer went off, just as Brian predicted.

We coerced Ed del Castillo into performing a card effect that used the slop shuffle to find one card facing the opposite direction in a straightened-out deck. Our President, Star Newman, had a beautiful production box that she folded together to produce three scarves that she got for Christmas; for a bit of danger, she did a card effect with cards marked "Boo" and "Go Crazy" for some fun. Secretary, Tom Vorjohan, shared his new effect that he designed and had Dick Stevens masterfully make his prototype. For danger, he showed two different Finger Choppers.

Gene Alcorn did a mini-illusion of Smash and Stab (TCC Mini Roulette) with a very tentative Bob Banta who thought it was not going to go well...but it did.

Okay, I don't know if Bob Banta should sit in the front row during "Danger Magic," because if Gene wasn't enough stress on Bob's heart, the Devil's Nail that Sean Cullen followed with almost did him in as Sean showed a multi-pronged fish hook with four strings, and put the hook in his mouth allowing other members to pull the strings! Gary Roberts used his wife Kathy with an illusion frame he built from plans in a 30-year-old Genii to do a very good-looking Rope Thru Neck.

Bringing the evening in for a landing, Jack Walters showed a new effect he recently received that is a beautiful drawer box with enough room to produce two decks of cards. To end the evening, Star Newman had everyone take out nine cards to show and teach a fun Nine

Card Trick; and Tom Vorjohan followed to share a Four Card Trick. It was a great evening of magic and fun...even if it came close to making Bob pass out!

Tom Vorjohan

RING 89, BATTLE CREEK, MICHIGAN – Neil Foster Ring

Meets the second Monday of every month, 7 p.m., at American Museum of Magic located at 107 E. Michigan Ave. Marshall, MI 49068.

ERIC SULLIVAN, President

140 W. Michigan Ave., Marshall, MI 49068 / E-mail: trazdal@att.net

The December IBM Neil Foster Ring 89 meeting has concluded. John Sherwood, Kevin Rosewood, Mike Moorian, and Eric Sullivan (Trazdel) were all in attendance!

Eric kicked off the meeting. Eric reminded everyone about the Business meeting on December 29th at 7:00 pm over Zoom.

We had a brief discussion about the book release event for “The Power of Magical Women” by Connie Boyd, which took place at the Museum. Our very own Leia Spade was a featured performer for the event.

Mike kicked off the magic with a few amazing effects. One effect involved a coin vanishing, and a puff of smoke helping the coin to return. Mike showcased the gimmick used for this effect, and we all shared different uses for it, from producing cards, coins, and other objects.

Mike also shared a card prediction routine where two predictions match two selected cards. John and Kevin both shared alternative methods to this great effect.

Kevin then shared his work on a card manipulation act that he is working on. Mike and Eric both had great thoughts and feedback on how it could be improved.

The next meeting will take place on January 12th at 7:00 p.m. at the American Museum of Magic in Marshall, Michigan.

The theme is New Magic.

Until then, keep practicing, performing, and sharing amazement.

Kevin Rosewood

RING 90, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

Meets 1st Thu. of each month about 7:00 pm at Heights Cumberland Presbyterian Church, Academy & Moon NE.

BILL FIENNING, Secretary

(505) 298-0743 / E-mail: wcfienn@att.net

Ring 90’s January theme—Mentalism vs. Mentalist Tricks—sparked thoughtful discussion, including: a nostalgic nod to the legendary Mind-Reading Duck routine, various types of Swami Gimmicks, spirits, mind science, and Dead Rebel Products (adding a dash of modern edge to the evening’s reflections).

The evening opened with exciting news: the incomparable Alain Nu may soon grace Ring 90 in Albuquerque, NM. Though the date remains to be finalized, anticipation is already building for what promises to be an unforgettable performance.

No Ring meeting would be complete without performances: David Dunlap opened the show with his take on Free Will Coins, a demonstration of choice, chance, and uncanny prediction. His calm confidence set the tone for the magic to follow.

Bill Finning presented a routine inspired by 51 Faces North, claiming he had received a whispered tip from his dearly departed Aunt Elsie: the 4 of Hearts would reveal itself. With a fully shuffled deck, he dealt cards one by one until a spectator called halt—then dramatically flipped the top card of the tabled pile. Sure enough, Aunt Elsie’s prophecy held true. Not finished charming the spirits, Bill borrowed a newly-opened/shuffled deck and turned his back to the audience. Holding the cards behind him, faces outward, he began correctly naming the color—red or black—of more than a dozen cards as he drew them from the deck. When pressed for an explanation, he simply smiled and credited “certain unseen collaborators,” leaving the room delightfully uncertain about just how alone he had been up there. Bill’s final act felt like a scene lifted from an ancient saga. He presented a watch displaying a time, clearly shown to the audience. From a box he produced an aged, mystical rune—an artifact that seemed to hum with history of the occult. Beneath it lay a slip of paper bearing the exact same time the watch had shown moments earlier. But the true gasp came when the watch was revealed once more...now completely devoid of hands! A perfect blend of storytelling and impossible mystery.

Chrissy Beyerlein brought a whisper of mentalism’s deeper mysteries to the room—the idea of mind-over-physical-matter. With poised, deliberate focus, she melted a black Ten of Clubs straight through a red Three of Diamonds, the cards softening and sliding through each other as if shaped by thought alone. When the pieces were examined, the black ink had vanished entirely from the Ten and reappeared on the back of the red card—a crisp reminder of what might be possible if the mind could nudge matter itself.

Ring 90 continues to thrive not merely because of the tricks performed, but because of the camaraderie, curiosity, and shared passion that fill the room each month. Whether discussing conventions, debating the nuances of mentalism, or marveling at a watch that forgets its own hands, members leave each gathering a little more inspired than when they arrived.

C. Beyerlein

RING 93, DUBUQUE, IOWA – Tri-State Magic Club

3rd Sun., 2:00pm, Adam’s Dance Connection, 900 Jackson, Dubuque, Iowa
JIM MCCREA, President, (309) 235-6215

E-mail: jrmpfc@gmail.com

With the holidays being very busy, Ring #93 had only five members in attendance for the December meeting. The club discussed some

possibilities for some future club shows and also the upcoming Paul Draper lecture in January.

With the theme of Christmas, Phyllis Fishnick performed an effect using two piles of duplicate cards; two cards were Santa standing in his boxer shorts, another with a pair of socks, his red pants, Santa fully dressed, and etc. With the help of all the members taking a turn and deciding who will move the card top to bottom; spelling "Match then one by one". When she finished, all the cards were paired. Phyllis finishes by playing the "Left, Right" game, passing a Christmas wrapped gift as the story of "the little drummer boy" was read. This was enjoyed by all, Merry Christmas.

Mark Pepelea performed three different methods for cut and restored ribbon. He used a cute story about the different ribbons being used in Santa's workshop but coming from three different suppliers because of cost considerations which is why each ribbon restored using a different method.

Chris Westemeier performed what he called an "upgraded" version of a trick found in kid's magic sets. A quarter is marked by an audience member. Chris brought out a clear plastic container and also a lid for it. The lid is placed on the container, the coin on the lid. A card is placed over the coin and pressed down. The coin drops into the container. The card and container are given to the spectator, who identifies their mark on the coin inside. Next he performed Meir Yedid's "Wow Book Test." Two books are shown and a spectator is asked to pick one of them. Another spectator named a page number in the book. The spectator with the book was asked to look at the first word on the page and think about it. Chris started to write something on paper, changed his mind and crumpled up the paper. He wrote another word and this time it is shown to be the same as what the spectator was thinking. Chris then indicated that he wasn't reading the spectators mind, but looking into the future. He tells the spectator to read the last word on the page and reveals that it matches what was written on the crumpled up paper at the start.

Adam Kiefer performed a self working card trick, where four packets of each royal suit are laid out and after shuffling and displaying the cards a few times, the jacks, queens, and kings are each found together in three packets.

Next he took three ropes, one with red ends, one with blue ends, and one with yellow ends. The spectators chose which matching ends should be tied together, telling the audience that he would be able to fit my body through the loops that were made from tying the ends off.

After the three knots were tied, Adam sprinkled some magic dust on the knots and when the ropes were released, there was one large loop left which Adam was able to fit his body through. To switch things up he took the loop that he passed through and told the crowd that he would be able to pass the loop through his neck. The rope was secured around his neck twice and then after a little suspense building, he "pulled" the rope through his neck from front to back.

Walking Magic Bob performed an older classic of magic with a stack of halves, very similar to nickels to dimes. He told a story about keeping your money safe (stack of halves) in a very secure vault. Somehow and very magically, the four half dollars not only vanished from the very secure vault held by a spectator, but then appeared on a frame that had appeared empty and in view the whole time. *Bob Beardasley*

RING 94, HAGERSTOWN, MARYLAND – The King Ring

Meets 4th Weds. each month, 7:30 p.m., Williamsport Redman Tribe #84, 16129 Lappans Rd., Williamsport, MD

Web site: www.kingmagicring.com

CHARLES JAMES, President / E-mail: khandu1@aol.com

The King Magic Ring celebrated the holiday season with a big after-meal show. Our MC for the evening was Jason Wratchford. The magic began with Khan-Du and Company. Theming their first trick around sugar, food coloring and peppermint, the red and the white silks became one inside the red metal tube. All it took was a blow and a striped silk emerged from the other end. Welcome to the Christmas season. Charlie then selected two spectators to help color a colorless target silk. This silk was tucked into a bag with a length of cord. Each additional colored silk added represented a wonderful feature of Christmas. With the magic words, "Merry Christmas," the target silk emerged fully colored.

Jason then introduced a very Santa-looking Jim Greer. Jim simply showed a large card with three different colored circles. Someone from the audience named a color and when the card was unfolded, upon it was written the selected color. Jim then asked a helper to stop on three face-down cards as they were spread. A wallet was then shown to hold only three cards that matched the selected cards.

Our MC, Jason Wratchford, stepped into the spotlight to present a comical story using the mystery of the Charming Chinese Challenge. Three Chinese coins magically released themselves, one-at-a-time, from Santa's corded necklace. Jason stuck with the theme, for sure.

Then he introduced Jerry Mullenix, who came with stories of how he used to walk around doing magic with a Santa hat. Showing

it empty he then surprised everyone by pulling out a beautiful “Merry Christmas” silk.

Joe Cole was next up. He demonstrated his command over the past, present, and future. A finger ring was shown on a rolled-up dollar bill. Joe slid it back and forth. When the ring was removed (and examined) the bill was unrolled to impossibly reveal a half-dollar coin (also examined). Joe then asked for an assistant to help him magically concoct a candy kiss from raw materials. One turned into many and we all benefited from the bounty. Finally, Joe asked for someone’s imagination to reverse the two jokers and think of a card. What happened next was like juggling. He laid an examined card box on the table that contained just one card, unrelated to the selection. Joe displayed a couple of strings of cards which changed messages, and their instructions led to the deck on the table. When the deck was opened it now contained a full deck with the selected card between the jokers.

It was then Derrick Robey’s turn to delight us with a rhyming version of the classic Pom-Pom Pole.

Louis Paul regaled us with the story of his aunt’s Christmas goodies. He weaved her story using the fantastic Grandma’s Necklace and lots of help from two members of our group.

John Swomley, aka ‘Johnny-O!’ opened his part by QUICKLY reading “The Night Before Christmas” using a magic coloring book. In the end, it was like he never read it. He followed this with his annual musical rendition of “Super Fragile Candy Canes and Cookies Are Delicious.” It’s an original song sung to the obvious tune from Mary Poppins. John then introduced a colorful image of Rudolph The Red-Nosed Reindeer and, sadly, with a blue nose (sponge ball). The magi removed the nose and vanished it, only to comically return a proper red nose to Rudolph. John finished by presenting a large bag as a prediction. A random animal was selected - a bear. From the large bag John produced a much much larger bear, too big for the bag it came from. *John Swomley*

RING 96. LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA – Merlin Efert Ring

Meets 3rd Sat., 7:00 pm at the Seal Beach North Community Center,
3333 Saint Cloud Dr., Seal Beach, CA

Web site: www.Ring96.com

CLIFF GERSTMAN, Secretary / E-mail: Cliffg37@verizon.net

On Saturday, December 20th, Ring 96 held its December meeting. We opened at 6 pm for our pre-meeting workshop. Maestro Kevin Papke taught us three tricks using a “special” deck that had been purchased from Penguin Magic. This workshop was very well attended and very well received. After the workshop everyone got their

holiday gift from the Ring, a “special” deck from Penguin so they could practice and do the tricks. Also included was a customized notebook and pen set. The notebook was donated by a member and featured the Ring name and website printed on it. Everyone seemed to appreciate the gifts.

President George Reis opened the meeting by explaining the goal of having magical new years resolutions. Each member is asked to submit a goal of how they want to improve their magic this year and then to report back later in the year as to their success.

George also presented a contest with prizes for Ring members to participate in. This contest will last six-months and will be a question of who can bring the most “magician” guests to the ring in that time. There will be a first, second, and third place prize for the winner that includes a See’s Candy gift card and reduced or forgiven dues for the year. Obviously, we are hoping that guests will stay and become members themselves.

Our first featured performer was Kevin Papke. Kevin opened by producing three coins from a disembodied purse frame. He vanished the three coins and pulled them one at a time from his elbow, his knee and the back of his neck. Then he vanished the coins.

Kevin brought out a silver dollar which suddenly became a ring. This led to a ring on string routine that ended with the ring impossibly on his finger.

Kevin ended with a deck of cards, from which he produced a King, a Queen and a Jack. He told a spectator he had a card for them, and it was a seven. Three randomly chosen cards turned out to be the other sevens, and Kevin performed Twisting the “7’s” and “Dr. Daley’s last trick” as a closer.

Jon Strum was the second featured performer. Jon opened with a scrabble game. He had the tiles mixed and shaken and had Mer pull out all the face up letters. After doing this a few times he said there were enough letters. He told Mer to call out the letters as he listened. He then gave a list of possible words starting with three letters and ending with eight letter words. The kicker ending was that the remaining letters that had not been chosen all spelled the nine-letter word “Juxtaposed.”

Jon brought up two volunteers. Each picked a card from a deck. Jon had two jokers to be his assistants. One joker told him where in the deck one chosen card was. The other joker told him where the second one was. Both were correct, and the jokers had the positions written on them that we had not seen before.

In a very funny bit, Jon produced a deck of two-sided blank cards. He had a volunteer pick one and proceeded to perform "The Ambitious Card" with the double blank. This got a strong laugh. Then he had the volunteer sign the card and now did the ambitious card for real.

Jon spread a real deck and had the volunteers pick, look at and replace the card. After some by play the cards were found in Jon's pocket.

Territorial Vice President Cliff Gerstman gave a presentation on the new IBM website, the new lecture series and upcoming conventions.

President George now called for "Open Mic Night" with six performers.

Joji was the first up. He asked everyone to take out their cell phone and open the calculator. He had random numbers picked and multiplied until we had a huge number. "122025851." This number turned out to match his previously written prediction, date 12/20/25 and the time 8:51 pm.

Alan Hanson was next with a Christmas motif set. He pulled a candy cane from a silver bag on the table. Then a Santa hat which he put on. Next came out pieces of colored tissue paper which he crumpled up and then opened to reveal a poster of Santa Clause. He pulled rubber ducks from the now empty bag. He vanished one of the ducks in a silk, only to find it in his Santa hat. He ended with a holiday themed 'Stratosphere' routine in which one of the balls was green and drawn to look like the Grinch. The Grinch cheated every time he entered the tube and ended up on the bottom.

Brett, "Bretts the Great!" came to the stage and told us he would do a trick with five red cards, ace through five. Unfortunately, he had seven cards, so he threw two away. He started over but still had seven. He again threw two away but still had seven. Finally, he gave up and threw five away leaving only two, but they were black cards.

Brad Erickson did a very entertaining piece where he called for four volunteers. He gave each one two bells and instructed them to ring the bell once when he tapped them on the shoulder. The turned he produced with "Joy to the World" and "The First Noel."

John Piercy had four volunteers come onto the stage. Each was given a poster. One was Santa, one was an Elf, one was Rudolph and one was a Christmas tree. Volunteers from the audience were asked to call out which poster should sit down. In the end only the Elf was left. That matched the picture frame that John had set up at the beginning of the meeting.

Last was John Engman who rolled up some newspaper sheets. He tore them in half and the

first half expanded into a Christmas tree. The second was folded and twisted into a ladder.

We ended the meeting with the installation of the 2026 Ring officers and our gift exchange.

Another exciting night at Ring 96.

Cliff Gerstman

RING 102, SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA - The Maurice Rooklyn Ring

Meets 3rd Tues. of month at 7:30 p.m. at Northside Chatswood
Salvation Army Church Hall Cnr. Bertram and Johnson Street
Chatswood.

JACK SHARP, President / email: jack@sharpmagic.com.au

Our December meeting was promoted as our Christmas Get Together and as we arrived it was great to see our member Joey Szabo slaving over the barbecue frying onions and sausages for our surprise sausage sizzle. He was assisted by our president Jack Sharp, Peter Wood and Ruth and Christiaan Jacob's who were handing out drinks, buttered bread rolls, salads, Christmas cake, puddings, fruit mince pies and other Christmas delights. After our hunger was all satisfied we settled down for a night of great magical entertainment. Jack welcomed everyone and thanked Joey, Ruth and Christiaan for providing all the Christmas cheer. He also welcomed visitors Julian Bull and Davide Castex from Italy.

To open the magic performances Jack defined what an Illusion is, he then showed a very large Queen of Spades with a hole which must have been one hundred millimetres in diameter. Jack looked through it, passed his hand through it to prove that it was real, but seconds later we were all amazed as he just peeled the black hole away showing that he just had a solid giant queen of spades without a hole.

Peter Wood was our next performer, who came on after more food was offered around. Peter asked if we knew what the primary colours were. He then showed three different coloured cards, one red, one green and one white. He then displayed three envelopes, also one red, one green and one white. He asked a spectator to place a card with each envelope, as long as it was a different colour. The climax showed that miraculously the spectator had matched the colours so the when the contents of each envelope was shown he had three groups, each displaying red, white and green.

Peter then told his assisting spectator that it was time to use his imagination. Peter held four jumbo cards, back outwards. He asked the spectator to imagine the four cards were all queens, he then said to imagine that he handed him two of them, were they the black or red queens? The spectator said red. Peter then asked another spectator to name just one queen with a red suit,

it was hearts, and he was asked to imagine returning that queen turned over into Peter's packet. When Peter fanned the cards we saw that the only face up card was the queen of hearts, the other cards all had blue backs. He showed that the queen of hearts was the only card with a red back. Peter then explained he was positive that the spectators would name the Queen of Hearts so he didn't even bring another queen and he showed that the other three cards were all blank. This was Peter performing Max Maven's now classic B'wave which I have always thought was far superior to John Bannon's more elaborate follow up, "Twisted Sisters" which is now so popular. I am usually a big fan of Bannon's material, but I still believe the original B'wave is a better effect on many levels.

Our next performer, our visitor, Davide, showed us an animated picture of a colourful chicken on his phone. Raising the phone to his mouth he blew into it and to everyone's astonishment and laughter a cloud of feathers flew out of the phone. He then, apparently, broke each of his fingers on one hand, he then moved his little finger down his wrist. Davide then showed his skill with a pack of cards by having a chosen card repeatedly travel to his pocket until finally every card in the pack traveled except for the chosen pasteboard.

Peter Rodgers was our next performer started with John Bannon's Chop Shop where a queen of spades placed into his pocket continually returned to a packet of jokers until suddenly the queen turned into the ace of spades and the jokers to the other three aces. Peter then performed his card warp routine from his Barnaby's restaurant act. The routine just uses one playing card plus an Australian dollar note now out of circulation for over forty years. The routine is based on Howard Schwarzman's Star Warp effect from volume 3 of Harry Lorayne's Apocalypse magazine and some additional moves from Michael Close's routine in his Workers series.

Peter Wood and Davide came back for some missed photo's and Davide delighted us with another card routine where a chosen card appeared under the card box then changed places with the four aces.

Christian Jacob's was next with two cords and three clear acrylic beads. The cords were threaded through the beads which were now held by a spectator. Christiaan tied the cords around the spectators hand only for the beads to be instantly released into the assistants hand. The "Grandmother's Necklace" was a great effect, even before it appeared in Reginald Scott's 1584 historic book, "The Discovery of

Witchcraft". This new version, Grandma's Miracle with clear beads and a beautifully gimmicked cords makes it even better.

Phuoc Can Hua came on displaying a red envelope with a square hole cut in it. With a flick of his wrist, the envelope was now filled with four Australian one hundred dollar notes which Phuoc immediately gave away. Although it is Christmas we were all disappointed that the notes were only stage money.

Barry Abkin had spent some time in hospital in 2025 and he started his act by explaining his love of numbers and how everything in hospital runs on numbers. There's blood pressure, sugar levels, weight and calorie levels and the list goes on. Barry then showed a pack of number cards and had two numbers chosen, they were 153 and 177. The balance of the pack was mixed and Barry laid sixteen of them out in a matrix on a sticky display board. Miraculously when every column row and diagonal was added it came to 177 as the cards now formed an amazing Magic Square, but the effect had just begun. The display board was turned upside down and it was seen that all the numbers could now be read upside down. They were added again and now the columns, rows and diagonals to everyone's surprise all totalled 153. Not content with ending his version of Andy Gladwin's "Magic Squared" at this point Barry's phone rang and the total of the numbers multiplied together was predicted.

President Jack Sharp came back handing out wooden spoons to a group of assistants from the audience. As the spectators lined up they were handed metal pipes hanging from strings. The spectators were primed to tap the pipes with the wooden spoons as they were pointed too. With famous Christmas tunes such as Jingle Bells ringing out the Sydney IBM Ring 102 may be the next competition for the Sydney Symphony Orchestra. This was Jack's rendition of Keith Fields Human Xylophone.

Christmas greetings and good wishes were all passed around as we packed up after another great Christmas Sydney IBM Magic Club meeting.

Peter Rodgers

RING 106, NEWARK, NEW JERSEY – Slydini Pyramid Garden State Ring

Meets 2nd Wed., 8:00 p.m. at The Sparta Avenue Stage, 10 Sparta Ave., Sparta Township, NJ
STAN BLADEK, Secretary / E-mail: quakmagicphil@aol.com

Our Club started off the New Year with good conversation, paying dues, talks of upcoming events and of course, some good magic. The club passed a motion to have our club formally listed as being based in Sparta NJ, part of beautiful Sussex County in the northwest corner of

the state. Originally, the club formed in Newark NJ, but that was many moons ago.

We had a roundtable discussion of where members were planning to attend any of the numerous magic conventions that will be taking place this year. The IBM convention, Magic Live, NEMCOM and even Blackpool all were on member's lists.

Michael Healy did 2 card effects to start our night. His first was a Jay Sankey effect of passing a metal skewer through a card case after the deck of cards was removed. After visually passing the skewer in one side and out the other, a metal plate was then removed from the deck. He then did a three part prediction trick utilizing two packets of 7 cards each. This is a Liam Montier masterpiece with a kicker ending.

Stan Bladek then performed his version of Jay Sankey's insane Stapled trick. His patter was based on a story of watching the three stooges pull a tablecloth off a table. In this case, a \$100 bill was removed after being stapled between two cards. The bill was not damaged, yet the two cards remained stapled together and were able to be passed out once the trick was done.

Joe Garsetti showed off a new set of super jumbo cards that he recently put together with the help of Staples printing services. His three card Monte presentation is visually stunning when utilizing the jumbo cards. He then showed off an upgrade to our beautiful meeting place, the Sparta Avenue Stage. A printed background scrim on the stage depicts a formal library in crisp detail. Our meeting place and theater is something to behold. Please stop on by and visit on the second Wednesday of the month in the future.

Stanley Bladek

RING 113, BERGEN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY – Audley Walsh/Conrad C. Bush

Meets 1st Thurs. 8:00 pm, at St. Thomas Episcopal Church, 300 Forest Ave., Lyndhurst, NJ.

ANTHONY FERRER, Secretary

web site: ibmring113@yahoo.com

Instead of our usual monthly ring meeting, December was our annual holiday party. We enjoyed a virtual smorgasbord of food, beverages and desserts. During the meal and afterward, some members formed small groups and performed magic for each other. Michael Healy demonstrated John Bannon's Power of Poker while Carl Morano showed off his new 2026 Tenyo tricks including Jail Break. Carl also brought in some recently purchased props, Horus Escape and the Mummy Mystery (from 3Dmagictricks.com) and a Now You See Me 3 movie promotional gung-ho box purchased at a local cinema.

Carl Morano

RING 115, SINGAPORE – The Great Wong Ring

Meets 15th of each month, 7:00 pm, Function Room 2, #03-01, National Library Building, 100 Victoria Street, Singapore 188064. Website: ibm-ring115.org

JOHN TEO, President / Tel: +62504422, 97509017

10M Braddell Hill #01-49, Singapore 57931

This evening's meeting, themed 'Festival Magic', marked the last for the year. The attendance consisted of 41 members and 4 guests.

Following a half hour magic jamming session of four mini groups, co-hosts Ng Kah King and Kenneth Chia kicked off the meeting with a few announcements. IBM Ring 115 will be holding its 75th Anniversary Celebration with a buffet dinner and magic show at Pan Pacific Hotel on 14 March 2026. Members are highly subsidized at \$60 per ticket and those who pay their annual membership fee by year end, get to enjoy a promo ticket price of \$60 for their partner/friend. Dr Loke Han Ying also urged members to sign up for the joint Republic Polytechnic & IBM magic show on 22 January 2026. The hosts also welcomed Jennie Teh, a new member who just signed up.

President John Teo introduced Mr and Mrs Pairuch – long time friends of the club – especially to the newer members.

Pairuch demonstrated tricks originated and manufactured by himself. They included "Super Punch", a special hole punch with adjustable holes. He showed 2 effects with this hole punch. 8 holes were punched on a dollar note and then went on to congregate at one corner of the note. He punched a hole on a playing card and proceeded to move it freely around the card's surface. With "Vampire Bat", he introduced a "coffin" with "Dracula" lying inside. The only way to kill the vampire was to drive a "stake" through its heart. The "vampire" then transformed into a human skeleton! In "Pin-It!", a volunteer inserted a pin on any body part of a voodoo figurine. Pairuch put another figurine together with a loose pin into a cloth bag. When this figurine was taken out, it had a pin in the same body part as that inserted by the volunteer. Next, he presented his "Money Maker", a roller-printer that read a money note and then duplicated it onto a blank paper on both sides. Lastly, he linked 2 plastic tooth floss picks together! He then generously contributed 27 packets of these linking plastic tooth picks for lucky draw for the members.

The Club welcomed Xuande Tan and Lim Shi Jie who were newly sworn in as IBM Ring 115 members, after passing their Induction Tests at the last meeting.

Henry Zuo took his Induction Test. Starting with 4 cards, he multiplied each of them to 3 cards. Next, with the 4 new sets (3 cards each),

he magically moved the same card from each set to a pile, leaving each set with only a pair of cards. He then transformed a deck of blue-backed cards to red ones, and further removed all printed images on the cards so that they appeared as blank ones. Putting the deck into a card box, he gave it a squeeze and the box vanished in some smoke, leaving the audience amazed.

After the break, James Pang invited 2 volunteers to pick a card each and insert them into the deck randomly. When the card backs were fanned out, 2 had different back designs from the rest. When flipped over, these 2 cards were the 2 volunteers' chosen cards. A 3rd volunteer signed a card and randomly inserted it into the shuffled deck which was then placed inside a card box. As his birthdate fell on the 10th, the cards in the box were counted off to the 10th card. When flipped over, it was the volunteer's signed card! The volunteer then reshuffled the deck with his chosen card in it; and cut it to 3 sets. He selected one set and when its top card was flipped over; it was his signed card!

Kai Emmanuel Kuah invited a volunteer to select a card, sign it and insert it randomly into a deck. He then made this card travel to his pocket with a tap of a magic buzzer. He also made the card appear under the buzzer just when the audience expected it to be in his pocket again. He tickled the audience as he made several cards appear instead of just 1 from his emptied pocket. He proceeded to vanish all these cards before the audience's eyes, leaving just the volunteer's card in one hand. Finally, when the buzzer was silent when pressed, he opened it up to reveal a folded card inside – the volunteer's!

Eisen Lee began his version of Card to Pocket using just one hand – shuffling, cutting and dealing the deck. He appeared to retrieve a wrong card (ie. not the volunteer's) from his pocket but instead comically pulled out several cards from his supposedly empty pocket. In an instant, he vanished all the cards except for the volunteer's card!

John Teo presented his effect "Shooting Gallery" which he contributed in the November's and December's issues of "The Quantum Ring". A cardboard displaying 5 animals each with its own assigned score, representing points earned when a 'shooter' hits it. He then showed 4 more similar cardboards with the same animals ordered differently and with varying scores assigned. Together, the 5 cardboards would represent a shooting gallery on a moving conveyor belt. A volunteer (aka 'shooter') would choose an animal he 'shot' from each of the 5 cardboards. The scores of the 5 'hits'

after being totalled, was 248 which, incredibly, was John's prediction, set aside earlier! He repeated this with 3 volunteers but asked the audience to guess who among them would attain the highest score. He was right again as the highest score among the 3 volunteers was his 2nd prediction!

The last meeting of 2025 ended, as awe-inspiring and entertaining as with previous ones. Several winners walked away with lucky draw prizes sponsored by President John Teo and Pairuch. 2 members also won the best Christmas outfit prizes. With that, the magic jamming session resumed for several members who found the night still too young.
Low Hwee Lang

RING 116, WINDSOR, ONTARIO, CANADA – Windsor Magic Circle

Meets 2nd Wed. of the month at The Masonic Temple, 986 Ouellette Avenue Windsor, ON, Canada.

ELIZABETH PROSSER, Secretary
prosserelizabeth@yahoo.com

Ring 116 met on Thursday, December 11, 2025, at 7 pm at the Masonic Temple: 986 Ouellette Ave. Windsor, ON, N9A 1C6. In attendance were Bill Dileva, Melissa Arditti, Tim Traynor, Tim Bailey, Michel Lejeune, Johnny Ould, Jay Scott, Garrett Spencley, and Helmut Parakenings.

The floor was opened to magic. Bill started out the evening with a Magical Santa trick "Christmas Bandana with Gingerbread" making gumdrop buttons on the gingerbread man appear.

Michel: 4 spectators came up to the table. 4 cards were chosen, 1 card found and torn up and then turned into 2nd spectator's card. 3rd card folded and turned into 4th spectator's card.

Tim T: David Parr's "Copy Cat" and Richard Turner's card manipulation trick "4 Card Do As I Do."

Johnny: Sleight of hand multiplying straw/candy cane stick.

Tim B: Read Michel's mind by guessing a Christmas present, who gave it to him, and his approximate age when he got it.

Jay: Using the "Inverso" app, a chosen card was signed by the spectator. The signature on the card appeared reversed into a mirrored view on the phone and also on the card itself.

The next meeting will be Thursday, January 8, 2026.
Tim Traynor

RING 129, KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI – Heart of America Ring

Meets 1st. Thu. of every month at Westport Coffeehouse Theater, 4010 Pennsylvania Ave., Suite D, Kansas City, MO 64111

KELLY RUSK, President,
E-mail: knr6244@hotmail.com

With the unusually mild weather for this season in the Midwest, we got off to a great start for the New Year on January 8. Jerry Jackson opened the meeting by teaching a no-sleight

card routine. We then moved on to the theme of the meeting, wallet magic. Along with ring president Kelly Rusk, three other magicians—Keith Leff, Jerry Jackson and Cliff Norris—also demonstrated a variety of wallets that could be used for card magic, and they showed how the wallets could be used to steal and produce selected cards. Tom Burgoon then demonstrated a fake foam wallet that he had invented and marketed, which enabled him to vanish the entire wallet along with the contents.

Dennis Burks, who is probably the Ring's most avid reader of books about magic, showed us a book he had recently purchased called "The Art of Magic," which consists of various pictures and posters of various magicians and their props. It is a huge volume, which he said he had trouble lifting and carrying. Kelly Rusk then led a discussion of magic in the media. He showed an excerpt from a "Gilligan's Island" episode in which the stranded travelers find a trunk full of magic props and learn how to perform magic with them. He then showed us a gift he had received for Christmas—a DVD set containing all of the episodes of the TV series "The Magician" (starring Bill Bixby).

We then moved on to the "Show Me the Magic" portion of our meeting, which gives members the opportunity to show off routines they have been working on or to report on shows they have seen or items they have acquired. Pete Walterscheid taught a four-card routine. Jason Moore showed us a collectible item he had acquired—the program of David Copperfield's first special, a musical called "The Magic Man" (not to be confused with "The Magic Show," which starred Doug Henning.) Steve Steiner showed us a trick with a stiff rope.

We then moved on to a discussion of various disasters some of our members have encountered. Tom Burgoon described how he had performed on a ship which caught fire, from which he was fortunate to escape, along with his props. Various other disasters were also discussed, including David Sandy's 2010 Magic Cruise, which also involved a fire, which did not cause any harm to the passengers but required the boat to be towed back to shore. Norby Forero described a potential disaster of a different type, where she was threatened at gun point to be sure that she had not really lost a spectator's ring that she had vanished.

All in all, it was an enjoyable evening which lasted longer than usual. *Stu Lewis*

RING 131, DENVER, COLORADO – Mile High Magicians Society – The Earl Reum Ring

Meets 2nd Thu., 7:00pm at 40 West Arts Magic Hub Stage, 6501 W. Colfax Ave., Lakewood, CO 80214

A. J. PEREA, Secretary / E-mail: Secretary@milehighmagicians.com

Web site: www.milehighmagicians.com

The Mile High Magicians recently celebrated the season with our Annual Holiday Show, a night filled

with wonder, laughter, and camaraderie. This year, we were delighted to welcome special guests from the Fellowship of Christian Magicians to share the stage.

Guiding us through the festivities were our wonderful emcees, Jeff and Karen Wake, who kicked off the evening and introduced a packed lineup of performers.

Eric Reamer started the show with a touch of mentalism, diving into Santa's files to divine which audience members were on the Naughty list and who made the Nice list. Following him, Jim Scott dazzled the crowd with a color dice routine, successfully predicting what the audience members rolled and which colors they held.

The holiday themes continued with Jack Hart, who performed a beautiful silk routine tailored to the season. Next up was AJ Perea, who magically produced milk and cookies to bribe Santa for good gifts but accidentally summoned Krampus in the process!

Melody Berg then took the stage dressed as one of Santa's elves, using her own copy of the naughty and nice list to predict the status of various audience members.

Brent Ladd kept the excitement going using his "Magic Gift Selector" to give out prizes, correctly predicting who would end up with a specific gift.

Victor Moskalski then captivated the room with the mysterious story of a magical doll that survived an arson attack.

Bringing a splash of color to the stage, Steve Davis performed the Color Changing Silks to represent the colors of the season. He was followed by Rabbi Eliot Baskin, who took us back thousands of years to the story of Hanukkah. To represent the miracle of the oil that lasted eight nights, he performed a routine where a vase of water magically refilled itself again and again.

To close out the night, Glenn Proulx was nowhere to be found, having been replaced by Santa Claus himself! Santa helped one of his elves (Jeff Wake) finally secure a spot on the nice list.

Thank you to everyone who performed and attended to make this a special night! *A.J. Perea*

RING 158, GREENSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA – Wizards of the North

Meets 1st Sun 3:00, Tapped Brick Oven & Pour House, 6044 Route 30 East, Greensburg, PA

MARK DURIGON, President / email: mdur@comcast.net

Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/70055716443

Greetings from the Wizards of the North! Our regular scribe was unable to attend our first gathering of the year, so I'm hoping that I can fill his huge clown-like shoes.

Our January meeting was attended by 7 members, all who were excited to start the new year off with some great magic and friendship. President Mark “Spark Plug” Durigon welcomed all and congratulated the new officers for 2026. He noted that the Christmas party was a huge success, and thanked Clint “Big Mac” McMaster for all his hard work in organizing the event. Mark reminded everyone that a lot of photos from 2025 meetings have been uploaded to our Facebook page. He also pointed out that the obituary for Bill “Buzzy” DeFalco was published in *the Linking Ring*. Mark then reminded the Ring members that the annual Magi-Fest convention is coming up soon and that Ring 158 will be represented. We also discussed some upcoming magic shows, including shows starring Ring 158 members Rich “Brain Food” Passaro and Chuck “Pick a Card” Snyder. Mark also pointed out that 2026 marks the 50th anniversary of Ring 158, and that we are making arrangements to mark our achievement and share the news with the community.

Mark likes to entertain and enlighten us with “hidden treasures” and “show and tell” segments during each meeting, and he didn’t disappoint us in January. He shared some Mac King KFC magic related giveaways, and some vintage books. The Ring members then discussed and finalized the 2026 meeting schedule.

Following a brief intermission, we reconvened for the magic performance segment of the evening. The performance theme was “New Magic” but we’re pretty liberal regarding the interpretation. Clint showed us the workings of the Movie Club effect that he performed at the Christmas party. I was up next and shared a surprising packet of rattlesnake eggs that I found in my Christmas stocking. I also performed Right and Wrong by Bob Solari. Since people weren’t booing me off the stage, I then performed David Regal’s Jigsaw Deck and moved right into Klaus the magic Mouse by Card Shark. I was awesome, if I must say so myself. And yes, I have to say it myself. Rick “Chop Stick” Bradley treated us like his grandkids and performed a color treat bag effect. My notes are bad here, but Rick performed another effect involving cards and coins that I don’t have a name for. Oops. President Mark then took the stage and performed SEO Magic’s Money Dream, which was very clever and fooled us all. He followed that up with an old trick called Countdown to Any Card trick. Chuck Snyder is always thinking of new ways to fool and entertain us, and he performed a custom-made Bigfoot monte trick. I believe! I believe! Rich Passaro blew our minds away by producing a block of wood in a

deck of cards. Very nice stuff. President Mark came back to perform The Eye. Chuck “Unshuffled and Unstable” Rygle performed a vanishing 50 cent piece effect using an Okito box, which was nothing less than perfect and amazing. Once the magic starts, it’s hard to stop it. Rich Passaro came back to perform a Brett Barry doodle pad effect, and Chuck Rygle had to share his color changing Jacob’s ladder trick. Do we have fun at our meetings or what?! Yes we do.

We’re looking forward to our February meeting which will have a numbers theme. I won’t be there, but I’ll be thinking about magic, I’m sure. *Mike “The Amazing Zombo” Baker*

RING 167, DES MOINES, IOWA – Justo Hijo Magic Club of Des Moines, Iowa

3rd Mon., 7:00pm at F&O’s Restaurant, 4050 Merle Hay Rd.,
Des Moines, IA 50310
STEVE DALY (Hinrichs), President
E-mail: Tinyb1999@yahoo.com

The I.B.M. Ring 167 Justo Hijo Magic Club of Des Moines, Iowa held our final meeting for 2025 on Monday December 8th. The December meeting has traditionally become the club’s Holiday Party featuring the election of officers for the next year, the “White Bunny Gift Exchange”, a Gourmet Pizza & Pop Buffet which is FREE for all club members and their immediate family members to attend. This year, we added a special guest magician’s magic show. JEFF SIKORA from Omaha Nebraska and his lovely wife Tammy drove the four hour round trip to Des Moines to entertain us with his award-winning magic show. Jeff brought a beautiful backdrop and lots of “magical goodies” he presented between his snappy patter and jokes. Audience participation with adults AND children with some custom “inside jokes” our club members “got” made for a fun 40-minute show. Forty five folks enjoyed the evenings festivities that started with the huge array of thin and Chicago-style Pan Pizzas that kept coming out of the kitchen. Plates were filled non-stop and the pizzas kept coming! If you ever come through Des Moines, Iowa - you MUST have a meal at FELIX & OSCARS (which happens to be our monthly meeting location).

With our tummies “magically filled” - we conducted our annual Election of Officers. Nominations were made & votes came in, we proudly present the 2026 Officers: MIKAYLA OZ/ Sergeant At Arms - TRICKY RICKY/ Secretary - MARCUS STEVENS/ Treasurer - LUCAS MCCANNON/ Vice President - STEVE HINRICHS/ President. Mikayla Oz is a past President of the club, she looks forward to taking on a new office in the club. Tricky Ricky

is one of our newest members. He is replacing LONG time club secretary BRUCE ANDERSON. Ricky has some big shoes to fill as Bruce did an amazing job as the club's secretary for decades! We feel Ricky will easily step up to the job at hand, as his enthusiasm for magic is very high. Marcus Stevens returns yet again as the club's trusted Treasurer. Marcus has done a fantastic job over the past several years and is a wiz with numbers! Lucas McCannon returns for his third year as the club's vice-president. He is great at organizing and keeping track of club attendance, as well as setting up the room each month and the "voice" of the club, making announcements. Steve Hinrichs begins his fifth year as President of the club. Steve is committed to raising the club bar with new ideas and approaches to making the club meetings fun, educational and inspirational. We are all looking forward to an exciting 2026 with lots of fun things planned for our club members.

The "White Bunny Gift Exchange" is basically a "White Elephant Gift Exchange" but with a magical twist. Gifts were cherished, only to be "swiped" moments later. LOTS of laughter and "looks" as club members and their guests took turns "shopping & stealing" one prize after another. In the end, everyone went home with a smile on their face and a new treat in their arms.

Our club members wish all the International Brotherhood of Magicians Rings around the World a very HAPPY HOLIDAY & HAPPY NEW YEAR! We meet the third Monday of each month at Felix & Oscars Restaurant on Merle Hay Road with Dinner on Your Own at 5:30 PM & the club meeting beginning at 7:00 PM. We always finish by 8:30 PM. If you are in the area, PLEASE JOIN US! *Steve Daly*

RING 172, TUCSON, ARIZONA – The Joe DuPerre Ring

Meets 3rd Mon., 6:30 p.m., Barro's Pizza, 410 N. Wilmont Rd. in Tucson
FRANK PROCHASKA, Ring Contact
ibmring172@gmail.com

Our November 2025 meeting had seven attendees, including Steve E., Dan M., Mike B., Aiden R., Jesse B., Mitch L., and David S. The group worked on a variety of basic card sleights, such as various double lifts, the Hofzinger cull, and a version of the three card monte with a surprise ending. A variety of other techniques were discussed as well, such as Lenart Green's mirror count. The next meeting will be December 15th, 2025.

The December meeting of IBM Ring 172 had five members present and one guest, including Steve E., Dan M., John S., Juan F., Mitch L., and guest Joe J. Steve talked about Outs when performing card magic. In addition, he performed Jack Carpenter's Potent Presage and some gam-

bling related material. Dan performed a variety of outstanding magic which included: Daryl's ambitious card, Derick Dingle's 3 way, Royal Scam, Venom Cube, and Jokers on Fire. John performed Daryl's cards across and Derick Dingle's all backs routine. Juan revealed a mentally thought of card, and our guest penetrated a bill with a car key and restored it.

Frank Prochaska

RING 175, TAMPA, FLORIDA – Warren Hamilton Ring

Meets 2nd Tue., 7:00 pm, Grace Lutheran Church, 3714 W. Linebaugh Ave., Tampa, FL 33618 / Website: <https://tampamagicclub.com>
KEN SPANOLA, President
(813) 249-7325 / E-mail: KSpanola@gmail.com

We had 29 members and guests to christen the Ring's 2026 with a surprise guest lecture that came available just one week prior to our regularly scheduled January meeting, and he was using Tampa as his first – and only – stop in Florida! A world-renowned close-up magician and mentalist, who now calls Vegas his home; he has been featured in many books including the most recent "Bend It Like Geller," and the 1989 "The Magic World of the Amazing Randi" by James Randi, plus his own TLC network mini-series in 2005 "The Mysterious World of Alain Nu" – we were very excited to welcome Alain Nu, "The Man Who Knows," to Tampa!

He opened his three-and-a-half-hour lecture with his "bread and butter" ACAAN effect. He spent a great deal of time talking about the effect and the stunning response he gets from it (including cementing his first television special!). While a memorized deck isn't for everyone, Alain shared the complete workings, including false shuffles, his pass, and the way he shifts cards as needed.

Most notably, Alain stepped back from cards for the rest of the lecture – which is a welcome change at a magic lecture. We learned an unpublished bit of audience interaction pertaining to the wrist lines we all have at the base of our hands, a very intriguing nuance to add to the presentation of the 1089 Force when people have just a two-digit number, his invisible watch addition to an Invisible Deck, and a fun bit of group psychology that he takes advantage of in his effect Howdy Doodle.

Of course, his metal bending was a huge hit! Member, Nick Faz, who is relatively new to magic, was dumbstruck and audibly gasped with each phase of three different spoon bending effects – and even the 30+ year veterans of magic loved seeing Alain's seemingly effortless work bending the cutlery. This was a highlight for many.

Two other effects that stood out as crowd favorites were his Unfabulation that disclosed

three “fun facts” including the third that correctly predicted the name and thought-of number of one of the random spectators who helped from the audience. We were pleased that no nail writer was needed to make this piece of mental magic part of our own performances. His other gem was his Ultimate Solution Book Test and the well-thought-out presentation that combines the three thought-of words into a very impactful ending revelation.

In all, we saw over 14 effects and about ten more moves and subtleties. He was selling nearly a dozen books and lecture notes. We believe Alain could have gone on for hours more! It was a delight to be able to book his lecture as our kick-off of 2026.

P.S. We welcomed our new 2026 officers: Ken Spanola as President and Treasurer, Geoff Williams as Vice President, Tom Vorjohan as Secretary, and Nick Faz and Rick Casale as our Board Members at Large. *Tom Vorjohan*

RING 194, HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA – Space City Magic Club

Meets 1st. Thu., 7:00pm Madison Christian Church, Hughes Rd.,
Madison, AL
MATT GROWDEN, President
E-mail: Growdne@yahoo.com

December 16th Xmas Party: Newly elected president Brett Boyer asked for reports starting with the treasurer’s report from newly reelected Dean Carter escorted by Nancy. Followed by a mentalist show report of Peter Antoniou (all good), announcement of Studio 60 March 21st show and signup sheets, and reports of MUM cover story about the SAM museum with our VP Matt Growden appearing in the story, and Patrick’s PHAT-JAM show report. Newly elected VP Matt Growden missed the party due to frozen pipes that melted. Bill Waring drove his grandson Gavyn Albright to the party due to Gavyn’s wrestling injury that put his shoulder in a sling. Jack Baldwin with Marti showed how to use a walker in magic. Bill Mullins and Kathryn arrived 2 hours late due to I-565 traffic jam. Jared Cassidy mentioned his Santa’s suit was in the dry cleaners rather than missing, so no BOLO was issued.

Patrick Brunson who brought Cindy and Violet, performed a sponge ball squeaker routine and a card trick using volunteers, Brett and Tammy Boyer. Brett’s Mom, Carlyne watched as Brett performed a flip book, a card prediction, and the Xmas Sucker Rabbit Trick. David and Melonie Thompson presented each member with a handmade steel Xmas ornament. Nice. Then David performed a three-card prediction trick blowing everyone’s Xmas mind. A great Xmas party for the first time meeting in Athens,

Alabama. Tip was automatically included in the bill of delicious food for the 17 attendees.

January meeting: A dozen magi attended. Reports included Dean Carter’s treasurer’s, future lectures, new style of meeting email, PHAT-JAM by Evan Tate with Kenneth Jordan providing the background music, obits with Bill Mullins, dates of the March stamp show from Jared Cassidy, stuff from the December Xmas party not heard because of the loud music, zooming options, and the March Club Show fund raiser. Theme for this evening was New Magic for this New Year.

Trace Cooper was the only attendee performing a show since the last meeting. David Thompson performed a Fast and Loose routine with a new chain that allowed Patrick to win up to \$100 if he guessed right. He guessed wrong repeatedly. Dean Carter, seeing the money asked for 2026 dues. Brett Boyer performed the Box with a Scarf, a coloring book from England, and a story of when Hairy Harry Whodini met the Hare E. (rabbit) Houdini. Evan Tate made a penny disappear between two silver dollars. Glenn Roudolph asked where he could obtain pennies since that are not produced anymore. Bill Waring said, “A nickel for your thoughts” on the trick. Patrick performed the 21 Card, but delt the cards sometimes face down making Evan not knowing which card was his. Pat followed this with a Chris Capehart free selection card matching the prediction. Jack followed this by comparing the writing on the prediction paper with his own writing. Inside joke since Jack and Patrick have Parkinson’s.

Patrick Brunson

RING 197, MARIETTA, OHIO – The Tommy Windsor Ring

Meets 2nd Thu., 7:00pm at 200 Franklin St., Marietta, OH
DALE WHEELER, President / E-mail: dalew3314@gmail.com

Ring 197 met on Monday, January 5. Jay called the meeting to order. Our meeting began with a reflection of the Christmas dinner held in December. Moving into the business meeting portion, we discussed the upcoming Ring shows, Treasury decisions, vest and wand purchases, our By-Laws, Ring member certificates, upcoming new member induction, and officer inductions for 2026.

There was no theme for this evening’s performances. Performers included Dale Wheeler, Dock Cutlip, Jay Foresta, Bill Stokes, and Keith Matheny. Dale performed a version of the Book Test that used a notebook, marker, several paperback books, and a dictionary, his helpers included Keith and Velma. Keith was asked to choose a page number, a line number, and a word. Through a series of questions Velma was directed to read from the dictionary. The ending

result was the word that Keith had chosen, and Dale had written in the notebook.

Next up was Dock and his Rubic's Cube magic. Dock asked Bill to secretly mix up a cube. Bill then quickly showed the cube to Dock, and then Dock took his cube (behind his back) and miraculously copied Bill's cube. A subsequent mix of one of the sides of the cube was recreated as a follow-up. Jay followed with a card change using a UNO deck.

Bill performed "Add Your Number" that utilizes a stand and a set of double-sided number cards. Dale assisted him by turning the cards, and Bill was able to reveal the sum without looking at the numbers. This was repeated and worked every time. Since this is a fairly new effect for Bill he asked for suggestions from the group. Several offered creative ideas on the presentation.

Rounding out the evening was Keith, with the help of Velma, he performed a Stephen Bargatze card effect called "I Hate Card Tricks." This was an effect that involved Velma mentally selecting a card and, based on certain parameters given by Keith, she was to cut the deck, stack the deck, etc. The end was a perfect match followed by an amazing grand finale!

We would love it, if you would like to join us, either as a guest or a new member. If you are traveling through or live in our area and would like to come to a meeting, get in touch with us.

Charleen Stokes

RING 205, LIMA/FINDLAY, OHIO – Northwestern Ohio Magicians Association (NOMA)

Meets last Sun. of the month at Mike Grubbs's home in Findlay.

GENE CRAFT, Secretary, 5038 Pheasant St., Elida, OH 45807

E-mail: Ecrafft@woh.rr.com

Web site: www.angelfire.com/oh/ring205

November: Ring 205 met on November 30, 2025 at Mike's home. Mike Bayer TVP for Ohio was a guest with us tonight. He discussed several methods to attract new members. Gary Friedrich suggested Roberta Howard become the Publicity Chair for Ring 205. She accepted and we voted her into position. Gary also mentioned a potluck dinner for Dick Stoner.

Gene Craft began magic with a magical story about four bunny rabbits and how they avoided the hungry wolves. Doug Ferguson manipulated some math numbers to arrive at the selected card in the deck.

Gary Friedrich shuffled the deck of cards but still ended with a perfect Straight Flush in spades. Mike Bayer placed nine cards in a column. After some manipulation he also produced a perfect Royal Flush. Chris Topel invited Mike Bayer to the performing table where Chris performed a card manipulation titled All About

You. Mike Grubbs performed a beautiful silk routine.

January: Ring 205 met on Sunday evening, January 4, at 7:00 at Mike Grubbs' home for our December meeting. Chris Topel opened the meeting and Doug Ferguson reported on the lecture by John Cary on Friday, May 15, 2026. Doug also handed out the treasurer's report showing bills paid for the annual banquet.

Chris Topel had Gene pick a card from the deck. He then counted down to the selected card. Mike Grubbs shuffled the deck of cards. Gene then dealt three cards to the table and Chris dealt twelve. Strangely the top cards of each pile matched in color and value, the Queen of spades and Queen of clubs.

Gary Friedrich caused a coin to pass through a drink straw. He also had a miniature Arrow Card routine. Gene Craft lectured on a prediction from a shuffled deck of cards. Doug Ferguson presented the evening show. He presented three versions of Oil and Water. He also demonstrated two rope routines and two card finds. Eddy Grubbs was also there. *Gene Craft*

RING 216, SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA

Meets 2nd Wed each month at the Yu Ai-Kai Cultural Center, 588 N.

Fourth St., San Jose, CA

DAVID MARTINEZ, President

E-mail: president@ring216.org / Web site: www.ring216.org

President Cal Tong opened the meeting by welcoming Ring 216's newest member, Dennis Morrow, who had gained an early interest in magic from his father, who was a performing magician. Cal also welcomed visitors Arthur von Wronski who was recently getting back into magic, Sean Lin who had participated in a magic club at Taiwan University and recently won third place in the Oakland Magic Circle competition, and Colin, who has studied with member Dan Chan for quite a few years.

Elections were conducted by President Emeritus Fred Rasmussen, and the current officers of the Ring were all re-elected for 2026.

The evening was devoted to open performances, and plenty of those present were eager to perform. Gary Goldberg started it out demonstrating a method of arithmetic that was so fast it gave the answer before the problem was stated. Harold De Armas ran a Stroop test. Syd Kashima told a gambling story ending with a spectator's named card matching the one in an envelope the spectator had been holding. Jeff Friend used ESP cards and inter-dimensional travel to transport three cards between spectator's packets.

Jim Blaishek performed a card effect with a spectator peeking at a card. Alex Wu assembled four aces in slow motion from separate packets,

done one-handed to some beautiful music. Yitian made three coins disappear one by one and then reappear in the box that had come from. Dan Chan matched ESP cards with a spectator. Carey Klenetsky regaled the audience with a story of a hotel full of cards on fire, and showed he had predicted the spectators' choice of the only card to survive the fire.

David Martinez diverted the members with a test of fate, with spectators choosing four wallets of different colors and each person found inside a card describing themselves. Michael Nguyen closed the night with a chosen card that floated out above the deck! IBM Ring 216 of Silicon Valley meets the second Wednesday of every month. We welcome all visiting magicians.

Gary Goldberg

RING 219, LAFAYETTE, INDIANA – Bob Hurt/Ron London Ring

1st Thu., 7:00pm, Faith Community Center, Lafayette, IN
SCOTT STARKEY, President

Notes from our banquet which we hold in lieu of a traditional meeting in January.

As is tradition our banquet began with camaraderie, frivolity, and pizza. Banter and bits were bandied about with reckless abandon. Officers were installed like the k in knight - silently.

The evening's entertainment came from David Shadowens. He had flowers appear, disappear, turn into chocolate, and more! Popcorn kernels were instantly popped to a delightful snack. David revealed several selected playing cards with just a few folds and snips of a piece of paper. He passed several ropes through the body of a volunteer unscathed! David closed the night by escaping from ropes tied about his wrists.

Benji Milanowski

RING 236, CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS – Don & Dorothy Schultz Ring

Meets 3rd Wed., 7:00pm, (except Nov. and Dec.) at The Salvation Army,
502 N. Prospect, Champaign, IL 61820 (and Zoom).

KEN BARHAM, Secretary

2318 Winchester Dr., Champaign, IL 61821 / (217) 841-5616

E-mail: Kebra@aol.com

The meeting opened with discussion of recent online meetings and lectures from the national organizations and that the new IBM website is up and running.

The Club will be doing a show for the VA in Danville on Feb 11 at 2 PM. Talk with Chris Bontjes if you are interested in participating. We may do another show for them, going room to room, in March as well.

Rob "The Professor" Higgins recently purchased Gravity and will give us a review once

he has a chance to look it over. Chris Bontjes gave a good review of a youtube video by Reid Perry about the Classic Force.

Ken Barham opened the magic with his open hand Matrix using coffee creamers. Chris Bontjes took the floor with Two in Hand One in Pocket, Bolts, and a Straw Penetration. Hesham Hassan showed us his Impromptu Rising Card. Rob Higgins demonstrated his Infinity Link Cards. Bill Pierce demonstrated his Ace Transpo and Essen Hu joined us on Zoom with his Infinite Coin Flip Control.

There was also a lot of discussion about the many magic podcasts and teaching videos available online.

The next meeting will be on January 14th at 7:00 PM at the Salvation Army on North Market St in Champaign. The topic will be Do a New (to you) Trick. As usual, come early and meet us at Manzella's Italian Patio for dinner, or just to hang out, before the meeting. I try to get there around 5:00.

Ken Barham

RING 258, LEESBURG, FLORIDA – The "Magic Ian" Ring

4th Thu. at 7:00 pm, in the Ball Room of the Lake Square Mall,
Leesburg, FL 34748

ROGER L. REID, Secretary / (321) 945-7500

E-mail: rogerreid1114@gmail.com / Website: www.Ring 258.com

Tonight was our Holiday Party. We had a small turnout possibly because our date was in between Christmas and New Years Eve.

Under Old Business – We are still waiting for the Lake Square Mall Office to confirm our use of the Ball Room for all our meeting dates for 2026.

Under New Business – Magician Steve Hart will lecture for us on Jan. 22nd. Lance Burton will be in the area at the Tracy Theatre in Melbourne on Jan. 30th. Reza will appear at The Villages on Feb. 2nd, at the Brownwood Hotel.

Past President George Drake officially inducted the new Officers for 2026. They are President – Andrew Rohweder, Vice President – David Ginsburg, Secretary – Roger Reid and Treasurer – Karen Lyons. And the official part of the meeting was over.

Kim Young presented the Magic for the evening. She performed quite a number of effects beautifully including: Pulling a Glass of Water from an Empty Paper Bag, finding a borrowed Ring on her Key Chain, transforming a playing card into a wristwatch, Rain to Snow, finding a chosen card with a rope thru it and an initial found on a cracker in a sealed package!

The final event of the evening was the Wild Gift Exchange, which turned out not to be very wild. Just some nice gifts shared by everyone.

Roger Reid

RING 265, LONDON, ONTARIO, CANADA – London Magicians Guild

Meets 2nd Wed., Labatt's Engineering Bldg. unless otherwise notified.
MARK HOGAN, Secretary

November meeting: It was a brand-new theme we never have tried before for November – One Item Magic! These would be effects that use just one item.

Peter Mennie started us off with a terrific torn & restored card effect from J.C. Wagner – his famous “T & C Card”. He then generously gave us all playing cards and walked through the effect several times so we could all learn it!

Mark Hogan showed a way to choose a spectator by firing a paper rabbit into the crowd which floated down gently to the ground. He then did Kyle Littleton's “3G”, where a package of gum changes brands 3 times! He also performed Nicholas Einhorn's “Word in a Million”, where Mark was able to determine any word chosen from a regular book! Lastly, he broke all the rules and presented his sponge ball routines about Martians (he said they were clones, so it was still one item??), which included the “10 Count” - which fooled the pants off Al Coombs!

Our guest for tonight, Harvey Poole, showed off his homemade wooden magic case as well as his homemade Pom Pom Sticks. He also did some rubber band magic, including two linked bands that switch places and then unlink – all in the spectator's hands.

Andrew Olmstead performed a wonderful David Parr effect where the spectator chose one of the invisible coins, as well as if it was heads or tails up – and that coin (with the proper orientation) was under Andrew's hand all the while!

Al Coombs made his wedding ring disappear and reappear in his hand, then on top of a spectator's hand, then on top of their shoulder! As a big finish, he made his wedding ring switch places with a finger ring – inside his pocket! And Peter Skells had an ingenious way of knowing the position of any card in his deck!

Turns out there's a lot of magic you can do with one item! Thanks to everyone for coming out and sharing.

December meeting: The December meeting was held at Crabby Joe's restaurant downtown. A few hardy souls had dinner beforehand, and others came for the actual meeting – which this month was the game “Pass The Deck”.

We passed around what started as a unopened, complete, ordered deck of cards to everyone, and were asked to do a trick using it. You can mark the cards, tear the cards, whatever you like. If you do a trick, pass the deck and you stay in the game. If not, you're out.

The competition was ferocious. Everyone had at least one card trick to show. Someone (not mentioning names, Byron!) brought in a couple unexpected gaffs to add to the deck, stretching the rules to the limit! But one rule did cause the downfall of many: If the trick doesn't work, you're out!

One by one the competitors dropped like flies, until there were two warriors left – Leo Martins and Andrew Olmstead. Unable to decide on a winner, they used the deck to cut to a high card, and Andrew Olmstead walked away the champion. Peter Mennie brought a Sven Deck for the winner, and all other competitors got a chocolate for their efforts.

We saw a lot of great card magic. Thanks to everyone who came out on a very snowy winter night to have some fun passing the deck!

Mark Hogan

RING 273, CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA - Oliver Ring

Meets 3rd Thur., 7:30pm at the Burns Club

PETER FOSTER, Secretary

Email: pfoster@pcug.au

Another good meeting this month, although there were just the four of us: Richard Hunt, Kieran Taylor, Phil Bevan and me. The theme was Christmas Magic, an obvious theme given the time of year. Although it seems the season got to us a bit, as none of us actually brought any Christmas stuff. I started off with a card trick. A spectator freely chose a forced card, which was put aside unseen. The spectator then made three piles of cards, not all the same size. The spectator chose piles to get a colour (black), a suit (clubs), and a value (ten). This made the ten of clubs. The selected card was now revealed, to indeed be the ten of clubs. This was Petal to the Metal by John Bannon. Richard followed with another card trick. A deck was cut into 4 piles. The top card of each pile was shown, to reveal 4 random cards. These cards indicated how many cards to deal from each pile. For example, a five means to deal 5 cards down. The cards dealt to were then shown - they were the 4 aces! A surprising outcome with a clever method. Richard learned this trick from YouTube. Phil then did a quick ambitious card routine. He then explained how the card managed to repeatedly return to the top of the deck. It was because the deck itself was a piece of technical wizardry. The deck was then “opened”, to reveal flashing lights and gears! A very unexpected finish. This was Tech deck by Craig Petty. Phil continued with an interesting one where the deck looked to be fairly far'd in the hands, then again, with the deck placed on the table and the spectators pushing the cards in. Despite this fairness, the deck was immediately

shown to be in new deck order. This fooled us all. This was Double False Faro Shuffle by Kyle Littleton. Kieran had some questions about the various false riffle shuffles, so Phil did a demonstration of the Zarrow shuffle, the Push Through, and the Strip Out. Phil then did the world's easiest cups and balls routine, with three cups and three wads of tissue. There were some phases of the wads penetrating the cups. For the finale, the cups were stacked and the wads placed on top. They vanished in a flash of flame, then the cups were lifted to reveal a bottle of water (or almost anything). A very short and sharp routine that used zero sleight of hand. This was Fireballs by Gary Jones. Phil continued with a poker deal. There were ten cards, to be dealt to the spectator and magician. The spectator made all the decisions as to who got which cards. Despite this, not only did the magician win, but the outcome matched a prediction. This was Power of Poker by John Bannon. Phil then did a quick one where a large die was tossed onto a tray. The die disappeared, to be replaced by a ball. Almost anything could be produced, such as lots of small dice or a pile of sweets. This was a Tenyo item. Phil finished with a fun card trick, a partial sucker effect that can be used when a spectator asks to be taught a card trick. First, the joker was placed on top. Then the deck was spread and a card selected and noted. The deck was closed, then the magician lifted about half the deck, asking that the selection be placed on the bottom half. As this was done, the magician looked at the bottom card of the upper half of the deck. The magician explained that placing the 2 halves together results in that key card being placed on top of the selection. Of course, this is a very well known trick, so the magician then took the joker from the top of the deck, and it transformed into the selection! A very surprising finish. This was Teacher's Pet by Paul Curry. Next meeting is on 15 January. The theme is "New Stuff for the New Year".

Peter Foster

RING 289, MACON, GEORGIA – Mike Fuller Ring

Meets 1st Tue. each month at 6:00 p.m., Fresh Air BBQ on Riverside Dr., Macon

DANNY WATSON, President / (478) 338-5572

Web site: www.angelfire.com/magic2/maconmagic

In Attendance: Mike and Linda Fuller, Tony Zelonis, John and Rhonda Donahue, Danny Watson and Jimmy Roach. We ended the year 2025 with some of the finest BBQ in middle Georgia at our December meeting along with some great sweets and deserts and talked about this past year and the one's we lost and the memories we shared this past year. No magic done, just the magic of food and friendship and looking for a better year to come.

January 2026, we started off the meeting with our theme being magic you got for Christmas or something new for the New Year.

Mike Fuller started us off by sharing a magic clock in design that he receive from his lovely wife, Linda Fuller to hang in his den at home. Looked nice.

Next John Donahue presented his version of Bond Lee's, Tic Tac Toe board and played a game of tic tac toe with Danny Watson and after the game was over, nobody won the game. John explained that even though he didn't win and Danny didn't win, together, they magically made magic together for when turning around the tic tac toe board was a giant picture of a rabbit in a hat. Looked great.

Danny Watson was up next with the help of Linda Fuller presented us with Craig Petty's, card lottery effect where he had a red and blue deck. Linda shuffled the blue deck then proceeded to make 6 piles face down on the table. On each of those cards had a number from 1 to 52 with the upper most card to be her selected lottery number to be. Next Danny fanned the red deck face up and had different members choose a number in the red packet and then choose which pile to put that number on. After six numbers were selected Danny showed the number that was selected and then turned over the top card it was sitting on and they matched. Each pile in the end matched the number that was selected by each spectator. Nicely done.

Next he did his new version of the sharp nail in the block, in the paper bag where he had 6 paper bags, had the block with the nail inspected by Linda Fuller to be really sharp placed in a paper bag and mixed by Tony Zelonis so Danny with his back turned didn't know which one had the nail sticking up. Danny then turned around and one by one he smashed the bags with his hand hoping not to impale himself as on each and every turn the bags were mixed again and still was able to smash a bag without hitting the nail. All the way to the end with the last bag containing the nail. Looked great. Some discussion afterwards on the how tos and the wherefores. Great meeting. Next month's meeting the theme will be Magic Wands. If you're in the area, give a shout, stop in, we'd love to see ya. See you next month.

John Donahue

RING 324, MIDDLETOWN, OHIO – Middletown Magic

Meets 1st. Fri. 7:00 pm, Tytus Avenue First Church of God, 3300 Tytus Ave., Middletown, Ohio 45042

LARRY HOLLINGER, Secretary

4515 Northglen Court, Englewood, OH 45322 / (937) 836-4359

E-mail: IBMRing324@aol.com

We quickly got down to business. First, we asked the group if they would be open to meeting

at a different location for one month. The responses were mostly positive. In other news, we were informed of Another DA@M Magic Convention coming April 2 – 4, 2026 and Territorial Vice President Mike Bayer's scheduled visit to us. Bill West has volunteered to lead our Coupon Book fund raiser. He had just received the books before the meeting. They are regularly \$25 but we are selling them for \$20. For every Coupon Book sold, the Ring gets \$10. Thank you, Bill, for spear-heading this. In other ways to make the Ring some added income, we #1. Collected yearly dues at the insanely low price of only \$25 and #2. raffled off 17 items donated by members. Every little bit helps. Then we ate. Thank you, June, for the food.

Time for MAGIC! First was Dave Davis with "Jacked Up Si Stebbins Trick." Dave then taught us the trick and demonstrated how to make a deck into Si Stebbins Order. tRick Gaffney was next with "DEQODE" from David Johnson in which a QR code delivered the prediction. tRick also presented "Dr. Boswell – Physic Minds" from Ikat Magic using standard ESP cards in a story-telling illusion. Jake Lindsey showed us his "Color Changing Rose Routine". Then Jake performed a flawless "Omni Deck" routine. Larry Payne unveiled his "Fibulator Meter" with lights and alarm and solicited questions that could be used in a routine using the meter. Larry Taylor borrowed a bill from Tom Casper and then "Vanished Signed Bill". Larry then brought out a locked cylinder ("Bill Tube"). Unlocking the cylinder revealed the signed bill to be inside. Dave Davis presented his ungimmicked "Two Coin Copper Silver Trick". Corey White revealed the volunteer's astrological sign after viewing a set of five cards – "Zodiac". Bill West presented "All Roads" by Henry Christ.

Jake Lindsey showed us the "Arm Card Flourish" that he has been working on. Bill West came back with his version of "Entourage" by Gordan Bean. Larry Hollinger finished with four of his magic Christmas presents (Penguin Magic loves Larry around Christmas time). #1. "Missing Finger" by Mario Lopez, #2. "Agatha's Haunted Key" from P3 Magic, #3. "Animal Mistake" by George Iglesias and #4. "Glass Menagerie" from Jay Sankey.

We adjourned but stayed around and talked magic. So, if you are ever in Middletown, Ohio the first Friday of the month, please stop by and join us. From Ring 324 – The Friendliest Ring Around.

Larry Hollinger

RING 325, BRANSON, MISSOURI – The Tri-Lakes Tricksters

Meets 3rd Sat. of the month atl's Magic & Joke Shop, 6:00pm, 124 South Business 65, Branson, MO

DR. CHRISTOPHER BECK, President / Email: beckbimring325@gmail.com

Nov 15, 2025 Branson Magic Ring #325 Meeting Notes

Meeting attendees: Jim Holmes, Gary & Mary Geise, Monica Holcomb, Anthony Mullins, Thom Taylor, Seth Dreams, Yak Williams.

Old Business

The October meeting was held at Hamner's Variety Show and all who attended enjoyed the time with Dave and the Show.

This being the November Annual Pizza Party, Jim invited everyone to dig in and reminded us there were drinks available in the cooler. YUM!

New Business

Jim reminded us the December meeting is our annual Auction/Flea Market. 10% of all sales made is donated to the club. Jim anticipates sending additional information to other nearby Magician groups and encouraging them to come and participate. The Carson's Comedy Magic Show at The Cabaret has invited our magic club to attend their show free, with the option before or after to enjoy dinner. After checking, the group chose Saturday, December 6. Dinner is served at 6PM with the show following at 6:45PM. The show is free, dinner is \$20 per person including tax.

Performances

Anthony Mullins was up first assisted by Seth Dreams. Displaying three boxes colored Green, Pink, Orange, Seth chose the Orange one. When the lid of the Orange box was checked the message was "You Will Choose Orange".

Thom Taylor, aka, Nicholas Nickleby Insktioff also chose Seth as his assistant. A reference was made to the Pink Pony Club. Then a discussion of Biblical Names selected Mary. A St Christopher Medal was displayed. A deck of cards was turned to show Yellow backs. The St Christopher medal was anonymously placed on top of one of the cards. Then Red backed cards were displayed and the same design was displayed on both cards.

For his second effect "Nicholas" had Gary Geise select a card anonymously. He then told Gary the suit and number of the card chosen. He then opened a new Red Backed deck and asked Gary to tell him to "Stop" when desired. Gary selected 7 and he counted down to show Gary's chosen card.

"Nicholas" then opened his prediction envelope, one side of the prediction card showed all 52 cards in order. Turning the card over he showed the 6 Diamonds. He then displayed his "prediction wallet" with the A Spades telling Gary he had been "Aced", then checked the wallet again and showed the 6 Diamonds.

Gary Geise was next. Turning cards over in sequence he retold the story ending with "Gamblers Always Lose".

Yak Williams took the stage next. Seth assisted him to demonstrate a new item called The Stone, available for \$35. Yak displayed a bag with several different colored/shaped stones. Seth selected one, returned the rest to the bag and stored the chosen one in his left hand. Yak then pulled a stone from his pocket which matched the one in Seth's hand.

Seth Dreams was up next. He indicated that mentalism Does Not work well with three-year-old children. Everyone laughed. He proceeded to give a book to Gary/Monica. They selected the word "light" from a random page in the book. They revealed the page number was 103. When the book was opened, page 103 was missing. Seth removed his coat, turned around and the missing page was taped to his back.

Yak returned to the stage with a rice bowl effect. He poured some Rice Krispies into the bowl. Returned the top and turned it around three times, more Rice Krispies. Then he turned them around again, four times and it turned into milk for the Rice Krispies.

Demonstrating another effect from the store, Yak displayed a multicolored ball and a tube. He placed the ball into the tube, "Magic Magic" the ball turned into a multicolored square. Returning it to the tube, "Magic Magic" this time revealed a real Rubik's Cube. *Mary Geise*

RING 362, BANGOR, MAINE – The Bob Nixon Ring

Meets 2nd. Sun at the Buker Community Center, 22 ArmoryRd., Augusta, ME
SCOT GRASSETTE, Secretary / E-mail: grassette@gwi.net

VP Dennis Labbe opened the meeting, and quickly took care of business. We're all hoping president Randy Begin will get well soon and will be able to run the meeting in February. Our December meeting was a club show fundraiser, (Which earned us 8 months of rent for our meeting room) therefore we made 1st order of activity our popular annual Yankee Swap. We had lots of fun opening presents and some swapped for gifts that suited them better, but it was all good because all the gifts were really nice!

We then did a Magic Jam going around the room and each performing one trick, those not performing passed, and we went around the room until we ran out of time. I'm not going to give too many details because there was so much magic but here are the effects and who did them: Geoff Miller - Dan Harlen's Awakening. Scot Grassette - Tom Burgoon's Air Bear. Carroll Chapman - Burmese Bells. Brian Rogers - Diamond Jim Tyler's 10 Grand Prix. Stephan Cornish - Follow along with 9 cards, and find the 3rd card with spelling. Fred Carter - His own floating Christmas Tree. Dennis Labbe - Photo Assembly from multiple cut up photos. Joel

Riemersma - Banded by Garrett Thomas. Wes Booth - Coloring book with funny adult joke on Dennis. Joel - Earl Nelson's one dollar, fifty cent vanish. Geoff - Haunted Key. Scot - Flower Wallet production using volunteer to do the magic. Brian R. - NYPE, pips become holes the return with one of them backwards, Brian also did a bare-handed Matrix. Wes - Found Fred's card using an Audley Walsh control. Stephan performed a complicated self-working trick that works like magic. Dennis performed Cocktail Deck. Joel - Down Under Aces he found in John Carney's Carneycopia. Scot performed a trick learned from David Ginn using a fragile teacup, tied to a 2 foot string and a washer, the string runs over a wand the cup would seemingly fall and smash but when the washer is released the string wraps around the wand saving the cup. Fellowship and social continued at Margarita's Mexican Restaurant. *Scot Grassette*

RING 398, APPLETON/GREEN BAY, WISCONSIN – Dr. Lynn Miner Ring

Meets last Tue. except Dec., 6:30 p.m., email for location.
RICK MOREIN, Secretary
E-mail: rmorein497@gmail.com

Ring 398's December meeting included our traditional holiday party at Luigi's Restaurant. Nineteen people attended, including Michael Schroeder, Marvin Roth, Daryl Rogers, Kevin Koehne, Kahlan Scherg, Monty Witt, Tal Kuhn, Rick Morein, Mike Desotell, Lou Lepore, and Jason Ransom, along with spouses and other family members.

After some socializing and a wonderful Italian dinner—complete with tiramisu for dessert—President Daryl Rogers led a reflection on Ring 398's many accomplishments in 2025. Highlights included organizing a celebration of Houdini's birthday, the Ring's community performances, and the kickoff of our "Year of Magic" for 2026. Daryl then read a magical ceremonial piece to remind us of the beauty and power of our art.

He next presented certificates of appreciation: one to Kendra Scherg, mother of member Kahlan, for her contributions to the Houdini birthday celebration; and another to Tom Boldt—accepted by Vice President Rick Morein—for his extensive work promoting magic in the community.

We then moved into the evening's magical performances, made even more special by a group of restaurant guests—friends of Lou Lepore's wife—who joined us for the show.

The performances began with Secretary Kevin Koehne presenting a lively and humorous Card on Ribbon routine. Treasurer Tal Kuhn followed with a card trick done in reverse that

ended with a watch reappearing on his wrist. Sergeant-at-Arms Michael Schroeder kept everyone laughing with his trademark wit and puns. Lou Lepore performed a mind-reading effect in which he predicted (and produced!) the mixed drink Kevin was thinking of. Marv Roth demonstrated a memory feat that rivaled Harry Lorayne by memorizing an entire deck of cards. Monty Witt amazed us with a silk routine featur-

ing ever-changing Christmas images. Mike Desotell stunned the room with a blindfolded prediction of a chosen color. Finally, Daryl closed the show by mixing red, green, and white silks in a Santa hat—producing a festive “Merry Christmas” silk.

It was another wonderful gathering filled with fellowship, food, and fantastic magic.

Kevin Koehne

NEW APPLICATIONS AND REINSTATEMENTS

SEND DUES, CHANGE OF ADDRESS, AND APPLICATIONS TO:

I.B.M. HEADQUARTERS

13 POINT WEST BLVD.,
ST. CHARLES, MO 63301

MARCH 2026

22 NEW MEMBERS

JONES, CHRISTOPHER, Owens Cross Roads, AL

JENSEN, JOSEPH, Tucson, AZ

SHARP, ERIC, Van Nuys, CA

ZHU, SHELDON, Mountain View, CA

BERGEN, MICHAEL, Alameda, CA

SHEARER, MICHAEL, Indio, CA

BERG, JACOB, San Francisco, CA

COOKE, KEVIN, Gainesville, GA

NILES, PHILIP, Dubuque, IA

BOE, DANIEL, Lewiston, ID

LOCKETT, RYAN, Quincy, IL

TILMANN, NOAH, Three Rivers, MI

GUISINGER, ALEXANDER, Three Rivers, MI

TROTTER, TIMOTHY, St Louis, MO

BORTOLATO, NICO, Elkins Park, PA

GIGLIOTTI, MICHAEL, Walston, PA

CHAR, ADARSH, Arlington, VA

LENNON, BEN, Sunshine West, VIC, Australia

KUSCH, BRENT, Surrey, BC, Canada

ROBINSON, JEREMY, St. Andrews, MB, Canada

TAN, IAN, Singapore, Singapore

PEERS, RYAN, STOCKPORT, Manchester, United Kingdom

4 REINSTATEMENTS

KAPLAN, MITCHELL, Wilmington, DE

FITZGERALD, RUSSELL, Abington, MA

DESMOND, JOSEPH, Brooklyn, NY

WHITKOFSKI, MICHAEL, Lakewood, OH

Sign Up a New Member

Ask our Headquarters Office for some Membership Brochures and Application Forms (or visit www.magician.org) and sign up someone interested in magic. Show them a *Linking Ring*, invite them to a meeting, and tell them about our magic-filled Convention!

Answer to Pictures from the Past – from page 14

Thomas James Osborne was born on December 3, 1902, in St. Louis, Missouri. In the late 1930s, Tom, his mother, and his two siblings moved to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where he set his sights on becoming a professional magician. Arthur M. Cowan, who was known for his expert card work and performance, became his tutor. Cowan worked with Tom to teach him the finer points of card, coin, and various other sleights. He also instructed Tom on the egg bag, an effect which Cowan had been known for over many years.

In February 1936, Tom performed several shows that included performances with the Emory Daugherty orchestra, singer Marie Fowler, and ballroom dancers La Costa and Lolita at the Lee Fong's Café La Paree at 14th and H Streets in Washington, DC. At the 1937 I.B.M. Convention in High Point, North Carolina, Tom proved himself by demonstrating his prowess with card manipulation and presentation. That same year, he sold an effect known as the "Three-To-One-Rope." The effect was originally created by Lyle "Carlyle" Laughlin. Tom also wrote a few books during the 1930s, including *Cups and Balls Magic* (1937) and *The Three Shell Game* (1938).

In Pennsylvania in October 1945, the Scottish Rite Club of Huntingdon and Bedford Counties hosted a fun and frivolous dinner event at the Masonic Temple and hired Tom to be the master of ceremonies. The event began with a feast of turkey served by the ladies of the First Baptist Church. Tom performed assorted magic effects throughout the night, much to the pleasure of the audience.

In 1948, the Fords Playhouse in Fords, New Jersey hosted a packed house for the Fords Lions Club's annual two-hour variety show. With the theater's eleven hundred seats filled and residents still lining up outside hoping to get in, it seemed as though the majority of the town had turned out for the event, which benefited the civic betterment fund. Emcee Frank Schluth kept the audience laughing and guessing what costume he would appear in next, whether he was commenting on the act taking the stage or filling time while the backstage crew prepared for the next performer. The evening featured the three Murphy Sisters in a delightful dance act, followed by Harold Holly and Company entertaining the crowd with their many impersonations.

Next on the playbill was Tom, who brought two audience volunteers on stage and put them through a series of entertaining challenges. At one point, he cut up one volunteer's tie, only to restore it and give it back to him. Before the restoration, the man had been pacing back and forth in a panic because it was a gift from his wife and he was dreading having to explain how it ended up in pieces. Both volunteers returned to their seats happy, and the man with the restored tie was visibly relieved. The audience thoroughly enjoyed the comedy as Tom skillfully presented his act.

In February 1955, Tom packed up his car and drove to Bristol, Pennsylvania to be one of two acts performing as part of the fun at the Good Will Hose Company No. 3 firehouse. Peggy Arnold, the "Queen of the Banjo," entertained the audience before Tom Osborne, "Magician Extraordinary," performed his act with the musical accompaniment of a band called The Octones.

Tom and his family moved to Woodbury, New Jersey in the 1950s to enjoy more space and partake in horseback riding, one of Tom's other passions. The home was located on two acres of land, where he grew fruit trees and enjoyed spending time with family and friends.

In July 1961, the 33rd Annual I.B.M. Convention at Chalfonte-Haddon Hall in Atlantic City, New Jersey promised to be an event to remember. The convention had an assortment of magic performers, including Tom Osborne as emcee for the night-before show. During the convention, Theo "Okito" Bamberg agreed to come out of retirement to partake in the evening's event. Other entertainers included Monk Watson, Jack Miller, Jack Chanin, The

Dodsons, Al Saal, Danny Johnson, The Berlands, Karrell Fox, Chop-Chop & Charlene, Joe Cossari, Jack Gwynne, Ray-Mond, Steranko, and Bro. John Hammon. Tom also gave lectures and close-up sessions during the convention. In December that year, Tom performed at the holiday party for mothers and children at the JoAnne and Fred Dancing School in Bristol, Pennsylvania.

Film photography was one of Tom's other hobbies and he filmed his fellow magicians whenever possible. Upon receiving the prestigious Honorary Life Membership award from the Academy of Magical Arts in Hollywood, he decided to donate his complete film library of magicians to the William Larsen Sr. Memorial Library. His entire library of color, 16mm film footage is now located at the famed Magic Castle in Hollywood.

Tom lectured at many magic clubs and conventions throughout his career, and wrote articles for the Society of American Magicians and the I.B.M. His "Tom Osborne Hocus Pocus Parade of Card Sleights" can be found on page 48 of the September 1958 issue of *The Linking Ring*. He also wrote a column called "Talk About Philadelphia" for *TOPS* magazine. He was a member of I.B.M. Rings 165 (Collingswood, New Jersey) and 6 (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania).

Tom Osborne's contributions to magic were not limited to performing at fraternal clubs, business conventions, or local magic conventions. Like many professional magicians, he often drove many miles to perform a single magic show. His magic was perfect for any venue or event, from private parties to large organizations, and his comedic stylings were created for audiences of any age. Tom made it his goal as a professional magician to be exactly what the audience would enjoy. Sadly, he passed away on April 17, 1963, at Jefferson Hospital in Woodbury, New Jersey.

Gary R. Frank

I.B.M. YOUTH TRIVIA CONTEST RULES

(Continued from page 51)

Send your answer on a single sheet of 8½" x 11" paper. Answers must be typed or legibly handwritten. Include your name, mailing address, telephone number, and I.B.M. membership number. Make your answers as complete as possible. *These questions are not designed to be easily Googled. We recommend that you ask the senior members of your local Ring to help you come up with the answers.*

Contest Rules: You must be a Youth Category member of the I.B.M. in good standing and not have reached your eighteenth birthday on or before the date of the postmark of your response.

The Youth member who supplies the correct answer will receive a valuable gift package from one or more of the world's best magic shops. In the event more than one correct answer is received, a drawing will be held to determine the winner. Results will be published in *The Linking Ring*.

To allow enough time for mail from international members to reach us, we will announce the winner and answer in the third issue after the question runs. For example, May's answer and winner will appear in the August issue. **For more information, see page 51.**

A grand stage with red curtains and a chandelier. The scene is set in a theater with ornate gold-colored columns and a large, glowing chandelier hanging from the ceiling. The red curtains are pulled back, revealing a stage floor.

Step Into the Spotlight

Enter the

I.B.M. Magic Competitions

The Gold Medal for Stage Magic
The Gold Cups for Close-up Magic

Showcase your magic, compete for **Big Cash Prizes**, and join the ranks of past competitors who have gone on to perform at **FISM, The Magic Castle, and beyond!**

This is your chance to shine on the global stage and make your mark in the world of magic.

Competition finals July 22-25 in St Louis MO. Registration is now open.

Contests chairs : Lady Sarah and Keith Fields.

**For more information magician.org/contest
or email IBMMagicContest@gmail.com**

