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The Linking Ring

MARCH 2025



RANDY PITCHFORD

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF MAGICIANS



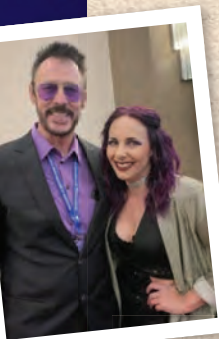
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MARCH

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If no, join us to hear how to use social media for Ring success.

**Thursday,
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**8:00 pm EST, 7:00pm
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Next Call: 4/17/25



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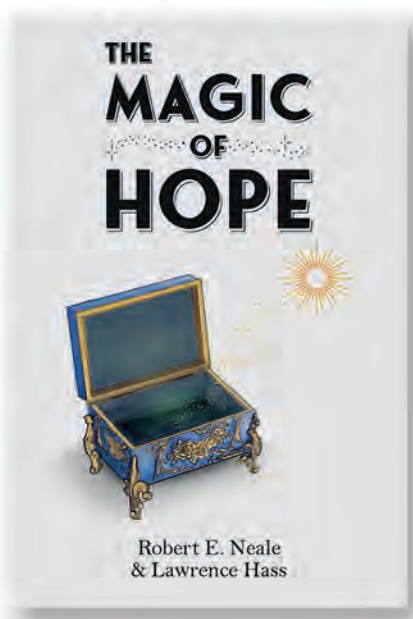
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THE UNDERCOVER COPS, which is nothing less than a color-changing sandwich effect, powered by a transposition from Jennings' Visitor, built on a "cops and robbers" chassis.

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.

Step Into the Spotlight

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do to advance magic and serve you.



From the Editor

SAMUEL PATRICK SMITH

Since the dawn of the Industrial Age, students of the human condition have noted the increasing busyness of life. This faster pace is ironic because technological advances are supposed to reduce the burden of laboring humanity, not lengthen the workday. Yet many people today seem to be working harder and faster to get ahead – or just to maintain the status quo. Family life is also more hectic than it was even in years past, as parents spend more time and money on their children’s recreational and athletic activities than our grandparents would have dreamed possible.

Busyness is not intrinsically bad; it is certainly better than sloth. An active life helps us maintain good health. It also relieves depression, aimlessness, and excessive introspection. A healthy, productive, and balanced lifestyle can be elusive, but stepping off the proverbial treadmill on a regular basis may pay off in surprisingly tangible ways.

Benjamin Franklin wrote, “Necessity never made a good bargain.” The same could be said of a frenzied lifestyle. When we are too busy to think, we are apt to make poor decisions in critical areas, such as what we eat and how we spend our money. We may eat at fast-food restaurants because it’s quicker than preparing a meal at home. This is more expensive and may not be as healthy due to the limited choices and hasty decisions we tend to make at a drive-through.

Thus a hectic mindset impairs a person’s judgment by causing him to make decisions based on convenience. Defaulting to what is easiest is often the costliest course of action.

The “brain space” required to examine our options and make the smartest moves is only available if we are willing to pause, even briefly. Otherwise, we may continue succeeding in pursuits that don’t matter while overlooking those that do. A performer who spends all of his time trying to book himself solid may be neglecting the development of performing skills that would eventually allow him to get better paying jobs. Perhaps he has failed to evaluate the profitability of the shows he is doing but feels temporarily successful because he is busy.

The negative consequences of rushing – always responding to the pressure of the moment rather than planning ahead – may also affect our finances in other ways. Being too busy to review our monthly bills may result in incorrect charges, missed payments, late fees, and other negative financial consequences.

Years ago during a hectic period when my wife and I had young children and had recently moved, I returned a piece of equipment to the phone company. One month as I was reviewing our phone bill, I discovered we were still being charged – two years later! Such mistakes are more apt to happen when we are in a frenetic frame of mind.

If we’re busy, that’s good. Success requires action. But even with sometimes overwhelming responsibilities at home or at work, we can invest a few minutes each day to evaluate our activities. We can then move forward and happily identify ourselves with this observation by Elbert Hubbard: “If you want a job well done, ask a busy person; the other kind has no time.”

President's Page

MIKE DUNAGAN



It takes a lot of time, work, and dedication, by a lot of people, to make this organization tick. As I write this column, it's early February and the Board of Trustees have just finished our midyear business meeting.

Being our only in-person gathering other than the July annual meeting (thank goodness for regular Zoom calls), the midyear business meeting is a dedicated time for us to talk face-to-face about the many current and future initiatives, programs and opportunities being worked on.

I'm happy to report that it was a very productive meeting. I want to thank all the officers, members-at-large, Past International Presidents, staff, and visitors who collectively invested almost three hundred hours of work time, not including travel and non-meeting time, focused solely on the business of the International Brotherhood of

Magicians. From budget discussions to brainstorming sessions, it was an incredibly positive meeting and experience.

Our Convention Hotel. The midyear meeting was held at the Houston Royal Sonesta Galleria, our hotel for this year's Convention. I can now say first hand what a perfect hotel it is for us. It's a beautiful property, well maintained, clean, and delivers top-notch service. The convention space is fantastic. It features a conference center with a great space for our shows, lectures, and after-hour jamming, without being a challenge to navigate. The guest rooms are spacious and comfortable. The food is terrific and the restaurant and bar areas are perfect for gathering with friends.

If you've not registered, do it now. You don't want to miss the fun!

(continued on page 15)



The Board of Trustees meet for the midyear business meeting. Front Row (L to R): Keith Fields, Jeff Sobel, Stephen Levine, Jason Michaels, Mike Dunagan, Charles Arkin, Simone Marron, Mike Woodward, Scott Cantrell. Back Row (L to R): Sammy Smith, David Garrard, Bill Evans, Oscar Muñoz, Joe M. Turner, Rolando Santos, Alex Zander, Billy Hsueh, Tim Vient, Sindi Richison, Matt Stanley.

PHOTO BY MICHAEL MESSING



Pictures from the Past

THE LINKING RING



William A. Russell was a name known to fellow magicians in the early 1900s. They took notice of the young magician from Batavia, New York early on because he wasn't following along the same lines as his peers when it came to creating effects that would make theater managers take notice. Russell created a version of a rising card trick that baffled fellow magicians. Throughout his life he made a name for himself as a performer, a builder of props, and an inventor. Other performers like Houdini, Theo Bamberg, and Thurston would easily acknowledge and praise the accomplishments of William "Billy" Russell. To learn more, turn to page 144.

A Reminder and Correction. In my December *Linking Ring* article I announced the Houston Convention registration rebate program for Ring Presidents and Territorial Vice Presidents. In explaining how to take advantage of this **\$100 rebate** program, I provided the wrong year for when you must be active in that role. It applies to anyone active in these two roles as of **July 1, 2025**. To qualify, write **TVP** or **Ring President** in the Occupation field of the registration form so we can follow up to confirm. We want to see you in Houston!

Live and Learn. Okay, technically this is my mistake, too. Each month, I host a ninety-minute Zoom meeting called the **Ring Leaders Call**. These are Zoom calls designed to bring together members across our ring network to discuss and share ideas with each other to drive Ring success.

My mistake was what I named these calls. A Ring Leaders Call implies it's only for Ring officers. My bad. I define a leader as anyone willing to make a difference in their Ring, regardless of being an officer.

If this sounds like you, come join us. Call details are on our social media pages, in the monthly newsletter, and on the www.magician.org home page.

A Great Idea. An idea shared on a Ring Leaders call: If you want to run a better meeting, be a visitor. At your next Ring meeting, view it as if you are a first-time visitor. Imagine this is your initial exposure to your Ring. What would you think about it? Is it well run? Are the members friendly? Is it a positive experience? This outsider's perspective can help you see your club through a different lens and might identify some areas for improvement.

Coming Up. We have lots of exciting programs and projects we can hopefully share with you over the next few months. Consider this a tease for what's to come. Thanks for reading.

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!

RANDY PITCHFORD

A New Era at the Magic Castle

PHOTOS COURTESY OF RANDY PITCHFORD AND THE ACADEMY OF MAGICAL ARTS.

Let's keep the arts alive, let's keep young hearts alive,
because the show must go on. – *John Wyatt*

By Dale Salwak

“Randy is a very special person as far as the Magic Castle is concerned,” said David Copperfield. “He has the means and attitude to preserve its legacy.”

“For as long as I’ve known about the Magic Castle,” said Penn Jillette, “it’s been a bit precarious. I’ve always worried about it. Now I don’t need to.”

“Randy’s purchase,” said Erika Larsen, “brings the heart and soul back to this institution that I have loved and devoted my life to. I know my parents would be thrilled with the news.”

The above as reported in the *Los Angeles Times* were among the many accolades coming from the magic community upon release in 2022 of the following thrilling – thrilling! – news:

Randy Pitchford, lifetime member (since 1983) of the Academy of Magical Arts and former magician at Universal CityWalk Wizardz, grandnephew of British magician Richard Valentine Pitchford (known as the Great Cardini), and CEO of Gearbox Entertainment Co. has bought the

Hollywood Magic Castle from its long-time owners, the Thomas Glover family. The permanent agreement (confirmed and signed on Randy’s birthday, April 21) covers the land, building, Magic Castle Hotel and apartments, as well as the trademarks and intellectual property.

With irreproachable credentials as both businessman and philanthropist, his goals include strengthening the bond between the building and its tenant, the Academy of Magical Arts; securing its financial future; and re-investing its lucrative potential, as he told *Genii: The Conjuror’s Magazine* (which he also purchased – and saved – in 2017), to continue “enhancing, improving, and cultivating it for the future.”

It is most fitting, therefore, that in Houston at the forthcoming Annual Convention of the International Brotherhood of Magicians, Randy and his wife Kristy (who were married April 19, 1997 onstage at the Magic Castle) will be guests of honor in recognition of their untiring



Tom Glover, Jr., Milt and Randy hold the key to the Magic Castle.

emotional, artistic, and financial commitment to magic and the variety arts.

Randy's indefatigable love for our art and the Larsen family runs deep. "The Magic Castle is like bedrock – the center point of magic," he said in a statement released at the time on ABC-TV.

"The people who think of the Castle as their home and the place itself seem to have magical properties that have created and inspired some of the world's greatest entertainers. I'm proud to be trusted to both, give back to the place that made me to become the custodian of the Magic Castle, and to work with its members and the Larsen family to ensure our most incredible clubhouse grows and thrives for decades to come."

The Victorian mansion with French and Gothic elements, high on a hill along Franklin Avenue, just a block north of Hollywood Boulevard, was built in 1908 by Rollin Benjamin Lane, a Redlands financier and orange grower, and his wife, Katherine. In 1955 Thomas O. Glover, Sr. acquired the building.

Six years later Milt Larsen was gazing out his ninth-floor office window at Ralph

Edwards Productions in Hollywood, and thought the eerie mansion looked perfect for the magic club that he and his TV producer brother, Bill, were dreaming about as a fulfillment of their late father's vision.

Following lengthy discussions and a handshake lease agreement with Thomas Glover, Jr., the club opened its doors January 2, 1963 with 123 magician members and 104 associates in the AMA. Today, the Magic Castle is Los Angeles' world class Historic-Cultural Monument No. 406 with an active membership of over six thousand.

"Basically everything I know about entertainment started there," Randy said. "I feel like I owe my career to the Magic Castle."

Born Randall Steward Pitchford on April 21, 1971, his self-assuredness, sharp mind, keen perceptions, and business acumen developed early in life.

When he turned five, his father, who created high-technology equipment for the United States intelligence system, brought home one of the computers he had developed. Two years later, his father gave him his own computer with which he learned



Above: Erika Larsen signs *Magic Castle Enterprise* documents with Liberty Larsen (right) and Jessica Hopkins. Right: Randy and Kristy at the Magic Castle on their wedding day, 19 April 1997.



the programming language, BASIC, and tried to reproduce current arcade games.

Ever curious, at twelve he wrote his first game – a sixteen-room text adventure. He played *Colossal Cave Adventure* and was so captivated that he used a hex editor to examine the code and figure out some of the programming concepts behind it.

After high school, Randy attended the University of California, Los Angeles, planning to study law, then switched to computer science, but his future wife (Kristy, *née* Junio, also a writer and tabletop gaming and hospitality expert) shrewdly urged him to pursue a career in entertainment.

On the strength of her encouragement, he moved to Frisco, Texas, where he began designing video games in a nonstop flurry of experimentation and innovation. In 1999 he founded Gearbox; the first product, *Half-Life Opposing Force*, was a huge success. His breakout game, the Mad Max-style Looter Shooter *Borderlands*, sold forty-eight million copies and generated over one billion dollars in sales.

In 2021 he stepped back from game operations to lead the company's film and TV division, Gearbox Studios, through which he produced *Borderlands* and *Brothers in Arms*, among others. Then, early in 2022, he sold the company to

Swedish game conglomerate Embracer for an unprecedented \$1.3 billion.

As with video games, so with magic: his interest began early in life. He traces it back to Samuel, a relative he met at a family reunion. Samuel worshipped Cardini, loved puzzles and magic, and the stories he told ignited Randy's interest. Because of that his parents bought him a magic set the following Christmas. He studied and practiced the tricks and tried to put on a magic show for his parents, but they showed little interest.

Remarkably, about a year later at another family reunion, he met his great-uncle's widow, Swan Cardini. She had heard of Randy's interest and brought him a copy of J. B. Bobo's *Modern Coin Magic*. "It made my head explode," he told the interviewer for *Genii* in 2022. "Having Cardini as a relative, and listening to my Uncle Sam talk about him with such admiration, was genuinely inspiring and pulled me forward to work harder."

By his teens he had learned from books a few skills with cards and coins, but he lived near Pismo Beach, California, where there were no other magicians, no magic shops. Then he heard about the Magic Castle. Too young to visit, he joined local I.B.M. Ring 21, which met a block away. At last, when twenty-one, an



Above: Randy performs at the Peacock Theater. Below: Randy and Milt strike a pose by their caricatures on a wall at the Magic Castle.



Above: Milt shows Randy a model he built with news for expanding the Magic Castle. Right: Milt and Randy session with Carole Marie (left) and Jessica Hopkins.

“old gambling guy” named Verner and Billy McComb sponsored his Castle membership.

During this time, to make extra money he was working as a tour guide on the trams at Universal Studios. When the dynamic entertainment, dining and retail promenade, CityWalk, opened in 1993, one of the businesses was a magic nightclub called Wizardz. While it was still under construction he wandered in and asked for the manager, Fred Wood, a professional magician and 1980 graduate of the Chavez Studio of Magic.

Randy said, “Hey, I think this is going to be a magic club and I should work here.” He showed Fred some card effects. “Do you have a tuxedo?” Randy didn’t but said yes, knowing he would buy one to get the job. “We’re going to open in about two months,” Fred commented, “so why don’t you come back in about six weeks and we’ll get you set up.”

And so Randy was one of the starting magicians at Wizardz, strolling and pitching in the magic shop four or five nights a week. All this time he was taking classes at UCLA and still working as a Universal tour guide until he





Left: Randy after a show at the Peacock Theater. Right: Randy relaxes on the grand staircase at the Magic Castle.

moved to Texas and became a computer game developer.

Central to Randy's success is Kristy, also shaped by the Magic Castle when they were young. In the early 1980s they went there three or four nights a week. Randy spent time reading in the library or sessioning with magician friends while Kristy



Randy and Milt Larsen get excited about future plans.

socialized and built connections with the staff and guests.

What she learned during that period became really important seeds as she built her own businesses in table top gaming and hospitality. "I don't know anything about running a food and beverage operation," said Randy, "but Kristy is an expert."

She now owns and operates two very successful bar-restaurants that she created. They are called Nerdvana: Food and Spirits, offering an original concept that brings together a craft kitchen, craft cocktails, and nerd culture.

Her expertise in hospitality, not just as a business owner but also as a leader, a creator, and an investor, is a huge part of why the Larsen and Glover families came to



Randy signs Magic Castle Enterprises documents with Erika Larsen (left), Jessica Hopkins, and Liberty Larsen.

them when it became clear that the property was going to change hands.

"If she wasn't part of the equation with her experience, skill, and success in the very, very difficult business of hospitality, combined with her confidence as an investor," added Randy, "it's fair to say that we would never have taken on becoming the custodians of the Magic Castle."

He also learned a lot from Erika Larsen, now president of the new entity, PEMM (Pitchford Entertainment, Magic, and Media). He even built a home in Texas with secret passageways and doors and modeled after the Larsens' Brookledge estate in Los Angeles.

"The environment she created at Brookledge offers incredible performers who try their material on really discerning private crowds," he said.

Randy flies in magicians, jugglers, acrobats, comedians and musicians for command performances in his own one-hundred-seat Peacock Theater. Another smaller theater, the Gallery of Intimate Magic, seats about thirty for close-up magic shows.

We all have stories about what we were doing when we fell under the spell of the

Magic Castle. Without that hallowed institution, where would our art be? Where would many of us be as performers? I can't even imagine.

Randy and Kristy's historic devotion and commitment to keeping the magical arts alive for the next generation and beyond is emotional and gratifying. "Randy really understands and appreciates my vision and the Larsen family vision," said the late Milt Larsen, "and there is no one better to carry on what we started in 1963."

"Randy Pitchford is a creative visionary, a strategic mastermind, and an exceptionally nice guy," added Erika. "His love for magic and the Magic Castle, his business savvy, his generosity, and his unbridled enthusiasm are exactly what is needed to revive the spirit of the Magic Castle and keep the place thriving for generations to come."

May what they have achieved and, will continue to achieve, live long in our profoundly grateful collective memory and experience.

This month Dale Salwak is celebrating fifty-three consecutive years as a performer at the Magic Castle.



Remembering My Mentor, Cesareo Pelaez

By Rick Heath

On Sunday, February 20, 1977, as the clock struck three, and as the gong sounded three times, the golden contour curtain rippled skyward, and an intrepid band of performers, led by a then-unknown theatrical wizard who went by the name of Marco the Magi, took to the stage of the Cabot Street Cinema Theatre in Beverly, Massachusetts.

This was the first of what became an incredible thirty-five-year run of performances by a troupe known as *Le Grand David and his own Spectacular Magic Company*.¹

Marco, whose real name was Cesareo Pelaez, was my mentor.

Cesareo was born on October 16, 1932, in Santa Clara, Cuba. He grew up immersed in influences artistic, musical, literary, and theatrical. His love for magic began at age four, sitting on his father's knee in Santa Clara's majestic *Teatro la Caridad*, watching the legendary magician Fu Manchu perform wonders on its stage.

As a youth, he won a nationwide radio talent contest, and as a teenager, he formed his own theatre company and created *Mirre's Follies* (Mirre being his nickname) – a magical, musical, variety revue.

Cesareo was a gifted student and always graduated first in his class. He earned a Doctorate degree in *Pedagogia* (psychology and education). He was a beloved teacher at

Santa Clara's Marista Academy and the Director of Psychometric Testing for his province of Las Villas. Cesareo was brilliant, talented, charismatic, and gifted with boundless energy. Only in his mid-twenties, his future was incredibly promising.



Cesareo, approximately age 10, dressed in a theatrical costume, Santa Clara, Cuba.

¹ Marco (Cesareo) also led the company in the purchase of two historic theatres in Beverly where it performed two different two-hour shows; to seven appearances at The White House in Washington, DC; and into the *Guinness Book of Records*. For thirty-five years, many of magic's most eminent historians came, saw, and wrote, including Robert Lund, founder of the American Museum of Magic, who called *Le Grand David* "An achievement unique in the history of recorded conjuring."



The Cabot Theatre stage and proscenium.

However, his personal and professional lives were shattered when Castro's revolutionaries stormed Santa Clara on their push to Havana. There was a pitched battle and blood in the streets. Cesareo soon realized the promise of a democratic Cuba was simply a big illusion. When he was mandated to test the suitability of young men for Communist training, his refusal meant he had to leave the country – either that or be imprisoned or shot.

In 1962, Cesareo did leave Cuba and came to the United States. His passion for psychology led him to Abraham Maslow, the father of Humanistic Psychology, at Brandeis University in Waltham, Massachusetts. Maslow was studying psychological health and conducting groundbreaking research in what he called Self-Actualization, the realization of one's full human potential.

Cesareo departed Brandeis in 1968. Two years later, he accepted a teaching position in psychology at Salem State College in Salem, Massachusetts. There he taught for twenty-

four years until his retirement as Professor Emeritus in 1995.



Cesareo striking the gong at the Cabot Theatre, circa 1977.

By the early 1970s, Cesareo had begun forming a theatre company and mounting not just a "magic show," but a "stage magic extravaganza," with the aim of enabling individuals to reach their full human potential, and to work together, over the long haul, in true cooperation.²

² Cesareo was actively engaged in gathering the people, raising the money, and finding a suitable theatre to launch his theatrical venture. A master of group dynamics, he formed teams to study painting, tap dancing, barbershop-style singing, puppetry, juggling, and classics of psychology. At his suggestion, we "found houses," lived together, and shared expenses – and in the process, became friends.



Cesareo performing his solo routine at the company's Larcom theatre.



Cesareo seated in the auditorium of the Larcom Theatre, 1985.

I met Cesareo in the fall of 1972. Within five seconds, I realized he was the most remarkable and perceptive person I might ever meet. Within ten seconds, I felt he knew me better than I knew myself. He made it clear our relationship could continue – if I *valued* what he had to offer. At that moment, the trajectory of my life changed forever.

Cesareo's mentorship was not limited to my performing as a clown and working as a company artist. Thankfully, it included both my outer *and* inner lives. He made it clear my "job" was to learn, not only about theatre, but most importantly, *about myself*.

Such wisdom would rarely be at my convenience. Thankfully, too, Cesareo never made opportunities easy for me, given my susceptibility to the disease of *mañana* (tomorrow, tomorrow, tomorrow), and to the pleasure principle (maximum gratification for minimum effort). Growth as a human being had to be paid for, and in advance – the currency being one's efforts. Only by facing difficulties head to head and with the proper attitude, while realizing that "success and failure are both impostors" (as Cesareo put it, borrowing from the Rudyard Kipling poem, "If"), does one grow.

To be a member of the company meant to be a good citizen – to organize my life; to hold a real job; to be dependable; to work for the greater good; to jettison negativity, self-pity, self-importance, and the delusion of entitlement; to develop a moral compass; to become truly educated; and, yes, to pay my taxes. Slowly but surely, I "joined the ranks of the responsables."

Be not mistaken: daily life and work was not all 24/7 "nose to the grindstone" stuff. Performing and painting were never "work," because I loved both, and each day was laced with lighthearted camaraderie, good humor, and Cesareo's brilliant insights into human behavior. Working with him was a master-class in psychology and the launchpad for learning how to think and work creatively.

Cesareo placed great value on working together. A magician once asked, "What is the most important thing for you?" He answered, "Togetherness." Later I asked Cesareo, "Why a magic company, specifically?" He answered, "Stage magic is a way to do theatre, which is a way to bring people together. That is what makes a true company – *togetherness* – doing things together."

Over time, it was brought to my attention that any value in my work existed not in the limited egocentrism of “I” or “Me,” but in the word “We,” because everything and everyone is related. Today, I define Magic as the movement from “I” to “We.”

Cesareo once said, “When we go to do magic, we go to do Beauty. That’s why we are on stage, to do Beauty. Where there is Beauty, there is also Goodness and Truth – the Eternal Triad.” Consequently, when one is True and Good and Beautiful *inside*, and in touch with one’s authentic, essential nature, what one manifests in performance (and in life) will be True and Good and Beautiful. For me, the practical application became, “Perform so others look good.”

So much more can be said. With age comes a greater understanding of my good fortune – of a “minor miracle” perhaps – that a brilliant psychologist with an abiding love for magic and theatre “took me under his wing.” Thankfully, he never gave up on me.

Forty-five years ago, Cesareo inscribed a company poster for me in Spanish. The English translation reads:

For Rick,
Even though the fruit
from the seeds you plant
may not always reach your hand,
always keep sowing.
Life is sowing,
sowing,
growing,
loving.
Marco the Magi
August 1980

Cesareo planted seeds. I can imagine him now, saying, “Rick, wake up! You have been given everything, and perhaps more, than you will ever need. Sow! Always keep sowing, and with no expectations. You may not be around for the harvest, but you keep at it. This is how you are to live your life.” I’ve taken this teaching to heart. It is a daunting mandate.

Cesareo died on March 24, 2012, at age seventy-nine. Because he nurtured both my inner and outer lives, I offer this expression of gratitude, initiated on February 20, 2025, forty-eight years after our first performance on that snowy Sunday afternoon.



Cesareo performing at the company’s Larcom Theatre in Beverly, MA circa 2005.



By Dale Salwak

PHOTOS COURTESY OF LEXA COREY (LMC),
THE ACADEMY OF MAGICAL ARTS

In the Year of the Rabbit 2023, the first-ever Chinese Spring Festival of Magic, held January 23–29 on the hallowed grounds of the Hollywood Magic Castle, was such a success that it returned January 15–21 in 2024, the Year of the Dragon, featuring acts from mainland China, Japan, South Korea, and Hong Kong. For 2025, the Year of the Snake, we again cast our net wide to present stellar talent from mainland China, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Japan.

My gratitude extends to the fifteen performers and their assistants, all of whom put great heart into every show; as well as 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 in bringing to fruition ideas that

we have been discussing since 2018; Gay Blackstone, Board Member Emeritus and member of the Academy of Magical Arts Board of Directors; General Manager Hervé Lévy, Entertainment Director Jack Goldfinger, point contact Melody Robusto, and volunteer Dana Lebental for their strong support of the project; the members and their guests who filled the Castle to capacity every evening; and Dr. Pedro Chan, who hosted a special luncheon for everyone at the Golden Dragon Restaurant in Chinatown.

As the accompanying photos capture, each carefully selected performer was polished and stylish, representative of the artistry, elegance, discipline, and seeming effortlessness that we have come to expect of Asia’s rich and magical talent.



Show Marquee



Dr. K

From the Palace of Mystery (Kenji Minemura as emcee, Jing Li Na [Lena], and Yang Xiao Lei [Yang Yang]) to the Close-Up Gallery (Shamon Lay, Rod Chow, and Ming Da); from the Parlour (Juliana Chen and David Chao) to the Peller Theater (Hiromasa Fukai and Akua Shin); from the Parlour brunch (Rod Chow) to the Library Bar (Dr. K [Kemin Zhang] with Oasis Hu) to the Friday lunch (David Yee), the entertaining and engaging work of these artists, filled with surprises and innovations, left a deep impression on everyone. I couldn't be prouder of them.

Kenji Minemura returned for the Saturday and Sunday brunch shows to showcase Wu

Xuehui (Layla, age fourteen), Yuhao Chen (Mick, age sixteen), and Yunzhe Hong (Kate, age fourteen), assisted by her sister, Yunhan (Phoenix), all of whom are exceptionally talented, creative performers with wide-open futures.

With her commanding, artistic touch, Xuehui presented with confidence and élan an advanced-level performance of the classic billiard balls, with quick color changes, four-to-one-to-four transformations, multiplying and vanishing, and sudden card productions and vanishes, climaxing with a costume change. Layla will be competing in manipulation at this summer's FISM competition in Italy, and we all wish her every



Dr. Pedro Chan hosts a special luncheon for performers and guests at Chinatown's Golden Dragon Restaurant.



Shamon Lay (Japan). Rod Chow (Canada). Ming Da (Singapore). Juliana Chen (China). Yunzhe Hong (Kate/China). Kenji Minemura (Japan). Yang Xiao Lei (Yang Yang/China). David Shao (China). Wu Xuehui (Layla/China). Hiromasa Fukai (Japan). Yuhao Chen (Mick/China). Akua Shin and Hiromasa Fukai (Japan).

success with this huge step in her flourishing career.

Yuhao began with a mirror that magically shattered into many pieces, one of which floated up to his outstretched hand. Highly skilled productions, vanishes, and transfor-

mations 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 and



Posing in front of Bruce Lee statue.

transformed into an astronaut as his table became, in a puff of smoke, a five-foot rocket-ship.

During Yunzhe's Wonderful Fish and Dragon, she produced live goldfish to convey an ancient legend. All kinds of fish are considered to contain a blessing. The point was clear: If the fish is so auspicious and magical, then the magician who can transform into a fish is the messenger who brings to everyone the blessings of life, prosperity, and happiness, "a seemingly endless supply of fish to fill this box," she said, "as a token of good fortune in the coming year."

Then as the accompanying music softened, Yunzhe invited a spectator from the audience and explained that fish have long been a sign of surplus and prosperity in the Chinese tradition. "So I shall now summon the spectator who held the rod and lowered it into a box. Fortune smiles upon us," said Yunzhe. "Our nets will be filled

to the brim in the coming months." A two-foot magical fish appeared, symbolic of comfort and wealth in the new year. "May we all enjoy bounty and blessing in the months ahead."

The events concluded with Ming Da's brilliant two-hour lecture featuring specialty routines developed during his career in restaurants, corporate functions, and private parties.

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 was that, once again, the door opened to younger performers whose talent and hard work had earned them the opportunity to appear on the Palace of Mystery stage.

What better way to begin the Year of the Snake, a time for personal growth, renewal, and wisdom? It was a refreshing start, setting a hope-filled precedence for a promising future of prosperity and good fortune as we plan for the next special event in 2026.

85th Annual Houdini Club Convention 2024

By Julie Sobanski



Julie Sobanski – president of The Houdini Club of Wisconsin.

In this day and age when club memberships are declining, it's truly amazing that Wisconsin's oldest independent magic organization is still around. The Houdini Club of Wisconsin celebrated its 85th annual magic convention in Milwaukee, meeting at the beautiful Hilton Garden Center Hotel for a day and a half of friends, magic, and fun.

Activities kicked off on Friday, September 20 with an invaluable lecture by William Pack, from Chicago, Illinois, on marketing magic to libraries. William makes his living as a magician and library presenter, performing more than one hundred library shows a year. The amazing detail he let us in on is that his marketing is strictly for adult education programs at the library. William is a fantastic storyteller who offers more than twenty "essential" programs on topics including magic, vaudeville, and the circus. Afterward, his lecture notes were available for purchase.



William Pack.

While the Houdini Club of Wisconsin is rather small, our enthusiasm for magic is big. Most dealers aren't interested in small club conventions because they don't garner big sales, but we managed to snag Don's Magic & Books, Magic Tricks Ltd, and Iowa City Magic. We also had a magic flea market, where members brought in vintage and gently used magic for sale. The end result was a packed dealer's room!

After a dinner break, the doors opened for the All-Star Magic Show with a great mix of performers featuring Zack Purcell, Isaiah Foster, and John Measner.

Color coordinated in his signature black and red, Rockford Illinois' Zack Purcell dazzled us with Rubik's Cube magic, a mystical silly sock prediction, and a bit of mentalism with a borrowed bill and its serial number.

Next up was Isaiah Foster from Lacrosse, Wisconsin. He is one of the busiest magicians in the summertime. Isaiah impressed us by finding a matching card and performing a unique effect dabbling in imagination and reality with food. The trick was all magic that partially took place in the spectator's mind. Super creative!

Last on the bill was John Measner, a premier magician from the Chicagoland area. He did not disappoint, performing colorful scarf productions, dove magic, and a grand final with doves that turned into his beloved poodle.

Our close-up contest concluded the



Zack Purcell.



Isaiah Foster.



John Measner.

evening with seven contestants: Daryl Rogers, Marshall Philyaw, Danny King, Mike Miller, Ben Ulin, Steve Daly, and Mikayla Oz.

For some people, the contests are the highlight of the convention. This year was a close match with a single point deciding the winner of the Bill Rae Close-Up Trophy, Steve Daly! Ben Ulin took home the Bob & Lynne Steffen Comedy Award.

Saturday, September 21 was a full day of magic. Conventions are often so jam-packed with activities that it's hard to catch your breath before the next activity starts. The Houdini Club of Wisconsin Convention was planned with enough downtime to allow convention attendees to mill about the dealer's room, socialize, swap tricks, and watch each other perform in the comfortable hotel lobby.

We started the day off right with breakfast, which was included in the price of registration! You didn't need to scramble to find something to eat before the first activity of the day, a lecture by the super talented Joan DuKore of Las Vegas. She charmed the con-

vention with her wit, effervescent personality, and multitasking skills. Joan is an expert at perfect card fans and a busy working magician who gave us an in-depth look at the ins and outs of being a strolling magician. She included tips for working with agents and party planners, never sugar coating the facts. Joan also showed us the actual effects in her working repertoire! Everyone was raving about her!

The stage and escape contests were up next. Being the Houdini Club of Wisconsin, we had to have an escape contest! Five people competed in the stage contest: Wayne Peterson, Jeremy Hawk, Danny King, Ben Ulin, and Mikayla Oz. Competition was stiff and the first and second place were once again decided by a single point.

The winner of the Harold Martin Stage Trophy was Danny King, performing a fabulous Spanish-inspired card manipulation act while blindfolded. Danny also took home the Jack lesser Costume Award for his red-and-black Spanish toreador costume.

Daryl Rogers, Chuck Arkin, and the Cor-



Steve Daly.



Danny King.



The Cornetts.

netts competed in the escape contest. Every act was great, but it was the Iowa-based Cornetts who won the Ben Berger Escape Trophy. They knocked it out of the park with a hilarious one-hundred-foot rope tie. Steve Daly sat in a



Joan DuKore.



Tim Wright.



Don Bursell.

chair and was joined by Ben Ulin, Danny King, Mikayla Oz, and Anthony Stockton. Two spectators tied them all in and they escaped.

The Ben Tallman Literary Award went to John Lewit for his fantastic account of his experience on the *Penn & Teller: Fool Us* show.

We wanted to keep up the relaxed pace, so we included a southwestern lunch buffet. We didn't want anyone to go anywhere because Tim Wright was our final lecture, and he did not disappoint. It was fun to see him in a close-up environment where he effortlessly shared his knuckle-busting moves.

Joan DuKore and Tim Wright performed in the close-up show. Both did an exceptional job.

After a dinner break, the doors opened for the Gala Magic Show with another wonderful mix of performers, featuring Joan DuKore, Don Bursell, and Tim Wright.

Joan captivated everyone with her bubbly personality, while her simple props – an egg bag and a deck of cards – held us spellbound. Joan proved that the magic isn't in the props you use, it's in the magician.

Don Bursell gets the "I Don't Believe He Did That" award. He is a comedian and juggler who rides a unicycle. Our set-up was a typical banquet-style stage about a foot and a half off the floor. However, the ceiling was low. When he brought out the big unicycle, we thought there was no way he could ride it under such a low ceiling. But somehow he did it, with an inch above his head to spare!

Closing out the show was Tim Wright,

who did his famous Abbott Pitch. For magicians, this was a treat! The stage was filled with Abbott's props and Tim was the Southern-style magician trying to sell us magic by performing with these seldom-seen props (which many of us have drooled over in the Abbott's Magic catalogs). His effortless performance and humor had us in stitches!

The AbraCORNdabra crew of Steve Daly and Mikayla Oz presented me with a wonderful, unexpected plaque to congratulate us for putting on a great convention.

We finished with an awards ceremony followed by cake and ice cream. My dad Jim Sobanski helped at the registration desk and with public ticket sales. It was also his eighty-fifth birthday, so everyone sang Happy Birthday. It was nice that my "Magic Family" welcomed and included him in the celebration.



Julie with plaque.



Jim Sobanski.

Keep track of what the Houdini Club is doing by visiting our Houdini Club of Wisconsin Official Facebook page and our website at www.houdiniclubofwisconsin.com. We are planning our next convention for September. Hope to see you there!

Ring 93 (Dubuque, Iowa) Broken Wand and Celebration of Life

This year, Ring 93 (Dubuque, Iowa) lost one of its members: magician, poet, and good friend to all Rob Gomoll. Rob was remembered by Ring members for his kindness and inspiration. He was passionate about life in general and magic in particular. Ring members praised his enthusiasm and kindness, citing his devotion to the Ring and his profound influence on aspiring as well as accomplished magicians.

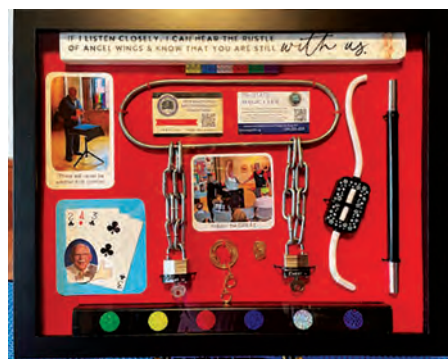
Rob was a public-school teacher in Dubuque and taught at the University of Dubuque. He was “a gifted educator,” in the words of those who knew him. He had the ability to lift people up with his joy for all things magical, mentoring those who wanted to be better magicians with sensitivity and insight. He was a “cheerleader” who had the ability “to make the ordinary, extraordinary.”

Readers of *The Linking Ring* have had the pleasure to read his monthly poems. And Ring members noted that he began every meeting with both a song that he wrote and his signature rhyming couplets. He was prolific, writing poems not just about magic, but also for weddings, the passing of loved ones, and even visiting lecturers.

To commemorate his dear friend and colleague, Bob Beardsley assembled a binder of Rob’s verses as a gift to Rob’s widow and created a shadow box containing items of significance from Rob’s life. There will never be another like him. He will surely be missed. *Bob Beardsley*



The notebook contains more than 120 pages of poems Rob Gomoll wrote for the club on nearly every topic possible.



A shadow box to commemorate Rob, which contains: a head shot of Rob giving a thumbs up after successfully performing his favorite effect “Chase the Ace” (lower left); a chain escape he used in club shows; his I.B.M. membership card and Ring 93 business card; and a jumbo hot rod that he used when he was the emcee at meetings and shows.

Ring 115 of Singapore's MegaJam 2024: A Celebration of Magic and Cardistry

On 16 November 2024, I.B.M. Ring 115 (Singapore) proudly partnered with MegaJam for its third and most exciting edition yet. Held at the House of Offline in Singapore, the event welcomed ninety-three participants, comprising magicians and cardists from Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Australia, and Japan.

This year's MegaJam featured dealer booths from renowned local and international magic and cardistry companies, creating an engaging marketplace for enthusiasts to explore. The event's centrepiece was a vibrant jamming session, where participants gathered around tables to perform, exchange ideas, and forge lasting connections.

The highlight of MegaJam 2024 was the appearance of two special guests: Patrick Kun, the celebrated magic superstar from Thailand, and Samuel Pratt, a rising card legend from New Zealand. Patrick Kun wowed attendees with an exclusive live performance, while Samuel Pratt debuted a cardistry video featuring the Overplay deck, a custom-designed pack of playing cards printed exclusively for the event by Bacon Magic in China.



Thailand's celebrity magician Patrick Kun performed his inimitable brand of magic to an enthusiastic audience of cardicians and magicians.

The day concluded with a grand lucky draw, offering prizes generously sponsored by fourteen companies, including Murphy's Magic, Vanishing Inc., Art of Play, Ellusionist, and Hanson Chien Productions. Attendees also received goodie bags filled with premium merchandise from these sponsors, adding to the excitement.

MegaJam 2024 not only celebrated the artistry of magic and cards, but also highlighted the camaraderie and innovation within the community. With the support of I.B.M. Ring 115, the event showcased the vibrancy of local magic while reinforcing Ring 115's reputation as a hub for nurturing young talents.



MegaJam 2024.

The overwhelming energy and enthusiasm of the day ensured MegaJam 2024's success, setting a high standard for future events and further strengthening the bond between magicians and cardists worldwide.

Harapan Ong

Singapore's Ring 115 Welcomes Patrick Kun and Avi Yap

On 15 November, we held our monthly meeting with Patrick Kun from Thailand and Singapore's Avi Yap. With a healthy turnout of thirty-eight members and guests, host En-

rico Varella handed the floor to member Harapan Ong, author of *Principia*, who introduced Patrick Kun.

Kun, a "Wild Card Show" choice for



(l to r): Patrick Kun generously shares his television experiences. • Magicians are gobsmacked by Avi's coin sleight-of-hand prowess. • Avi Yap shares his "Empty Hands Theory" of magic. • Magicians mime the vanish of a coin, and its believability in performance.

America's *Got Talent* season sixteen, presented a short and engaging lecture on how to perform for television. Using PowerPoint slides and video snippets, he gave a brief treatise on how he would progressively script his effects for television and on Instagram. We learned how important it is to clearly instruct and direct both crew and audience. Accompanying Kun was Tada "Tadathepadthai," the co-writer/partner-magician for comedy-magician "Charles the French."

After a twenty-minute break, which saw an enthusiastic crowd around Patrick who performed his magic creations (and witnessed brisk sales), Tommy Kian introduced Avi Yap. Avi Yap presented his lecture on coin magic. He gave a short lecture on his "Empty Hands Theory," and demonstrated how this idea could be presented in performance. He began with a review of how we

could pass a coin from one hand to another with the Classic Palm, and he noted several in the audience who learned the method taught by David Roth. A student of David Roth, Avi is recognized among his peers including Chris Kenner and Homer Liwag who had him perform for David Copperfield after one of his shows in Las Vegas.

Prior to the lecture, Avi held a masterclass for our Ring. He taught us his signature effects "Monarch" (coin assembly with back-fire assembly), "Instant Travels," "Winged Silver," "OHC Vanish," "Contact Change," "Three Coin Monte," and "Thread." The latter is his rendition of Troy Hoosier's "A Charming Chinese Challenge," whose instruction covers more than one-third of his lecture notes. Avi possesses deadly chops with coins, and it is on par with his photographic skills.

Enrico Varella

A Magical Farewell: Ring 130 (Jacksonville, Florida) Tribute Show Honors Beloved First Coast Performer

Members of I.B.M. Ring 130 in Jacksonville, Florida recently came together for an unforgettable evening to honor the life and legacy of Paul Cummins, a cherished member of the magic community. While Paul passed in 2020, he never had a service. His wife, Kakie, recently moved into a retirement home where the tribute was held. The tribute show, held at Sunrise of Jacksonville on December 18, 2024, was a celebratory event bringing together performers,

family, friends, and fans to commemorate a life dedicated to wonder and illusion.

Hosted by Chris "TADAD" Sharp, the evening began with some heartfelt words about Paul's contributions to the art of magic. He set the tone with humor, warmth, and a touch of the theatrical flair that the honoree was known for. "Tonight, we don't just mourn a loss," Chris said, "we celebrate the magic Paul brought into our lives and shared across the world."



(l to r): Ring 130 President Todd “Doctor Toddellini” Gwynn. • Ring 130 Member Keith Gwaltney. • Ring 130 Member Robert Sands. • Ring 130 Secretary Chris “TADAD” Sharp.

The show featured three exceptional performers each bringing their unique style to the stage. While a tribute show, it was not just modified “tribute” performances of Paul’s work. It was great to see a variety of magic, stunts, and interaction with Kakie’s new neighbors and friends.



(l to r): Keith Gwaltney, Robert Sands, Kakie Cummings, and Chris Sharp.

First up was Ring 130’s President, Todd Gwynn, who showcased the comedic talent of his character “Doctor Toddellini.” Using the audience to randomly select a thought-of card, his powers of mindreading proved his predictions to be correct. Kakie was the first audience participant, revealing the final selection of a “Chicago Kicker” routine.

Next, Keith Gwaltney literally knocked our socks off with a rendition of “Socks.” He involved the children in the audience with a unique sponge ball routine to ensure they weren’t left out, which delighted all attendees. He added a touch of special messaging into his act, reminding people how we are

brought together, not just tonight, but in all our daily activities.

Paul and Kakie’s neighbors of eighteen years, Keith and Rebecca, helped coordinate the event. Rebecca couldn’t attend, but Keith did, and he offered a fantastic story to the group about his children meeting Paul for the first time. They were elated to having met a real-life magician. Of course, that was impossible, surely the kids meant “musician.” Then, for the next several months, they went unaware knowing what we all know, that Paul was, in fact, a magician. And a great one at that.

The final act of the evening was Robert Sands, who delivered a fantastic performance teaching an audience member a trick. Their participation was highlighted with smiles and ended up with a rabbit production. You could almost feel the clocks wind back and everyone immediately turned into a giddy child, wanting to hold and pet the cute animal. The night’s theme was about connection, and this really brought everyone together. The emotional core of the evening came when Paul’s spouse, Kakie, took the stage alongside other family members and expressed gratitude to the performers and audience for keeping Paul’s spirit alive. We thanked Kakie with a single rose for inviting us to be her guests and perform but emphasized that she was truly the guest of honor for the night. We agreed it was mutual honor, and everyone had a blast. So, with a shared wink and a nod, the evening concluded.

Chris Sharp

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

Ring 284 (Fort Walton Beach, Florida) Open House

Ring 284 (Fort Walton Beach, Florida) hosted an Open House format meeting to raise community awareness and spur member recruiting. In spite of dreadful weather, we wound up with about a dozen guests for an evening of magic.

Ring President and I.B.M. Executive Committee Member Jeff Sobel opened the evening with a welcome to the crowd and a goals-based lesson built around “The Profes-

sor’s Nightmare.” Ron Hudspeth performed Engblom’s “Invisible Camera,” transitioning to Parr’s “Cue Test” and continued with his “ParaNorman” card effect done with postcards and table stands and finished the set getting the audience fully involved with an adaptation of Aragon’s “Love Ritual.” Jason Simonds closed the show with Thomas’ “Lie to Me,” Marlo’s “A Startling Climax,” and Carlyle’s “Homing Card.” *Ron Hudspeth*



(left): Ring 284's Corresponding Secretary Ron Hudspeth (standing) performing Aragon's "Love Ritual." (right): Jason Simonds (standing) performs at the Ring 284 Open House 2024.

Submitting Ring Events

News of your Ring Events published in *The Linking Ring* lets magicians around the world know about your Ring's activities and gives members international exposure.

How to submit news of your Ring's special activities? Submit your article as a Microsoft Word document, and send photos as medium- to high-resolution jpegs. Please do *not* embed your photographs in a Word document. Attach them as separate jpegs or in a Zip or Stuffit file. *Photos embedded in Word documents cannot be used.* We recommend taking lots of pictures and submitting *only* your very best photos.

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 Dr. Steven Schlanger at ringreports@magician.org. Type "Ring Event" as the e-mail subject.

Please note: Write-ups of your monthly Ring meetings are considered Ring Reports and should also be e-mailed to Dr. Steven Schlanger at RingReports@magician.org.

The Georgia Magnets

By Roy Field

The beautiful State of Georgia in the United States is famous for many things: its seven natural wonders, the birthplace of Martin Luther King Jr., the home of President Jimmy Carter, the holiday home and recuperation centre of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, and of course, Coca Cola!

For magicians and others interested in “special” acts, Georgia has another fame, one that has lasted 142 years. Even now in the twenty-first century, the addition of a “Georgia Magnet” on the bill of a European magic show 4,000 miles away, can cause wonder.

It was on the stage of the Beacon Arts Centre theatre in Greenock, Scotland, in 2017, that the audience was treated to a nineteenth-century music hall and sideshow phenomenon with a modern twist. Those of us in the Gala Show audience at the I.B.M. British Ring magic convention will remember the appearance of an attractive, slightly built young lady in a leopard skin leotard. She told the audience about a nineteenth-century American performer, Annie Abbott, who was billed as the “Georgia Magnet,” and then proceeded to invite two well-built men onto the stage to assist her. She asked them each to lift her, which due to her slight build they were able to do with ease. She then concentrated and asked them to repeat it. Try as hard as they could, they now found it impossible to lift. It was if a strong magnet was keeping her on the ground. The young lady was **Katie Trickett**, reminding us of a “spesh” act not seen for many years.

For the original “Georgia Magnet,” we have to return to the late nineteenth century. **Lulu (“Lula”) Hurst** was born in the state of Georgia in 1869 and took the name of the

state for her stage name “The Georgia Wonder.” She began performing in her early teens, specialising in feats of seemingly great strength. The wonders of “new-fangled” electricity were being revealed in the popular press of the time and Lulu capitalised on this by indicating that her remarkable powers had come about after being exposed to an electrical storm. Her act involved having a number of men hold an object, such as a chair or a pole, and then moving the men and object with an apparently light touch. Her performances were very popular in the early 1880s not only in the South but as far north as New York and Chicago. She retired after performing only for two years and in a later autobiography revealed that her “supernatural powers” were really due to force deflection. She married and lived on until 1950.



After witnessing Lulu performing as the “Georgia Wonder,” another girl from Georgia developed her own version. Dixie Anne Jarrett, born in 1861, is better remembered by her stage name **Annie Abbott** and her act titled *The Georgia Magnet*. Her act, like Lulu’s, involved displacing objects held securely by one or two men, but she was also

especially noted for the lift test as performed by Katie at Greenock. She married young, but her husband, a United States Deputy Marshall, was shot and killed. She had to bring up three children on her own and, as the sole earner, had to develop a popular and profitable act. She was very successful and had a much longer career than Lulu Hurst, although she died in 1915 aged only fifty-four. Annie was good at self-promotion and claimed that her “powers” caused severe headaches, putting advertisements for some of her “cures” in many newspapers. Much pseudo-science was written about her act in the media, but when reporters did get it more or less right, her popularity was undiminished. Capitalising on her popularity, other women toured under the name “Annie Abbott” without her permission – rather unethical acts.

Annie’s fame soon spread out of Georgia and she had extensive tours in the US, including theatres in New York. In 1890 she travelled to Europe for a two-year tour, and in 1891 appeared to general acclaim in London. Her performances lasted for six weeks at the Alhambra Theatre and Music Hall in

Leicester Square. She also appeared by request before Queen Victoria and the Prince of Wales. Further research would be needed to discover whether she toured elsewhere in the United Kingdom, but in France she certainly appeared in the Casino de Paris before returning to America.



Alhambra Theatre, London.

One of Annie’s notable routines involved her holding a cane horizontally in front of herself whilst burly men attempted to dislodge her by pushing the cane. An 1890 description in the press explains how they failed:

“Men tugged till their eyes bulged and they were red and blue in the face, but she remained smiling and immovable as a block of buildings.”





Annie Abbott.

Annie and other copy-cat “Georgia Magnets” were somewhat controversial because they raised questions about both the paranormal and women’s strength abilities. Gender roles for women at the time did not include the ability to lift and defeat men. It was important for the acts to be successful that the women be small and slight so that their strength was seen to be even more remarkable. Lulu Hurst was actually of medium height at 5’6 (1.67 meters) and weighed 120 pounds (54.4 kilograms), whilst Annie Abbott was described as “small and petite” and weighed only 100 pounds (45.3 kilograms). It was also important that the costumes worn were revealing enough to prove there were no “hidden appliances.” This must have been difficult at the height of the magnet popularity circa 1883-1915. Lulu Hurst is described as wearing “short skirts and the calves of her legs were exposed and her arms bare.” This must have seemed scandalous and somewhat titillating in rural Georgia in the 1880s! Annie, as can be seen in a famous poster, wore an elegant Edwardian gown to accentuate her slim figure. Katie Trickett, who operates in contemporary times as the



Katie Trickett in Greenock, Scotland.

“Yorkshire Magnet,” works in a leotard – certainly no hiding of appliances with this costume.

Many of the “Georgia Magnets” operating at the same time as Annie’s fame and later, caused annoyance with some of their claims. Like Lulu Hurst originally, they often declared they possessed remarkable magnetic and electric powers to perform their feats. In 1899, E.W. Bunton-Wright, a celebrated martial arts expert known for his book *How to Pose as a Strong Man*, explained it to his readers. It was all, he said, “balance and leverage as applied to the human anatomy.” However right he was, audiences loved the more dramatic explanations, especially the flashing lights and lightening when “magnets” appeared in the then-popular “electric shows.” After Annie’s death in 1915, the shows moved from the theatres to the fringes of show business and became a staple of fairground sideshows. In turn, these sideshows also declined, although there is now something of a comeback.

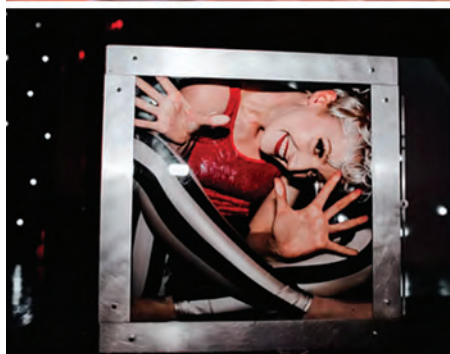
The concept of delicate females performing male feats of strength has always had appeal. Many readers will remember **Joan Rhodes**, of the UK variety circuit, bending steel bars and tearing up telephone directories. Joan was a genuine strong woman, albeit a glamorous blonde, but she also would have been aware of “balance and leverage.” There is a film sequence of Joan in the centre of a rope tug of war with men

trying to pull her over – they cannot. Whether it is genuine strength or using muscle deflection techniques is difficult to know, but the effect on an audience is the same.

In the twenty-first century US, **Sophie Evans**, working with the Pop Haydn Magic Show as “Tesla Girl,” performs the lift test and purports to use electricity rather like her nineteenth-century predecessors. She stands on a metal sheet, sparks fly, and the sheet becomes a “magnet”! Dr. Walford Bodie, the early twentieth-century showman and “Electric Wizard of the North,” would have recognised this. **Sisuepahn Phila** can be seen on YouTube and also on network American television. Although she guests on various mainstream shows, she also does street magic and dresses accordingly. For example, she visits muscle beaches in Los Angeles and gets the “beefcakes” to try and lift her.

The act always works better when the “magnet” is small and petite, but it can be effective even with a larger person, even male. American film star and magician John Calvert used to demonstrate his ability to resist movement in his shows in a similar manner to the “magnets.” I saw him do this when he was well into his nineties!

Katie Trickett, like many of her predecessors, has talents other than her “magnet” act. She describes herself also as an “enterologist” who can squeeze into an 18-inch (45-centimeter) glass cube box as well as through the centre of an unstrung tennis racket. These old time “spesh” acts are still good to see even now, and it is pleasing that younger performers like Katie, Sophie, and Sisuepahn appear on stages throughout the UK, Europe, and US. We still wonder at them as our predecessors did.



*Top: Sophie Evans as Tesla Girl
Center: Katie in 18 inch cube.
Bottom: Roy Field and Katie Trickett.*



From Our UK Correspondent

BRIAN LEAD

As UK correspondent, I guess my job is to report on happenings on my side of the pond without making the references too parochial to be of interest to an international readership.

In this context, magic played a significant part in the opening up of Bradford as the UK's City of Culture for 2025. A different city is chosen to receive this high-profile accolade every four years. Steven Frayne, "local lad made good," but also well-known beyond these shores as the performer formerly known as Dynamo, spoke lovingly about his hometown and his childhood there. Junior magician Dorian, performing as a schoolboy version of Dynamo accompanied by a voice-over, replicated one of his favourite tricks – the vanishing of a jumbo card chosen by the viewer from a set of five. Steven had incorporated this routine into his stage show, with his grandmother presenting it on screen. On this occasion, the young version of Dynamo then passed through a doorway to emerge as the adult Dynamo; a neat and well-timed illusion with more than a touch of emotion.

Also receiving an honourable mention was Sooty, whose creator, Harry Corbett, was born and lived in Bradford. Both Sooty

and Dynamo were depicted in some award-winning artwork. The bear hand-puppet Sooty, who has a keen interest in performing magic, has been a UK phenomenon for over three-quarters of a century, with three different human companions. His current "right hand man" is former British Ring President Richard Cadell.



Richard Cadell with the Sooty gang.

In the same week, Sooty (who, like Teller, never speaks) was the guest on BBC Radio



Steven Frayne/Dynamo.



Magic-inspired artwork.

4's *Rewinder* programme, the controversial subject of which was his girlfriend, Soo the panda. Using an interview from the *Home This Afternoon* series broadcast in 1964, we were reminded that Sooty the magic bear had been "found" by Harry in Paul Clive's magic and joke shop on Blackpool's North Pier in 1948, and bought for seven shillings and six pence. A BBC television producer had seen Harry performing with the bear hand puppet, and invited him to take part in the *Talent Night* programme, which was a forerunner of talent shows such as *Britain's Got Talent*. From this, Harry was offered a short series of six TV shows, but warned not to give up his lucrative day job as an engineer. He had to make that difficult choice, however, when his boss refused permission for him to take time off to record the shows. The first *Sooty Show* was aired on January 16th, 1955, when viewers were invited into the little bear's magic shop.

The tabloid rumours about Soo the panda began in 1965, when it was suggested that Sooty, who already had a canine pal called Sweep, should also have a girlfriend who would appeal to girls. A letter from the Head of North Regional Programmes, Graham D Miller, dated 28 April that year, spoke critically of the "girlfriend campaign" which was being waged in the national press. It began with "My dear Harry..." but went on to say: "I'm afraid all of us at the BBC are becoming increasingly puzzled and exasperated." It was felt that, although the publicity was no doubt helpful to Harry, this came at the expense of the BBC. It was no doubt a "good giggle," but it had led to the BBC being "pilloried as a prudish aunt," and they would have to "review the situation," with all that implied. Harry immediately contacted the *Daily Mail*, which had promoted the story, and it was dropped.

Interestingly, it was Trevor Hill, the producer credited with making Sooty, Sweep and Harry into celebrities, who didn't approve of the idea of introducing a new female character, but the Director General was in favour and Soo was eventually brought in, voiced initially by Harry's wife, Marjorie.

Elsewhere in the UK, towards the end of last year came the sad news that, on Saturday, November 9, the Tam Shepherds magic and joke shop in Glasgow had closed its doors for the last time, marking the end of an era.

Vinny Sagoo, the proprietor of Neo Magic who was brought up in the city, remarked in his newsletter: "This iconic shop, owned by the late, great Roy Walton, was more than just a place to buy magic; it was a true haven for enthusiasts like me.

"During the 1980s and 90s, long before the internet and smartphones, Tam Shepherds was my go-to spot. I spent countless hours there, eagerly picking up the latest and greatest effects, always inspired by Roy's exceptional kindness and his passion for the craft.

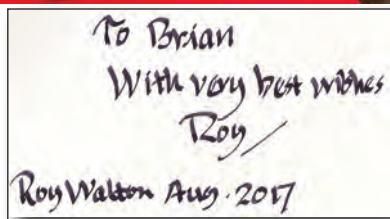


Tam Shepherds, Glasgow.

"Roy was a pleasure to know, always welcoming, patient, and ready with expert advice. His dedication to magic and the genuine warmth he shared with customers is missed dearly. For so many of us, Tam Shepherds was more than a shop; it was a

foundational part of our lives, and Roy's legacy of magic and generosity will live on in our memories."

I paid a visit a few years ago, and although I have little enthusiasm for close-up card magic I bought Roy's *Complete Walton* Vol 2, which he signed for me using his immaculate, copperplate calligraphy.



Roy Walton, with signature.

Although Tam Shepherds will no longer have a physical presence on Queen Street, the intention is for it to remain online, selling the same familiar range of magic, jokes, and fancy-dress items.

There was quite a bit of magic on television in the UK over the Christmas period, including a whole evening of Tommy Cooper, comprising two one-hour Christmas specials and a ninety-minute *Tommy Cooper Unseen* programme which included clips from his appearances in the USA not previously aired over here. One particular fan was

David Frost, who had regular shows in both countries, commuting weekly.

In one popular routine, Tommy got his hand stuck in a vase and, un-noticed in those days before re-plays, when he smashed it off with a hammer he sustained a nasty cut. In a subsequent shot a streak of blood could be seen in close-up, as he handled a sliding die-box.

Tommy was one of the very few performers to be honoured with a caricature on a British postage stamp.



Tommy Cooper postage stamp.

One especially interesting and poignant item was his appearance on the Royal Command Performance of 1977, when he performed for the Queen the routine which he would be doing seven years later when he died on stage, and on live television, pulling a series of increasingly unlikely items through a gap in the curtains as though they were appearing from his outsized magic cloak.

One thing which did strike me, however, was Tommy's blatant exposure of established effects for a very easy laugh. He would, for example, execute the vanishing bowl-on-tray to receive a round of applause, then immediately turn the tray round to reveal the bowl stuck to it as a "kicker" to gain a laugh and double response. He did the same with Ken Brooke's sliding pips.

On the other hand, Penn and Teller, the self-styled "bad boys of magic" who were also about to appear on the Royal Command show, purported to reveal the working of the classic cups and balls on morning television in their notorious "exposure" using transparent cups, but only managed to make it look even more impossible. Magicians have nothing to fear.

Did You Know?

By Joe Hernandez



Bess Houdini had a younger sister named Stella, who lived in the picturesque state of Connecticut. Tragically, Stella's life was cut short at a youthful age, leaving behind a precious little daughter, a sweet girl named Trixie, who was only three when she was diagnosed with polio. This devastating illness profoundly affected her early childhood and the trajectory of her young life.

Following Stella's passing, Bess's other sister, Marie, took on the remarkable and challenging role of guardian, raising the girl from the tender age of seven. Marie devoted herself to ensuring the girl had a loving home, even as the family faced significant financial hardships due to the medical expenses.

Among those who took a keen interest in the young girl's well-being was her uncle, Houdini. He was deeply concerned about his niece's health. His mission was to find a cure and embark on an extensive European journey searching for the best medical treatments. This endeavor was not only financially taxing, consuming a sizable portion of Houdini's resources, but it also took a heavy emotional toll on the entire family, as each failed attempt was a stark reminder of the girl's plight.

Despite the challenges she faced due to her illness, the little girl displayed an inspiring spirit and resilience. As she grew older, she fell head over heels in love with a charming and handsome young man named Phil, a relationship that blossomed with sincerity and devotion. They decided to marry within weeks of meeting, and in a generous gesture of love and support, Houdini orchestrated and covered the expenses for their wedding. The event was beautifully planned, including the ceremony and a delightful breakfast, lunch, and dinner following the vows. It was filled with laughter and joy, symbolizing hope despite the adversities they all faced.

Joseph Balsamo, aka Count Cagliostro, claimed to make older women young again and founded a mysterious lodge where members would learn how to live for five thousand years.

Professor Hoffman wrote about many subjects. Before writing about magic, his first published works were manuals on Indian law, which he wrote under his name Angelo J. Lewis.

Magician and author Jean Hugard's real name was John Gerard Rodney Boyce.

Joe Hernandez is the author of *Conjurer's Wisdom (Vol. 1 & 2)*, *Phonetastic*, *Magic Babylon*, *Houdini: The Ultimate Trivia Compendium*, and the just-released *The Foolosophy of Conjuring*, of which excerpts are taken for this column. Books can be purchased at www.amazon.com.



A Portrait of the Professional

DALE SALWAK

Retiring?

Work is one of life's great pleasures. – Craig Raine

*If you do follow your bliss, you put yourself on a kind of track
that has been there all the while waiting for you,
and the life you ought to be living
is the one you are living. – Joseph Campbell*

The professional is never quite sure what to say when a well-meaning friend inquires, “So, when are you retiring?”

Unsure what to say because, first, he (or she) had never thought of asking anyone else this deeply personal question and, second, he is not sure why it is being asked.

Is it just to make conversation? Is the inquirer thinking about his own far-off or perhaps soon-to-come retirement? Is he envious of the pro's devotion to work? Has the theatrical experience become so routine that he cannot imagine how anyone could find it compellingly pleasurable? Or is it something else?

To be fair, barring catastrophic illness or insurmountable family responsibilities, some performers leave simply because they want to escape the mad rush of the frenetic world and do something else (read Pico Iyer's *The Art of Stillness*); or they feel used up, or have grown so disenchanted with performing in general, so tired of trying, that they cannot continue.

But if they love their work, as most pros do, then no matter how much they give to it, or how old they are, there's always more to offer and more to discover. Because they love their work, it's as if they do no work at all.

With an incredible sense of purpose, the peerless John Calvert (see the Rev. William

Rauscher's *John Calvert: Magic and Adventures Around the World*), is the ideal model.

After a lifetime of performing, at one hundred he headlined at London's Palladium. “I feel every bit as enthusiastic about my art,” he said, “as I did in previous decades.” He continued performing and touring well past his century milestone before his passing on September 27, 2013, at the age of one hundred two.

Examples are countless of those who, like John, dearly loved to stay engaged. Billy McComb and Don Lawton immediately come to mind as both performers and hosts at the Magic Castle until weeks before their passing. Charlie Miller, Don Alan, and Mark Wilson, to name but three more, stayed active in so many ways; and, of course, creative genius Milt Larsen: to the end of his ninety-two years his sharp imagination was always looking ahead.

All of them found early in life what Joseph Campbell called their “bliss” – what they felt excited and passionate about (something most pros are conscious of). The more they were told that they couldn't do something, the more they believed they could. They loved life and appreciated all they had going.

And so, assuming that the questioner wants only a simple answer, the pro devises a respectful response, such as: “Retire from what?”



The peerless John Calvert continued performing and touring well past his one hundredth birthday.

PHOTO BY DELAYNA EARLEY

Reactions are as interesting as the question. Some faces go blank. Others say, “Oh, I see your point.” A few, baffled, laugh and quickly change the subject.

But if someone were to ask for an elaboration, the long version comes easily to mind, because performing is so central not just to what pros do but to who they are.

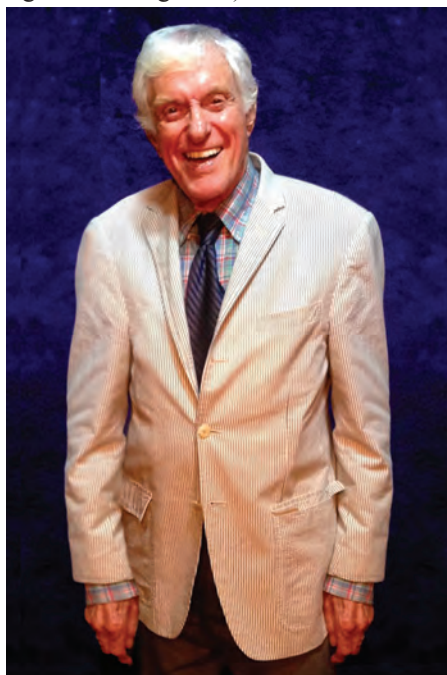
There’s the predictable side: the constant infusion of new ideas from reading, preparation and audience interactions all dance memorably together while feeding the performance and the performer.

Along with that, it is stimulating to be among talented and challenging colleagues, into whose raw enthusiasm pros tap: not to be derivative or stymied, but to be inspired. It’s rewarding, to be sure, but it’s also energizing; and most pros welcome the chance to influence fellow performers’ lives for the better.

Thus many continue to perform for the most honest of reasons: the sometimes daunting but always stimulating opportunities to explore the art that matters so much to them and, hopefully, to their audience.

In a lighthearted way this is the message of Dick Van Dyke’s bestselling memoir, *Keep Moving: And Other Tips and Truths About*

Aging, written when he was close to ninety (he’s now approaching one hundred with no signs of slowing down).



Dick Van Dyke loves magic and is a frequent visitor to the Magic Castle.

Among his achievements, he has starred in *Mary Poppins*, *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, *The Dick Van Dyke Show* and *Diagnosis Murder*; received five Emmy awards, a Tony, and a Grammy; and in 2013 the Screen Actors Guild Life Achievement Award.

As a younger man, he lacked confidence, the confidence that comes with experience. "I worried and stressed way more than I should have. Now I see that worrying and stressing never helped accomplish anything. It was only when I let myself go and had fun that the magic happened – and continues to happen."

If feeling feisty, pros might add that there lies within a talent and a strong appetite to develop and use it. With hard work, discipline, good fortune and the right guides, they can continue to grow unswervingly in the direction of that talent for as long as they choose. Pros don't want to render irrelevant whatever skill they have by stepping away from the arena where they have thrived for decades.

Yet, those who have performed for so long are acutely aware of the passage of time (something many of the young comfortably ignore or take for granted). We cannot study history, with its minute and varied examination of the human soul and psyche, and not understand that our powers are ultimately limited.

"Anyone who loves accomplishment," wrote poet Donald Hall in his wonderfully readable *Life Work*, "lives by the clock." When he came face to face with his own mortality halfway through writing this book, he

dwelt on his understandable obsession with work and its ultimate consolation. "[The possibility of] death," he wrote, "is a powerful stimulus to work. *Get done what you can.*"

So the final part of the pro's answer might be, when that chastening day arrives and change beckons the pro more strongly than all these gifts of performing; when he no longer is able to live up to the standards that he has set for himself; when the audience doesn't show up – then ruefully, but without resentment or complaint, he will know a calm acceptance.

For the time being, however, to retire from the stage and stop growing runs counter to every human instinct. Performing is for most pros a life that certainly seems to work some age-defying magic.

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.



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Hosting a Magic Convention

Part Five: Facing the Lineup

By Johnny New York

Ring 22 – The Detroit Magic Club – describes their journey as they prepare to host Michigan Magic Day 2025 – an annual major magic convention to be held on May 17, 2025.



Ring 22's two youngest members, Lincoln Stone and Drew Campbell (with Ring President Johnny New York), enjoy applause after a performance at the February meeting.

The devil may be in the details, but the core of a successful convention is its performers, lecturers, and dealers. With Ring 22's Michigan Magic Day Convention just around the corner, our steering committee, club members, and volunteers are busy taking care of the little things – ordering lanyards, printing tickets, designing flyers, tracking registration, making hotel arrangements, and paying the bills – all very important and necessary tasks to ensure a successful event.

The main ingredient, however, is our convention's lineup. Thanks to the solid financial management of our club treasurer, Robert Purcell, we've put together a real whopper at a price that can't be refused! Tickets are

priced at only \$95 per person, which covers a full day of activities, a commemorative book, a nice lunch, and an amazing lineup of performers and lecturers featuring top-drawer, world-class magicians: Steve Valentine, David Parr, Howard Mincone, Lady Sarah and Keith Fields, Paul Richards, and Ben Barnes. How can we go wrong? We also made sure to cover all the bases with an historic overview and presentation featuring noted historians and magicians Bill Kalush and Michael Mode, as well as some of the very best magicians in Michigan, including Josh Wilde, Alexander the Magician, George Tait, Dreygon, and Ring 22's Vice President Fred Lenter. We've even made room for

(continued on page 108)

Youth Trivia Contest



March's Question: In the first half of the 1900s, someone first performed an effect during which the conjuror seemed to be aware of what was going to appear in the news, long before the events occurred. *What do we call this, and who is generally credited with originating this effect?*

Answers must be postmarked by April 20, 2025.

December's Question was: A magic show once stopped traffic on one of the world's most important bridges. *What was the show?*

A couple of members did send us the correct answer to this month's question. Unfortunately, neither of them was still a Youth member – not by a long shot. Several *actual* Youth members also submitted answers, but unfortunately, none of them responded with the correct answer. Here's what we were hoping that you'd uncover ...

This is a small piece of the story about one of the strangest fates ever to befall a magic show.

One of the greatest jazz clubs ever to exist was in San Francisco, California. It was named *Earthquake McGoon's*, after a character in the *Li'l Abner* comic strip. This legendary establishment occupied four different locations over its twenty-four years, beginning in 1960. In 1962, *Earthquake McGoon's* moved from its original spot a few hundred feet from San Francisco Bay at 99 Broadway. This second location – the one that's relevant to our discussion – was a half-mile walk away, at 630 Clay Street. The new *Earthquake McGoon's* was near Chinatown, and right across the street from the future site of the Transamerica Pyramid. A few years later, *The Magic Cellar* opened in the basement of *Earthquake McGoon's* on Clay Street. They served beverages, and featured conjurors who performed close-up and plat-

form-stage magic. On occasion, snacks and light meals were made available – because California's Alcoholic Beverage Control Board ruled that minors could only enter nightclubs where food was served.

The fact that The Magic Cellar ever existed in the basement of a jazz joint was a bit of a happy accident. Earthquake McGoon's was owned and operated by a musician named Turk Murphy, and the Turk Murphy Band was the house band. Pete Clute, the piano player in the Turk Murphy Band, had stumbled upon the left behind illusions, stacks of equipment, boxes of advertising materials, cases, costumes, and correspondence from an almost-forgotten magic show. It was the touring show of the late Charles Joseph Carter – "Carter the Great" – from the early 1900s. This show had traveled the globe at least eight times during the first four decades of the last century. When Carter died, the stuff bounced from one storage location to another, unused and unappreciated, for more than three decades.

Pete Clute suggested to Turk Murphy that the vacant basement at 630 Clay Street would make an ideal spot for an additional entertainment venue; a nightclub with a magical theme. And, it just so happened that Pete already had some pretty impressive, authentic magical stuff to decorate the place. These non-magicians entered a partnership, and opened one of the most influential magic spots of the time.



(l to r): Carter in a pose remarkably similar to that of “Alexander, The Man Who Knows.” (Courtesy of Mike Caveney) • “Carter the Great” performing the “Sawing” as an ill-advised medical procedure. (From the Gary Frank Collection)

The new nightclub was named *The Magic Cellar*, and it was decked out with magic posters from Carter, Thurston, Germain, and others. There were magic side-tables and pieces of Carter’s stage illusions throughout the space, including “*Million Dollar Mystery*,” and “*Sawing*.” Well-known and soon-to-be-well-known conjurors performed on the small stage and at the close-up table: Martin Lewis, Slydini, Vic Kirk, David Roth, Harry Anderson, Gene Anderson, and more.

But, the performances at *The Magic Cellar* came to an end when the venue closed in 1977. The assembly of stuff that was once the show of “Carter the Great” was again packed and moved. Over the next twenty-

three years, the collection lived in several other storage spots, including a few warehouses and an old brewery. Finally, in 1990, Pete Clute decided to sell it all, and he began offering the huge accumulation of conjuring and accessories to magicians and magic collectors. This opportunity to purchase everything landed on the desk of Mike Caveney.

Mike contacted Bill Smith, who had been his close friend since they were in their teens. The two of them scraped together the necessary funds, and soon, they were the proud owners of the remaining items from the “Carter the Great” magic show.

The two new and enthusiastic owners



(l to r): These Otis Litho Co. window cards have become two of the most recognizable and collectible images from “*The Golden Age of Magic*.” • The cover of Mike Caveney’s book *Carter the Great*, featuring one of Carter’s many lithograph poster images.

packed the boxes of documents and advertising materials into a van, and then loaded the more-than-fifty trunks and cases of illusions and equipment into a rented Ryder truck. Mike called attention to the fact that he had absolutely **no** experience driving a large, commercial-sized truck, like the one that now held the show. Bill responded that he had the same level of confidence and capability, but he knew a guy who had experience driving trucks and transporting magic shows.

Bill Smith called Chris Diaz, who was familiar with driving large trucks and had done some work for Shimada. Soon, Chris was behind the wheel of the Ryder truck, headed for Los Angeles. The vehicles left the warehouse in San Rafael, California, north of San Francisco, just before noon. They headed south on US Route 101, the highway that crosses the iconic Golden Gate Bridge.

About fifteen minutes into the ride to Los Angeles, Chris Diaz was steering the big truck down a grade just north of the Golden Gate Bridge. As the slope steepened and the strong winds got stronger, the heavily loaded truck became unstable and started to sway. The sway became a swerve, and the truck's center of gravity became a problem. As the rented Ryder tipped over onto its side, it continued moving down the hill in a slowly rotating slide. The other drivers on US Route 101 veered their vehicles sharply to avoid a collision. Chris Diaz recalled, "One second I was driving the truck, the next second I was just along for the ride."

The truck came to a rest in a position that blocked any traffic to the north that had been travelling southbound. That traffic was stopped on US Route 101 for over an hour and a half. News helicopters circled overhead. Emergency crews applied flame retardant liquid foam to the road and the truck, to minimize the risk of fire.

Chris Diaz crawled out of the driver's side door – which had become a skylight – and lowered himself to the pavement, unhurt. Miraculously, nobody in any other vehicle was injured. Two different winch-trucks were used to "un-topple" the Ryder truck.

Mike Caveney sheepishly asked the police officers "Am I in big trouble?" They simply responded "Well, no laws were broken, so you're free to go."



The magic show of Carter the Great stopping traffic, more than fifty years after he died. (Courtesy of Mike Caveney)

Even more surprising was the fact that the illusions, including the 530-pound "Spirit Cabinet," the Kellar "Levitation," the "Million Dollar Mystery," and the enormous Thayer "Cheating the Gallows," were all unscathed by the incident. Mike, Bill, and Chris transferred the trunks and cases to a replacement truck provided by Ryder, and they all successfully completed the journey to Los Angeles (albeit five hours later than they had expected).

And **that** is how the touring show of a well-known magician from the "Golden Age of Magic" stopped traffic on one of the world's most important bridges, more than half of a century after that magician had passed away.

It was time consuming, but Mike Caveney and Bill Smith eventually catalogued and restored the entire collection. Some of the illusions were sold to performers and collectors. Other pieces stayed with Mike and Bill. (The "Spirit Cabinet" is in the Caveney basement, and he has performed it on occasion.) The documentation and ephemera were thoroughly examined, and used by Mike to write his extensive biography on "Carter the Great."

We owe a **GREAT BIG THANK YOU** to Mike Caveney and Bill Smith for their generous help with this month's subject!

You can find more information about the magic and history of Charles Carter in books, including Carter the Great, by Mike Caveney. There's also quite a bit of information in past issues of periodical publications, including Hugard's Magic Monthly, The Sphinx, and The Linking Ring.

Charles Carter died in 1936. Mike Caveney lives in Pasadena, California, where he runs his publishing company, "Mike Caveney's Magic Words," as well as his "Egyptian Hall Museum." Bill Smith lives in Las Vegas, Nevada, where he runs his world-class illusion building company, "Magic Ventures."

If you mailed us an answer to this month's question, but you didn't mail us the *correct* answer, *please ... try, try again!* These questions can be obscure, and they aren't written to be easily answered using Internet search engines such as Google or Archie. Take your copy of *The Linking Ring* to your local Ring meeting and ask some of the senior members to help you find the answer. Show the whole world how much you know, get your name published in the pages of *The Linking Ring*, and win some fantastic prizes from one of our finest brick-and-mortar magic shops!

Calling all Youth Members!

If you believe that you have a good question for the I.B.M. Youth Trivia Contest, ***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 case of Kansas City Chiefs Super Bowl THREE-PEAT T-shirts or a really cool magic book – our choice.

**See if you can win! Follow the Contest Rules on page 142 and mail your responses to the address above.
Answers must be postmarked by April 20, 2025.**

Sign up 1!

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

Magic and

Memories

David Ginn



Enough is Enough! Road Stories 1971-2020

One day I sat down with my show records over my forty-nine year full-time magic career and calculated I've performed over sixteen thousand live shows.

Most of those were schools, libraries, and church preschools. Most of them took place in Georgia, my home state. Most of these live shows were happy, pleasant events, during which I amazed and amused children for forty-five to sixty minutes at a time.

Those children – more than one hundred thousand of them each year – were like my grandchildren. I came to visit them, played with them for an hour, then went home and left them in wonder with their teachers and parents.

Frankly, it was *fun* for me. Almost always.

There were exceptions, however, which I didn't know how to handle when I was younger. But show by show, I learned how much I could take and when to draw the line.

Somewhere in my magic show education, I learned the concept of being the “good guy” on stage, always wearing a “white hat” like in the old cowboy movies. I always tried to keep that happy demeanor, rarely putting on the “black hat” of the disciplinarian or “bad guy.” But sometimes I had to make that decision and, in retrospect, I am glad I did.

Let me share with you some of the times that happened, and what I learned from those experiences.

1

One of my earliest memories of a “bad audience” came from a Friday night school

carnival in the early 1970s. My assistant Diana and I started our performance with musical magic: silks, canes, candles, and live doves. Then I went into audience participation for thirty minutes, with the Tear Apart Dove Vanish set for our musical closer.



David and Diana performing.

More than four hundred children were in the audience for the 7:30 p.m. show. They had been enjoying carnival activities since 4 p.m. for three hours: games, prizes, country store, hot dogs, sodas, candy, and more. At least two hundred of them had popcorn and Cokes in the cafeteria *at their seats* during my show.

To begin, the children were noisy, and they never let up. Midway during the act, some kids decided it would be funny to throw popcorn and empty paper cups. Not just at each other, but at the performers on the stage.

Frantically, I looked around the room while still doing the show, searching for an adult who could stop the nonsense. *There were no adults in the room.*

After at least a dozen cups and lots of popcorn hit the stage, I'd simply had enough. I purposely sped up the show, which was to be forty-five minutes, and finished it in thirty. With the music playing, I crashed the Tear Apart Vanish panels over Diana's arms, flipped the tablecloth into the air, and went into a bow. The moment I did, a paper cup sailed right through the space where my head was a moment before.

Diana closed the curtains, and we started packing up to leave. Minutes later, the PTA lady who hired me slipped behind the curtain to confront me.

"I thought the show was supposed to be forty-five minutes long? It appears you did only thirty minutes," she said.

"Yes, it was supposed to be forty-five minutes," I told her, "but I don't perform when people are throwing popcorn and cups at me. I looked around the room and could not find *any* adults to help me put a stop to it. Where were you and your committee people?"

"Oh," she said, "we thought you had everything under control. We didn't know you needed adult supervision in the auditorium."

Obviously when you have four hundred elementary kids stocked up with soda, hot dogs, and popcorn in one room, you need adult supervision. Preferably adults the kids know, such as teachers and administrators. Yes, I learned my lesson, and from that time forward, in my contract I insisted on adult supervision in the showrooms. I don't hire out to be a babysitter or a disciplinarian.

2

Sometimes the problem is only one or two child hecklers, kids who decide they and the performer are the only ones in the room (or world). They tell you out loud how they think things are done or try to have conversations with you or just "mouth off" to other kids around them.

Here are a couple of stories about them. But first, as much as I love Robert Orben's old "heckler stoppers," you must understand: *They don't work with children*. That's right. It doesn't look good for an adult performer to have a verbal battle with a kid. The

kid won't let up, and the adult looks bad. Instead, you have to employ other ways to solve the problems.

Take, for example, a show I did at a private school in the 1980s for some three hundred children and parents. Yes, the parents were sitting with the kids during a family night, and I was on stage talking.

That's when a boy (is it always a boy?) decided he would mouth off out loud during the performance. First, I did not confront him. But no matter what I said – "let's use this red handkerchief," for example – he disputed my words, saying, "It's not red!"

No one else was misbehaving, only the one boy. This went on for a good ten minutes with no one correcting him. Funny thing is, everyone knew he was heckling me but no one attempted to stop it. Where were his parents? Teachers? The principal?

Finally, about fifteen minutes into the show, I'd had enough of his interference. So I said something like, "Let me get our next experiment ready" and I flipped on the music. I waved my hands in time to the soundtrack and immediately walked off the stage. Standing beside the chairs was a tall man around age forty. He may have been a parent. I don't know. But I chose him to solve my dilemma. I walked directly to him, looked him straight in the face, and said:

"GET THAT BOY TO SHUT UP, OR THE SHOW IS OVER IN FIVE MINUTES!" Because my loud music was playing, nobody except the man heard my words.



An audience at one of David's school shows.

Quickly I walked back onto the stage, picked up my next prop, turned off the music, and continued the performance. As I forged ahead valiantly, I saw the man move to talk to another person and another, then someone moved in the direction of the boy, and next thing I knew the boy was escorted out of the auditorium.

The rest of the show went exactly as planned, the audience responded wonderfully well, and I got a big round of applause at the end. Thankfully, I never saw that boy again.

As most of you know, I love children, and I love teaching and entertaining them. But I cannot tolerate a child who is purposefully misbehaving and spoiling the show for others. Enough is enough.

3

Years later I took my daughter Autumn and her friend Dena to see Avner the Eccentric at a theatre in downtown Atlanta. It was a Saturday morning 11 a.m. performance in the late 1980s.



Avner the Eccentric.

In case you have never seen Avner, he does a little of everything: magic, mime, clowning, juggling, tightwire walking, and more – all silent with no music, so you have to watch and pay attention.

This was a paid ticket affair with kids and parents, and the three of us were sitting in the sixth row on the right. About twenty minutes into the show, a ten-year-old boy in the center fourth row began to talk out loud to Avner. What he said at first was funny, and Avner took it in stride – smiling, laughing, and pretending it was part of the show, which it was not.

But the boy, whose parents or grandparents were sitting right there with him, did not stop him. So the boy went on and on, talking and remarking loud enough for half the eight-hundred-seat house to hear him.

Dena said to Autumn, “Why doesn’t that boy stop? He’s sitting with grown-ups.”

Irritated as well, I kept quiet to see how Avner would handle the situation.

Finally, I could tell Avner had reached his limit. The boy not only was interfering with the performer, but also irritating the audience. It had to stop.

As part of his next routine, Avner left the stage and went into the theatre audience. He shook a few hands, then turned his head left and right as though searching for someone. Then he pretended to spot someone (a friend?) and waved. That person, it appeared, was in the fourth row.

Carefully, Avner entered the fourth row, climbed comically over and around at least ten seated people until he arrived at **the boy**. He leaned down and said something – *I don’t know what* – to the boy. Everyone was quiet, but only the boy and the adults with him heard what Avner said.

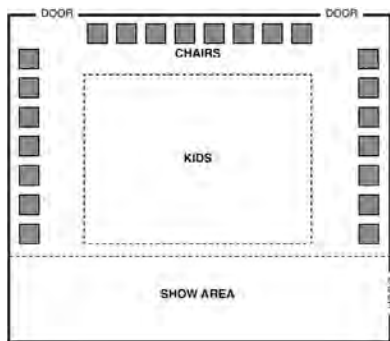
Then Avner made his way back to the stage and continued his excellent performance. The boy never uttered another word.

Years later when I met Avner, I repeated the story and asked him, “What did you say to the boy?” Avner smiled and said, “You know, I don’t even remember!”

Whatever Avner said – a threat on the kid’s life or a polite “stop talking or you will have to leave” – did the trick. I often wonder what I would have said. What would you have said?

4

Again in the 1990s I encountered a similar situation at a South Georgia summer library show. I had a packed reading room with more than one hundred students and thirty parents. The room was set up in a horseshoe pattern with adults in chairs around three sides and me doing my show at the open front of the horseshoe. The children all sat “criss-cross apple sauce” on the floor.



Library horseshoe set-up.

The show started off fine with my comedy warm-up, followed by some magic to rock music. The eight-year-old boy heckler jumped into the show when I started talking again.

In a similar story to before, he continued making comments out loud despite children packed in all around him.

“How’d you learn all those tricks?” he said while I was in the middle of a solo routine.

“By reading library books, of course,” I replied, and that got a laugh. But he evidently thought we were best friends, so he went on and on, interrupting the audience participation routine that followed.

I was getting ticked off and thinking about what to do with him when help came from an unexpected source.

As the young man continued his noisy remarks, a well-dressed lady sitting near him leaned over and tapped him on the head with one finger. When he turned to look up at her, with her finger still pointed at him, she silently mouthed the words, “STOP IT!”

Immediately, he clapped his mouth shut tight and didn’t say another word the entire show.

The rest of the show went fine. When it was over and everyone was leaving, the lady who saved me came forward.

“Hello,” I greeted her. “I saw what you did.”

She said, “My name is Mildred Jones, and I taught school here for forty-five years. And I just could not sit there with that young man acting out the way he did and *not* do anything about it. I hope you didn’t mind.”

“Mind?” I replied. “I just wish I had you at every show!”

She laughed, and we talked a few minutes about kids then and now and how these days they aren’t always taught courtesy.

“You did a very fine show,” she concluded, “and those who were listening learned a lot. Keep up the good work.”



Library show with kids.

Food for thought: *Have a retired school-teacher accompany you to every library show, just in case somebody has forgotten his manners!*

5

My friend Mark Tripp once did a home birthday party show with an unruly birthday boy who thought he could do anything. Ten minutes into the show, the boy got up, rushed to the performing area, and pushed over Mark’s showcase, which made all the kids laugh. Parents, by the way, were in the room and saw this happen. And did nothing.

Mark picked up the case, reset the props, and said, “I can’t do the magic show if you do that.”

He started back into the show, and the birthday boy came up again and pushed over the case. More laughter.

For a second time Mark picked up the case and reset things. Then, without continuing the show, he spoke not just to the audience but *directly to the birthday boy*.

“Johnny, I know it is your tenth birthday, and this is a special day, and you are very excited,” said Mark. “That is why I am here at your party – to celebrate your birthday with you and your friends.

“But if you knock over my case one more time, the show is over and I will leave. Is that clear?”

The boy made no reply. He only laughed.

“I hope so,” said Mark. “Now let’s all – ”

Can you guess what’s coming?

Before Mark could start into something new, Johnny jumped up, rushed forward, and pushed over the showcase for the third time.



Mark Tripp.

Containing his anger, Mark picked up the case, put his props inside, and closed the case. With all the children and parents sitting there watching, and without saying another word, Mark turned and walked out the front door. Maybe they thought it was a part of the show, who knows?

Outside the house, while loading the showcase into his car, Mark noticed the front door open and the father hurry after him.

“Mark, hey, where are you going?” asked the dad.

“Obviously, sir, I am going home,” he replied.

“But aren’t you going to finish the show?” the dad questioned.

“Sir, I gave your son three chances to behave himself, and he blew it. He knocked over my suitcase with my professional props *three times*. After the second time I made it perfectly clear to him and all of you, that if he knocked over the case one last time, the show was over. He ignored me, as you saw, and since *none of you parents* made any effort to stop him, there will be no show today.”

With that Mark got into his car and drove home. No, he did not get paid, and frankly he

didn’t want any money from a home with a rude birthday child and equally rude parents.

Would you have had the guts to walk?

I surely would have.

Enough is enough.

6

At a South Georgia library show in the early 2000s, I had a huge center of the library show filled with kids on the floor. Parents were at the back and sides in chairs. There must have been two hundred children there as I plunged into my forty-five-to-sixty-minute program. And this time there were no kid hecklers!

But something happened this time that had never occurred before or since. The children were all on the floor, but spread out and not packed tight. That gave them wiggle room.

Right in the front center, about ten feet back from the front row of kids, was a pair of six-year-olds: a cute little girl and a cute little boy. They evidently knew each other. They were probably school friends. And they were not jammed in tight, so seating was not the problem. In fact, I still don’t know what the problem was. Perhaps they thought mom had brought them to “play time” instead of showtime.

But shortly after I started my program, the girl (yes, the girl) poked the boy with her finger. A minute later, he poked her back. A bit later, she took her left foot and pushed his right foot. They weren’t being hurtful, they were playing with each other. Poke, push, poke, push, back and forth. My turn, your turn, on and on it went. Not hurting each other, just playing a silly game. Distractedly, I watched this go on and on for forty minutes – nearly my entire show.

*Finally I’d just had it! **Enough was enough!***

So I stopped the show and said, “Ladies and gentlemen, parents and children, I have an announcement to make: For the entire time I have been up here entertaining you, this little girl (I pointed right at her) and this little boy (I pointed at him) have been pushing and poking each other, and nobody is

seeing it except me, and I am tired of being distracted.

"So before I continue the show, I request that two parents come up here right now and *separate* these two little people so I can finish the show in peace!"

Immediately, two mothers came forward, picked up the children, and took them to the back.

Thankfully, I was able to finish the show with flying colors. After the crowd was gone, the librarian asked me what happened, and I told her.

"I'm sorry," she said, "I didn't see it going on."

"I know," I said, "I was the only one in the room aware of it, and I tolerated it as long as I could. Then I just snapped, and there you go."

I had simply had enough nonsense for the day.

7

Lest you think every show situation was like these stories, let me point out they were all exceptions to the norm. During the normal school and library shows I performed, over fifteen thousand of them went fine and dandy. They were fun for all and pretty much everybody had a good time.

And lest you think these "bad" kids are always there, let's close with a good kid story.

Thirty years back or so, I presented several yearly shows at West Point Elementary in West Point, Georgia, right on the Alabama border. The principal, Mr. Martin, liked me and knew I would do a good clean job of entertaining and educating his students with nothing out of line.

One morning I arrived at 9:00 a.m. for a ten o'clock program, unloaded with the assistance of four kid helpers and a teacher, and set up the show on the gym floor facing the bleachers. By 9:55 a.m. I was dressed and ready to go, and the students were courteously filing into the gymnasium.

Mr. Martin stood outside the gym door in a hallway, and I joined him to greet the students coming in. As I stood there waiting

and talking to the principal, I noticed he seemed distracted. He kept looking down at the floor, where I spotted a wadded-up piece of notebook paper.



Paper wadded up on the floor.

"Do you want me to pick that up?" I asked him.

He smiled and said, "Oh, no, don't. I put it there. I'm waiting to see who, if anyone, picks it up."

We talked on, but we both kept our eyes on the paper. A few minutes later, a fourth-grade boy stooped down and picked it up. Then he stepped out of line and started to drop the paper in a nearby trash can.

That's when Mr. Martin sprang into action.

"Stop!" he said, approaching the boy, who suddenly acted scared. "You're not in trouble. Please let me have that paper."

The boy handed it over.

"What's your name?" Mr. Martin asked the student, and the boy told him. "Everything's fine. Who is your teacher? Okay, Mrs. Wentworth. Go back and join your class." The boy did as instructed.

Mr. Martin turned to me and said, "Is your microphone turned on?"

"Yes," I said, "just flip up the button, say what you want, then get me out with a round of applause."

I headed back behind my backdrop to load whatever needed to be hidden at the last minute. Then I heard Mr. Martin call the students to order.

"Before we start the David Ginn magic show, I want to tell all of you what just happened out there in the hall. Before anyone started into the gym, I wadded up this piece

(continued on page 108)



Marketing Magic

KENT CUMMINS

Even More Pro Tips

“Your business needs to be a business first.” – Cris Johnson

I keep asking successful entrepreneurial entertainers for their best and most effective marketing tips, and they keep responding! (Thank you, Rick Heath, for suggesting the idea!)

Cris Johnson

“Sure thing,” I told Kent. “I’d love to submit an article.”

Once I hit send, though, self-doubt crept in. “One marketing secret” was Kent’s request.

I wasn’t sure I could narrow down my focus to one marketing secret. So many things need to be in place for long-term success as a performer.

Just off the top of my head, you need a great website filled with professional headshots, reaction shots, videos, testimonials from past clients, and more. *A lot* more.

Then you need a system in place for following up with leads, sending contracts, and more. Your business needs to be a business first.

Oh yeah, you need a great show, too.

But after you dig underneath all that stuff (and many more I haven’t mentioned), your marketing boils down to one fundamental thing: It’s the bedrock of your career. Without it, your business will fail. And it’s only three words.

Yup, three words. Here they are:

KNOW YOUR MARKET.

Why is this so important? Simple. When people hire a magician, they aren’t really hiring you for your show. They are hiring you to solve some kind of problem. And the problem depends on what market you are performing for.



Let's use birthdays as an example. Why is the birthday parent hiring you? To make their kid's special day unforgettable and fun. Simple, right? Not so fast.

That parent needs the show to be easy. On party day, they're going to be dealing with presents, cake, pizza, games, corralling a bunch of energetic kids, and so much more. The last thing this parent needs is an entertainer who shows up expecting the Hollywood star treatment. Your show needs to be self-sufficient.

This is a good start. But that's still not all. Your show needs to appeal to the age group of the kids at the party, including the birthday child. Every successful birthday magician I know has different birthday shows for different age groups. Every. Single. One.

Let's continue. Your show needs to be professional and professional. Oh yeah, it also needs to be professional. Why am I hammering this point? Because your show is going to reflect on the parent who hires you. If you show up in ripped jeans or carry your props through the door in a paper grocery bag (Yeah, I've seen it), it reflects poorly on the client.

Simply put, their friends are watching. Their relatives, neighbors, and whoever comes to the show will judge them based on how you present yourself. And this is entirely separate from the performance itself.

We're getting there. But there's one hidden need your show must fulfill on the day of the party. It's sneaky. And you can't hit it too hard in your marketing materials or the show itself. But your show must help the parent get love from their child. It's deep stuff.

I haven't been immersed in the birthday party market for years. These days I'm a school assembly guy. So, there may be other needs I'm not thinking of right now as I write this article. But my overall point is important. You gotta know the wants, needs, and desires of your market, and how your services help them fill those needs or solve those problems.

Sound like a lot of work? Yeah, it kinda is. Much more than just putting together a show with tricks you enjoy and expecting the audience to kiss your ring at your magical awesomeness. But the work is worth it. Once you've zeroed in on the problem your show must solve, it gives you a road map for everything else in your business.

Tricks? Your effects must fit into the overall market you are aiming for.

Website? The look and feel of your site must reflect the market.

Your copy? From postcards to web pages to sales letters and even your business card, what you say in each should be laser-focused on the needs of your market and how you can help them.

Your show setup? Again, it must fit into your market.

A note about this: It doesn't matter how cool a trick is. If it doesn't fit the market needs, you have to cut it. When I was doing a lot of birthdays, there were many tricks I tried but wound up cutting. Maybe the kids didn't like the trick. Or it was too much of a pain to set up. Or it might cause a mess in the client's home.

One final note about all of this. The wants, needs, and desires of every market will be different. Everything I outlined above is for birthdays. School assemblies, my main niche, has its own list of needs. Same with corporate holiday parties. Or trade shows.

Can some tricks play well across multiple markets? Sure. But I wouldn't expect it. If certain tricks fit multiple markets, consider yourself lucky. About 75 percent of what I perform for school assemblies would not fit the birthday market.

All of this might sound like one big fat bummer. But there's a silver lining. If you put in the work now, you'll set yourself up for long-term success. You'll be regarded as an expert in your market and not just some random performer.

With that distinction comes more shows at higher fees.

Intrigued? I encourage you to visit my website www.theprofessionalmagicianclubpro.com. I offer marketing services, scripted shows, a weekly free newsletter, and much more. I look forward to seeing you on the other side.

Cris Johnson

Kent's Comments

I read Cris's free digital newsletter every Saturday, and *almost* always agree with his ideas. I never met him in person, but what he has to say usually resonates with my own ideas. You need to operate as a business. You need to present yourself professionally at all times. You need to have a good show for each market!

“Entertainment for all occasions” might sound like a good idea, but the most successful entertainers polish their presence in a particular market. You might do mentalism for corporate events and balloon animals for family festivals, but each market requires its own marketing strategy.

At the peak of my earning a living as a magician, I had several different web sites and several different business cards. I marketed to each market segment differently.

Did you read Trixie Bond’s tips in my column last month? She also provides specific ideas for a specific niche.

Know *your* market(s).

Conny Ray Magic Party - TrolleriKalas



I started reading books about marketing early on, partly because I was interested in it, but also to get ideas about how I could reach potential customers.

To get magic requests, I had to spread information about my existence. Since I wanted to have my own image as a children’s magician, I had been thinking for some time about what I would call my performances. Then my wife and I visited a trade fair for household goods.

We walked around and looked at everything on offer to make kitchen and other household chores easier. At one point, we came across a stand for an ice cream manufacturer that had a big sign: “Invite them to an ice cream party!”

Immediately when I saw the sign, I had it clear in front of me: Magic Party! Or as they say in Swedish, TrolleriKalas!

Children like parties and magic, so of course, TrolleriKalas.

Conny Ray TrolleriKalas.

Between 1994 and 1998, I sent out four newsletters a year. They contained news

about my programs and information about a magic book that I wrote.



The name KALASbladet is PARTYleaf.

Conny Ray

Kent’s Comments

Conny Ray (stage name for Thorbjorn Holmqvist) is my favorite fan from Sweden. (Well, Bertil Fredstrom is also from Sweden, but since he has been a Texan for more than twenty-five years, he doesn’t count!)

I like the fact that Conny got inspiration from a non-magical event. In my experience, attending unrelated trade shows and

conferences often suggests marketing ideas that can be adapted for entrepreneurial entertainers.

I know many readers of *The Linking Ring* perform at children's birthday parties, and you can adapt this idea to fit your market (no matter what country you perform in).

Cody Fisher

Here is the best piece of marketing advice I can offer to any performer trying to enter any market. First and most important is to have a good show for whatever market you are trying to enter. Whether it's day care shows, school shows, corporate events, or cruise ships, you must have the type of show your client is interested in and it must be good. The best way to determine if your show is right for a certain market is to simply ask someone who is already in that market.



If you want to do library shows, contact another performer that is already doing them and get their advice. If you want to work cruise ships, find someone in that market

and ask for their advice. It may take several emails, but you will eventually find someone that will point you in the right direction. It all boils down to that old adage, "Don't try to reinvent the wheel."



If you have a good show that is perfect for your target market and you are following the advice of someone that is already successful in that market, then you too should have success.

Sincerely, Cody S. Fisher
www.codyfisher.com

Kent's Comments

The first step in my Marketing Magic checklist is to have a good product. Harlan Tarbell emphasized this in his famous course. Many of the pros who've contributed to this column have mentioned the need to have a good show as the cost of admission to the marketing process.

As other pros have mentioned, you need to know every market you enter. Cody once told me that he lost a corporate gig because the person booking the show saw a photo of Cody on Facebook doing a kids show. (Sometimes it is hard to keep your different markets separate.)

I like it when entertainers spend more energy helping each other than competing with each other.

I first met Cody when he was a young bachelor just finding his way in the wonderful

world of magic. He is no longer young, but he has a wonderful family and is well-established in the world of magic. It has been a pleasure watching him succeed. He has several good shows.

Harlan Tarbell



“There is no cut and dried method of selling magic. There are basic principles that all have used successfully, but who knows what the morrow will bring in a new angle of publicity and interest that will appeal to the public?”

“The man or woman who wants to make magic a profession should study the essentials of good business.”

“First you must build the best and most entertaining act or show you know how.”

Kent's Comments

Okay, even though I did meet Harlan Tarbell at the 1957 I.B.M. Convention in Houston, I did not ask him for marketing tips. But his work in the *Tarbell Course in Magic* speaks for itself, and I frequently quote him when I do “Marketing Magic Live” lectures for magicians.

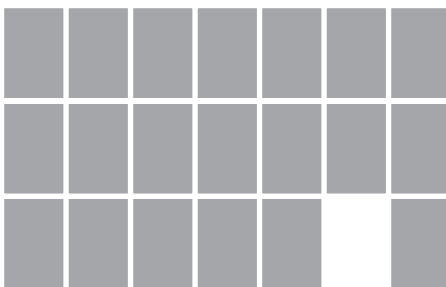
The basic principles of marketing have not changed, and the first step is to have a good show.

The Bottom Line

I would love to hear *your* favorite marketing strategy! Tell me at kent@kentcummins.com.

Do you love magic? Me, too! Listen to “Tales from the Fantastic Magic Center” at www.fantasticmagiccenter.com. And consider supporting the Patreon account to help preserve and share the art of magic.

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*.

Conjurer's Foolosophy

JOE HERNANDEZ



I've learned that residual learning persists even after the completion of practice sessions, as the nervous system, a fascinating and complex part of our body, continues to adapt to newly introduced methods. This means the benefits of practice aren't limited to the time spent actively learning; instead, they extend beyond those sessions. The nervous system processes and integrates the skills and techniques learned, facilitating a deeper understanding and mastery over time. This adaptive response allows the body and brain to refine movements and enhance performance, making the effects of practice last longer and profoundly influence future learning experiences.

I've learned that pauses, gestures, misdirection, and hand sleights are the alchemy of conjuring.

I've learned that magicians are superstitious people. They may carry a rabbit's foot for good luck, although it did not do the rabbit any good.

I've learned that a pickpocket expert is a person who has what it takes to take what you have.

I've learned that whenever you have a setback in your magical career, you should use it as rocket fuel to propel yourself forward.

I've learned that the more I engage with my imagination, the more vivid and expansive my visions become. Each time I allow my mind to wander and explore innovative ideas, I discover layers of creativity I hadn't noticed before. It's as if my imagination acts as a muscle that strengthens with use, empowering me to delve deeper into the imaginative realm while leading to an endless cycle of inspiration and innovation. The more I exercise this imaginative muscle, the more profound my thoughts become, resulting in a continuous flow of new and exciting possibilities.

I've learned that creativity requires you to embrace uncertainty.

I've learned that Harry Lorayne and Frank Garcia were friends who never liked each other.

I've learned that it was a good decision to stop going to confession; it used to be exhausting. I would spend my whole time confessing all my deceptions to Father Cyprian.

I've learned that the difference between a musician, a painter, and a magician is that the musician makes his money while he is alive, the painter makes his money after he dies, and the magician never makes money.

Joe Hernandez is the author of *Conjurer's Wisdom* (Vol. 1 & 2), *Phonetastic*, *Magic Babylon*, *Houdini: The Ultimate Trivia Compendium*, and the just-released *The Foolosophy of Conjuring*, of which excerpts are taken for this column. Books can be purchased at www.amazon.com.

An Amazing Discovery

By Dan Stapleton

A recent and amazing discovery reminded me that cruise ships, a popular performance venue for magicians, have undergone many changes over the decades.

Cruise ships built in the 1950s and 1960s were far smaller in tonnage than they are today. A typical cruise ship in the seventies and eighties could only hold six hundred to nine hundred passengers. Of course, there were bigger (and smaller) exceptions, too. But even the smaller ships still had wonderful evening entertainment resembling what one would find at posh nightclubs during the 1930s to 1950s. Eventually, small ships added Las Vegas-style revues that accommodated magicians of all calibers, including illusionists who might have performed only one or two smaller illusions.

In order to serve as a convention chairperson at the 1997 Florida State Magic Convention in Daytona, I took a break from performing on the *Enchanted Isle*, a ship that sailed seven-day cruises from New Orleans.

That “quaint” classic liner, which held seven hundred passengers, still retained its original charm from when the Moore-McCormack Line built it in 1958. Working aboard the *Isle* for five years from 1996 to 2001, my contract usually lasted around four months at a time with a two-month break. I took advantage of one of those breaks to help host the convention.

1997’s convention featured a stellar lineup of entertainers, including the legendary Del Ray. After the shows, a few of us met across the street to grab a late-night bite to eat at Denny’s. It was 3:00 a.m. and Del, in a raspy voice, was regaling us with tales of his storied career. Suddenly, it dawned on me that he had never mentioned performing on a cruise ship.

“Del, have you ever performed aboard any cruise ships?” I asked.

“Only one,” he replied. “It was a ship long gone, called *Argentina*.”

I nearly fell out of my chair. I looked at



Del Ray.



John Booth.

my wife, then back at Del. "You are not going to believe this," I said. "The *Argentina* was renamed the *Enchanted Isle* in 1990. That's the ship I'm working on now!"

"That old bucket is still sailing?"

"Yes, but it's most likely on its last legs."

My prediction was accurate: The *Enchanted Isle* stopped operating a few years later in 2001, and was finally scrapped in 2003. I was the last magician to perform aboard the ship, where I made wonderful memories as the world ushered in a new millennium. After Del passed in 2003, I was interviewed by John Moehring for his 2010 biography, *Del Ray, America's Foremost*. For whatever reasons, a few of my Del Ray revelations, including this story, never made it into the book. Two months after that late-night meal and amazing revelation, I was back aboard the *Enchanted Isle* with a feeling of wonderment about what it must have been like to witness Del Ray, one of America's greatest magicians, performing on the same stage where I was now performing.

But this story doesn't end there. Prior to the 1960s, cruise ships mostly functioned as transportation vessels and typically offered little in the way of entertainment. It wasn't until the 1970s, when cruise lines were getting more competitive, that entertainment offerings became a standard. The 1980s were witness to a cruise ship entertainment hiring boom, with Carnival Cruise Lines and similar lines building bigger ships that attracted younger passengers. The wildly successful



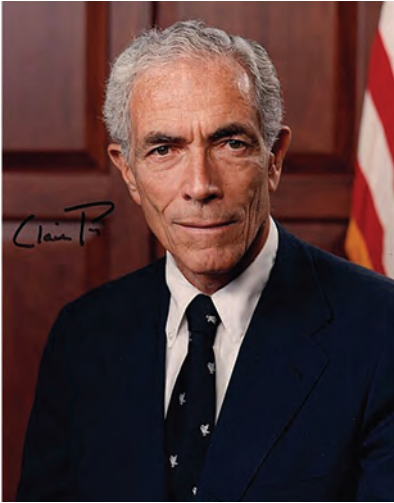
Dan Stapleton.

television show *The Love Boat* was also making cruise ships more popular.

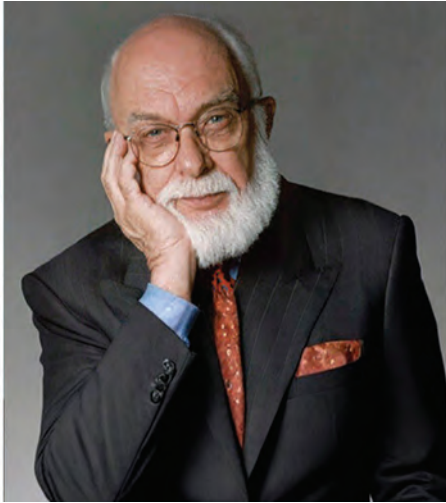
Old magic magazines seldom mentioned cruise ships before the 1960s. I presently own maybe one thousand old magazines, and last month I brought a few of them with me to read in my hotel room between lecture tour dates. One was an old copy of *The Linking Ring*, where I came across a photo of John Booth performing in a "night club" that looked familiar: you guessed it, the *S.S. Argentina/Enchanted Isle*. What a coincidence (and an honor for me) that I shared the same stage with Del Ray and John Booth aboard the same ship that has now vanished in the mists of time.



The Senator and the Skeptic



Senator Claiborne Pell.



James Randi.

By Dr. Steven Schlanger

James Randi was backstage enjoying a quiet moment with his good friend Harry Blackstone, Jr. when the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee barged into the green room. Senator Claiborne Pell was accompanied by two beefy and scowling bodyguards, who protected their quarry with the intensity of Dobermans. This was not a visit from an adoring fan seeking an autograph or perhaps a photo-op. Rather it was a confrontation. This uninvited guest came with an axe to grind. He was there, in Randi's words, "to confront his devil."

The Senator from Rhode Island was a man with an impressive set of credentials. He was a graduate of both Princeton and Columbia Universities, spoke several languages, and had served his country with distinction during the Second World War. As a member of congress, he ably represented his constituents, earning six consecutive terms in office from 1961 to 1997.

He was in the forefront of a burgeoning environmental movement and was an early opponent of the Vietnam War. He championed the arts, playing an important role in the creation of the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. His most famous and lasting piece of legislation has been to the benefit of aspiring college students since its inception, better known as Pell grants.

Though they had never met before, Randi was well aware of the Senator. In addition to his political and legislative accomplishments, Claiborne Pell had a reputation for being highly eccentric. He had some strange habits including jogging in shorts and a sports jacket and wearing his father's belt; his dad, having been a rotund man, meant that the belt had to circle the lean Senator's waist more than once. His biographer, G. Wayne Miller, referred to the enigmatic Pell as "an uncommon man." To many, that was an understatement.

Pell was fascinated by all things related to the supernatural, the paranormal, and the occult. "I've always been intellectually curious," he once said, "and I think these things should be examined." He claimed to have an open mind, though his purported curiosity verged more on the side of whole-hearted belief. In fact, he was so enamored with Uri Geller that he invited many congressional and military aides to witness the man's supposed demonstrations of psychic powers. In particular, Senator Pell was impressed with Geller's metal bending and proudly included one of his twisted pieces of cutlery on the bookcase in his office along with such titles as *The Astral Body* and tomes written by Shirley MacLaine offering "knowledge" about past lives.

Senator Pell's passion for the inexplicable ranged far and wide. He organized a near-death symposium in Washington, D.C. and attended another concerning UFO abductions, and he hired an aide with top secret security clearance to keep him apprised of investigations into telepathy, ESP, near-death experiences, remote viewing, and the like. Retired Naval Intelligence Officer C. B. Scott Jones was literally on the Senator's payroll, earning fifty-thousand dollars a year to conduct experiments such as listening to speeches by President George H.W. Bush and Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney, playing the tapes backwards to detect secret messages during the Persian Gulf conflict. (This particular "study" did not play well in the media or with the Senator's constituents, nor did Jones' attempt to "contact dead Soviet leaders." Despite the political embarrassment, Senator Pell argued that these inquiries could possibly lead to new insights about the human mind. "Many times, theories that seem ridiculous, produce greater areas of knowledge," he asserted.)

It wasn't the first time (or perhaps the last) that our leaders have flirted with those claiming to see beyond the veil. Abraham Lincoln was said to have been curious about spiritualists and Presidents Roo-

sevelt (Franklin), Nixon, and Reagan consulted (through emissaries) with so-called seers, though not one of the presidents claimed, at least publicly, to have made policy decisions based on the information they received. The Senator from Rhode Island, on the other hand, enthusiastically embraced all things mystical. In fact, he was so easily swayed that when people like Uri Geller were exposed as charlatans, Pell was instead, skeptical of the skeptics.

James Randi was passionate about taking on these "huxsters" as he called them. Geller and others were not entertainers; they were people who used deception and exploitation for financial gain. It was fraud, plain and simple, and often the innocent and unsuspecting victims of these thieves experienced financial, psychological, and emotional damage. Individuals like Randi, Steve Shaw (Banachek), and others, did what they could to prove to these easily manipulated scientists and gullible believers that the man behind the curtain was just a guy doing simple magic tricks. And yet despite their efforts, it would seem that even the most educated and presumably intelligent people were and are susceptible to manipulation. In fact, Randi once observed that these supposedly wise souls are often the easiest people to deceive.

In the showdown in the dressing room Senator Pell was determined to prove that Randi was wrong about Geller and the truth behind the unknown. Though he was regarded as a genial man and one who could laugh at himself, Randi describes Pell that night as aggressive. It was certainly not the first time Randi had encountered resistance. At a lecture in Buffalo in 1976, an audience member accused Randi of actually *having* psychic powers, arguing that the conjuror was using "trickery" to pretend he didn't have such an ability. Though this kind of sophistry seems completely ridiculous, it was indicative to Randi of how hard it is to crack the foundation of belief.

Senator Pell announced that he was

going to challenge Randi to a test. He was going to write a shape on a pad of paper, tear off the page, fold it, and place it under his shoe. Whether Randi liked it or not, Pell told him to try and identify what had been written. He also warned Randi that he was wise to the conjuror's methods. The Senator explained that he knew all about pencil reading and that he would not hand the pad to Randi because an impression could tip the answer.

In retelling the story, Randi pointed out that Senator Pell used the word "shape" when throwing down the gauntlet, thus inadvertently narrowing Randi's choices. And given Randi's experience, it might have been relatively easy to further narrow down the options with a little fishing. But to Randi's delight (and Blackstone's amusement), in the act of peeling the page off the pad, the Senator accidentally flashed his supposedly secret drawing.

Randi, of course, paused and seemed to be deep in thought. Then he took a napkin off a nearby table and drew the picture of an equilateral triangle. When the two images were compared and matched, the Senator trembled. "He began to stammer," Randi said, "waved his finger at me in an accusatory manner, and said quite clearly, 'That was no trick!'" Like the gentleman in Buffalo years earlier, the Senator re-

fused to accept that he had been fooled.

This anecdote from James Randi's celebrated career speaks to our human vulnerability, and how unscrupulous and duplicitous people often capitalize on that weakness. Most magicians are honorable and honest, using their "powers" to delight, educate, amaze, and move their audiences. We interact with our spectators in a loving way and use our magic to bring light to a sometimes dark world.

Senator Claiborne Pell was a good man by all accounts. He meant well in his search for truth, but he was also naïve. His anger at Randi might well have been the result of a tacit recognition that everything he believed about Geller and the other deceivers was a lie. It's hard to admit when we're wrong about things. But as it turned out, this "uncommon man," was really quite common after all. We're all susceptible to those who take advantage of our good natures. Indeed, it pays for all of us to remember what Mark Twain once said: "A lie can travel halfway around the world while the truth is putting on its shoes."

Dr. Steven Schlanger is an associate editor of *The Linking Ring*.

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In January, I discussed the Vernon Optical Move. It is an easy enough move that you can teach someone starting in magic and they will catch on to it right away, as it is more of a knack move than a sleight. I have been working on many different ideas using it, and I hope you enjoy this one.

EFFECT: You have a deck shuffled, then have a card selected and placed back into the deck. Now, draw two cards and show them to your audience. Place one in the deck's center but leave it sticking out and the other on top. With a wave of the hand, the cards change places. After the cards change places, the two cards find the selected card. All you do is cut them face up into the deck, and as you spread the cards out, a face-down card will be sandwiched between the two other cards.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION: Have someone shuffle the deck. Now, riffle down one corner of the face-down deck and ask them to say "Stop." Stop at the card and have them show it to everyone. Hold the top portion you cut off and ask your helper to return the card. As they do this, your right hand is holding the top of the deck. Gesture with your index finger and say, "Place the card back where it was." As you gesture, your right hand will naturally turn so your palm faces you. This allows you to peek at the card on the face of your half of the deck. This will be your key card. Drop the top portion onto their card. Your key card is now above the selection. At this point, you can cut the cards and mix them up. Do not shuffle, but you can cut as much as you want. Spread through the deck and ask for two chances to find the card. Cut the chosen card to the top of the deck and look for two dif-

ferent cards. A red face card and a black number card. Two cards, nothing close to theirs. If they chose a face card, then use two number cards. Remove the two cards from the deck. For example, they chose the Five of Clubs. So, you choose a Queen of Hearts and the Two of Spades. The Queen is on top of the two. Now, perform the Optical Move, getting a break under the top card (chosen card). Say, "Your card is either the queen or the two, let me place the queen in the center of the deck and I will leave the two on top of the deck." The Optical Move places the two in the center and the Queen on top. They will say neither card is the chosen one. "Well, in that case, let me show you some magic with the queen and the two. All it takes is a snap of the fingers and the cards change places." Remove the card from the center and turn it face up, showing the two. Hold it in your right hand and flip over the queen atop the deck. *Remember to hold your break.* Both cards are face up. Slide the two beneath the face-up queen and under the selection. Now cut the deck, saying, "These two cards will find your card." Snap the fingers and spread the deck, showing the face-up queen and two with a face-down card between them. Reveal the selection. This is a fun bit of magic and teaches your students a few needed card sleights. The finger break, controlling a card, and building a trick into a two-phased routine. It also has a touch of the "magician in trouble" idea, which always plays well for an audience.

Until next time,
Bob Durante
bobdurante55@gmail.com

The Magic of Distraction

By Daron McDonald
Primary Care Paramedic and Magician

Imagine it's the middle of the afternoon and a family member suffers a sudden emergency.

With a mix of worry and urgency, you dial 911, and within moments your home is filled with flashing lights, blaring sirens, and the hurried movements of men and women in uniform carrying a variety of medical equipment. These paramedics are here to help, but you can already sense the anxiety building in your loved one, who is neurodivergent. The intensity of the scene – the lights, the sounds, the flurry of responders – is overwhelming, and your loved one is becoming visibly distressed, struggling to communicate in the face of it all.

Then, a paramedic kneels down, meeting their gaze and pulling something unexpected from their pocket – a coin. “This isn’t just any coin,” the paramedic says with a warm smile. “It’s magic.”

With a wave of their hand, the coin vanishes, only to reappear from behind the ear of their partner. For the first time since the commotion began, your loved one breaks into laughter. The tension eases as they begin to communicate with the paramedic. This is paramedicine, the quiet magic of distraction and human connection.

In the high-pressure, fast-paced world of emergency medical services (EMS), paramedics are often seen as heroes who use their medical skills to save lives. However, there are tools beyond the standard paramedic “jump kit” that can be used to improve patient care: **magic**. This approach proves particularly beneficial in interactions with pediatric patients and the neurodivergent community, offering unique advantages for managing anxiety, improving communication, and creating a more positive healthcare

experience.

For many patients, the arrival of paramedics can be a frightening experience, compounded by intimidating emergency medical equipment, lights, and sirens. Similarly, neurodivergent individuals, including those with autism spectrum disorders or sensory processing disorders, may find the unpredictability and sensory overload of medical emergencies overwhelmingly stressful.

In these situations, the utilization of magic can be a powerful tool for distraction and engagement, tearing down the walls between the provider and the patient.

Magic, with its inherent wonder, captures attention and momentarily diverts focus from the often stressful or painful stimuli of a medical procedure. For some patients, a simple magic trick can transform a paramedic from a stranger into a friendly face, reducing anxiety and fear. This distraction not only calms the patient but can also facilitate smoother interactions, allowing paramedics to perform assessments and procedures with less resistance or fear-induced complications.

Trust is a critical component in any interaction but is especially so in pre-hospital emergency care involving vulnerable populations such as children and neurodivergent individuals. Magic, for me, has acted as a rapport-building tool, breaking down barriers between the patient and the caregiver. When a paramedic performs a magic trick, it lightens the mood and creates a moment of shared joy and amazement, laying the groundwork for trust. This rapport is essential for encouraging cooperation, which can lead to more accurate and efficient patient assessments.

Communication barriers can significantly impact the quality of care in emergency medical situations. Children and neurodivergent

patients often have unique communication needs or may struggle to express their symptoms and feelings. Magic serves as a non-verbal method of communication that engages patients in a way words often cannot. By focusing the patient's attention and increasing their comfort level, magic can provide an opening for paramedics to introduce verbal communication, ask questions about the patient's condition, and explain what they are doing in a more relaxed and receptive environment.

Interestingly, magic can also be educational. As a paramedic I often use magic tricks to explain medical procedures or the function of equipment in a less intimidating way. For example, a simple French Drop, causing a coin to vanish can be likened to making pain "disappear" with a provided medical intervention. A quick rendition of Crazy Man's Handcuffs using the rubber bands, which just held a package containing an oxygen mask together, serves well to remove the apprehension of a required procedure. Such analogies, framed within the context of a magic trick, can demystify medical procedures and equipment, making them less daunting to a young or neurodivergent mind.

The incorporation of magic tricks into pre-hospital healthcare requires careful consideration and practice. Paramedics interested in using magic as a tool would likely benefit from tailored workshops that not only teach

tricks but also instruct on the psychological and developmental aspects of working with children and neurodivergent patients. Furthermore, it's important to use this approach judiciously, ensuring it complements medical treatment and does not detract from the critical tasks at hand. The use of single-use items, such as rubber bands, should also be considered because they can be safely disposed to avoid contamination between patients. I have always dreamed of leading regular meetings with local paramedics and other first responders to teach them basic handling of various magic tricks whilst supporting one another in a safe space to share our experiences. For paramedics, magic also serves as a way to provide new and effective communication methods between one another, whether the uniform is on or off.

As unconventional as it may sound, the utilization of magic by paramedics is a testament to the ever-evolving nature of pre-hospital healthcare, particularly for those who might perceive the world differently. This creative approach not only enhances the patient's experience but also underscores the importance of empathy, rapport, and communication by healthcare professionals. By integrating magic into pre-hospital healthcare providers' toolkits, paramedics can offer more than medical treatment – they can bring a moment of wonder and comfort to those in crisis, proving that sometimes a little magic is just what the doctor ordered.

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



Polishing the Rings

SKIP WAY

Guest-friendly Rings

Attracting new Ring members and retaining the ones we have allows us to expand programming, balance our budgets, and promote a positive community presence. Offering great member-oriented programs is a strong first step in recruiting new members, but we can't stop there.

The modern magic club needs to be guest friendly! At the low end of the guest friendly scale is the club that rebels against inviting anyone who is not a pedigreed, knuckle-busting, practicing magician. These clubs tend to view magic as a secretive fraternal experience. They generally focus on one or two exclusive facets of the art and tend to offer intense educational and skill experiences rarely found in larger groups. If this is your club's structure and you're content with it, great! Enjoy!

At the higher end is the club that welcomes anyone with a genuine interest in magic. These clubs open their doors to magic enthusiasts, novices, hobbyists, collectors, and historians from all magic branches. They tend to be vibrant, active, and growing. Their members feel comfortable inviting family, friends, and co-workers to "Come and share the magic!"

Guest friendly clubs share the wider social and educational benefits of a more diverse membership. These five common sense strategies may help you understand guests, provide services that keep them coming back, and ensure that guests and members alike feel valued.

Forge a Sense of Community. The most successful clubs foster a second family,

home away from home vibe. They nurture a welcoming and inclusive environment that every member looks forward to visiting. The relaxed and supportive feeling surrounding these clubs helps the most reserved visitor break the ice and find new friends. Guests and members join clubs to feel good about community service, gain valuable skills and experience, share a warm fellowship and camaraderie with like-minded peers, and build a strong network of personal and professional contacts.

Social events nurture this blending of personal connection with specific interests. Encourage guests and members to get to know each other through social events like lunches, workshops, community service projects, and online meetings.

New members may feel a bit shy about connecting with long-term members. Help new members feel welcome by asking older members to step up as mentors or sponsors. Mentors and sponsors serve as the go-to people for asking questions, learning about the club, and establishing their first social connections.

Not all club connections take place in person. Give your guests and members a way to stay connected between meetings and events. Active and friendly message, Facebook, or Instagram groups, or email/text lists fill this need.

Offer Diverse Programs. This is where the more diverse clubs excel over their smaller, more exclusive peers. Offering a diverse array of programs and interests allows us to attract more members, serve changing

interests, and extend engagement opportunities. A progressive club may offer family-centered recreational events, in-depth workshops, guest and member lectures, and broad community support opportunities. Offering a broad spectrum of activities may inspire members to examine new perspectives on their approach to magic and the club.

Don't be shy about charging an extra fee to cover these new projects and benefits. Enhanced benefits provide greater value to club membership. Fund projects with new and special events offered to the general public for a ticketed fee. Offer members discounted entry, prime seating, or free entry. Hosting public events allows local residents who are curious about your club to get a taste of joining. Club members enjoy the added value of perks unavailable to non-members.

Seek Feedback and Input. Our clubs must change to meet evolving member interests, priorities, and preferences. Solicit frequent feedback from club members through surveys, focus groups, and informal discussions. Inviting members to express themselves increases their personal investment in the club. Test and incorporate practical suggestions that offer sound member benefit. Actively involve club members in the decision-making process.

Recognize and Celebrate Achievement. Acknowledge the guests and members who make the effort to participate. Always! Celebrate personal and club-related accomplishments. Recognizing guests helps them to feel as though they belong. Recognizing members gives guests a glimpse of the club's devotion to unity and encourages members to continue sharing part of their life with your community.

Handwritten notes and cards are preferable and carry the greatest emotional value. For the busy clubs, customize digital cards through sites like *BlueMountain.com* and *eCardWidget.com* with club branding and a unique message. We can send eCards immediately or schedule a later delivery.

Tangible gifts do a lot to make your club

stand out in members' minds. Even small clubs can order wands, mugs, and lapel pins to present on special occasions, such as their membership anniversaries.

A new member welcome kit builds excitement. A typical welcome kit may include a letter from the president, a membership certificate and card, lanyard and nametag, a club lapel pin, club logo stickers, I.B.M. application, a copy of the bylaws, a brief single page club history, and guidance on joining the club's social media and email lists.

Consider adding member spotlights to your social media page and newsletter. Highlight a different member's accomplishments and contributions to the club. Celebrating little accomplishments and expressing appreciation for our members inspires others and strengthens the communal bond. Prospective guests will see this recognition as a community strength worthy of consideration.

Provide Opportunities for Advancement. Many of our members may be interested in boosting their involvement in your club and sharing active leadership roles. Extend opportunities to develop relevant personal and professional skills. Committee and project chair appointments make excellent steppingstones to stronger club roles. Treat members who demonstrate an interest in leadership as stakeholders when making decisions. Actively solicit their input and assistance for future projects.

The concept of our magic clubs as closed, secretive societies jealously guarding age-old mysteries died decades ago. If we want our clubs to prosper, we need to adapt, step out of the shadows, capture their interest, and celebrate the art of magic.

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.

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 2025 in Houston.

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 2025/2026:

International President Elect – Mr. Jason Michaels

International Vice President – Mr. Keith Fields

International Treasurer – Mr. Charles Arkin

International Secretary – Ms. Simone Marron

Executive Committee Member 2025-2028 – Mr. Eric Schuster

Executive Committee Member 2025-2028 – Mr. Vincent Reres

Proposed Change to I.B.M. Bylaws



The following motion to change the Bylaws was voted on by the Board of Trustees at the midyear meeting in Houston, Texas on February 1, 2025.

MOTION:

That the existing:

Article II MISSION AND OBJECTIVES

Sec. 1. The mission of the organization shall be to promote fellowship and the advancement of magic as an entertainment art through premier publications, quality conventions, an international structure and progressive leadership.

Sec. 2. To accomplish this mission, the following objectives are established:

- A: Organize and associate those interested in the art of magic and its advancement without regard to race, color, religion, sex, or national origin;
- B. Advance the ethics of the magical fraternity by adopting a Code of Ethics;
- C. Publish a magazine;
- D. Hold an Annual Convention;
- E. Encourage humane treatment of animals used in magic presentations;
- F. Oppose public exposures of the principles of the art of magic; and
- G. Protect the magic creations of authors and inventors.

Be replaced with the following:

Article II MISSION AND OBJECTIVES

Sec. 1. The Mission of the I.B.M. is to foster a global community of magic enthusiasts and professionals, celebrating the art of magic as a dynamic form of entertainment. Through innovative publications, exceptional events, and visionary leadership, the I.B.M. aims to inspire creativity, elevate standards, and cultivate a welcoming environment to all.

Sec. 2. To achieve our mission, we are committed to:

- A. Bringing together and embracing everyone passionate about the art of magic every day.
- B. Supporting high ethical standards in the magical community through a Code of Ethics.
- C. Delivering world-class publications that inform and inspire.
- D. Hosting an annual convention to connect, educate and showcase the art of magic.

The motion carried unanimously.

This proposed change to the Bylaws will be voted on by the membership at the Annual Business Meeting in Houston, Texas, during the 2025 I.B.M. Convention.



Sick and Convalescent

I.B.M. MEMBERS

SICK AND CONVALESCENT COMMITTEE

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Thomas Henry *One-Man Parade*

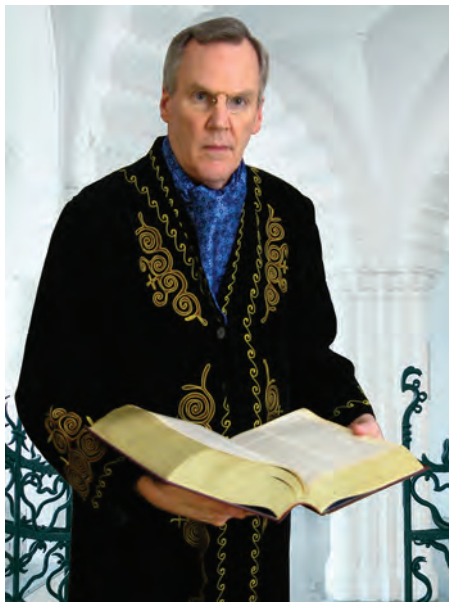
Written and Illustrated by Thomas Henry

Hello again, magic colleagues! This is my fifth One-Man Parade, and with so much new material to share with you, let me keep the typical biographical braggadocio to a minimum and simply call out a few dates relating to my trek through this wonderful craft of ours.

Cardinal events are that I started in magic as soon as I could read, around 1959, stood on stage next to Dunninger as a member of his audience committee in 1965, was a personal pupil of Bruno of Holland (Gerard Bruning) in 1966, and first joined the I.B.M. in 1967. My inaugural contribution to *The Linking Ring* ran in 2000, and my first One-Man Parade in 2005. An item from the latter won that journal's Best Mental Effect that year. The gorgeous plaque for this is proudly displayed above my magic bookshelves as a perpetual reminder of what our organization has always meant to me.

As for earning my daily crust, I put myself through graduate school singing bass and playing guitar in a campy fifties band, designed and built music synthesizers back when no one knew what they were, managed to keep myself nicely below the poverty level as a freelance writer of articles for popular electronics magazines, before eventually winding up a college mathematics professor.

Since retirement from the classroom a decade ago, my days are spent immersed in magic and its history, while setting aside a few hours each night to teach myself Latin.



ConSign

Here's a zippy precognition routine concerning the zodiac sign of some historical figure. Everything required can be carried in a shirt pocket, and moreover it can be performed standing up without a table. As such, it's well suited for extemporaneous demonstrations in everyday life besides more formal close-up shows.

EFFECT: "It's always kind of fun to try to figure out the zodiac sign of some famous person. Depending on the temperament, sometimes it's incredibly obvious. For example, Lord Byron was an Aquarius, and of course we'd guess it at once since that sign is notorious for defying convention. Well, I'd like to take this one step further and see if I can psychically anticipate the zodiac sign of some unknown person you'll throw at me."

So saying, the performer jots a note upon a small memo pad. Putting this aside for the moment, he hands the participant a face-down list of thirty notable figures from history with their birth dates.

He asks the participant to name any number from one to thirty, then refer to the list and find out to whom it corresponds. She notes the person and the birth date. For example, it might be Ralph Waldo Emerson, born on May 25, 1803.

With the aid of an astrology look-up card showing which zodiac signs go with dates of the year, the participant determines which it is for her choice. In the case of Emerson, it's Gemini.

When the performer opens his memo pad, it's seen that he had indeed predicted Gemini long before the participant made her decision.

REQUIREMENTS: The requirements are minimal for this speedy and direct presentation. First, you'll need a printed list of famous people and their birth dates. I designed a 5 by 7 inch sheet bearing them, adorned with portraits of several (**Fig. 1**). For clarity, here are the entries on that list:

Amelia Earhart — July 24, 1897

W. B. Yeats — June 13, 1865

Johann Sebastian Bach — March 21, 1685

Emily Dickinson — December 10, 1830

Immanuel Kant — April 22, 1724

William Blake — November 28, 1757

Benjamin Franklin — January 17, 1706

Walt Whitman — May 31, 1819

Queen Elizabeth I — September 7, 1533

Jane Austen — December 16, 1775

Jenny Lind — October 6, 1820

Joseph Conrad — December 3, 1857

Charles Darwin — February 12, 1809

Ralph Waldo Emerson — May 25, 1803

Theodore Roosevelt — October 27, 1858

Nicholas Rowe — June 20, 1674

Frédéric Chopin — March 1, 1810

Mark Twain — November 30, 1835

Ferdinand Magellan — February 4, 1480

John Milton — December 9, 1608

Meriwether Lewis — August 18, 1774

Harriet Beecher Stowe — June 14, 1811

Jesse James — September 5, 1847

William Cowper — November 26, 1731

Leonardo da Vinci — April 15, 1452

Marquis de Sade — June 2, 1740

James Watt — January 19, 1736

Louisa May Alcott — November 29, 1832

James McNeill Whistler — July 11, 1834

Thomas Hood — May 23, 1799



Figure 1

Then you'll need a look-up card showing the dates for the various zodiac signs. I like the one from my "The Four Humors," which appeared in *The Linking Ring*, Volume 103, Number 8, August 2023, pp. 83-85. But any list of signs with their dates will do, even a little pocket guide to astrology, or for that matter a horoscope column clipped from the newspaper.

Lastly, a simple two-way memo pad is required. It sports identical covers on the front and back so no one can discern which side is which (**Fig. 2**). Such a prop is much the same as used in traditional Add-a-No routines, but rather than switching lists of numbers, here it'll cover the two outs to be described shortly.



Figure 2

All you need do is buy two small memo pads (I found cheap ones on Amazon), then with needle-nose pliers unkink the spiral wire ends, disassemble both, and finally reassemble a single unit with the same cover front and back.

To prepare for the performance, on the first page of one of the sides, inscribe "Gemini" with whatever pen you'll be using and close up the pad. Remember which side is which.

SET-UP: The basic scheme upon which this is built evolved from an observation of Phil Goldstein in his "Please Sign In," *The Linking Ring*, Volume 62, Number 10, October 1982, pp. 85-86. In particular, the dates separating zodiac signs fall in the middle of the month. Thus, it's possible to hide certain repetitions required of this ranging force. For

example, the birth dates of Ralph Waldo Emerson and W. B. Yeats, falling in different months (May and June, respectively), don't really stand out as having much in common, especially when dispersed within the list. Nonetheless, each is a Gemini, which isn't readily apparent to the casual eye. And something similar applies to the Sagittarius people in the list. Thus, four different months inexorably lead to two zodiac signs only. We'll expand this further in just a moment so that the entire list of thirty can only produce these two results.

Goldstein's routine required cards, which didn't grab me. In this new incarnation, all action centers upon a single list, leading to easy stand-up use. This also has the pleasant side effect of eliminating the memory work and special card handling required of the original presentation.

Moreover, I completely revamped the days, months, and zodiac signs to better hide the underpinnings. On this list, all twelve zodiac signs are represented, as are all twelve months, and every day (except the eighth) appears as well. The distribution is more scattered now and the list will bear close scrutiny. Oh, I also altered it from pop celebrities to historical personages, which more fits my style.

Even though the list appears to be a completely random mix of months and days, the persons on the even numbers are guaranteed to be a Gemini or a Sagittarius. The double-sided memo pad handles either eventuality with aplomb. So it all comes down to: just make sure the participant chooses an even-numbered figure, then let the memo pad take care of the two-way out.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION: Begin by psychically sensing your prediction. Jot it down upon the memo pad as proof for later. Recall that one side of the pad already has Gemini pre-written on its first page which the audience is unaware of. So obviously, you now inscribe Sagittarius on the initial page of the other (blank) side of the memo pad. When done, close it up until the denouement. The two outs are now at your disposal.

Here comes the crucial ingredient which ties everything together: the words. You'll compel the participant to select a figure appearing at an even position in the list by means of an easy equivoque. First, set the stage with words similar to these:

*"To demonstrate my psychic abilities, I've got a rather interesting list of thirty notable figures from history, as you'll see in just a moment. I'll have you **pass over** all but one of them to arrive at a special person for this test. Let's try it like this. Now don't let me influence you, and make it your decision alone. Name any number from one to thirty."*

Note carefully the phrase in bold print (**pass over**) which you should slightly emphasize in some way. I do that by enunciating the two words more slowly. When the participant responds, the list is turned face up for the first time.

Take one of the two following paths depending upon her choice. Suppose she called out an even number, for instance twelve. Then say:

*"All right, you've chosen the twelfth person, **passing over** all the others, landing you on ... who is it?"*

In the event she called out an odd number, for instance nineteen, say:

*"All right, you've decided to **pass over** the first nineteen persons, landing you **next** on ... who is it?"*

In either case, make it a point to subtly give weight to the words in bold print somehow, thus linking the participant's actions back to what you originally uttered.

The participant names her person (guaranteed to lie on an even number), then with the aid of the look-up card which you helpfully provide, announces the zodiac sign of that person. It'll be either Gemini or Sagittarius, of course. Now it's just a matter of opening the memo pad to the required side showing that you had indeed predicted that very sign.

FINAL THOUGHTS: Apart from a new optimized list, in my opinion what makes this play even stronger is the memo pad

business. Writing the prediction in the presence of the participant seems far more personalized instead of pulling out a pre-fab message which could apply to any yahoo. Refer to "The Personal Prediction Principle" in my very first One-Man Parade, *The Linking Ring*, Volume 85, Number 6, June 2005, pp. 92-94 for a bit more on this powerful bit of stagecraft.

Eclipse

This routine featuring symbols could be scripted in several different ways, from parapsychology to storytelling to bizarrist. My presentation falls somewhere in the middle, treating the subject mysteriously, but more as an illustration of how modern-day instances of omens are still possible, if we but keep our eyes open. It's serious, but not too serious!

EFFECT: "I've always been fascinated by the history of omens, auguries, and sooth-saying. Perhaps the most famous instance is that of Julius Caesar when he was warned to beware the Ides of March. Or how about the appearance of Halley's comet portending the invasion of England by William the Conqueror? While those are certainly blockbusters, it's equally true even in our everyday lives humble indicators may come our way ... if we only take the time to notice them. In fact, just now I had a flash of insight ... a symbol that may mean something to you personally."

The performer takes up a notepad and pen, then jots a thought down. He indicates this was an inspiration which could have special significance. That message is set aside face down for the nonce.

He then brings forth a pack of Romany fortune-telling cards, suggesting they might be useful for confirming the accuracy of his prediction. These bear not only the usual suits and values of ordinary playing cards, but also various symbols such as the Shepherd, Dog, Cat, Key, Flames, etc.

The participant takes the pack and starts dealing them one at a time into a single face-down pile. To make things even more hap-

hazard, she's encouraged to grab cards from the top, middle or bottom, and even deal them out in clumps of two, three, or more. The performer instructs her to stop at any time, say after ten or twenty cards or so. The remainder of the pack is set aside and not used thereafter.

The performer pauses here to suggest life is always directed by opposing forces: light and dark, hot and cold, sweet and sour, etc. Taking her packet, the participant now deals the cards into two separate piles, back and forth, representing those extremes.

Declaring that the participant has arrived at her personal indicators, the performer bids her to take the top card of each packet for herself, but not to look at them just yet. The remainder is pushed aside.

The performer reminds the participant that he jotted down his impression of an omen way back at the start of this exploration, and then finally reveals it. On the notepad is written the single word: "Eclipse."

He goes on to explain that in some cultures eclipses were taken as inauspicious signs since darkness falls, the temperature drops, and owls begin to hoot. On the other hand, Italians have always viewed a solar eclipse as a beneficent token. In fact, these people have long believed planting seeds during an eclipse will produce the most brilliant and colorful flowers. So, this is no doubt an omen of a productive and vibrant future.

With that dramatic build-up, the participant turns her pair over, and lo! They bear the symbols of the Sun and Moon, the very orbs which kiss in the sky to create an eclipse.

REQUIREMENTS: You'll need a fortune-telling pack which has cards featuring the Sun and the Moon. Most do, including Tarot cards. But for this routine, I prefer the poker sized Gypsy Witch Fortune Telling Cards manufactured nowadays by U. S. Game Systems, Inc., and readily available from Amazon and elsewhere. In your performance, you may want to refer to them as Romany cards to avoid a word many people perceive as pejorative.

If these are new to you, then check out my "An Archaic Prop for New Mental Magic," *The Linking Ring*, Volume 104, Number 3, March 2024, pp. 52-57 to learn further ways to embellish their usefulness.

The only set-up is to have the Sun and Moon on top of the pack at the outset. A notepad and pen are also required.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION:

You've probably surmised that here is yet another application of the venerable Re-Deal Force. It matters not one whit this method is some 350 years old. It's still a genuine fooler, as it seems so fair, and virtually all the action takes place in the participant's hands. Just make sure to include sensible time misdirection between her two deals.

The handling should be clear from the description of the performance, above. But just to be sure, here's a schematic of the actions:

1. Bring forth the pack and shuffle it while chatting, maintaining the Sun and Moon on top. Riffle or overhand shuffles easily accommodate that.
2. Hand the pack to the participant.
3. She starts dealing a single face-down pile.
4. After she's dealt the first two cards sequentially, you can then tell her, as if in afterthought, to plop them down any way desired. Make the most of this.
5. The participant pushes the remainder aside.
6. To render the Re-Deal Force truly deceptive, pause for some sensible time misdirection at this juncture. The main thing is to break the flow between what the participant has just done and what's to come.
7. After that disconnect, the participant deals two piles in the usual way.
8. The Sun will be atop one talon, with the Moon upon the other. You're all set for the finale.

FINAL THOUGHTS: The method here is virtually identical to that employed in my "Ever the Twain Shall Meet," *The Linking Ring*, Volume 103, Number 8, August 2023, pp. 75-77. Yet the two effects perceived by the audience are as different as day and night (or Sun and Moon)!

Your Personal Number

What we have here is not a routine, but instead a well-known force completely reinvigorated for fresh creations of your own. It's particularly well suited to themes revolving around numerology or fortune-telling. An easy-to-make prop not only simplifies everything for the participant, but also imparts a generous amount of personalized meaning to the actions.

WHAT'S OLD: At the heart of this is a venerable method for forcing the number nine. Stated baldly, the digits of a secret number are rearranged. Then the original and scrambled versions are subtracted.

Next, the digits of that difference are totaled, yielding what's known as the *checksum*. If the checksum consists of more than one digit, those are added again as needed until eventually arriving at a solitary *digital root*. This will always be nine. (Actually, there is one other situation which could conceivably arise, and we'll see how to easily deal with that in just a moment).

Yawn ...

While it all works, it certainly comes across as pretty dull and procedural from the viewpoint of an innocent onlooker expecting entertainment, not an arithmetic lesson. And as wielded in the past, the method requires a fair amount of patter to ensure the participant doesn't mess things up. Worst of all, though, is that there's no inherent meaning behind all this rigmarole in the first place.

Now I'm fond of mathematical methods, but absolutely abhor number tricks. However, with a bit of cosmetic surgery, this old chestnut can be resuscitated to seem far less austere.

WHAT'S NEW: To give this force a new lease on life, I've reworked it so its impetus is words or thoughts, not numerical quantities. Furthermore, a simple prop renders the computational aspects less onerous or prone to misunderstanding. It's all quite painless now, and moreover makes dramatic sense since it draws upon "legitimate" numerology audience members may be familiar with.

Remember, this is the front-end of a rou-

tine; it'll unerringly yield the force value of nine, but then it's up to you decide how that result will chain to an interesting climax involving ancillaries such as books, pictures, cards, maps, lists, runes, dates on coins, etc.

REQUIREMENTS: The prop is nothing more than a printed sheet containing some blanks the participant will fill in with a pencil (**Fig. 3**). It's designed to look exactly like a form any numerologist or fortune-teller might employ. The labels and associated empty blanks and boxes give it an orderly appearance to ensure the participant won't become confused along the way. Some mystical mumbo-jumbo on the sheet rounds things out, just to impart a bit of authenticity.

We'll get to what it all means and how to use it in just a moment, but let's first take care of how to make the prop. You'll want to scan or photocopy **Figure 3**, then run off a bunch. I went with a size of 4.25 by 5.5 inches, meaning that you can fit four on a letter sized sheet, which is then quartered. Alter it as desired, or for that matter design a custom one using your computer and a word processor.

While you can certainly employ individual leaves, I decided to assemble a stack of forty into a tear-off pad for convenient use. In other words, this looks just like a typical desk notepad, bound at the top edge, and on a chipboard backing; after a sheet has been filled out, it can be torn off, exposing a fresh one for the next performance.

As it turns out, making such a notepad at home is easy, and I've created several different types for various routines. First, print off a stack of the sheets. Then you'll want some chipboard; this is a heavy, stiff cardboard. You can buy it new at craft stores, but I've always just saved the backings from spent writing tablets over the years and am set for life. The purpose, of course, is to make it easier for the participant to fill out the form when a hard surface isn't available.

Then you'll require some binding glue. This is called "padding compound." I got a bottle of it cheap on Amazon. It goes a long way, so you can also make custom or gag

YOUR PERSONAL NUMBER



Alphabetic Equivalents

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R
S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	

Choice

Chance

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Conjunct

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

- Jot down a word regarding your Choice.
- Transliterate to numerals by the chart above.
- Rearrange the digits guided only by Chance.
- Find the Conjunct by subtracting these two.
- Reduce by summing all digits of the Conjunct.
- Sum again to arrive at your personalized digital root.

Reduced

--	--

Root

--

Figure 3

memo pads for home and office use as well.

Finally, grab some sort of small paintbrush with which to apply the padding compound. I scrounged up a trim brush for interior room-painting from my cluttered basement.

The process is straightforward. Line up the stack of sheets and the chipboard backing, then grip them together with some clamp-type paper clasps. Brush the padding

compound along the top edge and let it dry. There are all sorts of websites and videos online explaining the steps visually if you need more detail. Just search for “how to make tear-off notepads.”

WORKING AND PRESENTATION:

With the prop in hand, here’s how it all plays out. Providing the participant with a pencil and the pad you just made, request that she jot down a word. This could be her

name, the name of a friend, that of a pet, a famous person, a city, a wish, a concern, etc. The sky's the limit; use whatever fits your theme. She'll inscribe this on the top line labeled **Choice**, with up to eight letters permitted, one per box.

Let's imagine the participant has jotted down the word "Change" as her concern. You're turned away, of course, and don't see what she's writing. Follow along with **Figure 3** as we proceed here.

So far, things are already nicely personalized. But now the participant transliterates that word to numerical form with the aid of the Alphabetic Equivalents chart on the pad. Note that it really is standard practice in "legitimate" numerology to have the querent write something down, then convert the letters to digits one-by-one according to a standard scheme. So, if you're looking for authenticity, you've got it! She'll inscribe that number on the second line of the **Choice** area, just below her word.

So at this point, she's scribbled:

C	H	A	N	G	E
3	8	1	5	7	5

Now to give meaning to what comes next, while also making things seem more impossible, say something like:

"Life is the interplay of fate and free will. The number you've just written down can be seen as fate, since the word representing your concern dictated it. In order to discover the number which is currently guiding you, however, we need to bring free will into the picture. I want you, right now, to rearrange the digits any way you'd like. This will be a perfect representation of free will."

So, she scrambles the digits any way desired and inscribes them on the line labeled **Chance**. Maybe it shakes out like this:

C	H	A	N	G	E
3	8	1	5	7	5
1	3	5	7	5	8

Now she's to subtract the smaller number from the larger, and enter the result in the **Conjunct** line. You explain that this represents the confluence of choice and chance.

Of course, the participant will probably want to use a calculator or smart phone app for this step, while arriving at:

C	H	A	N	G	E
3	8	1	5	7	5
1	3	5	7	5	8
2	4	5	8	1	7

Indicating that standard practice in numerology is to reduce a large number to its essence, have her create the checksum of the **Conjunct** line by summing the digits. Thus:

$$2 + 4 + 5 + 8 + 1 + 7 = 27$$

She writes that result in the box labeled **Reduced**. Finally, she combines those digits (2 + 7) to boil it down to a single quantity to be entered in the **Root** box. Here, as always, it's 9.

At this point, you've got the force number, and can proceed to your marvelous climax!

FINAL THOUGHTS: The mechanics of this force date back at least to Paul von Kalnassy, "Mnemotechnik: Gedanken-Er-raten," *Der Zauberspiegel*, Volume 4, Number 6, June 1904, pp. 98-99. A half-century later, it popped up in books for the general public by Blackstone, Walter B. Gibson, Joseph Leeming, and Martin Gardner.

Note that you can stop early and employ the number in the **Reduced** box (the checksum) as a ranging force if desired. The outcomes depend upon the length of the initial word, but each will always be a multiple of nine. For example, a two-letter word will always yield a checksum of 9. A three-letter word produces checksums of 9 or 18. Four-letter words generate 9, 18, or 27, five-letter words 9, 18, 27, or 36, and so on. Observe the pattern: these are increasing multiples of nine.

While unlikely to occur in practice, it's possible for a word to lead to zero. For example, try "Fox" and see what happens. Likewise, if the participant doesn't scramble the digits, but retains the order before subtracting, obviously she'll also arrive at zero. Any self-respecting prophet would explain that nought holds no significance in numerology, and so the participant should try again.

AnyGram

Here follows an entirely new application of an ancient gambit. What has previously found a home in rather pedestrian number tricks, takes on fresh life as a mystic design divination.

EFFECT: Instead of psychically perceiving digits, try this on for size: “I sense you are home-loving, perhaps living within your own shell at times, are protective of feelings you rarely reveal to others, and have the strong characteristic of tenacity, much like the humble seashore creature, the Crab. Yes, that explains the image which came through to me. The Crab!”

So saying, the performer unveils a sketchpad previously drawn upon, revealing an idealized representation of a Crab ... to enthusiastic applause, naturally.

BACKGROUND: The method at the heart of this is a couple centuries old, but here it’s employed completely differently. In a nutshell, we’ll turn the useful cyclic number 142857

into something visual. Even better, this revised handling totally obscures the midstream clues common in older renditions, while also dispensing with the need for a gaming die.

Of course, everything’s still based upon the remarkable properties of that cyclic number. If this is new to you, all you need know is that the product of it with the numbers one through six results in a simple rotation: 142857, 285714, 428571, 571428, 714285, and 857142. If you’d like to learn more of its history and traditional uses, refer to my “The Story of Cyclic Numbers in Magic,” *The Linking Ring*, Volume 104, Number 2, February 2024, pp. 66-72.

REQUIREMENTS: Apart from the usual requisites of pencil, paper and perhaps a calculator, the main prop is a 7 by 9 inch placard easily created with a home computer and printer (**Fig. 4**). Print this out on card stock, then cover the front with clear, self-adhesive laminating film. In this way, the participant can scrawl upon it with a dry-erase marker, which is also added to the prop list.

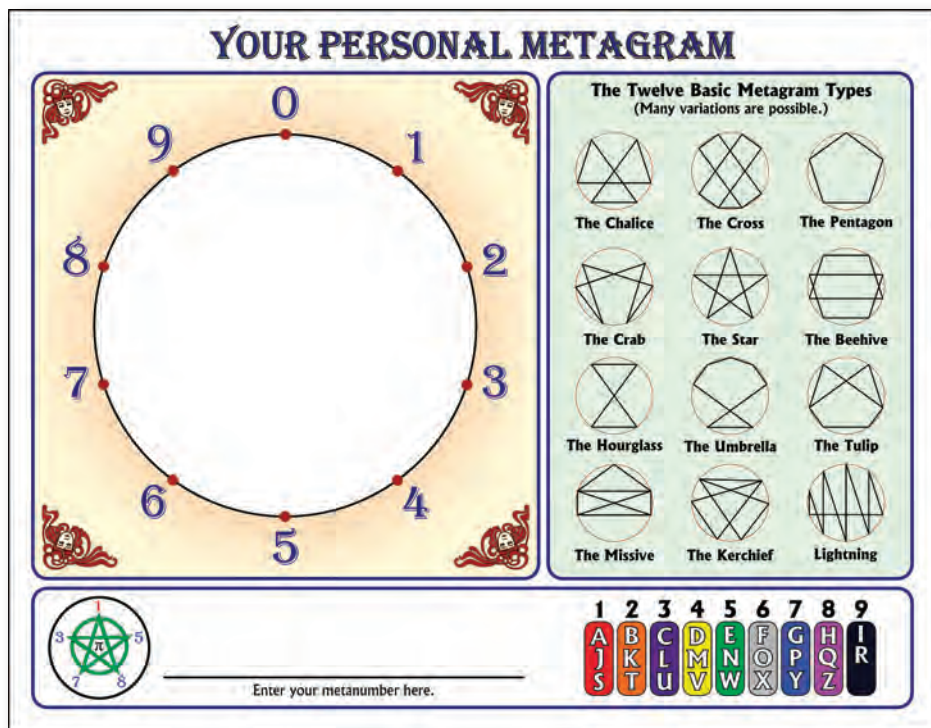


Figure 4

SET-UP: There are four main areas of interest on the placard which we'll look at individually as we anticipate the handling. Toward the bottom-right is a table showing the usual Alphabetic Equivalents; you'll recognize this from before. The participant will begin by thinking of some name, word, or concern, then convert its letters to digits by means of this chart.

Eventually, however, she'll turn this into a so-called *Metanumber* (a nonsense term I made up) which is then inscribed on the line near the bottom left. As we'll soon see, this number can only be one of the six possible rotations mentioned earlier.

On the left is a clock face or large circle whose circumference is populated by the digits zero through nine. Using the marker, the participant will sequentially draw line segments connecting the digits of her Metanumber to arrive at a geometric figure, which we'll call the *Metagram*.

On the right of the placard is an interpretation guide, assigning names to the twelve basic figures supposedly possible: Chalice, Cross, Pentagon, Crab, Star, Beehive, Hourglass, Umbrella, Tulip, Missive, Kerchief, Lightning (Fig. 5). Of course, only the Crab can result, thanks to the magic of the cyclic number force.

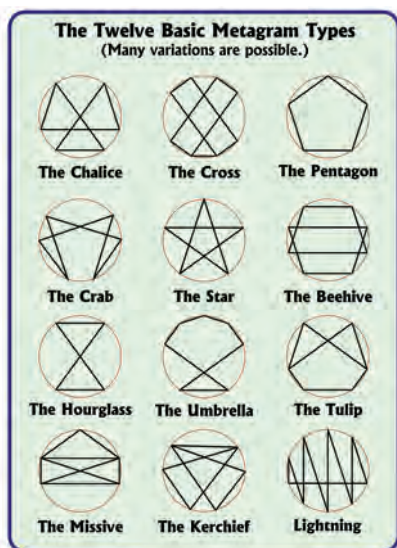


Figure 5

WORKING AND PRESENTATION:

Refer back to "Your Personal Number," above, and you'll quickly see what's going on at the outset. The participant jots down a word and transliterates it to digits. She then scrambles these to make a new number based upon chance. Subtracting the smaller from the larger, she comes up with a result combining the essence of the two.

Then she tots up the digits to create the checksum. Here's where it gets cool. If her original word was seven letters or less, that checksum can only be 9, 18, 27, 36, 45, or 54. And if any of these outcomes is multiplied into 15873, the only possible result is one of the six cyclic number rotations described earlier!

Fine. But what about that number 15873, I hear you ask?

At the lower-left of the placard is a mystic symbol, a five-pointed star decorated with those very figures. We'll simply portray this as the (fictitious) Sigil of Pythagoras, claiming it bears the imprimatur of antiquity. That's an easy fib to make, and within the presentation rapidly recedes from prominence since the participant is apt to be more focused upon her own number.

As a brief synopsis of the method, then, here 'tis: 15873 when multiplied by 9, 18, 27, 36, 45, or 54, respectively, is 142857, 285714, 428571, 571428, 714285, or 857142. And any of the latter will trace out a Metagram of the Crab on the circle when the digits are connected by line segments.

PRESENTATION: All right, let's get this show on the road! I'll sketch out the presentational sequence here, but it's up to you to impart theatrical meaning. Here are the steps:

1. Begin by drawing your prediction (the Crab) on an artist's sketchpad and set it aside until the conclusion.
2. Hand the participant a notepad and pencil.
3. She jots down a word representing her question or concern.
4. She then transliterates that to a number, via the chart of Alphabetic Equivalents.
5. That number is next rearranged.

6. The original and scrambled numbers are now subtracted.

7. Finally, the digits of the difference are added up, forming the checksum. Observe that all these steps could be nicely guided along using the form from “Your Personal Number” if desired.

8. And now the key step. Request that the participant multiply the Sigil of Pythagoras, 15873, by her checksum. With the dry-erase marker, she inscribes this as her Metanumber on the placard.

9. Finally, she draws line-segments on the clock, connecting the digits of her Metanumber, thus creating her personal Metagram, a rectilinear mystic symbol (Fig. 6).



Figure 6

And then it's on to the climax. Ask the participant to refer to the placard to see which of the twelve basic types her Metagram most closely resembles. It'll be the Crab, of course, and then you reveal the sketch you made at the outset.

FINAL THOUGHTS: In step 3, above, the participant jotted down a concern. If the word used by the participant is seven letters or shorter, then the final result is guaranteed to be one of the first six multiples of nine as required. So, for example, any of Career, Work, Romance, Family, Parents, Friends, Wealth, Money, Change, Worry, etc., are all suitable.

However, if the participant insists upon a longer word, that's okay too. After she finds the checksum as usual, merely ask her to reduce it once again, which will give a smaller multiple of nine. And so you're back on track.

Note that it's just possible for the participant to arrive at zero for her Metanumber if she fails to scramble the digits or if all digits are the same. No problem. Simply indicate the oracle has nothing to foretell about that word and have her decide upon another one.

Oh, about the label: several decades back in the height of New Age frenzy, the notion of Enneagrams as a means of self-enlightenment was all the craze. Originally invented by famed occultist G. I. Gurdjieff (1867-1949), these too were glyphs framed around connecting numbers on a circle. I liked the image-versus-digit idea, but didn't want to use the actual name Enneagram on the off-chance I bumped into practitioners knowing more of it than I, so decided to frame this as Metagrams. Besides I might want to start my own cult someday...

Zener Gleaner

This is an impromptu, no gimmick experiment for two participants using Zener (ESP) cards. The theme concerns subliminal cues, body language and clairvoyance.

SET-UP: You'll need an ordinary Zener pack consisting of five each of the usual five symbols. In addition, a twenty-sixth card which is not part of the symbol set is required. Think of it as a Joker if you want.

For example, I use the traditional Haines Zener pack which includes an instruction card spouting some gobbledygook explaining how to test a person's extrasensory perception. Since it's mostly white, it stands out distinctly from the other twenty-five. But any oddball card will serve, even a humble double-blank. Going forward, let's call it the indicator.

For this routine, it'll be convenient to describe the method and performance together, and put you in the driver's seat.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION: “Psychologists tell us that we evince subconscious cues all the time, and that there's really no such thing as a poker face. Whether it's a twitch of the eyelids, increased respiration or slight perspiration over the lip, our bodies reveal quite a bit about what we're thinking. I'd like to try a test along these

lines with both of you. Are you game for that?"

Assuming an affirmative response, bring out the pack, show it around, and place the indicator card aside for a moment. Explaining that a Zener pack consists of five each of five symbols, you set out representatives face up. Lay down this row of five different symbols near your side of the table; that'll leave room for the participants to deal their cards later. These five are for display only and don't figure otherwise in the method. (But they do surreptitiously motivate another aspect of the handling, as we'll see).

Set the remainder of the pack up front; it now contains four each of the five symbols, or twenty cards total.

Instruct the first participant, a gentleman say, to mix the cards any way he wants. He then sets the pack down. Now give the indicator card to the second participant, a lady, say. Ask her to cut off about half of the pack, insert the indicator card there, and replace the cut-off portion on top. Emphasize how fair everything has been.

You now explain to both that the indicator card designates two choices. The gentleman is to look at the symbol immediately above it, while the lady spies the one below it. If you trust your audience, you could actually let them look for themselves. But it may be faster and safer to hold the cards up yourself and have the participants peer at their respective symbols. In that case, do it all in a dainty fashion, and avert your vision to lend confidence you're not peeking or pulling any shenanigans.

They each memorize their symbol. By the way, you genuinely don't know these, and in fact never will know what they are or where they are until the very end. However, it'll soon appear otherwise!

Now perform the well-known Reverse Faro Shuffle two times in a row, apparently mixing the cards. This move has appeared in print many times within *The Linking Ring* and elsewhere, but here it is again for any newcomers.

You'll be holding the packet of twenty-one cards, say in your left hand, face down

and parallel to the table. Slide the top card directly to your awaiting right-hand fingers and thumb. Then push the next card, which is still underneath the one you just moved, to the right but nudge it forward as well so that it's up-jogged. Now push the third card straight to the right; it'll lie behind the initial card. Push the next one over, up-jogging again. It'll wind up behind the second card. Continue in this fashion, up-jogging every other card until the packet's consumed. For emphasis, the odd cards go straight over, while the even cards are up-jogged.

Square things laterally if needed, then strip out the up-jogged cards as a unit, slapping them atop the other packet still in your left hand. Then do it all over again, so two times total.

Practice the Reverse Faro Shuffle until you can prosecute it smoothly and accurately while chatting away. You don't want to lose track of any cards during the process, but certainly ought to perform it competently, sans grimaces or tortured concentration. And since it's a repetitive move, consider giving thought to the meter, tempo, and rhythm.

Remember, the goal is to make it seem as though you're mixing the cards in a carefree way while conversing. After the second iteration, cut the pack as desired to the table and complete the cut.

A little bit of acting is required now. You suddenly realize that the indicator card is no longer needed. So remove and discard it, nonchalantly cutting the pack and completing the cut at that point as you do so. Set the pack down again. The participants' cards are now positioned where they need to be.

For the initial test, have the gentleman (your first participant) cut off about half of the pack for himself; the lady gets the remainder. Claim that you can read his body language and psychologically discern when he's seen his card. Have him deal his packet a card at a time into a face-up pile. In gambler's terms, he'll be doing a stud deal. Watch for the fifth symbol he lays down—that's his! Remember it, but let him keep going as if you're uncertain. Just as important, mentally

count the number of cards he deals total. You'll need to know that for the lady's half of the test.

When he's done dealing, and after a suitable build up, reach into the now face-up pile and extract his symbol. Success!

Let's pause at this moment for an important bit of business. When you're removing the gentleman's chosen symbol – let's say it's the star – from the face-up packet, keep the following very important point in mind. Suppose there's a star at positions two and five. The method tells you, of course, that the fifth symbol is the one he actually looked at earlier. *But he doesn't know that!* Remember, you're supposedly reading his subconscious reactions to the symbols; if anything he would have unwittingly reacted to the star at position two. So that's the one you should grab. This'll keep you on your toes, but what do you expect in a demonstration requiring no sleight-of-hand?

Back to the action. Averring that you feel confident now, you'll try a second test with the lady. But this time to make things more difficult you'll have her deal her cards face down into a single pile. Neither of you is able to see the faces of the cards so the only explanation would have to be second-sight.

Now you still don't know which symbol is hers, but you do know where it is. Here's how. Remember the number of cards that were in the gentleman's packet? Subtract that from sixteen; the lady's choice will lie at that position. So, when she deals the cards out, one at a time into a face-down pile, stop her just when she gets to that point. Have her announce her symbol, then turn the card over to show you're correct. Another success, and under sightless conditions!

Just to make sure you're clear on this, suppose you had silently counted nine cards in the gentleman's packet. Halt the lady when she has dealt out seven cards (16–9).

FINAL THOUGHTS: While utilized in a completely different way, the machinery here derives from Charles T. Jordan's "Double Prediction" which you'll find in Jean Hugard's *Encyclopedia of Card Tricks*, (New York: Max Holden, 1937), p. 85.

However, for a more thorough write-up, let me recommend the late Karl Fulves' *Charles Jordan's Best Card Tricks*, (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1992), pp. 6-7. Be aware that the even cards are up-jogged in my rendition.

Jordan originally employed this to demonstrate precognition. Rather weak is that his approach comes across as repetitive demonstrations of the same phenomenon. But in this new guise, the second phase builds in apparent difficulty.

And there's a further theatrical improvement. Even with all the variations described by Fulves, the audience is never given a good reason why only a portion of a playing card deck is used. But with a Zener pack, after removing five cards (one of each symbol) to serve as exemplars, we're automatically left with the necessary twenty. Voilà! An instant rationale!

The Uno-Nueve-Diez Force

Here's a really carefree force worked around the cards from the popular game UNO. You can find these online or in most grocery or department stores. It's a pack of colored number cards, featuring the digits 0 through 9 in red, yellow, green, and blue. Many standard card magic methods can be adapted to them. In this case, we'll work up a neat ranging force yielding either the number 9 or 10.

REQUIREMENTS AND SET-UP:

Lay your hands on an UNO pack. The game comprises 112 cards, but here we need only 38 of them; the remaining ones are not used. In particular, you'll require a set of the numbers 1 through 9 in each of the four colors, and also the 0 cards in blue and yellow.

Now stack the cards according to the following scheme: 0, 9, 1, 8, 2, 7, 3, 6, 4, 5, 5, 4, 6, 3, 7, 2, 8, 1, 9, 0, 9, 1, 8, 2, 7, 3, 6, 4, 5, 5, 4, 6, 3, 7, 2, 8, 1, 9. The colors are irrelevant, so scatter 'em helter-skelter. This really imparts a random appearance which obscures the pattern nicely (**Fig. 7**).

Keep the pack encircled by a rubber band or within a wallet of some sort and you're ready to go.



Figure 7

WORKING AND PRESENTATION:

All right, the curtain has risen. Bring out the pack, and while warming up the crowd, apparently mix the cards as you chat. A Charlier Haymow false-shuffle is ideal here since there are fewer cards than usual and they're bridge-sized. The participant may also deliver straight cuts to the pack, since the stack is cyclic.

When it's force time, you've got several options. You could fan the cards out and ask the participant simply to withdraw two adjacent ones. As mentioned, upon adding up the numbers on those cards, the result is guaranteed to be either 9 or 10.

That seems a little contrived to me, so maybe it would be better to have her cut the cards and take the top two of either talon. Or, for additional obfuscation, she could deal two piles, stopping whenever desired (even if of unequal sizes), taking the top card from each. In any of these cases, it might appear more natural to call upon two participants, each receiving a card which they eventually combine to form a total. I'm sure there are myriad possibilities, for this method really is pretty open-ended.

But will the stack be noticed, you might ask? Well, thanks to the confusion of colors, the fact the numbers sometimes go up and sometimes go down, and that the pack itself may be legitimately cut as often as desired, the secret should pass muster even among keen observers.

FINAL THOUGHTS: You've no doubt recognized this as the old 14-15 force simply reworked for UNO cards. The germ of this with playing cards harks back at least to A.

C. P. Medrington, "Pack to Force the Number 14 or 28," *A Dozen of Magic For Practical Conjurers*, (no place: self-published, 1917), pp. 31-32. He employed the notion of 14's-complements, i.e., pairs which always sum to 14.

Thereafter, it evolved to 14's- and 15's-complements, at the hands of H. S. Paine, Walter B. Gibson, Theodore Annemann and others. Nowadays, most magicians will recall it as the seventh number force in Annemann's *202 Methods of Forcing*, (New York: Max Holden, 1933), pp. 23.

I've always felt this scheme suffers when carried out with an ordinary deck; asking an innocent bystander to visualize court cards as the numbers 11, 12, and 13 seems a bit of an imposition. But with UNO cards running 0 through 9, it all makes perfect sense with no mental translation demanded of the audience.

Strictly Bi the Book

I've always been a fan of ranging forces since they're so carefree and nonchalant. Rather than rigidly constraining the participant to a single target, as in a definite force, here we're perfectly content if any of several choices is made, knowing that a battery of outs will accommodate the upshot, whatever it might be. Hence, a great sense of freedom is on parade.

What follows is a method for handling two-way outs in a ranging force, suitable for many different precognition routines of your own invention. It's very fair looking.

REQUIREMENTS: All that's required is a pocket guide matching the theme of your routine, and a bookmark. The pocket guide is used for the final reveal; eventually the participant will open it to the designated page, and upon reading it, finds that it perfectly describes what she had merely thought of earlier.

In the past, I've used pocket guides on astrology, numerology, cartomancy and even a neat little portable atlas containing maps of the world's countries. Other possibilities might include a booklet of quotations, celebrity birth dates, favorite poems, etc. At the conclusion, I've always found participants

delight in thumbing through the guide. So, there's an entrancing tactility to this approach, as well. For even more ideas along these lines, see my "In Praise of Pocket Guides," *The Linking Ring*, Volume 104, Number 7, July 2024, pp. 62-67.

As for the bookmark, rather than being fabricated of cardboard, cloth, or leather, you'll want one designed as a clip. These are made of springy metal, and slide over the page in much the same way a paperclip might. It could be fancy, but the one I use is more subdued, crafted to look like a cup of coffee. The important thing is, it shouldn't bear any decoration differentiating the front from the back. Mine is just flat black, with no ornamentation whatsoever. Incidentally, this was a birthday gift from ages back, but I believe it to have come from the local Barnes & Noble store.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION:

To make things concrete, let's suppose you've chosen a suitable pocket guide for your routine, and that the ranging force invoked at the outset pertains to the contents of pages 23 and 24. (All that's required is that the force pages be consecutive, with the smaller page number odd).

Now what makes this kind of metal bookmark different from others is that it hangs onto the page it's clipped to. That is, since it moves when the leaf is turned over, one can naturally open the guide to either the odd preceding page, or to the even numbered subsequent page (**Fig. 8**). There's no built-in orientation, so whichever way you open the book at the mark appears perfectly natural. As far as the audience is concerned, you simply parted the pages at a specific point, while handing the guide to the participant, with the bookmark locked in place.

Even better, the force pages are back-to-back so it's impossible to see both at once. Thus, the two outs are perfectly veiled.

Sticking with our example, let's see how this plays out in a hypothetical performance. For the sake of argument, suppose you're using an astrology pocket guide and that page 23 (a right-hand page) concerns the zodiac sign Leo, while page 24 (the following

left-hand page) is all about Virgo.



Figure 8

Earlier in the routine you invoked a ranging force guaranteed to yield either Leo or Virgo, but you don't know which just yet. Nearing the conclusion of your routine, the participant finally announces to the audience which sign she had focused upon earlier.

Your patter could then run:

"As amazing as it might seem, last night while reading this little guide, I stopped dead in my tracks on a certain page, thinking it could very well be a presentiment of today. In fact, I marked that page, and realize now it was a premonition of what would transpire when we met."

At which point, you open the book (left-to-right or right-to-left, as required), and hand it to the participant, asking her to recite aloud for the others to hear where your nighttime reading had halted you.

To recap:

1. This is a two-way out, for a pair of consecutive pages.
2. But those pages are never seen simultaneously.
3. Unlike a cardboard bookmark, the metal one remains fixed upon a single leaf of the book.

4. Opening the pages either way appears natural, since there's no inherent orientation implied by the clip-on bookmark.

5. After opening, simply hand the book to the participant for her to read the outcome aloud.

FINAL THOUGHTS: This makes a welcome alternative to the rather shop-worn double envelope or Himber wallet for two-way outs. Everything can be handled by the participant, and the back-story of why you slipped the bookmark on in the first place (because of a premonition) comes across as personalized.

Catchword

While words are central to this test of telepathy, it's not how they're spelled that matters, but rather how they appear when rendered in a sketch.

EFFECT: "The way artists see the world always amazes me. I'm constantly boggled how they're able to depict a thought or an emotion on canvas so economically. I mean, most of us think with words, but the artist is able to convey so much more visually, going way beyond what spoken language is capable of. Well, my artistic skills are a bit punk but still, let's see if I'm able to render an image you'll mentally transmit to me."

The performer brings forth a set of five vocabulary cards, the sort of thing that might be used in the schoolroom to quiz students on new words. These sport over six hundred different entries varying in difficulty.

The participant is invited to select a vocabulary card from which she'll focus upon a single word. To ensure her choice is random, she uses a pair of dice to arrive at a number while the performer is turned away.

Referring to the word at that position, she tries to visualize what it represents and mentally project its image to the performer.

Turning back, the performer concentrates, then grabs an artist's tablet and marker. After suitable histrionics, he makes a sketch of the picture psychically coming through to him. It may appear a trifle simplistic, nonetheless it's an unmistakable visual representation of the participant's very choice.

REQUIREMENTS: Required for this routine are two ordinary dice, a pad and pen-

cil (or calculator), a sketchpad and marker, and five vocabulary lists printed on colored card stock. The latter appear to be something like worksheets for students to learn new words. Each card bears 125 numbered entries ranging in spelling difficulty, so there are 625 words total ... a pretty varied collection (**Fig. 9**).



Figure 9

As mentioned, each card is a different color: white, pink, orange, yellow and green. Appearing on each are eleven words particular to that set, at these important numbered locations: 32, 41, 50, 59, 68, 77, 86, 95, 104, 113, 122. The words of each are:

White: circle, disk, sphere, orb, hoop, ring, wheel, zero, halo, annulus, round.

Pink: cube, box, crate, package, squares, block, carton, parcel, case, hexahedron, dice.

Orange: barrel, can, tube, drum, Coca-Cola, wastebasket, cylinder, pillar, column, pipe, tumbler.

Yellow: cloverleaf, propeller, flower, fan, rose, helicopter, asterisk, eggbeater, blossom, daisy, bloom.

Green: spiral, snailshell, coil, galaxy, spring, hurricane, vortex, swirl, whirlpool, curl, whorl.

I like to think of these as *visual synonyms*. Note that all eleven words within a set can be roughly depicted by the same visual representation once sketched out. The words in the other null locations can be whatever you want since they'll never be chosen.

So make up some vocabulary cards accordingly using a word processor, print them out on colored card stock, and you're all set.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION:

Before we get into the actions, let's clarify the two secrets at work here. First, the dice

are used to implement a ranging force. In particular, by a ruse I dubbed the Rearranged Dice Principle, the participant is constrained to the eleven numbers mentioned above. If you'd like to learn more about this force and its many useful variations, check out my article of the same name which appeared in *The Linking Ring*, Volume 103, Number 11, November 2023, pp. 56-60.

And as noted, each group of visual synonyms can be portrayed by a single simple sketch (**Fig. 10**). The notion is that the participant is concentrating upon one of the key words guaranteed by the Rearranged Dice Principle. As she mentally projects its image to you, you stylistically render that thought on an artist's pad with a marker. Your picture matches within the normal limitations of telepathy and seedy draftsmanship!

Very little memory work is required. All you need recall is which of the five images in **Figure 10** goes with each color, and you're home free.

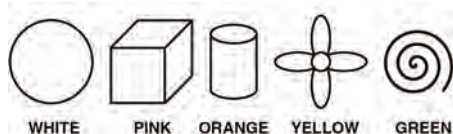


Figure 10

We can now pull everything together to see how to launch the performance. You may want to begin the routine with a quick spiel on how we process words versus images, maybe referring to that old theory concerning hemispheres of the brain.

Offer the vocabulary cards to your participant and have her select one, setting the others aside. The instant you spot the color of her chosen card, you'll know the image to be sketched and it's all downhill thereafter.

Handing the dice to the participant, you'll now force one of those eleven special numbers. Just follow these steps:

1. The participant rolls two dice.
2. She rearranges them in either order to form a two-digit number. Make a big deal out of this freedom.
3. She turns them both over completely, revealing the previously hidden spots.

4. The participant again rearranges the dice in either order to make a new two-digit number. Emphasize that she's completely in charge of things.

5. And finally she adds that pair of two-digit numbers to arrive at a final result. One of the eleven force results is assured.

After the participant pushes the dice aside, you turn back and take up the sketchpad and pen. Ask her to focus upon the word at her number and telepathically transmit it to you. Since you know the color of her chosen vocabulary card, you'll know which image to sketch, confirming your uncanny talent for telepathy.

FINAL THOUGHTS: Synonyms have been exploited in mental magic for at least seventy years now, perhaps starting with Ed Mellon's marketed effect "Synonymental." I've not seen his original routine, but you can find it explained in Richard Osterlind's video *Easy to Master Mental Miracles*, Volume 4, (Tahoma, California: L&L Publishing, 2004).

The late Larry Becker also employed synonyms in his "Reflecta-Thot" and "Symbolic" which appeared respectively in *Larry Becker's World of Super Mentalism*, (Brooklyn: D. Robbins & Co., Inc., 1998), pp. 48-54 and *The Best of Book Two: Larry Becker's World of Super Mentalism*, (New York: Magico Magazine, 1989), pp. 23-25.

I've long been captivated by visual synonyms in which images are the focus. My first stab along these lines appeared in "Synonimagery," *Hidden Numerical Forces*, (Orlando, Florida: Leaping Lizards Magic, 2006), pp. 24-27, 159-163. The present rendition stems from that, but now uses dice to rapidly constrain the participant's choice.

Just recently, Chris Wardle proposed the devious notion of color synonyms in his exceedingly clever "Teddy Time," *The Linking Ring*, Volume 103, Number 10, October 2023, pp. 84-85.

Send comments and appreciations to:

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The Card Corner

MIKE POWERS

This month's selection comes from my good friend Terry Hedges. Terry has contributed a number of items to the Card Corner, including "Subliminal Persuasion," "The Witches Do All the Work," and "Split Decision." I cornered Terry at the MagiFest in January and filmed him performing this little gem. You can see his performance at www.mallofmagic.com/cardcorner. Scroll down to the bottom for the link. As you'll see, Terry gets a lot of mileage out of a blank-faced card and some fairly easy sleight of hand. So, enjoy "Imagination Deck."

Imagination Deck

By Terry Hedges

REQUIREMENTS: A single blank-faced card whose back matches your deck.

SET-UP: Position the blank-facer at the face of the deck. You're ready to rock.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION: You will first "prove" that the deck consists of fifty-two blank-face cards. The method Terry employs on the video is the Reverse Fan* (Moves tagged with "*" have video instruction at www.mallofmagic.com/themoves, password "marlo7d."). Some cardicians can achieve a very full fan without flashing any indices. I have to limit my Reverse Fan to about two-thirds of my normal fan's circumference. If I'm not careful, an index might flash, breaking the illusion of full blankness. To the extent that you can perform a Reverse Fan, this is the way to go. It really looks like the deck contains fifty-two blank-facers.

The alternative is to use the Hindu Shuffle sequence often used to make a deck seem to be, say, red when in reality only the top card has a red back. I have posted a short video tutorial of this technique at www.mallofmagic.com/themoves as Hindu Shuffle Bluff*. Many of you are already familiar with this technique but if not, check out the tutorial.

As you show the deck to be all blank-faced cards, say, "As you can see, they've had some quality-control problems at the playing card company. But that does allow us to think of this as an 'imagination deck.'" As you're saying this line, flash the face of the deck (blank card) and then go into a face-down Overhand Shuffle*, ultimately running the last few cards singly so that you end up with the blank-facer as the top card of the face-down deck. Alternatively, you could Double Cut* it from bottom to top, but shuffling is the best way to achieve the needed condition.

Continue with the presentation. "So, what card do you like?" Let's say the spectator says, "Seven of Diamonds (7D)." Begin spreading the cards toward yourself as you search for the named card. Continue, "So if I go through the blank cards and find a card that I imagine is the 7D, it would be this card." Upjog the named card and flip the deck face down into the left hand without flashing the face of the card. Rotate the card out of the center (**Fig. 1**) and place it, face down on top as you grab a left fourth finger break under the blank card, now second from top, in preparation for a Double Turnover*.

Flip over the double showing a blank card

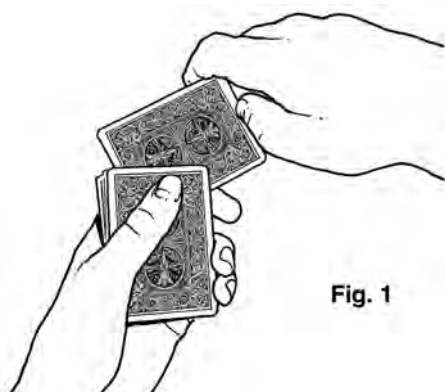


Fig. 1

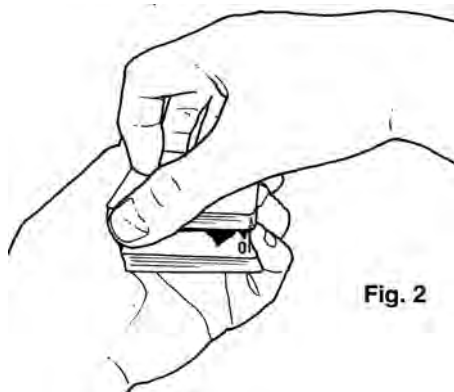


Fig. 2

as you reinforce the premise by saying, “Yes. The Seven of Diamonds.” Flip the double face down and deal the top card (7D) face down onto the table. Now, spread the cards toward yourself and find a contrasting card, say the QH. Upjog the card as before and again flip the deck face down into the left hand and repeat the previous process of rotating the card out and placing it face down on top. Again, perform a double turnover, showing a blank-faced card as you say, “This time I took out one of my favorites, the Queen of Hearts.” Flip the double face down and deal the top card (QH) face down next to the tabled 7D.

Holding the deck in left-hand dealing position, run the top few cards singly and then shuffle off. This positions the blank card, once again, at the face of the deck. Flip the deck face up, being careful to keep it squared so no faces or indices show. Now repeat your initial method for making the deck seem 100 percent blank. The Reverse Fan is the best way. That’s what Terry does in the video.

Square up and then open the deck slightly at the inner edge. Secretly peek the card you cut to (**Fig. 2**). Hold a left fourth-finger break above the card. Once you have peeked the card, get a few moments of time misdirection and then say, “I should be able to create the image of any card using my imagination, say the Ten of Spades.” Now use the right hand to control the cards above the break, moving that block inward about half the length of a card. This exposes the

face of the 10S, the card you just named (**Fig. 3**). The fingers of your right hand rest on the face of the 10S. This allows you to move the right hand, with its block of cards, forward as you push the 10S to an outjogged position (**Fig. 4**). Rotate the card from the deck and place it face up on top of the blank-faced card. You’re now set for the big ending.

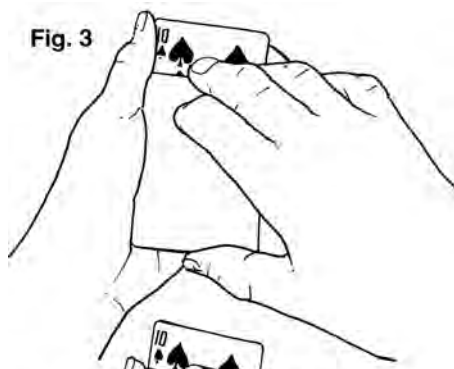


Fig. 3



Fig. 4

Ask the spectator to name any other card. Spread the deck, keeping the first few cards in a block so the blank-facer doesn’t show

in the spread. Say, “That would be one of these.” Finally, reach down to the two tabled cards, the 7D and the QH. Turn them face up one by one as you say, “And, of course, the 7D and the QH.”

FINAL THOUGHTS: A lot of visual magic takes place here in a short amount of time. This is a great trick for a strolling set.

If you don’t have access to a blank-faced card, send me a self-addressed, stamped envelope, and I’ll send you a few Bicycle blank-facers. Specify red/blue backs. Send to: Mike Powers, 1701 Monroe Street, La Porte, Indiana, 46350.

CHALLENGE #1: What could you do with two blank-facers in the deck?

CHALLENGE #2: Think of alternative ways to end with the normal deck. For example, you could turn the deck face down and bottom palm the blank-facer. Then ask the spectator to name any card. Hand her the deck as you say, “You could have named any card. See if the card you named is now real.” Big surprise when she finds the entire deck now has printed faces. Be creative.

Mike Powers

mpowers@mallofmagic.com

BAMBOOZLERS

Diamond Jim Tyler

BONE CRACKING CANDY

GAG: As you bend backwards, those near you hear the bones in your back make an awful cracking noise. Or when you grab your head and twist it, everyone hears your neck make a horrible bone-popping sound. This gag sends shivers up people’s spines!

SECRET: All you need is a piece of hard candy and some good teeth. Most restaurants have some type of mint dish near the entrance. On the way in or out I secretly put a piece of their complimentary candy in my pocket. When the time seems right, I’ll slyly unwrap the candy and pop it into my mouth. To set up the gag I’ll usually make a groaning noise like my back or neck is bothering me. Then I’ll chomp down on the candy with my back teeth as I pretend to pop my back or neck. I’ve had people scream upon hearing the horrible noise that it makes. I have found that peppermints work the best.

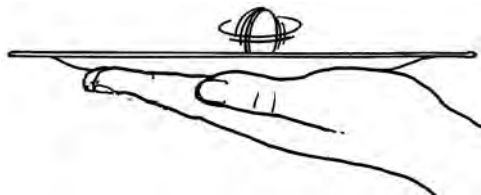
If you have bad teeth (or any doubts about this gag), then do not try this on any day that ends with a Y.



Excerpted from *Bamboozlers: The Book of Bankable Bar Betches, Brain Beggars, Belly Busters, and Bewitchery* by Diamond Jim Tyler.
www.djtyler.com.



Coin Spinning Mystery



I so do delight in performing this quick effect at outdoor barbeques and gatherings. Have you ever found yourself at a gathering, waiting in line to access the scrumptious food spread? Maybe the line is not moving as quickly as you would desire. So to pass the time, you offer to display your amazing magical abilities with your line mates.

EFFECT: Reach into your pocket and remove a coin. In this case, it will be a Canadian quarter. You carefully balance the coin, on its edge, on the centre of the paper plate (which is a tricky task in itself). The magician casts a wonderous spell and with the tip of their finger, strikes the surface of the coin along its edge, causing it to spin on its axis. If this feat was not sufficient to spellbind your onlookers, you give them the opportunity to achieve such magical prowess. The spectator(s) are unable to perform the exact feat.

PREPARATION: Use a thinly constructed paper plate. Have a coin in a nearby pocket. You must be wearing a PK Ring (magnetic).

WORKING AND PRESENTATION: To perform simply place your hand with the PK Ring palm up as the other hand

places the paper plate upon the flat palm. The same hand reaches into the pocket and removes a Canadian quarter. Perform as described above. Hand the spectator the same coin and enjoy their attempts. This will pass the time quickly and soon you will be dining.

TIP: Depending on the strength of the PK ring and the coin in play, these factors may affect the ability of the coin to freely spin. Therefore, some experimentation with the combination of the type of coin/washer and the thickness of the paper plate may be necessary.

A well-thought-out handling and accompanying patter will elevate this effect from a mere bar bet or puzzle to an enigmatic magical trick. If the PK ring in your possession is particularly strong, then experiment with a paper coaster. If in an office environment, use a file folder. The opportunities to create an impromptu-looking miracle are extensive. You can also borrow a coin from a spectator, but that will require further research and/or out.

Andrew Woo

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www.magicalwoo.com



Auto-magic

MICHAEL BREGGAR

In the June 2020 issue of *The Linking Ring*, the indefatigable Bob Farmer offered up a wonderful routine with a powerful premise. At the time I wrote: “Bob Farmer has rattled around the magic community for almost three hundred years or so. Yet the nature and structure of his magic is as fresh, young, and dazzling as anything rolling off the mystical presses today. Bob’s current magical output can be found in many awesome marketed effects and books (at your favorite magic shop) or in detailed and well-researched eBooks at www.lybrary.com. And it is not just card routines that he creates. Bob’s brilliantly fun *Mojo Boogie Boxes* is my go-to Okito Box routine. His thinking is always original and creative.”

The problem was my *transcription* of Bob’s notes. I made it more complicated than it needed to be and messed up one point that kerfuffle-ized the whole piece. Still, I received tons of nice letters. Most, however, told me I closed the doughnut box before the twelfth doughnut had been wrapped in wax paper.

So, let’s revisit Bob’s fantastic routine, correcting my previous prose so that it *actually works this time!*

The Future Is Past

By Bob Farmer

The deck is divided between three spectators and they all shuffle. During the mixing, you speak about a great statistician friend at the University of Toronto who said this method of splitting the deck and shuffling will randomize the cards in more possible positions than there are atoms on earth (the so-called “fifty-two factorial”). “*Amazing, isn’t it? But another professor at the university told me that because you three have physically touched the cards, the principles of astrology and numerology have affected the order!*”

Your helpers have reassembled the deck and placed it on the table as you continue. “*The future is past. If we could travel back in time, something we do in the past could change something that happens in the future. They call that the ‘chaos effect.’ However, here in the present, I’m going to write*

a prediction about the future, which we will look at in a moment.” You now write a prediction on a piece of paper, fold it, seal it with a paper clip, and give it to a spectator to hold.

Looking at spectator A, Marilyn, you say, “*First we must travel into the past. I’m going to start moving back in time by calling out the months of the year in reverse, as if the calendar was running backwards, and I’ll deal a card for each month. When I hit the month you were born in, tell me to stop.*”

You begin dealing cards into a face-down pile, saying, “*December, November, October, September ...*” Marilyn yells “*Stop!*” and you deal the stopped-on card onto the little packet.

Turning to spectator B, Seth, the procedure is repeated. December through January

are counted down until Seth finally yelps “Stop.” The January card is dealt to the packet, which is then placed to the left of Marilyn’s cards.

It’s Kirby’s turn next, and the mysterious procedure is repeated. Kirby says “Stop” when you reach May. His cards are set on the table to the left of Seth’s packet.

The remainder of the deck is set down momentarily to the left of all.

Remainder of the deck	Kirby’s cards MAY	Seth’s cards JANUARY	Marilyn’s cards SEPTEMBER
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You explain, “*You three fully shuffled the cards. There are millions and millions of ways the deck could be shuffled. I had no way of knowing what months you were born in. So, the cards we have left here were completely determined at random by things you did in the past.*”

You look at Marilyn and ask, “*What month were you born in?*”

“September,” she says.

“*We traveled into the past, now we travel forward to the present. January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September.*” From the remainder packet on your far left, you deal off a single card for each month called to a new pile directly in front of you.

“*Seth, remind us again what month you were born in.*”

He says “January,” and you deal off a single to the discard pile while calling out “January.”

Kirby mentions his birthday is in May. You again travel from the past to the present and deal a card from the remainders to the discard pile for each month, saying, “*January, February, March, April, May.*”

However, just before you deal the last card (“May”) face down, you pause. “*So, we traveled back in time and everything we did in the past has come together like a cosmic crap shoot. All to finally select this card! Let’s face it, if the deck had been shuffled a different way, this would be a different card. If you were born on different months,*

this would be a different card. In the past I thought something would happen in the future. The past is now in our minds, but what once was the future is now the present and it is here on this piece of paper.” You look at your audience for a moment. “*Only in the future could I present something that past as a future present. Or something like that...*” You now ask the spectator holding the paper to open it and read it. It says TODAY IS THE NEXUS OF PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE. BESIDES THAT, THE TEN OF DIAMONDS WILL BE SELECTED.

The face-down card in your hands is turned face up: it is the 10D, exactly the same as the prediction!

The Farmer Time-Travel Postulate

Bob has taken a wonderful idea and wrapped it in a topical and highly deceiving structure. You gotta love it! It *looks* as if a random countdown is occurring, and the audience *must conclude* that a different result is used every time the trick is done. In fact, the *total* number of cards counted off to arrive at the selection will always be the same, but the *final* numbers used will always be different. You can confirm this by running through the trick with different months.

The antecedents to this effect can be found in several places: “Mathematical Finder” and the “Allerchrist Card Trick” from *Scarne On Card Tricks* by John Scarne (1950), “Henry Christ’s Improvement” from *Mathematics, Magic, and Mystery* by Martin Gardner (1956), “Lost and Found” by Terry LaGerould from *Best of Friends Volume II* (compiled and written by Harry Lorayne in 1985), “Christ Meets Gilbreath” from *Subtle Card Creations Volume 5* by Nick Trost (2015), and “LaGerould Countdown Force” from *Subtle Card Creations Volume 1* by Nick Trost, which traces its published history to as early as 1979. I also leveraged its fascinating principle in my very own “Cra-Ker-Jack,” from *Back to the Launching Pad* (2017).

Bob has structured this method and use of the Countdown Force so that the overall

effect appears completely impossible by normal magic methods, since the spectators shuffle the deck and you apparently never look at any card. However, this trick works Auto-Magically!

The deck of cards can be borrowed, in use, shuffled, whatever ... just be sure it is complete and contains fifty-two cards.

Push off fourteen cards without obviously counting them and hand them to spectator A. Bob suggests pushing off two sets of five cards, then four more. Divide the remaining cards between spectators B and C but push off cards in the same manner (i.e., in groups of three, four, or more) so the handling looks consistent. It doesn't matter how many cards they get.

Have them shuffle their packets.

Take the fourteen-card packet from spectator A. Add the cards from spectators B and C on top, holding a break above the fourteen-card packet.

Now, with the faces of the cards toward your audience, *sloppily* spread off about a third of the deck, commenting how the shuffles truly mixed the cards. Let the audience see the mixture for a moment, then plop them *face up* on the table.

Spread with half the cards remaining above the break. Again, show the mixture

and drop them on the table. Do this once more up to the break.

Your left hand should now be holding the fourteen remaining cards. *Casually* spread these faces toward the audience. Push over the first few cards of the spread as a block, thus hiding the top card. Wait a moment or two, then close this spread while turning the faces toward yourself. You will easily be able to glimpse the card closest to your palm. This will be the prediction card. Then, slap the packet *face down on the table and immediately grab a handful of cards from the other pile, placing them face down on top of the newly slapped packet.*

Ask your helpers to grab some cards and drop them on top, continuing until all the cards have been replaced. You can even ask all helpers to give them another quick mix as they drop the cards.

At this point, your prediction card will be fourteenth from the bottom of the pack.

Write the prediction and clip the paper, then follow the script above and you will have your audience raving about this effect for the rest of their futures!

You can email me in the future at:
mbreggarmagic@gmail.com.

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Broken Wand

"...ANY MAN'S DEATH DIMINISHES ME BECAUSE I AM INVOLVED IN MANKIND..." —JOHN DONNE



DAVID EUGENE BOGDON

David Eugene Bogdon, 72, of Grand Rapids, Michigan, died April 9, 2024. He held I.B.M. number 25329 and had been a member since 2007. He belonged to Ring 211 (Grand Rapids), where he was a past president, and Society of American Magicians Assembly 106. He received a magic kit from Marshall Field's at age six and began putting on shows in his backyard. He loved reading about Houdini and, when he was nineteen, bought a Milk Can Escape for \$550. After four years, he could hold his breath for three and a half minutes. Before moving to Grand Rapids, David worked for Montgomery Ward and managed The Magic Palace in Joliet, Illinois, with his father, Gene. He worked as a sales associate at Kramer Entertainment and then Matrix Entertainment, booking acts that included Mickey Rooney, Hanna Montana, and Bill Cosby. Near the end of his life, David continued to do magic for residents at Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Center, and he was featured in a news segment for the local Fox News affiliate in Grand Rapids. He was also a youth basketball coach. David is survived by his children Jeff (Jenni), Greg (Rebecca), Sheri (Rev. Matt Harris), Keegan, and Kellen; stepchildren Matt, Allison (Marc) Silverman, and Kyle Casillas; sister Linda (Gary) Trager; grandchildren; and extended family.



WARREN DALE CAMPBELL

Warren Dale Campbell, Jr., 82, of Howland, Ohio, died on January 7, 2024. He held

I.B.M. number 69965

and was a member of the Youngstown Magic Club, Ring 2. He was born in Fairmont, West Virginia on September 18, 1941, the son of the late Warren Campbell and Mary Helen Jamison. Warren was known for his humorous wit and clever patter when he presented magic. He was a former employee of IBM as well as Homestead RV and Delphi. He often attended flea markets and craft shows to sell 3D items. In his spare time, he enjoyed woodworking in his garage, gardening, and spending time working on his lawn. Warren is survived by his wife, Donna Campbell, whom he married in 1979; daughter Susan Campbell; and sister Ginger Smead of Tennessee.



RICHARD "TED" HARDING

Richard "Ted" Harding, 85, of Toronto, Ontario, Canada, died July 10, 2024. He held I.B.M. number

52506 and had been a member since 1997. He belonged to the Order of Merlin (twenty-five years of continuous membership) and Ring 17 (Toronto). He was professionally known as "The Great Hardini" for his ability to blend his love of magic with knowledge of the carpet and floor cleaning industry. With a wand in one hand and a cleaning tool in the other, Ted integrated magic into his cleaning demonstrations. He was the



founding member of Kleen Kuip Supply Mart Inc. Ted is survived by Linda, his wife of thirty-nine years; children Julie, Michael, and Randy; and two grandchildren.

DUANE HOOVER

Duane Hoover, 75, of Shreveport, Louisiana, died June 20, 2024. He held I.B.M. number 41763 and had been a member since 1983. He belonged to the Order of Merlin Shield (thirty-five years of continuous membership) and Ring 267 (Shreveport). He also belonged to the Fellowship of Christian Magicians. He worked for Beaird Poula Saw, the Louisiana Army Ammunition Plant, and Fibrebond, where he retired after twenty-five years. He earned two associate degrees in electrical engineering and hydraulic engineering. He was a Deacon of Broadacres Baptist Church of Shreveport, where he also led the Children's Church. He is survived by his wife of fifty-three years, Mary Ann Hoover; children Darrell Hoover (Angela), James Hoover, Lori Allen (Andy), and Michael Swanger (Kelly); siblings Carmelita Hartman and Anna Crawford; five grandchildren; and a large extended family.



JAMES MANEY

James "Jim" Edward Maney, 79, of Peachtree City, Georgia, died June 23, 2024. He held I.B.M. number 26327 and had been a member since 1973. He belonged to the Order of Merlin Excalibur (fifty years of continuous membership) and Ring 9 (Atlanta, Georgia). He worked for Delta Airlines in Atlanta for thirty-two years. He put on magic shows and attended conventions for thirty years and was an avid sports fan. Jim is survived by his wife of



forty-five years, Dianne Maney; children Michael (Jennifer) Maney, John (Christine) Maney, and Schanda Maney; brother Bill (Frances) Maney; grandchildren; and extended family.

WILLIAM McLAURY

William "Bill" McLaury, 89, of Hiddenite, North Carolina, died January 31, 2025. He held I.B.M. number 14078 and had been a member since 1953. He belonged to the Order of Merlin Excelsior (sixty years of continuous membership) and Ring 392 (Blowing Rock, North Carolina). Bill was born on February 25, 1935, in Oneonta, New York to parents Stuart Reid and Janette Clark McLaury. He frequently told the stories of his childhood, fondly recalling his best friend Alva Vanderworker. Alva's family lived on a dairy farm in Cherry Valley, where Bill would go and enjoy the workings of the farm. It was during these years that Bill fell in love with farm life. When he was nine years old, he witnessed his first magic show at a local county fair and his dream of studying magic began. He graduated from the Chavez School of Magic and performed professionally across the United States. At eighteen years old, Bill joined the US Navy during the Korean Conflict. After ten years of active service, Bill joined the reserves and completed his duty to our country with over twenty years of service. While serving the US Navy, Bill received two Good Conduct Medals and retired as a First Class Petty Officer. In 1955 he met and married Dorothy "Dot" Carolyn Holder, who was also serving in the navy. While in the Navy, they started their family and were stationed in Charleston SC, Kwajalein Atoll, Azores and finally, Washington, DC. Bill kept his love of magic alive by performing with Dot and their children. Bill introduced his character "Willy the Clown" at his child's fifth birthday party. In the years that followed, Bill performed



magic as a magician and a clown, making balloon animals for thousands of people. During this time, a new burger franchise was conducting auditions for a clown mascot. “Willy” won the competition, but they wanted him to change his name to Ronald McDonald, so Bill declined, making Willard Scott the first “Ronald McDonald.” However, if you ever look at the face of Ole Ronald, you may see several similarities to “Willy the Clown.” In 1964, Dot was rushed to a hospital to give birth but Bill had no time to change clothes, so he had to go to the hospital as “Willy.” “Willy” was stopped by the secret service because former President Dwight Eisenhower was a patient at the hospital. Once he was cleared to enter, he made a balloon animal for President Eisenhower. The former President wrote “Willy” a letter thanking him for the balloon animal. It was in 1967, Bill’s childhood dream came true with the help of his father-in-law, Charles Holder, who bought farmland for Bill and his family in Hiddenite, North Carolina. The family moved there and created their forever home, gardening and raising chickens, hogs, and cattle. He was active in 4-H and continued to perform magic with his family: Bill with the “Linking Rings,” Dan with the “Ding-a-ling,” Terry with the “Magic Silks,” Kimberly through her “Dancing Cane” and Bruce with assisting and prop set-up. Bruce later brought Bill and Dot out of retirement to perform shows together as the Magical McLaurys. Bill wrote two editions of his book *The Encyclopedia of Escapes* and articles for *The Linking Ring* and *Genii*. He was featured on the cover of *The Linking Ring* in February 2007. When Bill and Dot became “empty nesters,” they traveled across the county, joining the arts and crafts mall shows, performing and making balloon sculptures. They took a cross-country road trip that included the Magic Castle, and a trip of a lifetime to Europe. In his final years, Bill fought Alzheimer’s disease, a thief that slowly robbed his beautiful quick-witted mind and active body, as he was one who never sat still. However, he never lost his smile when family came to visit, especially

his love, Dot. Bill is survived by his loving wife of more than sixty-nine years, Dorothy McLaury; children William “Bill” (Pat) McLaury of Wesley Chapel, Florida, Terry McLaury of Blowing Rock, North Carolina, Kimberly (Scott) Frye of Taylorsville, North Carolina, and Bruce McLaury (Tammy) of Hiddenite, North Carolina; grandchildren Brian (Stephanie) McLaury, Michael McLaury, Satchel Moberg, Melanie Frye, Erin Frye, Haley (Kurt) Reitzel, and Ashlyn (Nathan) Echerd; great grandchildren Elizabeth McLaury, Freddie McLaury, Piper McLaury, Hayden Frye, Harper Prouty, Aria Echerd, Avett Echerd, and Atlas Echerd; sisters Nancy Krall of Morganton, North Carolina and Susan (Joe) Barber of Brunswick, Georgia. He is survived by many nieces, nephews, and cousins. Bill was preceded in death by his son Daniel “Dan” McLaury.

PAUL MUMMERT

Paul Eugene Mummert, 93, of Martinsburg, West Virginia, died January 28, 2025. He held I.B.M. number 38249 and had been a member since 1983. He belonged to Ring 94 (Hagerstown, Maryland). He was a 1949 graduate of Greencastle-Antrim Senior High School, and served in the US Army as an x-ray technician from 1952 to 1954. He earned his x-ray technician certification from Johns Hopkins Hospital. He worked for thirty-seven years at the Martinsburg VA Hospital, retiring in 1978. For ten years of his career, he was a supervisory radiological technologist. He was a captain for the Civil Air Patrol, a founding member of the Bedington Volunteer Fire Department, and a member of the Norwalk Car Club, VFW, and American Legion. Paul enjoyed model trains, woodworking, magic, and flying as a private pilot. He performed at the “Evening of Comedy and Magic” since its inception, raising funds for the prevention of child abuse. The Magicians’ Alliance of



Eastern States honored him with the Dr. William M. Endlich Memorial Award in 1992. He is survived by his wife of sixty-nine years, Phillis V. Crim Mummert; son Philip E. Mummert; two grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

RUSSELL MATHEW POLIZZI

Russell Mathew Polizzi, age 60, of Erie, Pennsylvania, died on August 26, 2024. He held I.B.M. number 60690 was a member the Youngstown Magic Club Ring 2. Born on June 8, 1964, in Jamestown, New York, Russ was a curious, entertaining, and knowledge-seeking individual. He had a gift for making people laugh and listen to him speak. He had an ability to impersonate individuals with uncanny skill.



He graduated high school in 1982 before attending Jamestown Community College and WCA Hospital's Advanced Emergency Medical technician program, where he worked in the emergency department from 1986 to 1995. Later, he attended SUNY at Fredonia and Gannon University in Erie, graduating with honors from Gannon's first occupational therapy program. As an occupational therapist, Russ was known for providing fun in a workplace, especially practical jokes and antics. He managed the transitional care unit and acute care floors, and was the first to advocate for therapists to be part of the treatment program during Covid. Russ became interested in magic at age six, passionately seeking out and reading magic books. His father and uncle would take him to a magic shop in Buffalo, New York, where he met many magicians. He performed his first magic show to a school class when he was thirteen. By age fifteen, he was performing private birthday parties all over Jamestown, specializing in comedy platform/parlor and close-up magic. As an adult, he was a headliner at the former Magic Parlour in Jamestown and a regular performer at the Maplehurst Country Club.

After college, he performed throughout New York and Pennsylvania before leaving performance to focus his time on caring for Nancy, who had multiple sclerosis. He often performed and billed himself as "Russell Raven" or "The Raven." Russ collaborated with several known magicians around the world including Bill Measel and Tom Craven, and has had several of his own creations published in leading magic publications. He is survived by his partner of twenty-nine years, Nancy S. Makay; brother Anthony V. (Donna) Polizzi of Florida; mother-in-law Susanne Makay; sister-in-law Shelly Bender; and extended family.

FRANK SPRITZER

Frank Spritzer, 91, of Warren, Ohio passed away on Wednesday, May 15, 2024. He held I.B.M. number 23732, was a member of the Youngstown Magic Club Ring 2, and belonged to the Order of Merlin Excalibur (fifty years of continuous membership). Frank was born on March 24, 1933, in California, Pennsylvania, to parents Frank and Mary (Rozek) Spritzer. Following high school, Frank served in the US Army from 1952 to 1955 and was honorably discharged. He then worked for Packard Electric for forty-seven years, retiring in 1999. As a magician, he was known for his exquisite coin work and accomplished card work. He was exceptionally proud of the fact that he entertained and fooled Harry Blackstone Jr. when he visited the Youngstown Magic Club. Frank was known for his unique presentations and simplification of the handling of many card effects. Outside of work and magic, Frank was a renowned baseball player, coach, and lifelong fan of the sport. He started playing baseball in 1955 at Packard Park and coached the AA league from 1968 to 1989. Frank enjoyed going to Pittsburgh Pirates games and his great grandchildren's baseball games. He also enjoyed golf and made a hole-in-one at



Cranberry Golf Course in Champion, Ohio. Frank enjoyed doing yard work, attending the local ITAMs, and rooting for the Pittsburgh Steelers. Frank is survived by his daughter Teri (Michael) Sunn of Warren, Ohio and son Rock E. (Tracy) Spritzer of Walters, Oklahoma, grandchildren Carrie Briscoe and Kelly (Andrew) Bailey, and great grand children Mila, Kade, and Chase. He was preceded in death by his parents, his wife of forty-seven years Loretta (Cicero) Spritzer, son Frank J. Spritzer, brothers John and Joe, and sisters Millie and Ann.

RICHARD "DICK" WOOTEN

Richard "Dick" Wooten, 93, of Grand Blanc, Michigan, died February 8, 2025. He held I.B.M. number 14756 and had been a member since 1961. He belonged to the Order of Merlin Excelsior (sixty years of continuous membership and Ring 36 (Flint, Michigan). He graduated from Michigan State University, earning his



bachelor's degree in 1953 and his master's degree in 1961. He taught history for thirty-two years at Bendle High School and used magic to illustrate his lessons. He also mentored students in magic every year for the school's talent show. Dick was inducted into the Michigan Magic Hall of Fame in 2011 and was the only Lifetime Member of Ring 36. He ran the only magic shop in Flint out of his basement for years and he was a major book collector and dealer, purchasing magic from Percy Abbott. Two years ago, Dick donated about three hundred of his magic books to The American Museum of Magic in Marshall, Michigan. Dick attended many magic conventions, including Abbott's Get-Together, Daytona Magic, and Columbus Fest. He was preceded in death by his parents, wife, and sister Joyce, and is survived by his good friend Ricky Kipp.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The Broken Wand entry for Richard "Ted" Harding in the November *Linking Ring* incorrectly listed his date of death. In this issue we are running his obituary with the corrected date.

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.



Hosting a Magic Convention – from page 49

neighboring Ohio's well-known Patrick Przysiecki, the vice president of Toledo's Ring 68, a former I.B.M. champion, and creator of Patt's Mats.

Our night-before party on Friday, May 16, 2025, is also looking like a winner. For only ten dollars, registered attendees will experience a parlor performance of seasoned local veteran magicians Ferran Charles (recent I.B.M. champion), Ken Foley, and promoter/performer Mike Thornton, while enjoying complimentary pizza, soft beverages, and a few fun hours of sessioning with friends. Everyone will have an opportunity to share magic during our open mic – the stage will be wide open.

Club member Tara McAllister will provide entertaining and visual magic in our welcoming lobby. At least eight magic dealers will be available for shopping between convention activities, including Wunderground Magic, FAB Magic, Patt's Mats, Paul Richards, George Tait, Hippy Hop Magic, Antony Gerrard, and the American Museum of Magic.

No doubt about it, we've done our very best to provide a "big bang for the buck" convention and continue the long-running Michigan Magic Day tradition in style! This convention has already proven itself to be an extremely positive investment for Ring 22 in so many ways.

Visit www.detroitmagic.club/michigan-magic-day-2025 to learn more and buy tickets before they run out. We look forward to celebrating magic with you on **Saturday, May 17, 2025!**

Magic and Memories – from page 59

of paper and I dropped it on the floor just outside the door. I wanted to see who would pick it up. And do you know what happened? Nobody in the kindergarten, first, second, or third grades picked up the paper. Many of you didn't see it, but some of you did, and if you did, you didn't pick it up.

"But when the fourth-grade classes started in, one boy in Mrs. Wentworth's class saw the paper as trash on the floor. That one boy didn't want trash on the floor of his school, and being a good citizen, he picked up this paper and went to throw it into the trash can. That boy's name is Billy Carrigan, and I want *you*, Billy, to stand up right now. There he is. And I want everyone here to give Billy a big round of applause for helping keep West Point Elementary clean!"

With that, the entire audience of five hundred students burst into loud hand clapping. Then Mr. Martin had Billy sit down.

"I want to thank Billy for picking up that piece of paper and being a good example of what West Point's students should be doing. I hope every one of you will keep your eyes open like Billy, and if you see trash dropped on our floors, pick it up and deposit it where?"

"In the trash!" yelled the kids.

"That's right," said Mr. Martin. "And now — are we ready for a magic show by David Ginn?"

Of course they were! What a wonderful warm-up I had that day in West Point. And you won't be surprised to hear that the show went extremely well. It had adult supervision and a principal who gained not only the students' respect, but mine as well.

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, Dr. Steven Schlanger, 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, Dielman Recreation Center, 11400 Olde Cabin Rd., Creve Coeur, MO 63141 / Web Site: www.IBMRing1.com

ALAN ZIBITS., Secretary

E-mail: Alan.a.zibits@boeing.com

532 Dartmouth Crossing, Wildwood, MO 63011

Bob Blattel has been organizing a Toy Drive for almost twenty years. His company, Blattel and Associates, have been helping to get the word out to their clients who also contribute toys. Bob's wife, Chris, helped to start the toy drive when she was teaching at the Academy of the Sacred Heart in Saint Charles. The North Grand Area in St. Louis City benefitted for almost 17 years. However, when Covid hit their neighborhood, it was not feasible to continue to service that area. Therefore, Bob connected with The Employment Connection, which is a United Way of Greater St. Louis partner agency, and their CEO Sal Martinnez. A brochure, that was distributed, requested new or gently used, unwrapped toys. Bob's grandchildren helped to pack the toys in his basement. His son, Scott, and daughter, Kate even donated four bikes to the toy drive. Bob shared the following, "My favorite way to give back is through magic. This past December, I volunteered to perform at three local Breakfast with Santa events and sponsored the Holiday Magic Toy Drive. Thanks to all the people and businesses who helped collect and donate toys, we reached nearly two hundred needy and unhoused families in the Greater St. Louis Area. A special thanks to Sal Martinez and his team at Employment Connection for coordinating and distributing toys!" The Ring appreciates what you are doing for the less fortunate in our community.

Steve Finkelstein, Ring 1 Board Member and Community Engagement Chairman, organized a new event titled I.B.M. Ring One Supporting Our Troops: A Magical Homecoming. On Saturday, December 21, 2024, I.B.M. Ring 1

joined with the USO and brought joy and wonder to 3,000 active-duty military personnel. This is a yearly event, also called Green Day. These personnel are traveling from Fort Leonard Wood through St. Louis Lambert International Airport to begin their holiday leave as they made their way home for the holidays. A team of five talented magicians from Ring 1, Steve Finkelstein, Tim Shegitz, D. Jay, Dan Todd, and John Skarin dedicated their morning to performing close-up and walk-around magic for our troops. From 6:00 to 10:30 a.m., the magicians moved around the USO area, engaging and creating moments of surprise, laughter, and connection. "It was an incredible experience to bring smiles to the faces of those who serve our country," said Steve Finkelstein, reflecting on the event. "We felt honored to entertain and provide a brief escape for our troops as they waited for their flights." This special event marked the beginning of what I.B.M. Ring 1 hopes will be an ongoing relationship with the USO. The magicians expressed their enthusiasm for continuing to support and uplift military personnel through the art of magic. "Seeing the joy and amazement on their faces was the best reward we could ask for," was a common refrain expressed by all of the volunteer magicians. We look forward to future opportunities to collaborate with the USO and give back to those who give so much for us. We have opportunities to spread the magic to other cities with other I.B.M. Rings. As the holidays approach, moments like these serve as a reminder of the importance of community, gratitude, and the magic of human connection. I.B.M. Ring 1 remains committed to using their craft to spread positivity and support, ensuring that those who serve our nation experience a touch of wonder during their travels. Steve thanks the Ring One Team for doing such an outstanding job!

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

The following Ring 2 members and friends were present at our January meeting, Barb Briggs, Donna and Susan Campbell, Paul Capito, Fritz Coombs, Kyler Freeland, Bob Gurdak, Larry Henderson, James and Eric Killmeyer, Jim Klayder, Peter Lucke, Gary Morton, Brian Moss, and Keri Vrable. The theme of the evening was Invisible Magic.

The evening's magic opened with Barb Briggs performing her first YMC entrance show. She presented "Magic Band-It" and "Shuffleboard," both attributed to Jim Klayder.

Members' Magic opened with Fritz Coombs entertaining us with the traditional Chinese Sticks. He displayed two wooden sticks. Each stick had a tassel on the end of a string which passed through a hole in one end of the stick and connected to a small loop. When Fritz pulled up on a loop, the tassel rose up to the stick. Fritz took an invisible thread and connected the ends to the sticks. Then when he pulled the tassel up on one stick, the tassel on the other stick also moved upward. Fritz continued with some variations of the effect.

James Killmeyer next entertained us with "Lazy Man's Card Trick" from Jack Miller. James asked Larry to assist him. James placed a deck on the table and said he would not touch it. He asked Larry to cut the deck and remove the card at the cut and remember it; it was the 5C. Larry then placed the 5C on top of the deck and cut the deck to lose the card. James had Larry cut the deck eight more times. Following the last cut, James had Larry choose the third card from the top. It was the 5C.

Jim Klayder followed with "The Whole Thing" attributed to Daryl. He showed us a number of large cards with white fronts and red backs. One card had a hole in the center. Placing a red-backed card behind the card with the hole created a spot card. Jim continued with a number of variations involving holes and spots, accompanied by an amusing patter.

Bob Gurdak continued the magic with Four Quarters to the Corner "Invisibly." Bob began by asking Donna to name a card; she chose the four, and Bob removed all the fours from his deck. He then placed four quarters on the table in a square. On top of each quarter, Bob placed a card. He then lifted the card off two of the quarters to show them. Bob replaced the cards, and when he removed them again, two quarters were under one card and none under the other card. Bob repeated this effect with another corner card; the quarter

vanished, now three quarters were together. The process was repeated one more time, and all four quarters had accumulated in one corner.

Larry Henderson amazed us with "What Happens in Vegas" from Liam Montier.

Brian Moss followed with a "Chop Cup" routine attributed to Michael O'Brien. Brian showed us a small plastic cup and a ball. He held the cup upside down in his right hand and placed the ball in his pocket. Brian invisibly removed the ball from his pocket with his left hand and pushed it up under his right hand. Lifting the cup revealed the ball underneath. He asked Kyler to assist him, and he repeated the effect in Kyler's hand.

Susan Campbell concluded members' magic with a card effect. She invited Keri and Kyler to assist her. She began by having Keri choose an even number, and Kyler choose an odd number. Keri then dealt off her number of cards, and the next card was her selection. Kyler did likewise. Susan then faro shuffled the deck and placed it in her pocket. She asked her assistants to reveal their cards; they were the 10D and 8S. Susan removed two cards from her pocket, they were the matching 10H and 8C.

Guest Magician Kyler Freeland performed "Faded Coins" attributed to Tomoyuki Takahashi. Kyler asked Brian to assist him. Kyler pointed to three spots on the table saying they were three invisible coins: a dime, a quarter, and a nickel. He asked Brian to pick up one of the invisible coins, the quarter, and Kyler picked up the other two. He asked Brian to open his hand and commented that was invisibility. Kyler opened his hands and dropped a dime and nickel to the table commenting that that was visibility.

Peter Lucke

RING 5, DAYTON, OHIO – Dayton Magic Club

Meets 2nd Fri. each month at 7:30pm, Mighty Fortress Lutheran Church,
Kettering, OH.

DAVE DAVIS, Ring Reporter / E-mail: daytonmagicring5@yahoo.com

Web site: www.sites.google.com/site/daytonmagicring5

As we bid farewell to another incredible year, Ring 5 and S.A.M. Assembly 56 joined forces once again to throw a spectacular Christmas party, marking the perfect end to 2024. Our year began with a shared ambition of being more "present" in our community, and we certainly achieved that goal.

Throughout the year, we performed shows, attended festivals, and participated in local events, culminating in our largest gathering since Ring 5's 80th birthday. Nearly seventy people attended the Christmas party, making it a truly memorable event. The main courses, generously provided by Ms. Debby Riggs, were complemented by a variety of dishes from the Ring membership, ensuring there was plenty of deli-

cious food for everyone.

The highlight of the evening was undoubtedly the entertainment provided by our officers. Led by Master of Ceremonies Paul Burnham (previous S.A.M. 56 President), the talented lineup included Jimmy Pepper (also Ring 324 President), Justin Byers (Ring 5 Vice President), Tommy Collins (Assembly 56 President and Ring 5 Secretary), and Matt Stanley (Assembly 56 Security and I.B.M. Executive Committee Member). Their performances amazed and delighted all in attendance.

To cap off the night, a group of us convened at Archers to unwind and reflect on the success of the event. It was a perfect way to celebrate our achievements and look forward to the opportunities that lie ahead in the coming year.

Thank you to everyone who made this year and this party so special. Here's to an even more amazing 2025!

Mike Bayer

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

November – T.I.P. Lecture: In her presentation of “Match Games,” Debbie Leifer performed and explained two tricks involving a prediction that matched the procedure’s results.

Business Meeting: President Steve Langston greeted thirty-nine attendees, including three on Zoom, and one guest (who was nominated for membership). Secretary-Treasurer Bill Packard handed a new member certificate to George Roberson and September’s Theme Magic Winner certificate to Jamey Evans. Upcoming Vice President Zach Ivins requested that the membership submit ideas for 2025 magic themes to him. The Georgia Magic Book Club will have its final Zoom discussion of John Guastaferrro’s *The Nth Degree* on December 4. The Annual Ring 9/Georgia Magic Club Auction profited almost \$2500! Walter Fields gave an update on Project Magic at the Shepherd Center. Past International President Ken Scott reported that the outreach for Partners Against Domestic Violence on November 24 in Fulton County will feature Ross “the Hat” DeMocko. Lecture Chair Debbie Leifer reminded us about Michael Ammar’s “Greatest Hits” lecture scheduled for January 29 and announced a lecture by Willy Monroe scheduled for April 16. Steve Greenfield announced that the Atlanta Society of Magicians will celebrate its 100th Anniversary at their January 11 meeting at the American Legion. I.B.M. International President Mike Dunagan presented Presidential Citations to Eric Schuster and Debbie Leifer.

Theme Magic Performers: “Loosen Up Lighten

Up Day” (Perform something that makes us laugh.) Vice President Clark Kjorlaug was the emcee. Mike Varon showed the ending to his trick first (he spread the deck to show that the Ace of Hearts was the only card reversed), then performed a Triumph-type card trick in its entirety. Clark Kjorlaug performed a sequence of “Boomerang” optical illusions with an architectural arches theme. Mal Simpson invited a spectator to “probe” three cards into three packets (reversed, into the Medulla, Amygdala, and Cerebral Cortex, respectively) and showed that each card had located its mate. Mark Hatfield performed a Comedy Suitcoat Escape while handcuffed under the cover of a circular curtain held by spectators. Ken Scott did a prediction trick. Mike Dunagan played Russian Roulette with five Diet Dr. Pepper cans. George Roberson performed an unusual card-find effect. Steve Langston performed “Chicago Opener.” Lynn Fox produced two stuffed animals. Steve Goldstein had a “Mr. Bill” card locate a selected card. Ross DeMocko performed a “You Do As I Do” effect with a spectator. Darryl Berman used a laser for his card trick. Guest Jerry Li magically produced the four aces from a deck one at a time, except for the last one, which was actually removed from part of the card box. He also caused a row of sixes on a calculator to change into nines without turning the device over. After passing out “I Voted” stickers, Jamey Evans hypnotized Ross DeMocko.

General Magic Performers: Martin Baratz performed a self-working card trick. Jim Mangham presented, with explanation, a Bob Hummer mentalism trick. Darryl Berman performed Paul Richard’s “Fiction.”

Giveaway winners were Mike Dunagan, Jim Mangham, and Darryl Berman. The winner of the CRBP for November was Mark Hatfield.

December – T.I.P. Lecture: Brian Robert presented “The Hoops of Wonderment - Thoughts on Magic’s preeminent solid through solid effect - The Linking Rings.”

Business Meeting: President Steve Langston greeted thirty-five attendees, including three on Zoom, and two visitors (Mike Varon’s children). Mike presented a new member certificate to Dominic Pretera. The Georgia Magic Book Club has completed Zoom discussions of John Guastaferrro’s *The Nth Degree* and will choose a new book to start in January. Walter Fields reported that Project Magic has expanded its outreach to Hope Lodge in Decatur. Michael Ammar’s “Greatest Hits” lecture is scheduled for January 29. The Greater Atlanta Magicians’ Holiday Banquet is scheduled for January 11. Our guest headliner is I.B.M. International Vice President

Jason Michaels. Packard will send ballots this week for T.I.P. Lecturer of the Year and Magician of the Year. Ring 9's MOTY nominees are Jamey Evans, Steve Langston, and Ken Scott. Steve encouraged everyone to fill out the survey for Circle of Honor at

<https://www.gamagicclub.com/circleofhonor>. Steve Goldstein reminded us that the Atlanta Society of Magicians will celebrate its 100th Anniversary at their January (18th) meeting at the American Legion. Several national members of the Society of American Magicians will be performing. Twenty-dollars admission, business casual. Incoming Vice President Zach Ivins invited members to submit a request to present a T.I.P. lecture next year.

Theme Magic Performers: "Cyber Monday" - Bring out those electronics. Apparent or not!

Jamey Evans attempted to present a "Trick of the Month Club" routine. Steve Goldstein performed a "Coins Across to Glass" routine. Martin Baratz invited several spectators to perform some multiplications on their calculators and each recite all the digits in the total except one and determined for each what the missing digit was. Steve Langston performed three Rubik's Cube effects.

General Magic Performers: Michael Varon performed a variation of "Any Card At Any Number." Jason Kresner, with child volunteer, performed an effect where the spectator chooses the only printed card in the deck, then discovers he's holding the only blank card! Martin Baratz presented a self-working card trick, then showed how he simplified the procedure. Howie Slomka told a riddle with a Triplet punchline and performed "Triplets," allowing a spectator to find four of a kind. Jamey Evans, with loud music and a wrestling persona as Mr. Dove Pan, produced a Tootsie Roll.

Catweazle Jim Mangham gave the attendees a choice for his upcoming T.I.P. lecture: An Origami Pyramid Box workshop or a biography of Edgar Cayce, who claimed to be clairvoyant.

Giveaway winners were Aryeh Rabin (book, DVD, deck), Rocky Smith (Diary trick, decks), and Mike Dunagan (Gentleman Jack wallet).

The winner of the Coveted Royal Blue pin for December was Steve Goldstein. *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

It's a new year, but the same quality of magicians in Ring 12 as always. For our teaching table we had Rhys Mandavile. Rhys did some impressive Monte moves, and he taught about

the importance of a memorized deck, such as *Mnemonic*. I have a quest now to learn *Mnemonic* an easy way. Rhys also had some impressive colour changes. It was a great teaching table.

Leading into a great lecture by Noel. Noel is an amazing card magician, but he challenged the world with some amazing coin magic. A lot of his moves he learned from Mike Gallo. He also had a "Cup and Pearl" routine, which was for sale and purchased by the author of this. I can't wait to try it out.

We then had our break and Noel continued with the card magic we all love to see. He had some poker effects, and much more. Noel will always astound me and many others. His coin magic was terrific, and the card magic blew my mind. I'm looking forward to learning more from him in the future. *Shlomo Birkan*

RING 13, PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA – Tampa-Greenberg Ring

Meets 1st Thu., 7:30pm The Linden Grove, 1100 Grove St., Pittsburgh, PA
MARK ZAJICEK, Secretary / E-mail: mtz@sei.cmu.edu
Web site: www.ibmring13.org

In January, our re-elected Ring President Levi announced the formation of several new committees and respective chairpersons for our upcoming year. We randomly selected upcoming theme suggestions for the upcoming months, using the Ring Meeting Themes list available on the I.B.M. website Ring Resources page. So many ideas! We approved Eric Pensensadler's application to be reinstated as a Ring member, and we welcomed his son, Alex, as a new Youth member applicant. Lucy Hall introduced our performers with this month's theme of "anything goes."

Lashaya Fields presented her third performance for Ring membership as she stretched out a length of rope between her hands, let go of one end of the rope with one hand, and caused the stiff rope to remain extended horizontally before she made the rope fall limp. Next Lashaya showed three playing cards, and she made one of the cards change from a three into the "tree" of Diamonds. Lashaya finished by placing four coins into a brass coin box, and she made the coins pass one by one through the bottom of the box and onto the table.

Alex Pensensadler presented his first performance for Ring membership, telling a story of how he tried to buy something at a store that cost \$25, but he had only a \$100 bill. Alex folded the bill, and when he unfolded it, the bill had turned inside out (mis-made bill). Alex asked the cashier if he could cut the bill to use one fourth of it to pay for the item. The cashier declined, so Alex folded and then unfolded the

bill to restore it to a normal \$100 bill again.

Eric Meredith asked Mark Newara to choose a card and sign it, which Eric inserted into the middle of the deck. Eric removed a joker, signed it, and gave the signed joker to Mark to place in his wallet. Eric caused his signed card to jump back into the deck and switch places with Mark's signed card that was now in Mark's wallet (adapted from a Michael Vincent "Card to Wallet" routine).

Jeff Vanderhoff recited a rhyming story of a girl with a smile, as he showed a large cardboard square with a smile drawn on each side. As Jeff turned the board over and over while telling the story, one of the smiles turned into a frown, and then both sides turned into frowns. Eventually, Jeff turned both of the frowns into smiles again at the story's conclusion (a variation of the "Upside Down Arrow" trick). Jeff requested feedback, and he received many interesting suggestions for possible modifications.

Levi produced a silk from his hand, and he stuffed the silk into a metal tube canister, then closed it with a lid. Levi shook the canister, opened the lid, and showed that the silk had transformed into a sponge ball.

Steven Gailey closed our performances with a juggling demonstration, in which he juggled three clubs and then three large juggling knives.

At the conclusion of the performances, Eric Meredith initiated an engaging conversation and extensive discussion by asking why magicians don't seem to compare with other, top performing entertainers, popular actors, singers/musicians, or comedians, like a Charlie Chaplin or a Taylor Swift. Lots of interesting ideas and thoughts were shared.

Later that month (although it had not yet happened when this Ring Report was submitted), Francis Menotti was scheduled to present our first magic lecture of the year on January 21, hosted at our wonderful local venue, Liberty Magic. We were looking forward to Francis' lecture to kick off a great new year of magic here in Pittsburgh. If you are ever in the southwestern Pennsylvania area, please don't hesitate to connect with us!

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

A magical new year began in Memphis with the January 7 meeting of the Society of Memphis Magicians. Ring 16 President Bill Canaday introduced Michael Clayton to provide our "front table" mini lecture. Michael performed and taught an excellent three-billet test

that he originally learned from *Mark Wilson's Complete Course in Magic*. He also provided several of his own tips learned from years of performing experience.

The business meeting was brief. Bill Canaday related that Jeff and Kathy Day were absent as she was in the hospital and Jeff was looking after her. We wished her a speedy recovery, and several people noted that they'd be reaching out to Jeff to check on him and their needs. The recent passing of Kreskin was marked with a few stories from members who had seen him perform. We also welcomed visitors Walter and Nancy Joerg from Chicago.

The magic began with Doug Green who performed his creation "Walking a Mile in Coco's Shoes." In this case, Coco's shoes were a pair of multicolored shoes that Doug wore that seemingly allowed thoughts to be transferred between two other participants. James Pennington and Mike Waits were somehow impossibly empowered to share thought-of names and images with each other. Even at a distance of somewhat less than a mile, telepathy is a magical experience.

The "Amazin' Grayson" Smith displayed a giant rubber band which he applied as a "tourniquet" to his thumb. Even though his participant Nancy was holding the end of his thumb, Grayson was able to magically pull on the band to penetrate right through his thumb. This fortunately left Grayson still capable of reviewing movies, hitchhiking, and signaling mercy or judgment to defeated gladiators.

Bill Canaday performed a series of mindreading demonstrations using a book full of various symbols, images, and numbers. Don Berry, James Pennington, and Past International President Joe M. Turner were each asked to turn to a random page in the book and think of an object, a number, and a symbol, respectively. After hearing other symbols on the page read out in a random order, Bill was able to identify each person's chosen thought.

Visitor Walter Joerg delivered two routines. First, he performed a double card location, having cards chosen in two different ways by people on each side of the room. Despite the random selections, Walter was able to find both cards. He then had Bill Canaday come up to select a card from a red backed deck. This card was found to match a blue backed prediction.

Joe M. Turner performed a variation of the classic "Out of this World" routine that was somewhat streamlined compared to the original. Two red and two black poker chips were displayed. After placing a red and a black chip on the table, Joe drew cards from a shuffled deck

and placed them behind the chips as directed by participant James Pennington. This was repeated with the other two chips and with James dealing the cards himself. The packets were spread, and each packet was seen to be comprised of cards matching the color of the corresponding chip. As a kicker, the total number of red cards matched the number printed on the red chips, and the total number of black cards matched the number printed on the black chips.

James Pennington closed out the meeting by performing an amazing "Card to Impossible Location" in his rendition of the classic Biddle trick. In this case, Doug Green selected a card which was replaced and seen to be one of five cards James later displayed after mixing the deck. One card vanished, leaving him with only four; the selected Three of Hearts was found reversed in the deck. This performance led to a discussion of other interesting handlings of both the plot and the mechanics.

We love to welcome visitors to our meetings. Join us when in the Midsouth! *Joe M. Turner*

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

Our January meeting drew eighteen intrepid souls (we are Minnesotans, after all) in from the snow and cold to gather to view some wonderful magic.

Dan Norat started out the magic performances with a card trick. Assisted by Magic Brad Gudim and Paul Laidig, Dan performed Asi Wind's "Double Exposure."

Parker William, with the aid of volunteer Kyle Frisk, offered up his original trick "My Least Favorite Vermin" using the PATEO force. Parker then went on to provide a tutorial on the PATEO force and how to incorporate this brilliant force into our magic.

Rick Hinrichs has been working on silk vanishes. He wowed us with his silk, purse, and purse frame routine. We discussed the use of the purse as wand cover.

Blake Scholl, along with Parker William and Dan Norat, performed a card trick whereby a thought-of and a selected card were revealed in the card box.

Not to be outdone, younger brother Bennett Scholl performed paper origami magic.

Bob Miller, assisted by Steven Olson, performed Simon Aronson's "The Invisible Card."

Paul Laidig performed a quick trick with AnnMarie Thomas, in which he made small balls change color in her hand.

Tyler Erickson offered the Teach a Trick sec-

tion of the meeting by discussing the Gambler's False Cut and the 10 - 20 Force. He then presented an original trick that he calls "Lying in White," the name alluding to the trick and its surprising finish.

Jean Robert LeMarchand auditioned for the Ring by performing a card/mentalism trick that he calls "The Envelopes of Mystery." Jean Robert was enthusiastically welcomed to the Ring for membership.

Our Monday Zoom meeting was attended by a small but dedicated group. Although we were attending for the magic, we were also distracted by the Wild Card matchup between the Minnesota Vikings and the L.A. Rams. We did our best to focus on both the football game and the magic.

Rick Hinrichs performed what he called a "Quick Mathematical Card Trick."

Dan Norat has been doing a lot of reading and was impressed with *Smoke and Mirrors* by Jon Armstrong and Mike Costa. Dan is also reading *The Millionaire's Magician* by Steve Cohen in preparation for his upcoming birthday trip to New York City.

Rick Hinrich performed some rubber band magic and Jennifer Graham, with the assistance of Michael Barnard, offered up "The Long-Distance Card Trick," a perfect effect for Zoom or over the phone.

We briefly discussed the snap change but then spent the remainder of the virtual meeting watching the Minnesota Vikings being soundly defeated from another chance to go to the Super Bowl. Enough said.... *Jennifer Graham*

RING 20, HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA – Eddie Clever Keystone Ring

Meets 2nd Thur., at 8:00pm (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

Note: Due to the closure of John's Diner, we met at Jack Ritter's Gathering Place, 25 West Main Street, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055. In attendance were Frank Bianco, Al Bienstock, John Fortino, Tom Herrold (guest), Ed Lopez, Vic Orriola, Jack Ritter, John Sergott, Charlie Shields, Steve Smith, and Mark Zagursky. President Smith opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m. He also then greeted everyone in attendance.

The Secretary's Report and Treasurer's Report were accepted. Under Old Business Al reported that we entertained disabled vets from the Lebanon VA Hospital on October 21st. Frank Bianco, Al Bienstock, John Fortino, Vic Orriola, Jack Ritter, and Steve Smith all performed.

For New Business, instead of our regular

meeting in December, we will hold our holiday party in December on our regular meeting night of December 12th at 5:00. The location will be Marzoni's Brick Oven and Brewing Co. (4925 Ritter Rd, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055-6928). As usual, we will invite our friends from the Lancaster club (PMC) to join us, and friends, family, and potential new members are all invited. Vic Orriola has offered to entertain us that evening, and Smith will ask if anyone else would like to do so as well.

Good of the Order: Michael Worsham had his first physical therapy appointment today, and it went well. We wish him a full recovery. John Fortino inquired about the possible holiday show that the club might perform for the members, family, and friends at the Hampden VFW. Al is looking into it. If it comes to fruition, club members will put on a show, and the revenue from the performance would go toward the club treasury to help to replenish it and to pay off our debts. Vic showed us his cool autobiography, (actually a fictional Al-created novel) called *Magic Tricks Gone Wrong* that his daughters gave him as a gift.

Election of Officers for 2025: Nominated last month were Vice President Vic Orriola; Treasurer Al Bienstock; Secretary Michael Reist; Board Members (two-year term) Al Bienstock and Jack Ritter. Frank Bianco motioned to close nominations. Charlie Shields seconded. A single vote was held for all above-mentioned candidates, and all were elected unanimously. Stephen Smith had been nominated for president last month. He dutifully asked three times if there were any other nominations. Hearing none, Frank Bianco motioned to close nominations. Charlie Shields seconded. The vote elected Smith unanimously.

Al Bienstock then motioned to adjourn. Charlie Shields seconded. All voted in favor, and the meeting closed at 7:05 p.m. EST.

For our evening program, Frank Bianco generously offered a lesson in some sleights as well as some full routines. He taught the following: The snap change, "Shapeshifter," a double lift get-ready, "Dr. Daley's Last Trick," Pete Watt's "Sociable Jokers" (i.e. a version of Roy Walton's "Cascade"), Frank's "Ring and String" routine (featuring his own brilliant move), the Clifton Ring Move, The Slydini rope cut and "Professor's Nightmare" featuring a full rope restoration at end, (a Danny Tong routine), the Jordan Count, the "Charming Chinese Challenge" by Troy Hooser, Outs for the Classic Force gone wrong, a Top Change, "Gemini Twins" packet trick, "One Rope to Two and Back Again."

In lieu of a regular meeting, we held our Christmas Party at Marzoni's Brick Oven and Brewing Co. in Mechanicsburg, PA. The purpose of this was primarily just fellowship, a good meal, and some magical entertainment. In attendance were Michael Reist and his wife Kathy, Rodney Ries and his wife Maureen, Stephen Smith and his daughter Jenna, Dan Sculley and his wife Angel, Victor Orriola, Jack Ritter and his wife Linda, and John Fortino. President Smith opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m. He also then greeted everyone in attendance.

Because of the nature of this meeting, there was no reading or approval of reports. We gathered at 5:00 and began with ordering dinner and just sharing conversation with each other. It was mentioned that several people had planned to come but could not because of circumstances: Al Bienstock was home after undergoing some surgery; Doc Yoder was home sick; Michael Worsham was undergoing physical therapy.

The only real order of business that was conducted was simply informative in nature. We used to meet at John's Diner in New Cumberland until they closed in November. However, it was shared that the establishment has now reopened under new management and a new name, and they are happy to host us. The new name is Beacon Hill Café.

With that being said, after dinner we were entertained by the magical skills of John Fortino and Victor Orriola. Because it was meant for entertainment, the secretary did not take notes on the performances, just sat back and enjoyed.

Michael L. Reist

RING 21, HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA – Caryl Fleming

Meets 1st Thu. at ThymeLe Arts, 5481 Santa Monica Blvd.,
Los Angeles, CA 90029 / Web site: www.IBMRing21.org
GERRY SCHILLER, Secretary
P.O. Box 246, Newbury Park, CA 91319 / (805) 499-8921
E-mail: geraldschiller@gmail.com

President Bob Weiss called the January 2025 meeting to order at 7:25 p.m. at our "current" location, which may be permanent, but subject to change (as we continue to evaluate other possibilities). He explained the next few meetings will be our "award" meetings with members competing in various categories: February comedy; March stage; April a possible lecture; May "Bizarre Magic;" and June Close-up. However, for this evening's meeting the theme was decided to be "Show and Tell." Basically, it was an opportunity to perform a familiar trick and then explain the method.

Dr. John Kowalczyk took over as the emcee for the evening and presented our first performer, the always inventive Reed Eckman. Reed definitely did not disappoint us as he did a

marvelous rope trick in which the rope was not cut but kept getting bigger and bigger! By his finish it was about seventeen feet long! Reed assured us when he explained his method and set up, it involved a very substantial amount of preparation.

John Engman did a brief coin routine that involved coins of many various denominations and a lot of audience imagination.

Manny Gonzalez chose a volunteer and gave her lots of choices about a vacation (location, partners, and even choice of room) Amazingly, he provided all she requested, even a room key with the right number on it. He did divulge that an "index" he prepared helped him provide all the requests.

Alan Litteneker had found some good magical uses for all that left over wrapping paper from the holidays as long as he could do some fancy cutting.

David Martinez had some baseball cards (some apparently valuable ones) but was not averse to tearing one up and making it return to its previous state of "wholeness."

Gerry Schiller performed his popular "Egg Bag" routine but added a four-foot-high red plastic chicken, who helped the volunteer (a child played convincingly by Manny Gonzalez) to find the egg. And the chicken made some very strange chicken noises as well.

Bob Weiss did and explained the popular coloring book routine and added a bit of history about the various ways the trick has evolved over the years.

Brad Erickson closed the evening with a "Twentieth Century Silks" routine to which he had added a wooden frame to hold the silks, so the final appearance of the vanished silk happened in a flash.

Although the "show and tell" was mostly "show" there was a wide selection of material and a copious amount of creativity from all the performers.

Gerry Schiller

RING 27, NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA – Earle J. Christenberry, Jr. Ring

Meets 1st Thu. each month, 7:00pm, Happy Italian Pizzeria 7105 Jefferson Hwy., Harahan, LA 70123. Optional meal anytime after 6:00pm – brief business meeting around 7:00 - 7:15 – followed by magic.

KEVIN CARNEY, Vice President / Web site: www.ibmring27.com

January 9th, 2025 – Dr. Neil "the Whiz" Baum, Lenny "Tricky Trainwreck" and Darlene Bertrand, Allen Boudreaux, Kevin Carney, Dr. Joe Dalgo, and Kella Krubbe attended.

Allen Boudreaux asked Lenny to secure Darlene's ring onto a padlock. Allen handed Lenny three keys, of which only one would open the lock, and was instructed to mix them up behind his back. Bertrand was to select only

one for testing. Whew, it worked, and Darlene's ring was returned. When the three keys were inspected, two proved to be blank/uncut keys (Adam Dadswell's "Loki"). Boudreaux then proceeded into a card effect that shuffled and cut the deck into separate reds and blacks (Asi Wind's "Reds and Blacks" from *Repertoire II*).

Kevin Carney made various items, including rings, appear and vanish at his will from inside a box ("Wonder Ring" by Tenyo Magic). Carney then had Darlene and Allen each place their selected card horizontally into a vertical deck secured inside a wooden box. Both cards penetrated the deck effectively, slicing the deck in thirds. Carney, with surgical precision, separated the middle third before returning it, restoring the undamaged deck (Zig Zag Cards and Box).

Dr. Joe Dalgo related some folklore of a Turkish Sultan's Palace in New Orleans where a fire massacre took place. Tragically the doors were mysteriously locked preventing any escape from the blaze and the door keys were bent ("Kenton's Key Bend" by Kenton Knepper from Steve Drury's *Key Mysteries*). Dalgo then presented a head scratcher by placing some balled up thread around a needle that ultimately threaded many individual strands through the needle eye (Tommy Wonder's "Through the Eye of the Needle" from *The Books of Wonder*, vol. 2 and *Visions of Wonder*, vol. 1 video).

Darlene Bertrand was a budding magician in trouble when attempting to find the four aces. Allen selected a random card to hopefully help her find the first ace. Darn, it missed. After we all felt sorry for her, she instituted Plan B and used the "miss card" to produce three aces and turn the "miss card" into the final ace (Ryan Matney's "Plan-B Aces" from *Bada-Bing*).

Kella Krubbe had Carney name any card and Krubbe instantly produced it face up on top of a face down deck.

Lenny Bertrand, with spectator assistance from Kella and Darlene, used cards to do a variety of feats (Aldo Colombini's "Maestoso," "All for One," and "Adagio" from his videos *Impromptu Card Magic*, vol. 2 and 3).

Leonard Bertrand

RING 31, MADISON, WISCONSIN – Ben Bergor Ring

Meets 1st Wed. each month, 6:30pm at the Sequoyia Public Library, 4340 Tokay Blvd., Madison, WI.

MARK PEPELEA, Ring Contact
(608) 425-8839 / E-mail: mpepelea@gmail.com

Website: www.ibmring31.com
<http://www.facebook.com/BenBergor.IBMRing31>

Our January meeting had a great turnout with six members in person and three on Zoom!

New officers were voted in for 2025. The new

roster of officers are Dr. Dan Feaster President, Mark Pepelea Vice President, Ben Talbot Secretary, and Cliff Wollin Treasurer. Thanks for stepping up!

The theme for our meeting was open mike. Our club always has a monthly theme. Members can perform or share anything they wish.

Mark Pepelea did a demonstration of quantum tunnelling using a copper coin and coin purse. The magical transfer of coins was amazing! Mark's degree in physics made everything seem magical!

Richar Ortiz Diaz performed a perplexing domino routine. No matter how close you looked the dots kept changing! He also performed a humorous card routine. Richar couldn't find the card Cliff Wollin picked. He finally took off his glasses and blew on a lens. The image of Cliff's card appeared!

Wayne Peterson performed "Dave's Deck." He first showed all fifty-two face up cards. He then had Cliff Wollin call out any card. He found and placed that card face up on the table. Wayne then riffled the backs of the deck showing all to be red. When Wayne turned over Cliff's card and it was the only blue backed card! He then performed "Poker Premonition" by Bailey's Top Hat Magic Fun Shop. Wayne lined up four different colored poker chips. He turned his back and requested Richar Diaz to turn over one of the chips and remember it. When he turned back around and with some mental concentration Wayne was able point out the chip Richar had chosen! He did it one more time to everyone's amazement! Finally, Wayne performed a Himber Wallet routine. He placed three gold foiled cards with one-hundred-dollar bill back designs in the wallet. With a magical pass he changed them into three gold foiled one-hundred-dollar bills!

Tal Kuhn performed "It's A Match!" by Andy Levis. He placed a hotel key card face down on the table. Tal then showed a bowl of hotel matchbooks which he mixed up. He then had Cliff Wollin reach into the bowl and pick out a matchbook. Tal then turned over the hotel key card and it matched Cliff's matchbook!

Dr. Dan Feaster performed the Niffin Tube. Dan showed a beautiful, chromed tube with a cap on the end. He unscrewed the cap and pulled out a silk handkerchief. He showed the tube empty and placed the silk back in. With a magical wave in the air, he unscrewed the cap and the silk handkerchief had changed into a sponge ball!

Daryl Rogers our Wisconsin Territorial Vice President performed the original version of "Melt" by Penguin Magic. He folded a dollar

bill in half-length ways and folded it around a card. When he turned it around the card had penetrated the bill! Daryl had a fun story about testing for counterfeit bills that went nicely with this clever illusion. Daryl showed everyone an Abbott's Goofoo Plant that he had recently acquired. It was in beautiful condition!

Dr. Lynn Miner performed a locked deck routine with an original clever crime story plot. The card Richar picked from the locked deck disappeared. It reappeared inside the card box with a lock on it!

Please stop by if you ever in the Madison area!
Wayne G. Peterson

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.rhhomepage.com.

JOE KEPPEL, President

No pushing or shoving at our January meeting with only six members present, but the post meeting magic and conversation was certainly up to par. Joe Keppel got things rolling with a John Bannon classic called "Chop." Al Grout had a new and improved "Grandma's Necklace" that he got at a recent Scott Correll event. Flashy beads and a no fumble setup of the ropes makes this an oldie but goody. I remember a version from seventy years back that Art Neimeyer showed me in a real brick and mortar shop in the Fifties. I think the new version allows for addition moves with those tricky ropes.

Jeff Stortz had a nice ace trick that spec kind of blew, but directions to them are not to be taken lightly. Then we go to Donnie Severn with a load of cute effects. A cheap pop-up top hat looked good and had a hidden compartment. Appearing umbrellas got some oohs and aahs. Silver plates that allowed for coin work were next and then a mess of wand work with really affordable wands. Yeah, you forget all that can be done with a simple wand. One was that old five in one number. Wands causing flowers to appear in little flowerpots was cute. A couple of stiff ropes were next and then Don finished off with a great printing of multiple cards. Each card was printed differently and got a reaction. Imagine getting eight or ten oohs on one effect.

Yours truly had an effect, but after Donnie's great display I passed. Might as well hit on a high note. I try to keep the ball rolling with various pieces of patter, so all was not lost.

Keep the faith and don't forget the old stuff. Also watch Charlie Frye on Facebook. He is just wonderful. Next month may be a chop cup lecture by resident performer, Joe Keppel. Have fun.
Bob Good

RING 39, HOUSTON, TX – Scott Hollingsworth Ring

www.houstonmagic.com

JUDY HOLLINGSWORTH, Secretary / E-mail: judy4birds@yahoo.com

Scott Hollingsworth presented a short lecture on the best magic prop every magician should use – the wallet. He demonstrated his signature card trick, “Sleight of Foot,” and explained how the wallet makes magic. He talked about various types of magic wallets and their individual assets and flaws. His presentation was very well-received, and many questions were answered thoroughly. To quote Miles Root, “Overall, a very fine lecture by Scott, who always delivers the best in a most professional manner. Thanks, Scott!”

Caesar Trujillo’s “History Moment” presentation was about the Mexican Christmas celebration called Dia de los Reyes Magos or Three Kings Day, which is January 6 (the day of our meeting). Very apropos and extremely entertaining.

President Dick Olson called the I.B.M. Ring 39 meeting to order at 8:05 p.m. on January 6, 2025. Treasurer Judy Hollingsworth read the financial report. There was no old or new business. The meeting was adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

After the business meeting, plans were discussed for the annual installation of officers’ banquet and show on February 16, 2025, the Austin Magic Auction on February 22, and the disposition of magic donations by past member Ron Jernigan.

The evening’s program theme was sharing the best magic acquisition in 2024. Theme ribbon winners were Harry Maurer, Caesar Trujillo, and Lanny Kibbey. Others participating in this just-for-fun contest were Eric Falconer, Ricardo Teixeira, Tom Bradley, Gene Protas, Panda, Lee Wise, and the Aquino brothers. Greg Conner and David Corn showed some “old” magic too. All in all, a wonderful evening filled with fun and magic.

Judy Hollingsworth

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

For our December meeting the theme was our annual holiday party. After finishing the pizza, salad and cookies, the show began. Master of Ceremonies, John Hutsebaut kicked things off with some jokes and a funny bit where he kept taking off different colored gloves. John showed a deck with numbers on the back of each card and asked Julie Koslow to name a number. Card 47 was shown to be the Four of Hearts and John asked a few questions to enter into a phone app, which caused a small ape holding the four to pop out of his phone.

Martin Mercy was up next with a bingo sheet in honor of his mom. The sheet was passed around and numbers were crossed off until one number was left (18). Martin divined the number while everyone shouted “bingo.”

Scott Lebin followed with a nice “Cup and Die” routine. The die kept appearing and disappearing under the cup. There were multiple final loads of a lime, lemon, and tomato.

Mike Kamlet told the story of the cursed card who turned into a frog while folding a card into an origami “frog.” After a card was selected, the frog found the selection, breaking the curse, and the selection turned into the frog.

Nancy Anderson invited Terrence Hunter to take a trip to Las Vegas. As Terrence selected a card from a deck of casino cards, it matched a predicted card as well as a casino chip. Next Terrence chose a roulette number from a deck of numbered cards and Nancy made winning bets: Red, Even, High to get to the selected number (32).

I.B.M. Past International President Don Wiberg told some funny stories while handing Lizzy a red “McCombial” prediction (9H). Lizzy then selected a card from a blue packet (all 9H). When Don asked Lizzy for the name of the card (KS), Don showed that both cards now matched.

Ivan Tzontchev asked Julie to think of one of three colors which he showed matched to a prediction on the back of the colored card. Using two pieces of red rope, Ivan performed a wonderful routine where knots jumped off the ropes. Ivan closed with the “Linking Rings.”

Alan Koslow invited Alec Dylo and Fernando Flores to shuffle the cards. Alan then dealt cards until Fernando said stop and a prediction was removed. Alec then called stop as Alan continued to deal and then Scott said deal four more cards. Those cards were shown to be mates, and then Alan showed that the whole deck was now mated too.

Terrence Hunter performed a do as I do “Silk to Egg” where both the magician and spectator ended up with real eggs. Terrence then performed a short routine with an “Egg Bag,” but with a golf ball and ended by producing a tee and a golf club from the bag. Next, Terrence produced lots of eggs from his mouth closing with a long streamer.

Mary Ziembra closed the show with a dancing cane routine done to music sung by the crowd.

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

President Cassidy Smith led off our January meeting as the featured performer. He began with a three-ring “Linking Rings” routine. Next,

he added a loop of rope and linked and unlinked the rope to a ring. He untied the rope and tossed it into a paper sack. After an incantation, he withdrew the rope and showed that it was "Tide" in the middle.

Cassidy asked Justin Teeman to select a card and to show it around while Cassidy's back was turned. He withdrew a pocket mirror and got laughs as he tried to view the selection. The card was returned to the deck and Cassidy produced several aces, each of which Justin said was not his selected card. Finally, Cassidy removed the mirror from his pocket and showed that the Queen of Spades, the selected card, was now on the face of it. Cassidy started some music and performed a silk fountain routine, culminating in a silk scarf that proclaimed, "The End."

Cassidy went over the schedule of meetings for 2025. He then asked the audience what they wanted to learn in the new year. Several members responded with their magical goals for the year.

Our business meeting was very brief, as usual. Cassidy told us about the opportunity for a lecture by Gregory Wilson. Eight people volunteered to sponsor the lecture, so it will happen.

Brian Tabor demonstrated the effect "Liquify." He transformed a puddle of white fluid in his hand into a finger ring. He said his only complaint with the trick is that it does not support the use of a red liquid. He said that ketchup is almost always available and would be very visual.

David Teeman asked Bruce Rodesney to join him "on stage." He showed Bruce several cards with images on them that he had removed from a black bag. He asked Bruce to select one of the cards and Bruce selected the horseshoe. David dumped out the remaining contents of the bag, which proved to be a poker chip. The poker chip came from the Horseshoe Casino in Las Vegas.

Derrick Beeson showed off the effect "Repo," which consisted of a small chain and a small key. He linked the key onto the chain and then it melted off the chain.

Bruce Rodesney set up a laptop computer and showed video from one of our Pandemonium of Magic public shows from many years ago. John Pansze introduced Bruce and Bruce performed an illusion using a blanket. Twice he attempted to produce a tiger and failed. Finally, he went under the blanket and appeared to be in a fight for his life. When he came out, his clothes were all in tatters, apparently ripped to shreds by the "tiger." Bruce then amazed us with his thimble magic and by the divination of a number being thought of by everyone in the audience.

Lee Woodside passed out copies of the novels *Dracula* and *Frankenstein* for the audience mem-

bers to examine while he talked about the history the books. He asked Derrick Beeson to select either book and join him "on stage." Lee leafed through the book and asked Derrick to stop him at any point. (This was not a page force.) He asked Derrick to remember the first word on the page and Lee was then able to divine the word. Lee asked if any of the audience members found anything suspicious in their examination of the books and only David Teeman said that he did.
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

Our first meeting of 2025 started out with Rick Rossini teaching the club a simple but deceptive trick (the best kind), a real baffler until he revealed it was all done with a simple peek! It was intended to be our teacher's table, which is a regular part of our meetings, but it really rolled right into our main meeting theme which was to just share magic around a table.

We have been trying to focus on various aspects and/or styles of magic; last month was focused on stage work, this month was aimed at table effects and restaurant walk-around. Most magicians do tend to concentrate on specific markets or styles, but our thinking is that exposure to the larger spectrum of the art form can be very valuable.

Several members contributed material, multiple card effects of course, but also some excellent coin work (thanks Wij Namasivayam), a great prediction of a selected colored disk by Victor Staniewski, and several other effects. One member (Buck MacLeod) demonstrated an effect using a large safety pin (what used to be known as diaper pin) and a cloth similar to a cloth napkin. Excellently presented of course, but the effect then led to a larger discussion of older illusions and how effective they can be as they come back into vogue.

It's never a problem with meetings like this to get enough participation, the problem is getting the members to go home at the end of the night! This was a great meeting format and we're already talking about doing it again. Until then, see you all next month!
Rene Chouinard

RING 55, PHOENIX, ARIZONA – Bert Easley / Danny Dew Ring

Meets 1st Tue., 7:00 pm, at Denny's, 3315 Scottsdale Rd., Scottsdale, AZ / Web site: www.ring55.org
TANK HANNA, President (480) 343-0034
E-mail: president@PhoenixMagicClub.com

The Phoenix Magic Club celebrated the holiday season in style with an unforgettable

evening of camaraderie, culinary delights, and captivating performances. With twenty-seven magicians and their plus-ones in attendance, the event proved to be a true celebration of the magic community and the artistry we all love.

The evening kicked off with a fun dinner, where members and guests shared stories, laughs, and a common love of magic. The room buzzed with excitement, not just for the socializing, but for the promise of the show to come, a showcase of incredible talent from our own club members.

The show was a feast for the imagination, with six incredible acts that brought magic to life.

John O'Hare wowed the audience with his rendition of Rene Lavand's legendary routine "It Can't Be Done Any Slower." His flawless sleight of hand and deliberate pacing were a masterclass in creating drama and suspense.

Tank Hanna, our club president, served as the evening's emcee with charm and humor. Tank also performed a close-up card set that demonstrated why he's one of the club's most skilled and respected magicians.

Ed Mukai brought a touch of mystery (and wow!) with his routine "Patterns," weaving a narrative that breathed new life into the classic magic square by combining it with an "ACAAN" effect.

Bill Halmi turned the stage into a live game of Clue, where a member of audience worked to solve a magical murder mystery. Bill's storytelling and clever method had everyone riveted until the final reveal.

Jay Jennings, club secretary, added a weird twist to the evening with a rendition of Phill Smith's "Quinta," accompanied by the vocal stylings of NSYNC. The mix of mind-reading and nostalgic pop had the audience laughing and gasping in equal measure.

Joan Rieser closed the show with "Cassandra's Game," a surprising do as I do routine that highlighted her ability to combine fun (ring the bell!) with powerful magic.

The holiday party was a resounding success, showcasing the immense talent within our club and reminding us why we're all passionate about magic. It was a night of laughter, astonishment, and connection, everything the season is about.

Thank you to all the performers, attendees, and organizers who made this evening so special. Here's to another magical year ahead! And if you missed the party, don't worry, 2025 is already shaping up to be filled with events and opportunities to share the wonder of magic. Stay tuned!

Jay Jennings

RING 58, KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE – Smoky Mountain Mystics

Meets 4th Thu. 6:45 pm each month, Messiah Lutheran Church, 6900 Kingston Pke, Knoxville, TN 37919

Web site: ibmrings58.com

VICTOR AGREDA, Jr., President

(865) 223-1401 / e-mail: vagredajr@gmail.com

Our annual Holiday Party was held on December 12 with twenty-two members, seven guests and four visiting performers from Nashville's Ring 37. It was a great group ready to have some fun and fellowship! Our set up was by Sherman Wires who arranged for B&G Catering to bring turkey and dressing and "all the fixin's" plus Sherman's lovely wife also prepared deviled eggs, two different bundt cakes and some of her delicious banana pudding. It was the best feast we have shared in quite some time. Thank you to the Wires!

The previous weekend, five of our members (Michael Priestap, Sherman Wires, Andrew McGrath, Roy Schubert, and Ed Ripley) drove to Nashville to perform for their Christmas celebration, so tonight we had four of their members as our guests to provide the after-dinner magic. Vickie Gibson opened with some silent magic followed by her husband, Tom Gibson, who is the long-time I.B.M. TVP for Tennessee. Tom's comfort in front of our group was obvious, and he always looks like he is having just as much fun as we are watching him. Larry Finley, assisted by his wife Jana, closed the show with some magic that we have grown to love as Larry is a regular performer at the Winter Carnival of Magic's contests. Thank you to our neighbors who shared their time and talents with us.

To close out the evening, we held our annual, somewhat notorious "Dirty Magician" gift exchange. There were some nice – albeit coveted – treats under the tree that were playfully traded throughout the evening. In the end, there were no hard feelings, and it was all smiles after a wonderful evening of food, magic and fun-filled fellowship.

Tom Vorjohan

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, Lance Burton/Okito Ring, held its first meeting of 2025 at its usual location, the Kosair Charities Center, 982 Eastern Parkway in Louisville, KY 40217 on Tuesday, January 14th at 7 p.m. with forty-two members and two guests in attendance.

The meeting was called to order by Matt Sohl, our club's newsletter editor. After a few brief announcements by Club President Dennis Alm referencing upcoming events and lectures we were underway. "Happy New Year!"

Our guest lecturer for the evening was longtime LMC member Brent Braun. Brent is a well-known magician, business owner, and entrepreneur in and around the greater Louisville Metro and Southern Indiana areas. Brent is a self-described magic creator and inventor as well as owner of J-B Magic Shop & Theater and as owner of The Firm, a magic consulting business with several big-name magicians as clients.

Brent describes tonight's gathering not so much as a lecture, but as a conversation. Brent basically described the many highlights he has experienced and been part of during his many years in magic, a magical biography so to speak. During his presentation, Brent also performed some very entertaining magic tricks he learned from his many various magic mentors through the years, "This-That-Never," "Torn-Torched-Restored Card," "Kick Back Transfer" among them.

During the conversation Brent passed along some valuable advice and performing tips which would be helpful to any magician of any performing skill level. One particular gem of advice that really impressed this writer was, "If you announce yourself as a magician, be prepared to do something." Whether you are shopping at the grocery store, or in any type of social setting, always be prepared. You needn't make an elephant fly around the room in a sports car, but just a quick vanish of a coin will suffice, anything magical. Brent's appearance on *Penn & Teller: Fool Us* and his involvement with *America's Got Talent* was a great behind the scenes look into how the whole process works. Brent unfortunately didn't fool them, but he did say how they could be fooled; use technology that they are not familiar with. The world of magic certainly has changed with all the advancements in electronics from cell phones and computers to Artificial Intelligence and the like. Brent gave us the impression that card tricks are probably the least likely to fool them unless it is a really, really different and unusual trick. Good luck with that!

As the evening concluded, Brent, the consummate businessman that he is, brought along several items, inventions and creations of his own that he made available for purchase. One item in particular called "Tumbleweed" was especially clever. Brent also answered any questions that any of the attendees may have had but

didn't have the chance to ask during the evening.

It was a great lecture/conversation with a great magician, one of our own, Brent Braun. Thanks Brent.

Carl Loud

RING 68, TOLEDO, OHIO – Toledo Society of Magicians

Meets 2nd Tues.. each month, 6:30 p.m. Location varies.

PATRICK PRZYSECKI, President

E-mail: patrick@patrickmagic.com

Ring 68 (Toledo, Ohio) met on Tuesday, January 14, 2025, at the Blarney Irish Pub in downtown Toledo. Johnny New York gave more details on Ring 22's plans and venue for the Michigan Magic Day on May 16 and 17th. Six people (George Magill, Johnny, Martin Jarrett, Andy Martin, Doug Ferguson, and Boomer Reynolds) were in attendance.

The magic portion of the meeting included George with more rubber band magic and the "Magic Billet Catch" (a signed bill was finger-shot from the waitstaff spectator to a balloon in George's mouth). Martin showed us a \$100 credit card trick and several effects with a special deck. Johnny performed "Simple Pseudometry" (pseudo-memory) and also a prediction effect using different wine menu prices. Boomer shared his take on "Scarne's Four Ace Production," followed by Johnny with another four-ace production. Andy discussed the Vision Deck, comparing it to the Brainwave Deck.

It was a fun evening of food, libations, and lively conversation.

Doug Ferguson

RING 71, CINCINNATI, OHIO – W.W. Durbin Ring-J. Ronald Haines

Meeting dates vary per month, 7:00 p.m. at Springdale Nazarene

Church, 11177 Springfield Pike, Cincinnati, OH 45246.

Please check website, www.Ring71.com for upcoming events.

CHARLIE MEYER, President / Email: charlie.cadabra@yahoo.com

Facebook: International Brotherhood of Magicians - J. Ronald Haines - W.W. Durbin Ring 71

Our November Ring meeting started off with a thirty-minute lecture on "Mentalism" presented by Past International President Chuck Arkin. After demonstrating several mentalism effects, Chuck pointed that various card forces could be used to create mind reading effects. Then Chuck demonstrated several card forces and showed the group how the forced card could be used to read a spectator's mind. Chuck's presentation was followed by several members presenting mentalism effects.

The theme of the December meeting was Holiday Magic. Gerald Ralston, Larry Payne, Greg Hamilton, Chuck Arkin, and Chuck Meyer showed us several Christmas themed routines. A high light was Greg Hamilton inserting an empty silver tube into an empty brown paper bag. He then closed the bag and turned it upside

down. He then poked a hole in the bottom of the bag and produced a large Christmas silk.

The last demonstration of the evening was Ron Lawson using a pair of dice to select a card from a group of cards. The selected card was a card that Ron had predicted in advance. Ron then shared the YouTube link that he used to learn the trick with the group. *Al Scheide*

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
MATTHEW KING, Secretary / Web site: www.ring76.com

December is one of two of the biggest meetings of the Ring year. It is our annual Holiday Potluck and not only features a wide selection of great food, but we also make it a point to hire outstanding talent to entertain as well. This meeting is open to family and friends of the Ring so as a result it is often the largest attended event of the year. We were pleased to welcome thirty-eight members and fourteen guests. Each family brought fine food for the feast and Greg Wauson's wife Brenda once again volunteered to make festive holiday centerpieces for the tables. Thank you, Brenda.

The Board members arrived early to set up the meeting room. Fortunately for us, the church where we hold our meetings had celebrated their own so tables were already arranged. Long tables were placed along the walls to accommodate the wide variety of foods that members were to bring. Secretary Richard Ustick arrived with the warming trays, Sterno, plates, eating utensils as well as the serving spoons. As the crowd arrived, he directed food to the hot table, salad tables, and dessert tables. With the help of others, all went remarkably smoothly for such a complex maneuver. Normally our Ring meetings start at 7 p.m. however we start the food service early at the December meeting to make sure everyone has time to eat, business is attended to, and we can all enjoy the entertainment that is to come.

Shortly after everyone had had a chance to get the food a brief business meeting was called to order by President Josh Sherwin. It was announced that January would feature Bag Night and that anyone interested in entering February's Close-up contest should contact V.P. of Entertainment, "Magic Mike" Stilwell. Guests were welcomed but due to the nature of the evening, they were not called on to identify themselves and relate their interest in magic, as is the usual rule. With that, business was concluded, and the night's entertainment could commence.

For this year's program, we were fortunate

enough to book Christopher T. Magician and his "Not-So-Traditional Magic Show." While his show is "tailor-made for kids," it was tweaked just enough to make sure the mainly adult audience had an enjoyable time. The same energy and enthusiasm were present and at no time did the attendees feel they were watching a "children's show." Christopher had us laughing at his jokes, including the cleaver "inside jokes" aimed at the magical members, and also had us amazed at the skill and daring of many of his effects and presentations as he puts it in his promotional material, "No unimpressive 'kiddie' tricks here that wouldn't fool a baby. Christopher pulls every ounce of kid show fun and hilarity out of tricks that will fool everyone in the room!" including our most seasoned and professional magicians. He even produced his magical Rat, much to the delight of the younger members of the audience.

After the show, Member at Large and Ring Librarian Gary Salisbury presented the "Opportunity Drawing" where valuable additions to anyone's magical treasures could be won with a simple ticket. Finally, there was the grand holiday tradition of "cleaning the place up," in which everyone participated. The church recreation room was put back in order so that Ring 76 could continue its reputation of being welcomed guests wherever they are. *Richard Ustick*

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

Our January meeting was a freezing success. We reviewed last month's Holiday Banquet which was attended by over thirty folks from our Ring plus the Ithaca Ring and S.A.M. Elmira. We honored David Hanselman for his many years of service to magic in our area and to his accomplishments in the field of magic. There was great companionship, and several folks performed magic which included some effects created by David. We had a gift exchange and door prizes thanks to contributions from all three groups. Then we discussed a possible event this September at the apple festival for members to perform magic. We also discussed the idea of conducting a class at the community college on magic for beginners. This would be an opportunity to highlight our Ring and possibly get new members.

Next were the performances with our monthly theme being cups and balls. This started with David Black doing a routine with the tiny plastic sets you get in kids magic kits then Gary Freed

did his very nifty “Chop Cup” routine which ends with two large tennis balls in the final production. I then performed the routine from *Mark Wilson’s Complete Course in Magic*. I used the original cups set that came with the kit that my dad purchased for me in 1975. The old routine still plays well but then I showed some moves from an Aldo Colombini routine and the use of a wand from Michael Ammar routines.

Next up was Doug Welch who did a nifty “Chop Cup” routine in which he has the ball reappear under the cup while the spectator is holding the cup. Tim Cleary did a two-cup routine by Carl Andrews, a jigger and olive routine by Dan Fleschman and a cup and coin routine with a half dollar. Finally, John Maceli did something a little different where he had the spectator put a ball under one of the three cups and then with his back turned the spectator moved the cups around yet John was able to determine where the ball was located. Next month we are going to continue our classic theme with ropes.

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
GARY ROBERTS, President
E-MAIL: gary@robertsgary.com / Web site: www.ibmring81.com

It’s a new day... the second one of the New Year, and what a great day for some magic for about sixteen of us. The outgoing officers were recognized for their help, and three of the new officers were there for the installation. After a few minutes of other announcements, we had a lot of member performances.

Our outgoing President Gary Roberts asked Brian Zimble to choose and sign a card which was returned to the deck and dumped in a large envelope... which Gary pierced with a knife, skewering the signed card. Dick Stevens (who provides a gorgeous backdrop for us each month) asked Brian to stay and continue assisting; he asked the audience to applaud only when the electric Applause Light would light. When Dick vanished an orange silk, the light stayed dark, but we discovered the silk was inside the Applause Light’s bulb. Dick also performed a hilarious electronic bell routine.

It was great to have Wic Cooney perform his version of the classic “Sidewalk Shuffle.” Our new president, Star Newman, performed a beautifully orchestrated version of “Sneak Thief.” Then she revealed five different people’s favorite movies. Brian Zimble magically determined liars from truth-tellers as he correctly identified who held a coin, again, and again. Frank Velasco amazed even the seasoned veter-

ans with a card game titled “Always Six.” Gene Alcorn did a magical switch of folded one and five-dollar bills in Star Newman’s hand. Bob Banta presented a “show-and-teach” pertaining to some of the nuances for handling and using a Boston Box; Bob had learned these moves from David Roth several years ago during a visit to Fantasma Magic in Manhattan.

Tom Vorjohan via Robert Banta

RING 92, VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA – The Vancouver Magic Circle (Charles Howard Ring)

Meets 4th Thurs. except July, Aug. and Dec., 7:00 pm, Sunrise
Community Hall, 1950 Windermere St., Vancouver, B.C.
YOOSIK OUM, President

E-mail: yoosikoum@gmail.com / Web site: www.ibmring92.com

The 2024 magic year started off in January with the election of new officers. It was also initiation night for new members. The February meeting was the swearing in of the newly elected executive. The trophy awards, contest winner certificates, loyalty pins, and the Helping Hands certificates were handed out by Yoosik Oum.

The March meeting was the Vancouver Magic Circle’s annual Magic Mystery and dinner. It was also the start of the week-long Festival of Magic put on by Past International President Shawn Farquhar, with shows happening at different venues. There were stage shows, close-up magic and demonstrations. The Magic Festival ended with the Children’s Magician of the Year contest. S.A.M. Past National President Rod Boss was the producer.

During a Vancouver Canucks hockey game, at intermission, Blake Aleong did a magic performance and donated his show for the Canucks Kids Charity. Blake Aleong won the award of merit at the I.B.M. Convention in Tacoma. Cameron Minty, our “chef- gician” has moved to Victoria and joined the Victoria Magic Circle.

In April, Ken Cowie went to Zambia, Africa to do some mission work. He also did some kids’ magic and some gospel magic while he was there. In February, Gary Robins and Marlene went to Peru, Curacao in May, Greece in October, and Mexico in December. In April Charles Gauthier and his wife Donna went on a five-week tour to Spain. They visited one of the world’s oldest magic shops, El Rey de la Magica. In April, Past International President Billy Hsueh, Shawn Farquhar, and Rod Chow went to Fetcher’s Finger Frolic Festival. They also went to the Magic Association of Western New York. In May, Shawn and Lori Farquhar went on a grand adventure to Egypt. Robert Teszka’s Parlour Magic Show is also a popular event in the Vancouver area. In May, Graham Kita and his family went to Disneyland. In June, Robert Teszka and Alison went to Montreal for

the Montreal Fringe Festival. In July our “Diva of Deception” Gabriella Lester and Shawn Farquhar were some of the featured performers at the Tacoma Convention. Gabriella Lester was the recipient of the Allan Straight Award as a Canadian rising star.

The Cabaret of Wonders shows held at Hidden Wonders has been doing extremely well featuring local magicians and guests. The shows have been receiving many high recommendations and reviews from the media, Trip Advisor, and Tourism New West. Shawn has also been busy with his Hidden Wonders T-shirts, and he has also produced some playing cards with the Hidden Wonders logo on the back. The August picnic was also another fun event. During the summer, Shawn Farquhar was busy doing shows, lectures, and promoting his movie *Lost in the Shuffle*. This has been met with great success. Shawn Farquhar’s new magic program called *52 and You* held at Hidden Wonders is an event for card enthusiasts.

During the course of the year Henry Tom and his wife Pam went on a world cruise. During the summer, Past International President Alex Zander did shows in several fairs across the U.S. He also did shows at this year’s PNE. In December Alex and Monica went to Disneyworld and then went on a seven-day cruise. September was the club’s annual online auction. There was also a live auction of magic from the estate of former Ring member Jack Zemel. Simon Cassegrain and Roy Hopwood spent some time putting together the roster book for 2025.

This year’s annual Christmas dinner was held at Shimshiri Caveman restaurant. Credits go to President Yoosik Oum for sending out reminders about upcoming events, Simon Cassegrain for setting up the Zoom meetings, Henry Tom, Roy Hopwood, Rod Boss, and Graham Kita for their photography work, Roy Hopwood, our secretary/treasurer for keeping up with the finances and the membership list and *Magical Minutes* newsletter, John Stenning for proofreading the *MM*, Graham Kita, who does everything, and to Dennis the “Bulldog” Chan who still keeps reminding people not to play around with their cell phones and cards during a lecture, workshop, or performance.

On behalf of the officers, we thank you all for attending the meetings and to those taking part in all of the club’s activities. Without you, the Ring would not be where it is today. The Vancouver Magic Circle is an innovative and caring club which is steeped in tradition and ethics. We should be proud of what we’ve accomplished as we celebrate eighty-two years of magic.

Dennis Chan

RING 93, DUBUQUE, IOWA – Tri-State Magic Club

3rd Sun., 7:00pm, Hy-Vee meeting room, 400 Locust St., Dubuque, Iowa
BOB BEARDSLEY, President, (563) 556-8584
E-mail: rbeardsly@Q.com

The December meeting was a Broken Wand Ceremony and Celebration of Life for long time club member, Rob Gomoll who passed away on November 19th at the age of 75. Phyllis Fishnick opened the meeting singing the song “Do You Believe in Magic,” written by Rob and how he opened every meeting and club event. Phyllis did an outstanding job, and it was almost like Rob was speaking to the club. Bob Beardsley mentioned that just a few months ago while attending an event in the Wisconsin Dells, hosted by Rick Wilcox, Rob sang this song in the lobby during intermission to many in attendance.

Do you believe in magic? / Say you bought a new gaff... / It didn’t work, but you still got a laugh / Because it’s magic. / Learn all kinds of tricks. / Defy the law of gravity or physics. / You can join our club for brotherhood; / It’ll get you out of the house and do you some good! / Because it’s magic! / Make a card disappear. / Pull out a coin from behind someone’s ear. / You can’t believe a thing you see, / But you can believe in Ring 93. / So come to a meeting and watch yourself grow. / We meet every third Sunday in Adam’s Dance Studio! / We believe in magic!

Next Jim McCrea performed the Broken Wand Ceremony for the club and Rob’s family. Jim added his own personal touch to this ceremony making it one of the best ever. Jim stated that more than anything else, at least to the members of Ring 93, the Tri-State Magic Club, Rob was a talented poet who could create witty and whimsical poetry in an apparently effortless fashion; he was the very best Master of Ceremonies in our area, and he was the audience member every performer would want at their show because he was so effusive in his praise and so open about the amazement he would express when a magical effect completely led him down the garden path.

Bob Beardsley, a long-time best friend of Rob, opened the Celebration of Life by making a presentation to Linda Gomoll, a very attractive shadow box, containing pictures of Rob and some of his favorite effects. Bob also presented the Gomoll family with a large notebook containing over one hundred pages of poems that Rob had written over the years, most of which can be found in the club minutes published in *The Linking Ring*.

The following quotes sum up how members felt about and will remember Rob Gomoll. “He

was one of the most kind and decent people I have ever known.” “Rob was a great inspiration for me to join the magic club.” “Rob was everyone’s cheerleader and had a passion for helping others.” “Words were his passion, and he used them to lift up anyone who was struggling, feeling judged, or underestimated.” “Rob always encouraged me to keep writing and he pushed me to be a better person each and every day.” “Rob had a way to make the ordinary extraordinary.” “Whether he was sharing a poem to start a meeting, a story, or a bit of magic, Rob had the gift of making everyone around him feel special and appreciated.” “Rob was the brother I never had and there will never be another Rob Gomoll.”

Bob Beardsley told a few more stories about the great times he spent at Happy Joe’s Pizza performing magic with Rob. Bob had hoped to perform “Color Monte” to a poem, but unlike Rob, he couldn’t remember a few lines, so Adam Kieffer read the lines while Bob performed this classic dedicated to Rob. Bob also performed a thumb tie escape to honor “The Great Robini.” Rob earned the nickname “Robini,” after he performed the “Mailbag Escape” at a club show at the Dubuque Art Museum.

Mark Pepelea performed a version of Triumph that was themed for Christmas. Adam Kieffer did three card tricks as a tribute to the great Robdini. The first effect was the spelling bee trick, which was one of the first card tricks he saw Rob perform. Next, he did an effect with two black aces are on the top and the bottom of the deck and produced the two red aces. Knowing how much Rob loved escape tricks, Adam’s third affect involved picking a card from the deck, placing it back inside the deck, binding the deck with a rubber band, and having the chosen card flip from inside the deck to face up on the back of my hand under the rubber band.

The remaining time was spent visiting with the Gomoll family and remembering the many good times spent with Rob and his love of magic and dedication to Ring 93.

Bob Beardsley

RING 94, HAGERSTOWN, MARYLAND – The King Ring

Meets 4th Weds. each month, 7:30 p.m., Hagerstown American Legion, Northern Ave., Hagerstown, MD / Web site: www.kingmagicring.com
JOHN SWOMLEY, President / E-mail: johnnyo@trickyperson.com

Happy Holidays from the King Magic Ring Holiday Banquet. Our emcee for the evening was Johnny-O! (John Swomley) who immediately introduced Jolly Ole St. Nick. Santa Jim (Jim Greer) created a human bell choir to play a few holiday favorites. He finished with a sing-along of “We Wish You a Merry Christmas.”

This inspired our emcee to sing a song of his own creation, “Super-Fragile Candy Canes and Cookies are Delicious.”

Next up was Max Mixell with an original routine. Three nesting and undecorated boxes were placed in a larger box. With the introduction of a magical green ball, the boxes emerged decorated.

Johnny-O! returned with a demonstration of the power of “mind-reading cheese.” It was hijacked by a mouse, which correctly read human minds.

Khan-Du & Co. (Charlie and Karen James) treated us to a grand act, beginning with a number of magical silk productions, e.g., “Die to Silk,” “Silk in Wand” dissection and restoration, and “Wand to Silk.” This ended in a Merry Christmas, Santa Blendo. They followed this with a Target Blendo using audience helpers. Finally, Charlie woke up a rope-obsessed genie who lived inside a large vase.

A special treat at these banquets is to have guests. One such guest was a young twelve-year-old Brayden. He is new to magic and was taught a mental trick just before the show. He was able to identify one item chosen from three, not having been in the room prior. Bravo!

Our emcee came back with a “Nutcracker Prediction” mostly to music. Chuck Thomas (Jones) started his segment with a Jumbo Zig-Zag Card. “Queenie” impressively survived her ordeal. Speaking of ordeal... Chuck told us a harrowing tale of being stalked by a “Nightmare Santa.” This new version of “Sidewalk Shuffle” showed us a scary side of Christmas. Mr. Thomas concluded with the “Pegasus Page.” This book test on steroids finished with the actual page shown to have been mysteriously ripped from the selected book.

Showing everyone that persistence is key, and that this time of year is a time of second chances, Louis Paul laid out a group of well-mixed cards from which a selection was to be made. His prediction was correct. A Christmas miracle! Mr. Derrick Robey was welcomed and started with a silk penetration through a snow shovel, what else? The music began, and a red and white ball exchanged places. Derrick then demonstrated the “Johnny Tom Pom-Pom Stick.” This routine is full of comedy, impossible connections, disconnections, and reconconnections. These pom-poms on a stick danced throughout, in unpredictable ways. Lastly, Mr. Robey gave us an original “Five Card Repeat” in which the hat in use kept tossing the cards out as they went in.

In conclusion, Johnny-O! produced a giant Jesus silk announcing the birth of a savior, wishing everyone a Merry Christmas. *John Swomley*

RING 96, LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA – Merlin Eifert 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@verizonz.net

Ring 96 had their most recent meeting on Saturday, December 21st. We started out with a potluck dinner that featured salads, chicken, pastas, and even a homemade eggplant parmigiana. While we ate, Alan Hanson entertained us with a series of effects that were all Christmas, holiday, and celebration based. His set included producing candy from a clear tube, hippity hop elves, and melting and restoring a snowman.

After our potluck dinner our outgoing President John Piercy opened the meeting for our holiday magic show.

David Fisher told a heartwarming Christmas story about an aunt who would put a one-dollar bill in all family's children's stockings along with a piece of candy. David borrowed three one-dollar bills and had a volunteer choose one. He tore off the end of one and asked an audience member to hold on to it. He vanished the rest of the bill. He had a young girl from the audience load three stockings with candy. She selected one stocking and one piece of candy. When she opened the candy bar, the rest of the matching dollar was found there.

Marshall Butt vanished a red silk. He told us he would do it again and show us how he did it. He had a music player in the background playing the theme to *Chariots of Fire*. As he waved the silk in slow motion, George Reis came running up in slow motion and snatched away the silk. This sight gag got a huge reaction.

Brad Erickson came to the stage and pulled out a red case. He took out a Santa hat which he put on. He pulled out two red gloves and he put one on and a volunteer put on the other. He had the volunteer mimic his motions, and her glove changed color. He said that trick was a little greater, and he pulled out a little grater as a sight gag. Brad brought four children to the stage and gave each of them two bells. He told them to ring the bells when he tapped them on the shoulder from behind. He proceeded to close his act with a Christmas carol playing on the bells.

Zeezo came up with a small box and asked for a lady/mom volunteer. He had five small figurines in the box, all shaped like pigs. He had her call out the famous cadence as he counted pigs into her hand. "Pig one!" he called. She replied, "This little piggy went to market." When he got to the fifth pig, she called "This little piggy went wee wee all the way home," the pig seemingly urinated into her hand.

Vinny Marini, the "godfather of magic," borrowed a hundred-dollar bill and had it signed. He folded up small in his hand for all to see. He unfolded it, and it had changed into a one-dollar bill which he returned to the owner. Then he did a demonstration of the shell game. He was very skilled and quickly won over his audience.

John Piercy closed the performance section of the night by placing several silks into a container and pulling them back out knotted together while he recited a Christmas poem.

John Piercy, as outgoing president gave out several beautiful awards to people who had done service for the Ring over the years.

We held an installation for our next year of officers. Former President Paul Case emceed the installation and swearing in.

The gift exchange was the last item on our agenda. We used playing cards to choose the order and allowed each item to be stolen three times. The event was a lot of fun, and no one went home empty handed.

There was one final gift for everyone. The board of Ring 96 ordered mugs with our logo on it. Each member got a mug and a stylish pen that featured our name and website on the side. 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

What a great party that was. Our December meeting, organised by President Jack Sharp, was our 2024 Christmas party. Both members and friends of the I.B.M. were invited along to this special meeting.

Jack had organised the performers for a great magic show interrupted by pizzas, drinks, and Christmas style desserts. He was tonight's master of ceremonies, and he began with two packs of cards. He asked for a value to be chosen; a spectator said the queens. Jack removed two queens from one pack, he showed that they sandwiched a card and that the same two queens in the other pack sandwiched the same card.

Jack then introduced Andy Nunn, "Sydney's busiest mentalist." Andy showed why this is true with a medley of fast paced mental magic helped by his smooth and confident delivery style. Andy, after claiming that he would have been burned at the stake if he had lived two hundred years ago, deduced birthdays, predicted outcomes from a game of Twenty Questions. read minds, predicted a chosen movie, memorised a pack of cards in seconds, solved a Rubik's Cube and produced an astonishing

Magic Square. Jack then brought up Peter Wood, "Sydney's busiest kids' magician." Peter had a lovely rope routine starting with tying knots in half a second, tying knots with one hand, challenging a spectator to follow a long as Peter tied a knot without letting go of the ends of the rope, and then linking together three loops of rope.

Our next performer was Barry Abkin, "Sydney's busiest South African Sydney Magician," who had a lovely version of Winston Freer's "Tile Puzzle." Tiles shown to neatly fit into a frame continued to fit even as additional tiles were added. A great puzzling mystery for the uninformed. Dale Trueman, "Sydney's busiest Kiwi magician living on the Central Coast," was next. He claimed that his young nephew had invented a great prediction effect, and Dale showed a large envelope which he said contained the prediction. Dale invited Adam, a visitor to come and assist him. He got Adam to choose a coloured bead, a number between 1 and 100, a nation's flag, and a letter of the alphabet. As each item was chosen Dale wrote them on to Post-it Notes that were stuck on Adam's body. When the prediction was opened it was a sketch of Adam with all the appropriate Post-it Notes in their proper places.

Jack then introduced our latest member, Christiaan Jacobs, "Sydney's Busiest Magic Club New Member." Christiaan performed a "Cups and Balls" routine with large heavy cups. The routine was heavily based on Gazzo's routine and ended with the final production of baseballs and an apple. Stephen Bell, our next performer is "Sydney's Busiest Magician with a father called Bill." Steve performed a rope routine where he removed the ropes ends, leaving him with a rope with no ends, a loop? He cut the rope with imaginary scissors; he had two ropes that turned into one length then three unequal lengths that then became equal. Our final performer was our visitor from Morocco, Adam Zine. Adam is in Australia attending university and hopefully we will see more of him whilst he is a student in our country for the next three years. Adam is "Sydney's busiest bearded magician" and he showed that he is a lovely card worker with a delicate touch of the pasteboards. Amongst the routines he showed tonight was an effect from the French master, Babel, where a chosen card appeared between two court cards and before we could catch our breath, he did it again.

To close the evening Jack lined up volunteers with wind chimes and wooden spoons. As Jack pointed to the volunteers they hit their chimes with the spoons. "Jingle Bells" was the first piece followed up by "We Wish You a Merry Christmas." This was Jack's rendition of Keith

Fields' "Human Xylophone" and was an excellent way to close the meeting/party just a week before Christmas Day.

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

What a great turnout for our first meeting of the new year! President Phil Schwartz said to bring some magic, along with anything we bought ourselves or received as presents over the holidays. It turned out to be a very enjoyable and magical way to start the new year.

Phil started our meeting showing some of his new 2025 Tenyo tricks. "Six Sided" is a totally different card prediction effect utilizing a square cube displaying cards. He showed off the *Best of All Worlds* new book by Brent Arthur as the lead author. He also showed some small folding tables, one which was owned by Shimada.

Eddie Conrads took the prize for the coolest new magic prop. He brought along a recently purchased Inflatable Bear, all five feet of him. The group participated in suggesting ways to produce it, how to cover some sound issues, and ways to ditch it when done. Eddie also performed "What's My Job?" It works similar to the coloring book principle but is a slick force/prediction effect. Magic by Marco then did his version of Al Callas's twenty-dollar bill trick utilizing five dollar and one-dollar bills. He is calling it "Hornswoggle."

Stan Bladek followed with Greg Wilson's "Coffee Break" trick. This is a great impromptu and easily set up trick with a coffee stirrer and a Starbucks bag. A big "thank you" to Starbucks for donating the bags and sticks. He also showed his new present, *Modern Coin Magic* by J.B. Bobo. John Henderson once again fooled all of us with his card skills. He found a great card prediction effect on Totally Magic on YouTube. He then followed it up with Stephen Tucker's "Printing Press" trick utilizing a slick double lift along with his Himber wallet.

Bruce Harpster presented two very baffling card effects. One was Amanda Nepo's "Diamond Cutter." This is one ingenious card effect using a borrowed deck. To have the pip of a card change before your eyes is truly magical. He then did Danny DaOrtiz's "Symbiosis" flawlessly and left us astounded that he could locate a card after four spectators shuffled parts of the deck.

Members then stayed another hour talking and trading effects. The camaraderie and friendships that have developed is truly special and is part of what the "brotherhood" of magicians is all about.

Stan 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

Our first Ring meeting of 2025 got off to a finger choppin' bang with Richard Micucci demonstrating his Smart Guillotine by Tenyo, a great close-up finger penetration illusion released several years ago. Next, Rich displayed and took us on a tour of his Greek Peek Wallet by Tony Antoniou. He concluded with a strong Jay Sankey dollar bill illusion. A red circle is drawn on one end of the bill and a hole is punched on the opposite end. After some deceptive manipulation, the hole appeared in the center of the red bullseye! The trick is featured in Sankey's *Hundred Dollar Miracles*.

Carl Morano demonstrated a self-working variation on the classic "Free Will" prediction mental effect called "Free Choice" by A.K. Dutt. Working with three picture cards depicting a cell phone, a coin, and a wristwatch and three prediction cards, the spectator freely controls some random dealing and card elimination, leaving a single card that predicted what picture cards the spectator and magician each held and which image card was set aside.

John Henderson masterfully orchestrated a medley of three cards effects into one smooth flow, "Bannihilation" by John Bannon, "Yin To My Yang" (Liam Montier) and Paul LePaul's "Card To Box."

Mark Cahill continued the cardio card workout with a Cameron Francis routine producing four kings with the last king under the card box kicker! He followed up with a similar type aces effect by Joshua Jay where the last ace appeared in his mouth!

Jay Paul demonstrated his specialty, a find your card trick using an obscure hidden key card principle. From a deck, an indicator card is chosen to find two additional cards that represented the value and the suit of the first chosen card!

Tim Fortune presented Bill Goldman's "One For The Money." Using the deep key card principle, a borrowed deck is shuffled. The spectator is asked to take the top card and insert it into middle of the deck and do the same with the bottom card. Now, the top card is turned over to reveal the predicted card!

Mark Cahill closed out the evening with a performance of Doug Conn's "Clean Sweep Penetration of Thought." With the four aces from a red and blue deck, two thought of cards switch packets resulting in one red ace with the blues and vice versa. Doug teaches this visual stunner trick on YouTube. *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 TEQ, President / Tel: +62504422, 97509017

10M Braddell Hill #01-49, Singapore 57931

This evening's meeting, co-hosted by Victor Heng and John Teo, and themed "Mental Magic," was attended by twenty-seven members and one guest. Secretary JK Tan announced that Dr. Eric Yap, Charles Choo, and Lim Teck Guan qualified for Life-Time Membership with I.B.M. Ring 115 as they have been members for at least thirty years and are eighty years or older. These three members will henceforth have the privilege of free club membership. Baharudin also announced an upcoming trip to Penang from 27 February to 2 March 2025. Members were invited to check out details in the Ring 115 chatgroup and let him know early if interested.

Yu Hui Hang kicked off the evening's performances by transforming three American silver coins into bronze coins, and then into Chinese coins with a hole in each of them. A volunteer shuffled a deck of cards and cut to the Jack of Hearts. This card was turned over face up and was in the ninth position from the top of the deck. Hui Hang took out the cards from a second deck on the table. It also had the Jack of Hearts as the only card face up and occupying the ninth position from the top of the deck. He then showed that all the other cards were blank ones.

Ryan Goh performed a "3-Fly" coin routine. He had a volunteer write down an object on her mobile phone notepad. The mobile was passed to a second volunteer who erased the written object and replacing it with his own object. This was repeated with a third volunteer. Ryan took the mobile and was able to announce the erased objects written by the second and first volunteers respectively. Next, he took a photo of a volunteer couple holding up a piece of black film. He enlisted three other volunteers to make up an imaginary playing card, and the identity of that card was shown captured in the black film in the photograph of the couple.

An induction ceremony was then conducted for both Ryan Goh and Yu Hui Hang. Ivan Lee and Rebecca Seet took their induction tests as a couple. Using the theme, four of a kind, they produced four different coloured flowers, each springing from a matching-coloured pot. They performed a "Three Card Monte" effect using giant cards where the only queen among two kings finally transformed into the third king. Rebecca not only could guess correctly the

exact number of cards cut to by a volunteer, but she also caused the volunteer's selected card to be the only card face up in the deck. Ivan had the same volunteer cut the deck into four piles, and he found the four aces. The second card of each pile was turned over to reveal two queens of the same suits as the first two aces, a five and a two. The couple cleverly concluded that the two queen cards represented themselves and the numbers, including the aces, represented 15 December, the date of their induction test.

Dr. Loke Han Ying invited a volunteer to complete a series of three actions. Firstly, the volunteer drew a picture related to a travel destination. He then selected a photograph from a picture book on travels. Dr. Loke had two four-digit numbers randomly written by two other volunteers and a third one totaled them up. The first volunteer randomly selected four playing cards. The identities of these four cards coincided with the sum of the two four-digit numbers. Dr. Loke then correctly described the selected travel photograph, and drew a similar picture drawn by the first volunteer earlier.

Thomas Yeo presented art mentalism. Inviting four volunteers to draw a portrait of President John Teo while he stepped away from the room, he correctly matched the "artworks" with their respective "artists" on his return.

Charles Choo set aside a playing card as a prediction. He invited a volunteer to use a mobile phone to multiply any two sets of three-digit numbers. Using this result, he counted off cards in a deck and arrived at the mate of the card he placed earlier as his prediction.

It was dealer's demonstration time. Goh Yin Xiang demonstrated a double-load chick pan, Run Rabbit Run effect done with playing card, Michael Murray's "Polarity" and "Showcase 2.0."

James Pang next invited three volunteers to respectively write down any word from a book, any page from a book and a colour chosen from a colour chart. Using his magical sense of touch over each volunteer's closed fist which held the written piece of paper, he correctly read what each of them had written – the word "lower," the number 274 and the colour mustard.

President John Teo rounded off the evening's meeting with a teach-in. He shared interesting insights about the De-Monster, and how the unique drawing of this monster was inspired by a comic years ago. A volunteer would be asked to select one of the three prominent features on the monster – its face, feet, or tail. The magician would present his correct prediction from an envelope with two other decoy envelopes standing by. He also shared on the use of large motivational messages placemats, where a volunteer

would be invited to choose one of the ten displayed. He patiently demonstrated and explained in detail, how he could correctly predict any placemat chosen.

Low Hwee Lang (Ms)

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

For his final meeting as president, Jason Moore came up with a challenge for the members to show us some home-made magic props they had made by themselves. The challenge was enthusiastically accepted, with ten members displaying their creations.

Steve Steiner led off with his original handling of a balancing gimmick, in which a belt is made to balance on a wooden prop that is held in place by one finger. He showed how he attached various plaques to it to transmit a message. Jason Moore followed with a modification that he had done on an existing prop. Brad Lynn showed us some super-hero cards he had made for a kids' show. Matt Gurley showed us a glass of beans which changed to a glass of water. Jeremiah Jackson showed us some wooden props he had made for his personal use, based on Dean's Box, Blockhead, and the Monkey Bar. Past International President Roger Miller demonstrated a screen he had made for the production of a goldfish bowl. Dennis Burks showed us a Square Circle with multiplying bottles and some various paddles he had made for the traditional paddle trick. Samuel Bricker demonstrated his version of a confetti cannon. Keith Leff showed us his version of "Dots Impossible," using pictures based on a theme instead of simply using blank dots. Finally, Past International President David Sandy demonstrated how he changed a scoop of ice cream (which he appeared to put into a child's hand) for some candy, a much more practical thing for a child to hold in his bare hand.

After the break, Dennis Burks gave a positive review of a book called *The Spectacle of Illusion*, which described the work of various "spiritualists" of the past century and the work of magicians who exposed them as fakes. Dustin Blencoe showed us some home-made props. Tom Burgoon showed us a prop he had received as a gift (too hard to describe in words). David Sandy showed us a penetration device from his vast array of collectible magic. He showed us the workings, because he felt that the secret was more entertaining than the trick itself. Stu Lewis reported on seeing Asi Wind's one-man show during his recent trip to London,

which he said was one of the most impressive shows he had ever seen.

By the time you read this, we will have had our annual dinner and installed our new president, Kelly Rusk. We hope that some of you will come visit us in our new location. *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 Society hosted its annual holiday show. Dan Rodriguez emceed the event.

Charly Wonder planned to perform a Santa-themed magic trick but received a cease and desist from the North Pole. Instead, she switched two white-bearded people from different chimneys. One had a purple suit, and one had a yellow suit. While it looked like she turned them around, she showed that the Santa pictures were on the back.

Melody Berg dressed up like the elf on the shelf. She selected two volunteers from the audience. One had to select a card, while the other selected a number on the dart board. The back of the dartboard had symbols on it. The chosen number led to a symbol on the dartboard, matching the card's symbol.

John Walker brought the land down under to the mile-high city. He entered with the song "Down Under" by Men at Work wearing a Hawaiian shirt, shorts, and flip-flops. He built a sandcastle out of some sand that he brought. When he knocked it down, a snowman was standing inside. He also passed around a box and asked members of the audience to write down gift ideas. He pulled a random piece of paper that read "tight blue thong." Luckily that is the Australian term for a small blue flip-flop, which he had on stage.

Jason Fye brought a spectator onto the stage. He had them select a card, sign it, and lose it in the deck. He brought out a large candy cane with a sharpened end. He instructed the spectator to throw the deck of cards into the air, so he could stab the selected card. Unfortunately for him, the spectator threw the card too early. He brought a present for the spectator: a box containing a stocking with another box and another stocking. The signed card was somehow inside everything.

Kier Royale brought a trick to teach everyone. He was able to put a coin inside a clear ornament. He taught everyone how to perform it and make it at home.

Gene Gordon had a volunteer select a card

with names on the back. Unfortunately, they selected Scrooge. With some magic, he was able to change the name on the back of the card to Merry Christmas.

Brad Montgomery had a jacket with a tag still attached. He had the audience guess how much it costs. Both the guess and the prediction were exactly \$99.72. He also showed the power of positive thinking. He had a spectator write a positive taught on a piece of paper and hold it in their hand. The participant was able to noticeably improve their balance in different poses.

The holiday season can be a very stressful time, so Brend Ladd gave some helpful tips. He showed how he was able to make trash vanish when placed inside a Square Circle. He also cleaned dishes easily by using a bit of dish soap and a large pan.

Glenn Proulx brought a torn-up newspaper with some breaking holiday news with puns. After he read us this news, he was able to restore it to make it easier to read. He was able to make a holiday glass float in midair using Christmas spirit.

Rabbi Eliot Baskin took us back thousands of years to Jerusalem when the Maccabees found a small vile of oil only meant to light a menorah for one night. He had a vase filled with water to represent the oil that they found. He kept pouring out the water, but it kept magically refilling. Miraculously, the oil lasted eight nights providing much-needed relief.

Mark Weidhaas could not attend the meeting in person this year but recorded a mini lecture on becoming Santa. He taught us a few tricks involving storybooks. The first one allowed a black book to turn into *The Night Before Christmas*. For the other trick, he had young volunteers select a Christmas book. His mischievous rabbit snitches in a book about himself. Materials for the tricks are available through the Society of American Magicians' website. *A.J. Perea*

RING 153, BILLINGS, MONTANA – Billings Magic Society

Meets 2nd Tue., 7:00 pm, at Reflections, 1140 Sixteenth Street West, Suite 13, Billings, MT.

BRENT CROMLEY, President / E-mail: brent@cromley.net
(406) 208-4147

Our November meeting opened with the introduction of a new member, Moony Dagel, who often performs with our second-newest member J.D. Linderman who also brought his wife Kris to observe the action. J.D. had found our club as a result of inserts placed by Brent Cromley in all of the magic books at the local library, a sneaky way to get the word out about our group.

Pat Branger was also on hand and described

some of the newest illusions he has acquired. In particular, he showed a video of the "Ringmaster's Apprentice," a colorful and large illusion that Pat plans to use in most of his performances. Pat is planning to produce his own show in Billings in January or February and is working with several possible venues for a location. Pat also described his workshop and invited us to hold our meeting at that location so that he can better show some of his larger effects. We decided to meet there for our February meeting.

Starting off the magic portion of the evening, Tony Shandy fooled his fiancé, Debby Sherman, with a thirteen-card counting trick, with the patter involving mathematics and astrology. He followed that with a mentalism effect, calling himself the "Great Shandini," and correctly identified the chosen card as the Five of Clubs.

J.D. gave his inaugural performance at the meetings using a beautiful change bag that allowed him to do a great transportation of an Ace of Spades. He then talked about the various ways in which he's used that prop in his performances.

Brent, as usual, brought several card tricks, showing David Regal's "Flight of Fancy," Daniel Madison's "Angle Zero," and Paul Gordon's "Hellman's Aces." Brent also introduced a Stripper Deck, and gave one to Moony who is particularly interested in card work.

The highlight of the evening was Pat's showing several stage illusions that he uses particularly in the Christmas season. He introduced his act by turning Moony into a reindeer by means of a dropdown panel. But far more magical was his performing his milk and Oreo cookies illusion, in which the typical Passé Passé Bottles are replaced with a bottle of milk and a stack of cookies. Pat followed that with another stacking effect, this time using cube Christmas presents substituted for ABC blocks. Pat gave credit to Tommy James Magic for producing this timely trick.

It's great to have a few more members joining us and we're always looking for more persons, as our meetings are a great opportunity to practice magic as well as to learn from others. If any of you have plans to vacation or otherwise visit the Big Sky State, be sure to give us a heads-up so that we can plan to get together with you.

Brent Cromley

RING 158, GREENSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA – Wizards of the North

Meets 1st Sun 3:00 pm at Dino's Sports Lounge at 1020 Towne Sq. Dr., Greensburg, PA 15601

MARK DURIGON, President / email: mdur@comcast.net
Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/70055716443

Ring 158 met at Dino's Sports Lounge on Sunday, January 5, 2025, at 3:00 p.m. On a humorous post-holiday note, at the entrance a

large chalk-printed sign was supposed to read "PLEASE SEAT YOURSELVES" but someone had removed the first S from YOURSELVES.

The meeting was called to order by President Mark Durigon. Present were Mike Baker, Rick Bradley, Mark Durigon, Rich Passaro, Chuck Snyder, Rob Shook, and Mark Zajicek. We reviewed the December Christmas party and the announcement of the 2025 officers. Mark Durigon now has more time available and did a show recently for a gender reveal. Chuck Snyder's Tuesday through Saturday kiosk at Johnstown Mall is doing well. He brought some items for sale, and the group agreed that we would visit him at his kiosk in the future. Rich Passaro will be doing a show on February 21 at CORE Event Center in Irwin, Pa. Several of us plan to attend Magi-Fest later this month, and we also plan to visit the Penguin Magic shop in Columbus. The Amazing Kreskin died on December 10th, and locally, Frank D'Augustine and Bill Cornelius have both passed away recently.

After a hearty meal and a brief break, magic presentations began. Rick Bradley did a spelling trick with jumbo cards ace through ten in which one spectator always gets it right and the other always gets it wrong. He also performed Jigsaw Deck and "All's Fair" from *Close Up & Personal* by David Regal. Chuck Snyder performed "Lucid." Rich Passaro performed "Devious Aspirations." Rob Shook performed "Luck Key" in which only the predicted spectator successfully opens a lock.

The meeting then adjourned around 5:00 p.m., as western Pennsylvania was expecting a massive snowstorm (which never materialized).

Willis D. Shook, III, M.D.

RING 170, ORLANDO, FLORIDA – Bev Bergeron Ring

3rd Wed., 7:30 p.m., at IHOP on Kirkman Road, Orlando, FL

DENNIS PHILLIPS, Secretary

E-mail: dphillips13@cfl.rr.com

Web site: www.Ring170.com

Our December meeting was our holiday party. We had thirty-five members present and guests, Stefan Oswald and Lygia Way, Bruce Young, and Kent Gunn's wife, Judy. David Freeman handled all the party duties since Jacki Manna had planned it all, but was ill and could not attend.

We had a great spread of food and drinks with potluck donated goodies, and the eating and fun began. We did the annual "choose and steal" gift exchange. You get to choose a wrapped gift and then you can either keep it or steal what someone else has. They were a lot of good materials and lots of "stealing."

Phil Schwartz, our club historian led the

annual trivia contest with grocery gift certificates as prizes. The questions ranged from the easy to the obscure. Most of us knew the Magic Castle as “the house that Milt built” but few knew Ricky Potash’s middle name was “Jay” and now you know.

Phil then had everyone draw numbers and everyone got a memento from the late Bev Bergeron’s estate. He explained that when cleaning out Bev’s garage, they discovered a false wall with shelves filled with small effects, papers and items collected from Bev’s long history in magic. They were all treasures.

The holiday show featured David Freeman turning water into snowballs. Ari Fleishman doing a Santa Claus “Naughty or Nice” card and cellphone effect. Bruce Young made clever use of the classic amulet frame to make one of three silver dollars appear inside. Ryan Stiner had four random numbers freely chosen and they matched the price value on the sale tag for the coat he was wearing. James Bailey magically showed bells and chains coming apart and going together.

Dr. Ken Schreiber expertly performed the Al Baker “Cut and Restored Ribbon” effect. Ravelli closed out the show with a grand parlor act: “Flaming Rope to Cane,” fire eating, colored “Linking Ropes,” “Find the Lady” giant card trick, billiard balls, “Torn and Restored Paper Napkin to Mouth Coil,” and a Dove Pan finale with a live dove!

We had a Broken Wand Ceremony for former member Samaroo Monsar. *Dennis Phillips*

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>
TOM VORJOHAN, President
(865): 254-9254 / E-mail: TomVorjohan@gmail.com

We postponed our January meeting by a week to accommodate the lecture tour of Michael Ammar. The highlights of the lecture will be shared in our write-up next month, but rest assured we are very excited to be kicking off 2025 with Michael’s fantastic magic.

In February, we will be celebrating the 60th anniversary of Ring 175 with a special dinner and some guest performances if all goes according to plan. And on May 31 we will be hosting the Tampa Bay Festival of Magic with our headliner Dan Fleschman, a flea market, and a couple other special events during the day.

We have a great year planned, and if your travels take you near or through the Tampa area, please let us know and join us on the second Tuesday of the month for a variety of magic and some fellowship with fellow magi.

Tom Vorjohan

RING 192, SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA – Victor Saint Leon Ring

Meets 2nd Weds., 7:00 p.m., at the Mission Oaks Community Center, 4701 Gibbon’s Dr., Carmichael.

JEFFREY TINKER, Secretary

E-mail: jtinker53@yahoo.com

Web site: www.magic1.org/ibm192

January’s meeting kicked off with some announcements about upcoming events including two lectures this year and then it was on to the magic.

Al Skinner started us off, showing an empty box and inviting a volunteer to look inside it. “No dancing girls, no mirrors, nothing out of the ordinary?” When this was confirmed, he opened the box out to show pictures of the dancing girls on one panel and tiny mirrors covering another. He then demonstrated the difference between a prediction and mind reading.

Bill Devon did his take on mind reading using large cards with the responses pasted on the side away from his subject. These were words and phrases as answers to his questions, then he predicted an item from a grocery store and the price, using a bar code for the item selected.

Mary Mowder made snowflakes appear and vanish, then popped open a scarf that produced a surprising number of tiny “snowflakes.”

Scot Smith invited us to use our imagination to produce four of a kind from a blank deck, then asked his volunteer to choose one and revealed it to be the only card printed.

Richard Aylward recited a little poem as he went through a thimble routine ending with eight instead of one.

Al Lavaseur displayed his “dirty Houdini” cards, and had Kirby Romine assist him in cutting to four aces and then revealed the next card to be Houdini as a joker.

David Wright did his signature card Trick using a smiley face sticker to give them a voice and ended up with transparent cards.

Ric Ewing had a big Tic-Tac-Toe board and magnetic tiles. He chose Os and allowed Scot Smith to choose where his Xs would be placed. At the conclusion of the game, nobody won, but then Rick turned the board around to show a poster sized picture wishing Ring 192 a Happy New Year.

Dale Lorzo introduced us to Dinky the tiny magician, a hand puppet with googly eyes, to produce a streamer from his pocket and vanish a silk using a tiny magic wand.

Al Skinner explained his trick used a Slydini Deck, Scot Smith gave us his blank deck set-up, and Al Lavaseur used a stripper deck, but not in the way they are usually used. He called it his “dirty deck” because it was a stripper.

Jeff Tinker

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

The New Year brought New Magic, new magic ideas (theme for tonight) and ten magicians. President Matt Growden, elected again for another term, asked for new themes for the coming year. Glenn Rudolph said, "Magic for people who rarely show up." Other themes were Brown Bag, Kid's, Money, Cups and Balls, and Homemade Magic. Dean Carter, again newly elected treasurer, told that the family of Ralph Murphy, Murphy's Marvelous Magic, made a nice donation to the Ring's bank. A big thank you. Then Dean reminded members that the cost of attending lectures increased to twenty-five dollars and annual dues. The March fund raiser for Studio 60 plans and dress rehearsal takes place at the next meeting.

Kevin O'Connell opened with "Phantom Houdini," a card trick where the selected card appeared from Kevin's coat pocket. Kevin was upstaged by his daughter, Rylee Brasher performing a card count. Matt Growden performed "Dissolve" by Cameron, a card trick involving shuffled cards by Austin Lopez. Trace Cooper, Jared Cassidy, and Jack Baldwin did some impromptu magic with random objects found in the meeting room (No. 2 pencil, paper, and a folding quarter). V.P. Brett Boyer performed "3 Cast" by Paul Richard.

The ten attendees ended the night doing some one-on-one and teaching. To vote in the Ring election being present was required. Each candidate received ten votes, except for Patrick Brunson (not present) who received twelve votes.

Jack Baldwin and Patrick Brunson

RING 199, RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA – Lee & Snavelly Ring

Meets 1st Sat. of month, United Church, 820 E. Williams St., Apex, NC

DAN HARLAN, Secretary

E-mail: contact@danharlanmagic.com

Website: www.raleghmagicclub.org

Hey y'all! We've officially kicked off 2025 with our largest attendance in many years, partially due to the presence of quite a few new faces (all attached properly to people, BTW). Kevin Burke stepped masterfully into the role of emcee for the performance section of our meeting and artfully surprised everyone with a six-million-dollar prediction (a banana duct-taped to a canvas) presented to his helper, SarahElla. Now, that's mentalism with a-peel.

Next up, Tucker Goodman presented a "Tunnel of Mystery" which was (fortunately)

appropriate for all ages, and why wouldn't it be?

Speaking of family-friendly entertainment, The Fantastic Fiji Four made their world-wide debut as Daniel Buck directed his kids in a marvelous mini-show featuring Zach slicing a rope in half and helping four robbers evade the cops, Eli telepathically telling time trapped in a black box, and Daddy Dan (assisted by daughter) doing deceptive things with hair ties, a multi-colored wand, and a number 2 pencil.

Following in the Fiji Four family's footsteps, Sean MacBain presented "Oceans 4," the little-known prequel to *Oceans II*. After the four "ace" actors were magically located, the characters succeeded in pulling off twice the heist. Nice!

Then, Jonathan Barnes did a confabulous job with his first performance for membership as he predicted where, when, and who Paul K went on vacation to, for, and with.

After that, the assemblage was treated to the debut of Dan Harlan as The King of Magic auditioning Bhavish for the position of royal accountant by performing a fine feat of "ledger-demain."

Next, Junior Member Josh presented an original piece (inspired by "Red Hot Mama") where two signed cards transposed while their backs also changed color... a "Multi-Colored Mama," if you will. And you did.

From color to black-and-white, Marcus Auclair (decked out in marvelous monochrome) amused us in bitmap mode as his gloves transformed into a scarf and separate pieces of paper fused into a checkerboard pattern.

Finally, Tony Thomas brought back a spot of color with a red dot that changed into a ball, and back again, and again, and again, and again, and one (or maybe two) more time(s).

I officially decree; a good time was had by all.

Dan Harlan

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

Ring 205 met on Sunday, December 22, 2024, at Mike's home in Findlay. President Doug Ferguson opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. Gene Craft gave the treasurer's report. Several people discussed conventions and lecturers in our area. Gary Friedrich talked about work being done for the history of the I.B.M. and also for Dick Stoner in Fort Wayne.

Gary Friedrich began the evening magic with a "Four Ace Find." Three indifferent cards were dealt with each ace. As Gary counted and

manipulated the piles all four aces ended up in the same pile.

Doug Ferguson continued with five stacks of cards. When he counted down a selected number, he revealed the chosen card.

Mike Grubbs fanned the deck to a selected card and revealed that it matched his prediction. Also, the backs were different on the remaining cards.

Gene Craft presented the evening lecture. He discussed a routine he called, "Predict and Find." He was able to predict the exact location a card would be when the audience member inserted an envelope into the deck.

Chris Topel presented the evening show. His number one best performed trick "The Torn and Restored Napkin." He proceeded with "Predict and Find With A Twist," "Dream Cards," and a version of "Invisible Deck."

Eddie Grubbs was also present. Happy Holidays and may you all have a Magical New Year.

Gene Craft

RING 210, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN – Duke Stern Ring

Meets 2nd Wed. each month 7:00pm at the Plymouth Community Arts Council, 774 Sheldon Rd., Plymouth, MI 48170

RANDY A. SMITH, Secretary

Web site: www.aamagic.org

We had a great turnout at our December meeting and holiday party. Our President Dan Jones led the meeting for his last time as president and introduced our 2025-2026 Board: President Sean Howell; V.P. Mike Bogdas; Treasurer Rob Krozal; Secretary Karl Rabe; and Sergeant-at-Arms Tara McAllister.

Dan also introduced two guests, Kevin Rosewood from Ring 89 and Trevor Elliott a guest of Kaylin "Kinetic Kay" Janiczek. The new board and all members thanked Dan Jones for his many years of fantastic service to the club. Then Dan continued with a few bits of business. It was announced that Tara McAllister has arranged a couple of great opportunities for members. Sign-up sheets were passed around for two events, a spring tour of Baffling Bill's Illusionarium and a group rate for professional head shots to be conducted at our January meeting. Dan announced that we would be adding a Member Stage Competition to our annual events. Expect to hear more next fall. Finally, Sean Howell announced that the Board was working on updating the by-laws in order to simplify and clarify, but also to set them up to be compliant to meet our goal of becoming a tax exempt 501(c)3 in 2025. The board has been working with an accountant and a lawyer to achieve this goal. We hope to be able to begin receiving small grants in 2026. Grants typically need to be applied for mid-year for the following year.

Members socialized and enjoyed pizza, soft drinks and cookies. Then it was time for the White Elephant Exchange. We had fifteen participating members. Member Mike Thornton walked off with the best prize, an authentic Mike Thornton Magic Kit.

Then it was time for member performances. Our youngest member Lincoln Stone led us off with a nice pick a card routine which magically rose to the top of the deck when Lincoln sounded his slide whistle. Then Lincoln performed a nice "Linking Rings" routine. Next up was Mike Doyle who performed one of Josh Zandman's Book Tests. Kevin Rosewood performed a signed card to top of deck and then to impossible location (sealed envelope). Chuck Kimbrough performed a nice impromptu "Coin in Bottle" routine using an un-gimmicked water bottle and coin. Phil Mann performed a nice "Two in the Hand, One in the Pocket" routine with three machine nuts and then did a nice double climax with nut to bolt and then bolt to nuts on bolt. Kay "Kinetic Kay" Janiczek shared a juggling routine she is working on the cascade juggle two balls and a spinning plate. Then President Dan Jones challenged her to perform an impromptu tissue paper juggle which she pulled off admirably. Finally, April Barrett performed a nice tribute piece in memory of Jim Tait using Naughty/Nice cards and the Out To Lunch Principle.

We kicked off our next meeting with our featured performer Dan Jones. Dan performed a great "Milk and Cookies for Santa" routine. Milk poured into a hank miraculously transformed into Oreos and the milk re-appeared in a glass inside the Oreo box. Then Dan performed an old favorite, the first trick he ever learned, Dan Harlan's "Hold it, Buster," a four jumbo card Monte style routine with a story relating to his dad "Buster" and chores that Dan failed to do.

Then it was on to some bits of club business. Our former President Dan Jones called the board members up and they were sworn in. After a bit of tomfoolery around "state your name," the task was finally completed with the appropriate pomp and circumstance. Our 2025/2026 board consists of Sean Howell (President), Mike Bogdas (V.P.), Karl Rabe (Sec.), Rob Krozal (Treas.) and Tara McAllister (Sgt.-at-Arms) Then two board members, Karl Rabe and Mike Bogdas, presented the 2024 Top Contributor awards which is to recognize club members that frequently and consistently contribute their time and talent to further the mission of the club. Over the course of the calendar year, members accumulate points for engaging

in activities such as performing in a club show, volunteering for an event and even performing at a club meeting. At the end of the year members who have at least twenty-five points are awarded a Top Contributor Ace of Spades lapel pin. This year we recognized eleven members: Mike Bogdas; Robert Goodwin; Sean Howell; Kaylin Janiczek; Dan Jones; Phil Mann; Tara McAllister; Charlie Palko; Bill Rabe; Karl Rabe; and Mike Thornton. Honorable Mentions went to Alex Heath, Rob Krozal, April Barrett and Ming Louie who accumulated between twenty and twenty-five points.

Then it was time for Member Performances. Mike Bogdas performed a quick routine making a silk appear in a crystal box. Kinetic Kay met the challenge presented by Phil Mann to juggle three light-up pom-pom type balls. Phil Mann lured Dan Jones onstage and made his head disappear via a Fab Magic Light Head box and LED illuminated swords. Tara McAllister shared the Linking Rings routine she is working on. Johnny New York performed a great "Tour of Italy Wine Tasting" routine. After producing a bottle of wine, he allowed a number of members to choose a bottle of wine off of different menus. The total cost of the members' selection added to a number found on a piece of paper inside the bottle.

Our youngest member Lincoln Stone after proclaiming he was eleven years old and had been performing magic for fifteen years went on to share several effects including a floating apple (A la "Zombie") routine, a card trick and a "Card Warp" routine with a borrowed dollar bill and a playing card. Karl Rabe performed a bit of silliness claiming he couldn't find the trick he planned on performing but discovered while searching his pockets a small Waldo statue and then a small Nemo fish.

Then members spent the rest of the evening socializing, jamming and generally having a great time.

Karl Rabe

RING 219, LAFAYETTE, INDIANA – Bob Hurt/Ron London Ring

1st Thu., 7:00pm, Faith Community Center, Lafayette, IN
SCOTT STARKEY, President

Rather than a typical meeting, we start the year off with a banquet. 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. Starkey and Milanowski (or is it Milanowski and Starkey) provided our entertainment. Effigies were burned, cards were found, and awe was inspired.

Benji Milanowski

RING 236, CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS – Don & Dorothy Schultz Ring

Meets 3rd Wed., 7:00pm, (except Nov. and Dec.) For location call Chris at (217) 431-479

KEN BARHAM, Secretary

2318 Winchester Dr., Champaign, IL 61821 / (217) 841-5616

E-mail: Kebabram@aol.com

The meeting opened with discussion of online meetings and resources available through the national organizations. We also talked about setting up another club show for the Danville V.A. Chris will talk to them and get a date set up.

Rob "The Professor" Higgins opened the magic with a demonstration of "Notion of Motion," "DEX," "Poker Pocket," and a three-barrel Flash Cotton Shooter. We had discussion on vanishing canes and their history and uses.

Bill Pierce performed "The Trick That Can't Be done 2.0," Hesham Hassan showed us "Dr. Daley's Last Trick" which prompted discussion of variations on the sleights involved and a presentation demonstrated by Chris Bontjes. Chris continued with "Charming Chinese Challenge" which also prompted discussion on variations and the use of the FPS coin purse. Ken Barham closed out the magic with "Link King" and "Breaking Band."

The next meeting will be on January 15th at 7:00 p.m. at the Salvation Army in Champaign. Come early and meet us at Manzella's Italian Patio to hang out prior to the meeting. I try to be there around 5:00 p.m. The Topic will be New Year, New Trick. Show us something new but, as always, you can bring anything you want. See ya at the meeting.

Ken Barham

RING 265, LONDON, ONTARIO, CANADA – London Magicians Guild

Meets 2nd Wed., Labatt's Engineering Bldg. unless otherwise notified.

MARK HOGAN, Secretary

The November meeting was all about openers! We know we only get one chance to make a first impression, and a lot of folks brought the effects they like to use to start their shows.

Steve Seguin showed us the opener he has used for many years – a vanishing hanky, then pulling it from his mouth! Byron Berry produced a bill from his empty hands, then changed it into a coin! And Mark Hogan showed his opening effect from the club's Hamilton magic club performance, Nathan Kranzo's "The Mind Reading Crotch," where he pulled a thought-of card from his fly!

Peter Mennie performed his opening routine using a taped intro, music, and signs used to introduce him in a magical way! He followed that with an "Invisible Deck" routine utilizing a

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

52-on-1 card. He also presented an opener he uses in walk-around occasions to gather a crowd, Jon Allen's "Double Take," where two cards switch places in the spectator's hands!

Andrew Olmstead illustrated his use of a wizard's hat to capture the audience's attention. He then got the crowd engaged with a Lennart Green effect of turning the audience's palms down without turning their wrists, as well as having them all become unable to turn over their wrists!

Sam General wowed us with his Cardini Card Change, then used it in his opener of finding a selected card while complaining about his failing eyesight!

Leonardo Martins did a great card sandwich opener where a selected card (lost in the middle of the deck) was found on top of the deck between the two red queens.

And Scott Hood presented his stage show opener using music to produce silks from his empty hands, ending with a silk fountain! He also discussed the performances he does for patients at a local hospital.

What a great night seeing and discussing all these different opening effects! *Mark Hogan*

RING 266, TYLER, TEXAS – East Texas Court of Magic

1st Mon of the month, 7:00 pm, at Discover Science Place in downtown Tyler, TX
PAUL BUDD, President
E-mail: chipper35_1999@yahoo.com

For December, Ring 266 teamed up with two local Clown Alleys and had our Christmas meal and celebration at a local restaurant in Tyler. While we tried to announce our officers for 2025, the festivities got in the way and that had to be shelved. Attendance was notable. A few members performed for the group and there was a gift exchange in addition to the goings on.

Ring 266 held its January meeting at its newish location, Church of the Living Hope in Tyler. Eleven members attended. Our president shared some ideas for the upcoming year. Many of Jene's ideas are very exciting!

Eugene Wilkes, from the Longview Ring paid us a visit and he performed a few tricks.

David Gish performed some excellent effects with some jumbo cards.

Our youngest member, Eleanor entertained us with a straightforward effect as well!

Please visit us soon if you're in Tyler!

Paul M. Budd

RING 273, CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA - Oliver Ring

Meets 3rd Thur., 7:30pm at the Burns Club
PETER FOSTER, Secretary / Email: pfoster@pcug.au

Fun meeting this month, although there were just the four of us: Humphrey James, Chris

Donohue, Phil Bevan, and me. We would have had more but for people travelling for Christmas.

The theme was Christmas Magic, although we only had one trick that actually followed the theme. This used an alphabet deck, that was mixed face up and face down by the spectators. The face down cards were removed, and they spelled out "Happy Christmas." This was "Shuffle Bored," with an alphabet deck.

Humphrey then did one where the cards were mixed face up and face down, a spectator selected one of the face up cards, then another spectator selected and was shown one of the face down cards. The deck then righted itself, with the two selections together in the middle. The two cards then fused together. This was "Waltzing Cheek to Cheek" by Joshua Jay.

I then pulled a fairly dusty one from the depths of my magic case. This used three ropes, all the same length. The magician used a very transparent subterfuge to show that they were now different lengths, which was exposed when the magician "accidentally" dropped one of the ropes. The magician then explained what he did, and the ropes were then cleanly and separately shown to be of different lengths, before reverting to all the same. This was "Three Equal Ropes" by Glenn Keeley.

Humphrey was looking for some assistance with "Chicago Opener," as he was a bit unsure of some details, so Phil showed us his handling. A card was selected and lost in the deck. The deck was spread face down and there was one card with an odd back, the selection. This odd card was put aside and another card selected and lost. The magician claimed that this card will now change its back. The deck was spread, but there was no odd, backed card. Except... what about that odd card that was put aside? The second selection was named, and the odd card was now the second selection.

Chris was wearing a fairly nice jacket, and he asked us how much we thought he paid for this jacket. We decided on a price of \$25.17. He then revealed that he didn't pay anything for it, he stole it. He took it off, and on the back was a security tag, with a price tag attached. And the price tag said \$25.17! This was "Priceless" by Richard Sanders and Michel Huot.

Phil now shared some of his thoughts on "Scotch and Whiskey" by Tom Elderfield and Hanson Chien. This was Scotch and Soda but used keys rather than coins. So, a gold and silver key were given to a spectator to hold in their closed fist. Then the magician made one disappear, leaving just one key in the spectator's hand. But Phil was a bit concerned that the spectator

might be able to tell that they were only holding one key. So, we experimented a bit with different ways for the spectator to hold the keys.

Phil followed with a card trick, where a spectator took some cards from the middle of the deck, looked at them and remembered one of them. The magician determined the card. This was by David Blaine and used a memorised deck.

We finished at that point. Next meeting will be on 16 January, with the theme Rubber Bands.

Peter Foster

RING 280, VALENCIA, CALIFORNIA – Mark Wilson Ring

Meets 2nd thu. of the month at 7:00 pm at the Newhall Boys & Girls Club 24909 Newhall Ave., Newhall, CA 91321

DAVE NORMAN, Secretary

E-mail: Davemagic@lagnor.com

Web site: www.ibmring280.com

Greetings and Happy New Year! Here is Ring 280's report for January 2025. Please take a moment to reflect on the tragedy that has befallen our community. Our thoughts and prayers are with the Angelenos who have lost loved ones and to thousands of those who have lost their homes and belongings in the massive fire storm. Los Angeles County has experienced several days of unprecedented fires driven by gale force winds. One of our members was among those who tragically lost their home but was able to safely evacuate the conflagration.

Members attending this evening's meeting were Joe Berman, Chris Canfield, Luke Boehret, Glenn Crites, Lonnie Dilan, Everett Gomez, Brian Hoffman, Bob Love, David Norman, Clem Patafio, Oscar Rodriguez, Tim Silver, and Mark Wray. We were pleased to have Rocco Telese from our sister Ring, Ring 21 join us.

Ring 280 was privileged to have master magician Jonathan Levit spend the evening with us. Quoting highlights from Mr. Levit's web bio: His career has spanned nearly forty years as magician, actor, television host, magic consultant and producer. Mr. Levit is highly respected in all areas of magic, including sleight of hand, mentalism and magic history.

Mr. Levit began his presentation by showing us a card routine that he uses in his performances at the Magic Castle. It involved mentalism and incredible card manipulation skills, all of which he generously explained to us.

Mr. Levit shared with us his interest in using cutting-edge technology to enhance magic routines. He has been instrumental in developing technology using computer programs and even artificial intelligence. An example of some of his technology is "Stranger Phone Call" which can be found on his website. He explained that some in the magic community may see using a

mechanical or rather digital device as not real magic. I can certainly relate that we were absolutely blown away by the effects Mr. Levit performed for us. If you reflect on the history of magic, Mr. Levit said magicians have been using technology in performing their routines for centuries, all of which was cutting edge for their time.

He noted that magic has never been about merely showing a miraculous trick. Rather, it involves how it is presented. Mr. Levit epitomizes the concept. His engaging personality and showmanship left his audience wanting to spend more time with him. Oh, and we did. Our meeting started at 7:30 p.m. Although it normally ends around 9:00 p.m., before we realized, it was 11:00 p.m. Mr. Levit is that engaging and that generous with his time.

Everyone in attendance was entertained and came away with a greater understanding of where the magical arts are headed. Thank you, Mr. Levit, for a most enjoyable and enlightening evening. Happy Conjuring! *Glenn Crites*

RING 284, FORT WALTON BEACH, FLORIDA - Conrad C. Bush Ring

Meets 3rd thu, 6:00 pm for socializing at Fresh Greece Pizza & Grill, 339 N John Sims Pkwy. W. Niceville, FL 32578. 7:00 pm meeting Valparaiso Library (459 Valparaiso Pkwy)

RONALD HUDSPETH, Secretary / E-mail: RMHudspeth@spamcop.net

Things heated up a bit for the fourth quarter for Ring 284. On the business and events side, we decided to move the October "open house" meeting to the 5th Wednesday, both due to a confusion about the availability on the normal day as well as to take advantage of Magic Week and the proximity to Halloween. Tom Bierly brought his sons, Hudson and Jackson, to a meeting and Jack Chancellor brought his son Mark to another. We were contacted and responded to requests for magic, leading to two performances in December: a community Holiday Fest in and around the local FWB Library and what is now an annual tradition supporting a local community organizer with the Emerald Coast Christmas Miracle Children's Fiesta.

Magic – Many members provided entertainment and demonstrated props throughout the quarter: Ring President and I.B.M. Executive Committee member Jeff Sobel ("Becker's Stunner," Creative Magic's Stage table in a bag, Aragon's "Love Ritual," Discover's "Mind Trip"); Jack ("Ring and String," "Self-healing Bill," "Love and Money," "Powers' Four Ace Production," Maven's "Triskadekphobia," "McMillan's Mind Mirror"); Brian Ward ("Walton's Card Warp," Penn's "Nest of Boxes," "Lunch Pail Miracle"); Mark Zeid

("Ring and String" sequence, several card tricks); Tom (Bar Stunts and Betchas); and Ron Hudspeth (Bannon's "Duplicity," Cook's "Mental Vacation," Minton's "Executive Suite"). Of course, many of these wound up being workshops as members traded questions, tips, and "gotchas."

Our most significant event though was our open house in October. As mentioned above, it was planned to coincide with Magic Week as we approached Halloween. We wound up with about a dozen guests for an evening of magic. President Jeff Sobel opened the evening with a welcome to the crowd and a goals-based lesson built around "The Professor's Nightmare." Ron Hudspeth performed Engblom's "Invisible Camera," transitioning to Parr's "Cue Test," and a magnetic levitation demonstration in honor of Sir Clarke. He continued with his "ParaNorman" card effect done with post cards and table stands and finished his set getting the audience fully involved with an adaptation of Aragon's, "Love Ritual." Jason Simonds closed the show with Thomas' "Lie to Me," Racherbaumer's adaptation of Marlo's "Startling Climax," and Carlyle's "Homing Card."

Remember that we meet for early dinner time on the third Wednesday now. If any of you find yourself in the area, please feel free to drop in. However, during tourist season or to facilitate special events like lectures, we may need to relocate the meeting for any given month. If you think there is any chance you might like to make a meeting, please e-mail below and we can put you on our e-mail reminder distribution. Our public announcements page on Facebook can be found under "Ft Walton Beach/Niceville/Okaloosa Magic Club." Also, we have potentially several members who drive in from points as far away as Panama City, Crestview and Pace, so if you might like to carpool, feel free to e-mail RMHudspeth@spamcop.net. for information.

Ron Hudspeth

RING 287, PENSACOLA, FLORIDA – Gulf Coast Magicians Guild

3rd Thu., each month 6:45 pm at the Bayview Senior Center

Web site: gulfcoastmagiciansguild.com

ZACHARY READY, Secretary / (865) 719-8357

E-mail: deusso88@gmail.com

After a very, very brief business meeting, we had members introduce their guests. Then we discussed our public show and had a few of our spouses who had attended the show, let us know what they thought and give us a review of the show. All the comments were glowing. Bruce explained that a few days after the show, Patricia from the Bay Minette Library relayed that she had received many wonderful compli-

ments about the show from the guests, and asked if we do this again next year?

Then we presented certificates of "Recognition for Exemplary Service" to the GCMG for performing and participating in our public show to those members present at the meeting. So, thanks were given to the guys for putting on a wonderful show!

Then gifts were given to the members attending, an I.B.M. Christmas tree ornament and a "King Magic, Badlands Bob", dice trick. The ornaments were donated by Rob and the club bought the King Magic, Badlands Bob.

Finally, it was time for magic with those performing, Rob, Billy, Bruce, Don, Ben, Bart, Perry, and Jon Jr. Don did something outside the realm of magic. He performed his Blockhead routine. Don had Bart's wife Gina assisting, who had looks of disbelief on her face as he performed it. It was something to see. After the meeting, our server told me, a few of the other servers had come in to watch the magic and when Don started pounding that nail up his nose, they got completely grossed out and left the room.

Rob then gave a brief update about the Michael Ammar lecture coming up in February. We also told members their spouses could attend for free!

We wrapped up the meeting talking about what a great year it had been for our club. New members! More members than ever performing at meetings! A public show! The David Ginn lecture, Lots of great magic and lots of fun! 2024 was a great year for the GCMG. Miss a meeting and miss a lot!

Zachary Ready

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: Danny Watson, Mike and Linda Fuller, Tony Zelonis, John and Rhonda Donahue, Glen Heald, Jimmy Roach, Bill and Sally Sirmon and Freya, Ron and Angie Livingston, and Reya Solomon.

After dinner at some of the finest BBQ in Macon, Georgia our meeting began with some discussion on this world's events and personal stuff, we began with our monthly riddle sheet created and presented by our president Danny Watson to which we all take turns trying to solve them, usually five or six each month, challenging to say the least.

Our January 2025 meeting started off with a bang and had a house full of members. Our magic began with the theme being silk magic and Jimmy Roach showing his silk production

using his crystal silk flash production that looked great and following that up with his crystal tube and his three-silk production. Nice Jimmy.

Next up was Glen Heald sharing some of his history in starting in the world of magic and doing his version of a silk vanish without a TT. Looked good. Tony Zelonis brought along two effects that he needed some help on, his Buddha tubes and his acrobatic silks and with the help of Mike Fuller and Danny Watson helped out in the area and ideas for both effects and Mike presented the acrobatic silks to everyone then Tony Zelonis gave it away to Reya to add to her routine. Danny Watson was up with some effects that he called "Grandpa Magic" that he got from some of his younger family members at Christmas with a silk vanishing from a box and reappearing on a shawl wrapped around his neck and a pot of candy appearing in a previously empty pan that was covered. He also did some card predictions with the help of Glen Heald and Linda Fuller. All looked good.

Up next was John Donahue who had Bill Sirmon write down a three-digit number on a business card and John using his phone for help to deduce the number wrote down. Mike Fuller was up next with a silk vanish that looked great using an old gimmick that was probably put on the back burner by a lot of magicians. Nicely done. He then followed up helping Tony Zelonis with his acrobatic silks.

Last but not least, Ron Livingston showed us a silk color change followed up by a silk production. Looked good Ron. Next month the theme will be Musical Magic. If you are in the area, give a shout, drop in, love to see ya, oh and bring a trick or two.

John Donahue

RING 291, PALM DESERT, CALIFORNIA— Palm Springs Magic Club

Meets first and third Tuesday at the Portola Community Center in Palm Desert beginning at 6:00 p.m.

HENRY JUAREZ, Secretary / E-mail: henryjuarez1@hotmail.com

Web site: www.palmspringsmagicclub.com

PSMC members got an early start on the season at their first meeting in December by rolling out a sleigh full of "Winter Holiday Magic!" Among the performers, Warren Morse showed a variety of menu choices for his family's Christmas dinner while expressing some concern about overeating. He had several spectators choose the final menu to be served, and amazingly their choices produced the exact number of Weight Watchers points he was targeting. Then Dick Dumais demonstrated and taught a great "Christmas Jacks" card trick and followed with a routine using the PATEO Force prediction to match a spectator's chosen Christmas

toy. Dean Apple showed a list of top one hundred holiday songs. He asked someone to select one at random and then asked them to call his cellphone. His ringtone played the selected song! George Haas shared a speedy version of "Out of This World," while Eugene Ball placed a decorative box for a Christmas present on the table which explosively produced more Christmas boxes by the dozen. Henry Juarez asked for someone to name a card. He took a deck out of the box and pulled out the two jokers. On the back of the first joker, he had written the value of the named card and on the second joker he had written the suit.

It was "Anything Goes" at our second December meeting. Gary Beutler got things started with a series of effects using rubber bands. First, two of the bands linked! Then one band floated between his hands. The "box jumper" band jumped between other bands, and a "Cut Band Restored." He also showed a bullet-catching band and a band penetrating through his finger. Don Campbell showed four blank cards, and then a "Christmas card" appeared among them. Ed Waldo followed with a fun "Three Card Monte" routine, where the middle card changed from the Three of Hearts to the "Tree of Hearts." Next, he showed a glass of water and half dollar. The coin was dropped into the water under cover of a handkerchief, but even though we all heard the coin fall into the glass, it mysteriously vanished.

Steve Temkin used Chris Rawlins' Scrabble Deck and had a spectator deal a portion of the deck into two piles and choose a five-letter word based on the cards/letters on the bottom of the piles. Steve then correctly drew a picture of that word, HOUSE. Marv Chapman closed the evening with a "Two Card Monte" effect. Santa and Rudolph played hide-and-seek, and in the end, the cards turned into a Merry Christmas greeting!

David Prekeges

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

President James Butler officially welcomed all fourteen of us to our January meeting. For Business we first voted for this year's officers. Results of Voting: President James Butler; Vice President Larry Taylor (LT); Treasurer Rick Ross; Secretary Larry Hollinger; Sergeant-at-Arms Chris Rednour; and Board of Directors (in A-B-C order) Patrick Dugan, Ron Frank, Charlie Meyer, Larry Payne, and Ralph Steinlage. Congratulations or condolences to

them. A big thank you to June Taylor and Dave Davis for counting the votes.

We decided our next meeting's theme would be a take on Wizard's War with tricks being made from random items. Our sale of Entertainment Books will conclude next month. Our host church is participating in Middletown's "Feed and Shelter the Homeless" program during these cold months. It provides an excellent chance for us to show off our table-hopping skills and support the program. We also discussed performing a Magic Show for the program's volunteers during the terminating week of March 5th. We also collected dues of twenty-five dollars (a bargain at any price!).

Then, time for magic! Ron Frank started us off with three effects. First, a finger ring borrowed from Shawn Gray, one padlock and three keys. The ring is locked on the lock. Keys are shuffled and Shawn picks one from behind his back. Shawn selects the one working key. The other two keys are revealed as being uncut. This is "LOKI." Second, a very smooth handling of Asher's "Handed Out Jumbo Deck." Third, a random QR code selected on Dave Davis's phone matches a grocery item chosen at random by Bill West. This is "DeQode." Next, Larry Taylor performed "Vortex" and "Flight" flawlessly. Corey White gave us a mental telepathy effect revealing the volunteer's selected card by reading their mind and drawing it on a white board. He followed up by revealing in his wallet the queen selected by the volunteer. Dave Davis guided volunteer June Taylor to reveal volunteer tRick Gaffney's selected card using "Cue Card Prediction" from Craig Petty. Charlie Cadabra brought us three effects, "Passing The Buck" using a large, laminated display of a five-card spread. Then "Irish Poker" using face up and face down cards to deal poker hands. And finishing with "Lucky Lady." Larry Payne and Bob, the Magic Pirate Bear, were next. A signed coin vanishes! A Harry Potter wand breaks. The coin is found in Bob's pile of cannon balls. To finish up, James Butler did his version of "Comic Miracle" from Ed Marlo.

We adjourned but stayed around and talked about everything. It's a fun group. 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
E-mail: beckibring325@gmail.com

On Saturday evening, December 21, 2024, just four days before Christmas, members of I.B.M. Ring 325 met for their last meeting of

2024. The meeting was held in downtown Branson. Not only was the meeting magical because of the Christmas season, but it was also the evening set aside for the annual "auction" (used magic sale). This yearly event gives those who attend the opportunity to offer up magical "trinkets and treasures" to their fellow performers, for the right prices! In addition, ten percent of the proceeds earned by the sellers is donated to the club. So, it is a "Win/Win" for all involved.

Before the sellers began showing their wares to potential buyers, club president, Christopher Beck, opened the meeting. He shared a bit from the November *Magic Moments* club newsletter. This included a discussion regarding the DYK questions related to the miracles in the Bible that made that first Christmas so special and the birth of Jesus Christ so "magical" and so world changing.

Among the magicians offering items to sell, Thom Taylor shared a variety of very distinctive cigar boxes, including some wooden ones, which, as he noted, could be used to make nice, impressive presentation pieces to hold props during performances.

Magic shop owner Yak Williams shared some new 2025 Tenyo effects. One of those effects, "Unbroken," featured a broken and restored mirror. Another of these effects was "Six-Sided Psychic." In this effect, a cube with various cards pictured on each side is used to "read a spectator's mind" by allowing the performer to reveal a "merely thought of card." Those in attendance found this effect quite intriguing. A third effect was Tenyo's "Wonder Ring" which allows a ring to appear and/or disappear in a card box but also allows the ring to be transformed into another object (such as a coin), as well. Williams also shared Tenyo's "Crystal Pyramid" with his fellow magicians, who found this effect to be extremely ingenious! In short, a coin is placed outside the pyramid, covered with a silk or handkerchief, and it "vanishes," only to be found inside a nearby crystal pyramid!

From classic magic effects to feats of mentalism to utility items and magical props, Jim Holmes had a wide variety of "magical wares" to sell, as well, including another Tenyo item, the Tenyo version of the "Koorwinder Kar" and Tannen's "Die Divination." In addition to sharing the props and tricks for sale, those in attendance shared tips and ideas with one another concerning Ring and String moves. Christmas was in the air in the heart of Branson on this Saturday evening, and it was magical!

If you are an I.B.M. member and you plan to visit the Branson area on the third Saturday of

each month, we would love to have you attend one of our meetings. Meetings are normally held at the It's Magic shop (located at 124 US-65 BUS in Branson, Missouri). However, on special occasions, the meetings are sometimes relocated to another venue. So, if you know you are going to be in the area, or if you would like information about our club, feel free to email me (Christopher Beck, I.B.M. Ring 325 President) in advance. I would love to communicate with you. My email is: beckibmring325@gmail.com.

Christopher Beck, PhD

RING 334, MYRTLE BEACH, SOUTH CAROLINA – Grand Strand Magicians Society

Meets 1st Thu., 7:00 pm at the Southatlantic Bldg., Unit C, 908

Seaboard St., Myrtle Beach, SC

GERRY THOMPSON, Secretary

www.sandyshoesentertainment.com/

Our Grand Ring President Paul McTaggart conducted our January 2025 meeting, introducing the group to the “Ceremony of Secrets.” This re-enactment of the Circle of The Magicians is to dedicate themselves to keeping the Vows of Secrecy. Our evening began at the bottom of the staircase where members met “The Gentleman.” The initiates require three things, their magical costume, their ambitions for 2025, and dues for the upcoming year. Once those requirements were met, they proceeded to the Second Platform where they encountered “The Queen” who requested they promise to keep what happens here tonight a secret. Lastly, the members met with “Mister D the Executioner,” who tested their courage and trust by shaking their hands through a guillotine. Once the blade passed through their wrists, they were welcomed to enter and enjoy some Mystic Pizza!

This event was very theatrical from colored lights, strange costumes, and masks to the “Scared Script” that was read by President McTaggart, assuring them that yes, this ceremony was certainly weird, strange, and bizarre, because magic is weird, strange, and bizarre. For them to give a truly magical experience, they must have a magical experience. Many members have never had to or were required to swear to a vow of secrecy.

The members were next requested to gather in the blue and red-lit Great Hall. Once seated, President McTaggart greeted all the magicians and explained the purpose and procedure of the Ceremony of Secrets. The stage had two chairs on either side of the table/altar. On the table under a covering were two stacks of books to represent the Trees of Wisdom and Knowledge. The Queen positioned herself behind the table, silence represents Secrets and a moment of

silence was called for as the members, one by one, approached the Queen and they were asked, “Do you seek wisdom and knowledge?” When they replied, the Queen reached under the cloth and handed them a book before returning to their seat. Once all initiates had a book, they called out the names of famous magicians; Blackstone, Phillip Morris, Siegfried and Roy, Mister Electric, etc....

Then, Vice President Bryan Wilson had the member magicians take their Sacred Vows of Secrecy at which each point Eric Hall would create a ding with either the Linking Rings or by tapping his wand on a brass cup from a Cups and Balls set. Eric provided all the eerie music and sound effects for the ceremony. Once the vows were taken, President McTaggart explained The Magic Wand, the Magic Word at the Magic potion (see Henning Nelms’ *Magic and Showmanship* “Casting the Spell”). In conclusion for the Ceremony of Secrets Eric Hall played a recording by magician Orson Wells. After the recording had concluded, the members were asked to go through the receiving line to shake hands with actors Eric Hall and Deborah Cascio Plezia, V.P. Bryan Wilson, and finally President Paul McTaggart. They were told “Welcome Home” and returned the books.

The evening continued with the “Soiree Fantastique” Magic Show presentation by Eric Hall. The theme was, “Magic through the Ages.” His show presented classical effects through the lens of the different genres of magic starting with a Vaudeville-style ball manipulation act. He took us through a street performance segment with the Benson Bowl and a night club act with a “Silk and Bottle Production.” The second segment was the Mystery of the Mind, where Eric showed several successful experiments in telepathy, precognition, and remote viewing with audience members. Eric shared his attempts to create the illusion of telekinesis by enlarging a single atom that manifested into a floating silver ball that seemed to have a gravitational pull of its own.

After this experiment, the audience was treated to a meditative and sublime six “Linking Rings” routine, Eric’s handling of Dai Vernon’s classic, the “Symphony of the Rings.” He closed the show with a signed card shuffled into a deck by an assistant. The deck was spread out face down on the table. After some by-play, the signed card was found with the help of a puppet slinging a switchblade as the puppet performed a perfect card stab! The performance was brought to an elegant close with a “Blend” routine. Highlighting the styles of magic presentation, the red silk represents the magic of the

ages, the blue represents the ring routine, the yellow the mind reading, and the green the puppet switchblade card stab.

After Eric Hall's "Sorree Fantastique" magic show, the newly honored members socialized and did some photo shoots with our performers.

Featured in tonight's show were Paul McTaggart, President; Bryan Wilson, Vice President; Eric Hall, performer, sound effects; and special featured performer Deborah Cascio Plezia the Queen.

If you miss one of our meetings... you miss a lot! Dale Rabon, Gene Vosh, Paul McTaggart

RING 362, BANGOR, MAINE – The Bob Nixon Ring

Meets 2nd. Sun at the Buker Community Center, 22 ArmoryvRd., Augusta, ME

SCOT GRASSETTE, Secretary / E-mail: grassette@gwi.net

After a quick treasurer's report, we discussed old business which covered the Great Northeast Magic Auction held last November. The comments were very good with all the changes and improvements that were made and some constructive criticism to continuously improve things. Nominations for officers for 2025 were taken and the same slate was nominated as last year and includes Randy Begin as President, Dennis Labbe as Vice President, Scot Grassetto

as Secretary, Karen Seymour as Treasurer, and Steve Cornish as Sergeant-at-Arms. All nominations were accepted. Voting and installation will happen next month.

The January theme was open. Ken Shoemake performed Dan Harlan's "Starcle." Dennis Labbe performed a three-color maker prediction where Karen colored three pictures, and when Dennis revealed his prediction it matched Karen's choices to a tee. Wes turned a red hanky, yellow then the yellow hanky green with some funny byplay along the way. Joel performed a watch vanish and went into a well thought-out "Ball and Cup" routine with lots of vanishes, penetrations and ended with a tennis ball final load and topped with the watch appearing under the cup! Scot performed Barry Richardson's "Ovation Position Glass Appearance" and Joel worked the "Vanishing Glass" with some tips as Scot had received it as a Christmas gift. Joel finished up the meeting with an "Ace Assembly" and an effect called "Passing the Vanishing Aces."

We proceeded to do our annual Magic Yankee Swap with lots of fun and banter. Fellowship was carried on at Margarita's for supper.

Scot Grassetto

I.B.M. YOUTH TRIVIA CONTEST RULES

(Continued from page 53)

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 53.**

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 2025 32 NEW MEMBERS

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EL-HIRAKI, NORRIS, Riverside, CA
HUESO, ALEX, San Diego, CA
NG, YAT FUNG JOSHUA, Irvine, CA
XIANG, HAISHAN, Chino, CA
YNIGUEZ, RYAN "THEO STARPHIRE", Idyllwild, CA
YOUNG, GREGORY, Lemon Grove, CA
JANSSEN, BILL, Denver, CO
LAMOREUX, DAVID, Meriden, CT
RIVERA, EDAR, Naples, FL
RUSSELL, JOHN, Ocala, FL
BUCHEN, PATRICK, Braselton, GA
LI, CHENGRUI, Atlanta, GA
LOVING, TONY, Collinsville, IL
WATSON, TONY, Avon, IN
CURTIN, REBECCA, Lincoln, MA
PEREIRA DUARTE FILHO, DANIEL, Shrewsbury, MA
ROBERTI, SANDER, Rockville, MD
PECZYNSKI, AUSTIN, Howell, MI
MACBAIN, SEAN, Morrisville, NC
LINDBERG, DAVE, West Lebanon, NH
MIKA, ADAM, Buffalo, NY

BUCO, JOSEPH, Warwick, RI
WILSON, BRYAN, Myrtle Beach, SC
TAYLOR, WALTON, Dallas, TX
WILSON, JEFFREY, Yantis, TX
MILLER, TRAVIS, Richmond, VA
WILLIAMS, GRAYSON, Midlothian, VA
STEWART, MICHAEL, Spokane, WA
ORTIZ DIAZ, RICAR, Waunakee, WI
SCHLUETER, DAVID, Toronto, Canada
ROSVALL, MARTIN, 42837 Källered, Sweden

11 REINSTATEMENTS

BENTZ, KRISTOFFER, Chico, CA
PONCHER, JEFF, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA
HUNTER, SEBASTIAN, Melbourne Beach, FL
FOUND, ERNIE, Iowa City, IA
NASSUET, NIC, Topeka, KS
THOMAS, TONY, Wake Forest, NC
FLORES, JASON, Bethpage, TN
HITE, BRIAN, Madison, TN
ROACH, STACEY, Knoxville, TN
MOORE, STEVEN, Henrico, VA
WAGSTAFF, CARL, Holmfirth, United Kingdom

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 Dr. Steven Schlanger at ringreports@magician.org. Type "Ring Event" as the e-mail subject.

Please note: Write-ups of your monthly Ring meetings are considered Ring Reports and should also be e-mailed to Dr. Steven Schlanger at ringreports@magician.org.

William “Billy” Austin Russell was born on January 21, 1880, in Batavia, New York. Throughout his life on and off the stage, he remained true to his hometown of Batavia. At the age of eighteen, Russell toured nearby towns with his act “A Night in Wonderland.” The act included silk effects, a little close-up magic, and sometimes a production of a bird or small livestock.

One of the earliest mentions of his performance in the local news is from February 1904, when he entertained professors and students at Niagara University. “Russell, The Mystifier” performed magic and mirth for two-and-a-half hours to a packed theater. He caught live goldfish from the air, poured various liquors as requested by members of the audience, and vanished a bowl of goldfish. He thoroughly overwhelmed his audience with each and every trick. In 1911, Russell’s “Hindoo Palace of Mystery” was the headline act on The Gowanda Opera House in New York. He had the opportunity to prove he was not like performers the audience had seen pass by over the years. Along with cards effects and silk productions, Russell included an early version of his original idea of prop to make a silk appear inside an empty goblet.

Russell often rubbed elbows with popular magicians of the day including Harry Kellar, Howard Thurston, and even Harry Houdini. Russell devised two effects for Harry Houdini including “The Paper Bag Escape” and the first “Milk Can Escape,” using Houdini’s original drawings to create it. In 1913, Russell submitted a few paragraphs to *The Sphinx* magazine with advice for amateur readers. “Just try practicing for a while, and when you feel that you have mastered a certain sleight, begin practicing with renewed energy, and you will be astonished at your own skill,” he wrote. “Magic is an art and should be developed, not abused.” The entire article could easily be published in almost any magic magazine today, offering valid wisdom still worth reading.

In October of 1915, Russell performed his new illusion “The End of the World” for a packed house in Attica, New York. While in mid-air, the eight-inch globe of the earth vanished in a brilliant flame. It astounded and baffled his audience, so it’s no wonder his show continued to be booked well into the 1920s.

Russell always had time to jot down his tips and suggestions for magic effects he created. He would draw out plans, work through the details, and then practice, correct, and perform his effects before submitting them to magic magazines. He submitted an effect to the August 1927 issue of *The Linking Ring* called “Russell’s Slate Changing Cabinet” and it was a worthy contender to most of the mediums during that time. Russell presented it to his audience to show the readers the idea had been tested and would work.

He often performed his effect “Russell’s Growth of Roses,” in which he placed a small decorated screen on top of the day’s newspaper before laying a square top on the screen. He would then pass a large empty tube for inspection and upon its return, just before he’d place the tube over a small pot filled with sand, he placed what he called “magic seeds into the sand. Each time he removed the tube, the audience would gasp in disbelief. What they saw were small sprouts rising from the sand. Russell removed the tube to reveal a bush of blooming roses, freely cutting the colorful flowers off and tossing them into the amazed audience.

That being said, when the position of Chairman for the Exposé Committee of the I.B.M. was offered to Russell in 1930, he willingly agreed. Russell and six other magicians were on a mission to thwart those who thought they had a right to give away even the simplest of magic effects. As I.B.M. member 301, he was one of the organization’s earliest members and attended





A selection of Billy Russell promotional material, plus a 1958 Linking Ring cover featuring this dedicated I.B.M. member.

I.B.M. Ring 4 Batavia and Central New York magic meetings. On October 28, Russell (then the Ring's president) performed his "Russell's Magic Circus" at the Ring's annual magic show. Magicians Ray Hartman (who performed his "Chinese Mysteries"), Johnny Hargather (who presented various escapes), and the comedic Elmer Eckam.

Throughout the rest of the 1930s and 1940s, Russell's shows and participation with the magic community continued. Eventually, he stepped away from his regular bookings and accepted an opportunity to tour the western United States. He performed a blindfold act in New Plymouth, Iowa to promote a local car dealership, with people coming out to watch a blindfolded Russell drive down Main Street without breaking any traffic laws or causing any damage. Russell performed his "second sight act" for local businesses who wanted to pick up free publicity in the neighboring newspapers. He then traveled to Valparaiso, Indiana, Cedar City, Utah, and the coast of California, where he performed in cities like Ukiah, Van Nuys, Corona, Modesto, San Mateo, and Hayward before heading to Las Vegas, Nevada and Greeley, Colorado. Afterward, he returned to Batavia.

In 1947, he presented his two-sword levitation effect for the New York Conclave of Magicians at Batavia's Onondaga Hotel. In 1951, Russell received The Sphinx Award for Best Stage Effect for "The Russell Silk Production." *The Sphinx* published the effect in the August 1950 issue. In 1958, Russell was one of the performers on the big show at the Buffalo I.B.M. Convention. He was also featured in the October 1958 issue of *The Linking Ring*. There are ideas and effects well worth reading in this issue should you have the opportunity.

Russell said that one of his first introductions to magic was when Herrmann the Great performed at a local theater in Batavia. He was a member and the only president of the Magicians Alliance of Western New York (MAWNY) founded in 1947. That worked out well because the rest of the members were designated as vice presidents. Some of the vice presidents included Jack Chanin, Lou Tannen, Elmer Eckam, and Gene Gordon.

There weren't too many professional performers at that time who could book the talent, organize the dealers, and pull off a successful magic convention, but Russell did just that in 1931 and 1934.

In 1963, at eighty-three years old and after an active career in magic, Russell was forced to step away. He had a partial stroke that wouldn't allow him to continue his schedule. He did his best to keep in touch with his friends. Fellow performers and club members would drop by to see if they could help in any way. Sadly, on December 6, 1966, William "Billy" A. Russell passed away. When the news of his passing reached numerous magic clubs, there was a moment of silence to honor his memory. His ideas are still available today should you want to research them. Go to www.askalexander.org and type in "William A. Russell" to see for yourself just how much Russell contributed to the art of magic.

Gary R. Frank

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WANT TO SUBMIT AN ARTICLE OR NEWS ITEM?

Email editor@magician.org.

WANT TO SUBMIT A TRICK OR A PARADE?

Email editor@magician.org. Parades should be between 8,000 and 10,000 words and include photographs or drawings so our artist has something to follow.

WANT TO SUBMIT A RING EVENT?

E-mail a Microsoft Word document and high-resolution jpegs (not embedded in the Word document) to Dr. Steven Schlanger at ringreports@magician.org. Note: Ring Events are articles about special activities conducted by your Ring, such as banquets, shows, or charity events.

WANT TO SUBMIT A RING REPORT?

E-mail a Microsoft Word document to Dr. Steven Schlanger at ringreports@magician.org. Note: Ring Reports are reports of the activities of your regular Ring meetings.

HANDY TIP: Look on page four of every issue to find contact information for officers of the I.B.M. and staff members of *The Linking Ring*.

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF MAGICIANS

The Linking Ring

Dawn Hofmeister
Advertising Manager
advertising@magician.org



ADVERTISING RATES AND SPECS

Deadlines are the 5th of the month, the month prior to publication date. (Example: an ad appearing in the December issue must be submitted by November 5.)

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