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The Linking Ring

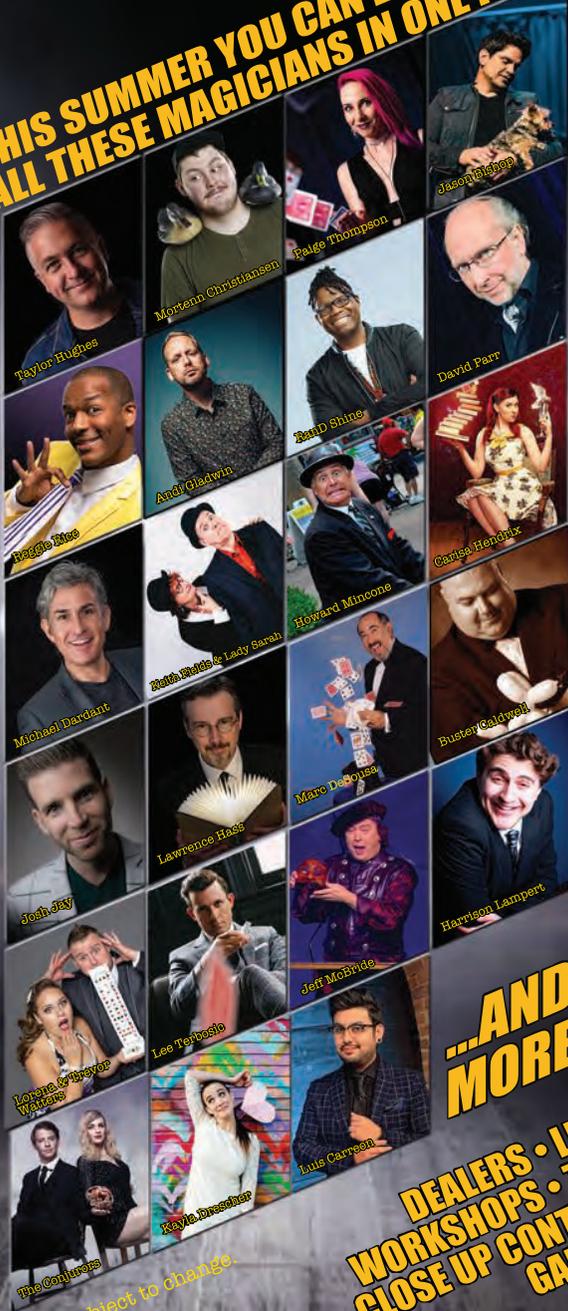
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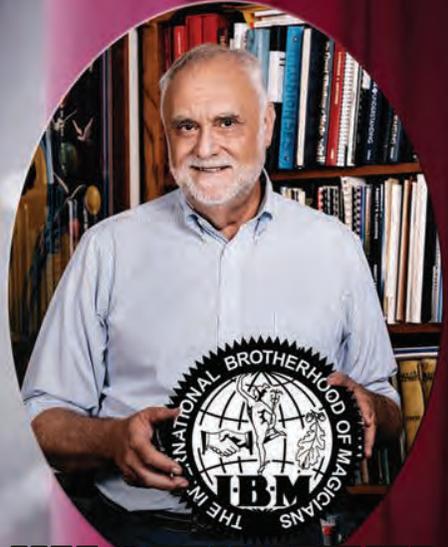
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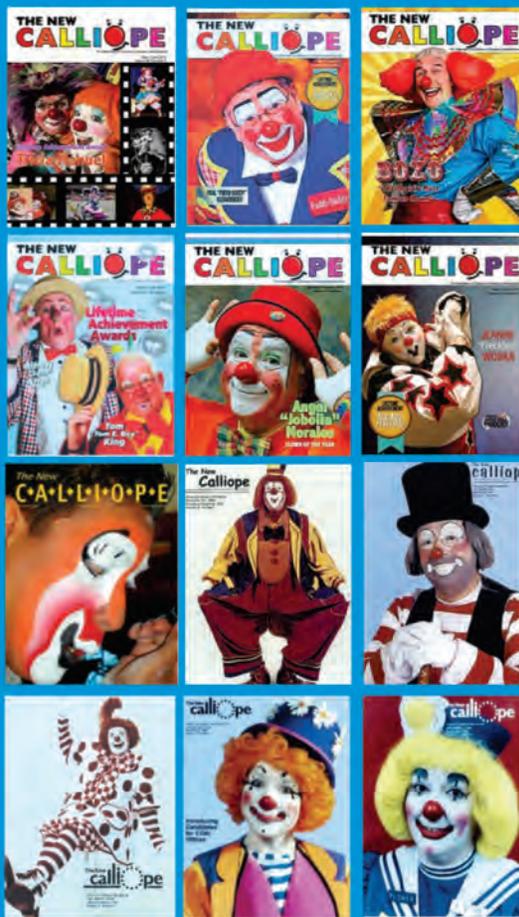
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If you have had your membership status properly reinstated following a short period of inactivity as described above, then your "continuous membership" span is not considered to have been interrupted. And if you have had such a short lapse in your membership *at any time in the past*, you still may have those lost years (up to three) reinstated upon repayment of all back dues owed. You are encouraged to reinstate your lost years, especially if they may hasten your induction into the Order of Merlin.

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

Feel the Power

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



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Steve's **MATRIX** with a **BACKFIRE** sneaks up on the audience, and burns rubber. No extra coins or crazy gimmicks.

In **THE SPONGEBALL TRICK** you'll witness the strongest effects possible with sponge balls, machined together into a single, sleek, stunning piece of engineered excitement.

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

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

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

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

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



From the Editor

SAMUEL PATRICK SMITH

How We Find Success. Earl Nightingale – the golden-voiced radio broadcaster who made the first spoken-word recording that sold over a million copies – pointed out a truth so obvious that it is easy to overlook: “We get all of our money from other people.” In fact, most of our satisfaction in all areas of life, not just financial, comes from our relationships with other people.

The old saying, “It’s who you know,” contains an element of truth. Studies show that job applicants are interviewed more fairly when they have been referred by a trusted source. They aren’t hired because they “know someone,” but qualified candidates who have been personally recommended are interviewed more carefully and thus are more likely to be hired.

This concept may also apply to booking magic shows. When I was actively performing assembly programs, one principal called me into his office and asked if I had worked any other schools in the area. I told him I had not. He pulled out a yellow legal pad and began writing the names of every school and principal in the county. “Tell them that I recommend you,” he said, “and if they have any questions, they can call me.” Out of twenty schools, I booked eighteen just by mentioning his name.

Getting a recommendation for work or business is only a small part of the magic of positive connections. Casual acquaintances, friends, family, and co-workers are also part of our personal network, and we are part of theirs. Working together, strengthening relationships, helping others, and allowing others to help us are indispensable keys to success.

This principle has passed the test of time. Well over a century ago, Andrew

Carnegie, who accumulated a vast fortune and gave most of it away to worthy causes, was known for his ability to find, build, and maintain connections. Carnegie claimed to know very little about his business – the production and sale of steel – but he created an enormously successful corporation by surrounding himself with people who bridged the gaps in his knowledge. Carnegie’s strength lay in recognizing talented individuals and enlisting them to help achieve his objectives.

Positive relationships enable us to do what we can’t accomplish by ourselves, whether it’s building a prop, drawing a picture, booking a show, writing a letter, or having faith in our future. Others can make this happen for us, and we can make it happen for them. I know this is true because I have made connections, some of them unexpected, which improved my life exponentially. They have helped me do what I could not do by myself.

We may wonder, if we are truly great shouldn’t we be able to succeed by ourselves? Absolutely not. Even the inventive genius Thomas Edison employed mathematicians to calculate formulas that were too advanced for him. We all need the cooperation of others. It’s a sign of maturity and intelligence to recognize that we are not self-sufficient. As the noted Japanese short story writer Ryūnosuke Satoro said, “Individually, we are one drop. Together, we are an ocean.” If that’s true, there’s no time to waste. Let’s work together, build connections, and make waves!

Ryūnosuke Satoro, 1926.



President's Page

BILLY HSUEH



Hi, I.B.M. Fam!

May was a lot of fun. I took a trip out to Detroit, Michigan, to perform at The Magic Soiree, with Dan Sperry as the headliner! Thank you, Keith Fields and Lady Sarah, for inviting me! While in town, I was able to visit the monthly meeting of Ring 22, the Detroit Magic Club. What is even cooler is that I had the honour of presenting a Presidential Citation to Johnny New York, the Ring President! He volunteered to take on the role and has single handedly revitalized the Ring to where it is now. I had a lot of fun visiting Ring 22 as well as sharing a bit of my magic with them.



Cast photo of The Magic Soiree, left to right: Andy Makar, Billy Hsueh, Keith Fields, Lady Sarah, Dan Sperry, Ferran Poage.



International President Billy Hsueh presents a citation to Johnny New York, President of Ring 22 in Detroit, Michigan.

Right after Detroit, I hopped on another plane and headed to Des Moines, Iowa, for AbraCORNdabra! It is such a cozy convention in the Midwest. I definitely had a lot of fun hanging out with old friends whom I haven't seen in a long time and meeting new friends. I was even presented an award! Thank you, Steve Hinrichs and Mikayla Oz, for inviting me!

Speaking of conventions, our own I.B.M. Annual Convention is right around the corner! If you haven't registered head over to www.IBMConvention.com and do so! Come and celebrate the end of my year as International President with me at our family reunion!

A bit about what's on my schedule for this month. I'll be heading to Georgia to perform at Atlanta Magic Night, as well as visiting Ring 9. If you are a local I hope to see you at the show on June 18, or at the meeting on June 19! Thank you, Joe M. Turner, for making this happen. I'm super stoked!

The old saying goes, time flies when you are having fun – and, seriously, this year has flown by so fast. So, as my term as International President draws to a close, a few “thank you's” are in order. First, to my local Ring 92, the Vancouver Magic Circle – I would not be where I am today without your support, especially the Farquhar Force Five + 1 being there for me every step of the way.

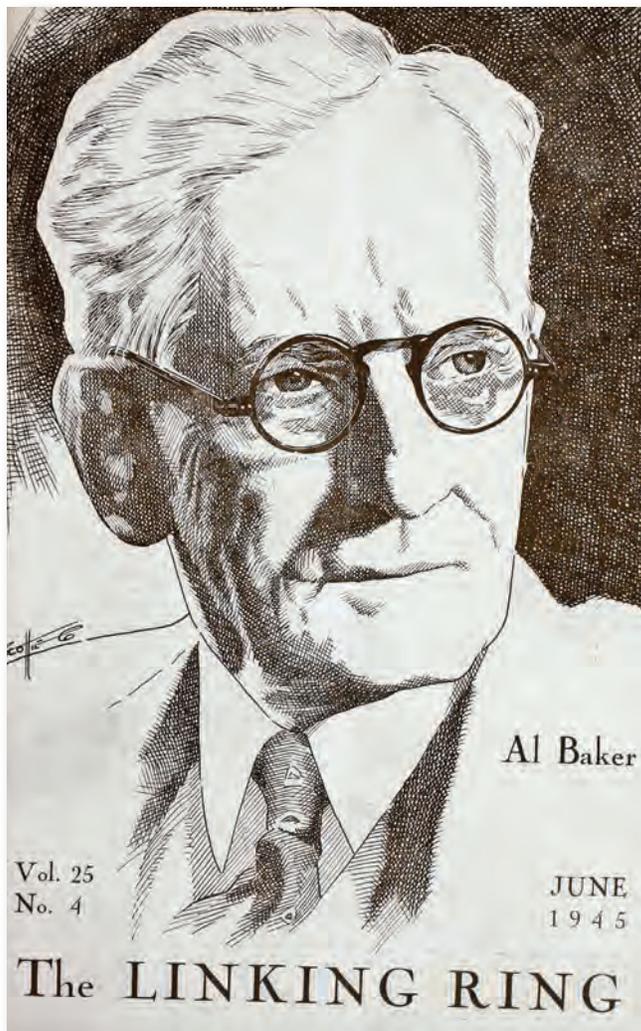
Second, to all the amazing people I have met during my term, thank you for spending time with me and creating so many memorable and embarrassing moments that will forever live on the Internet.

Third, to the amazing I.B.M. Board of
(continued on page 15)



Pictures from the Past

THE LINKING RING



Al Baker's father was responsible for teaching Al his first magic tricks. When Al was seventeen, it was the arrival of Herrmann the Great – who came to town to perform his full evening show – that set in motion the idea of magic. Al was hooked! He had never seen anything like it. After his dad taught him about the importance of practicing each effect to perfection, Al made it his life's ambition to fill the world with magic. Thank goodness for his decision. To learn more, turn to page 145.

“What’s in a Name?”

Part Fourteen

By Dr. Steven Schlanger

“What’s past is prologue.”

RING 210, Ann Arbor, Michigan – The Duke Stern Ring

In late 1969 (or early 1970), a few magicians got together at the home of Hank Moorehouse in Ypsilanti, Michigan, to talk about magic with the idea of starting a magic club. Over the next couple of years magicians from Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti, Jackson, Downriver Detroit, suburban Detroit, and a few students from the University of Michigan and Eastern Michigan University, brought the number of participants to twenty-seven. A charter from the I.B.M. was awarded in January 1972. Because of his involvement and influence in magic, Duke Stern, who worked for Abbott’s for a number of years and was a friend to all, was asked to give his name to our Ring.

At the party celebrating the charter held at Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Ypsilanti, a young Doug Henning performed, having just graduated from college in Canada.



Errata: The year of Frederick Eugene Powell’s death was incorrectly given as 1948 in the April issue. Powell died on February 27, 1938 at age eighty-one.

The President’s Page – from page 13

Trustees and officers who are hard at work making sure my plans get off the ground. Trust me when I say they are working really hard! You people rock! Especially my Advisory Committee – thank you for dealing with my constant questions!

Lastly, I would like to say thank you to *you*. Yes, you, who are reading this column right now. Thank you for following me on my journey and actually reading the stuff I write, but most importantly thank you for being a member and supporting the I.B.M.

There is so much more I could say but there is only so much space I’m allowed to have! This year has been a blast, and I can’t wait to see what’s in store for our organization in the future. If you see me at a convention or a magic event please come and say hi and maybe even show me a trick, I would love to meet you! Make sure you greet our incoming International President, Charles Arkin, if you see him! Charles, I wish you an amazing year as you come into the office.

Thanks for sticking around! This is Billy Hsueh, signing out as International President for the last time!



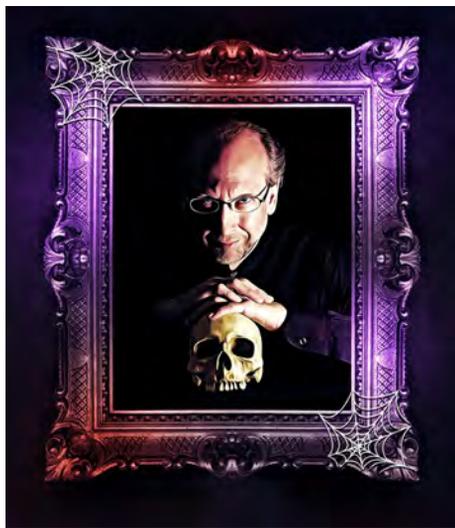
Our Cover

DAVID PARR MAKING MAGIC AND MYSTERY

By Jason Goldberg

David Parr has been creating magic, mystery, and memorable audience moments for over fifty years. He has earned respect across many areas of magic as well as arenas that exist beyond the craft. Parr has written magic books to wide acclaim, created long-running theater shows while consulting on others, and has even presented on the topics of spiritualism and séances at academic anthropology conferences.

Oh! He also fooled Penn and Teller using only a bell, two decks, and thirty-three scripted words. There wasn't a knuckle-busting move in the entire performance. Instead, he applied his favorite technique: "I like to design a narrative that creates a collaborative effort with the audience, that then builds into a surprising and mysterious experience."



Magic is simulated impossibility. Bizarre magic is simulated impossibility that implies there are otherworldly or supernatural forces involved.



Cabinet of Curiosities: A collection of possibilities. DAVID LINSELL PHOTO



The seventy-minute Cabinet of Curiosities show features a selection of weird artifacts, with spectators choosing which item to examine next. DAVID LINSELL PHOTO

To get a sense of what Parr is talking about, check out his two performances from *Penn & Teller: Fool Us*. Just search for “David Parr Fool Us” on YouTube.

After watching Parr’s appearance, a few things are immediately apparent. First, Parr is very creative. Second, the performance is not about showing off. He is clearly comfortable placing the focus on someone other than himself. A few things are less apparent, such as: the effort that goes into the creative process, the discipline to search for an engaging premise and the right words, and the life lessons that form the foundation of his work. We’ll get to those.

Some performers choose to focus on one style of magic. Parr has a foot in two worlds. One is in what might be considered mainstream magic; the other is in the bizarre realm. Few performers work as successfully in both as Parr does. Surprisingly, Parr didn’t think of his work as bizarre magic, even though he’d hung out with the likes of Tony Andruzzi and

other well-known bizarre performers at the legendary Invocational conventions in Chicago, back in the 1980s. It wasn’t until his book *Brain Food* was published in 1998 that he tuned in to the fact that other magicians noted its story-driven material and offbeat themes and labeled the book bizarre.

So, if *Brain Food* wasn’t Parr’s attempt to write a book about bizarre magic, what was it? Parr says that he was simply sharing the way he’d been creating and performing magic for years. “My background is in theater,” Parr explains, “so I tend to look at magic from a dramatic standpoint. The quickest, most direct way to connect with an audience is with narrative. People are built to respond to it, to engage with a story. If I have a limited time to connect with my audience, that’s the tool I’m going to use.”

Which raises another question: What exactly *is* bizarre magic? “I think first we have to define what magic is,” says Parr. “To me, magic is simulated impossibility.



Penn and Teller: Fool Us host Alison Hannigan reacts to David Parr's Pincushion Thumb trick. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CW

It's a representation of things that cannot exist in the day-to-day world. Bizarre magic is simulated impossibility that implies there are otherworldly or supernatural forces involved." In other words, Parr's performance of bizarre isn't simply a display of skill and dexterity; the magic apparently happens because he's able to marshal those uncanny forces. The result can be eerie, goosebump inducing.

Dark, spooky themes appealed to Parr early in life. He remembers, "When I was a kid, I consumed everything that was weird. Ghost stories, monster movies, creepy comic books. That stuff all scared me, by the way! I was an imaginative kid. Watching my favorite TV show, *Kolchak: The Night Stalker*, gave me nightmares. But the fear was always combined with fascination."

That early fascination with anything spooky led him to work in haunted houses during the Halloween season, from his teen years all the way to college. In a way, this allowed him to confront those childhood

fears. "I helped build the sets. I splattered the walls with blood-red paint. I helped with the lighting and the sound effects. And when it was all finished, I was one of the monsters that scared the visitors. I was behind the curtain, so it lost its power to scare me. It was just fun."

In addition to the Mattel Showstoppers Showcase magic set he received as a gift at age seven, something that initially sparked Parr's interest in magic was a Scholastic book he'd purchased at school titled *Spooky Tricks* by Rose Wyler and Gerald Ames. And although it was a book aimed at children, Parr discovered that some of the magic in it could elicit horrified responses from grownups.

For example, the Pincushion Thumb trick he performed on *Fool Us* had its origins in that book, with a few added twists to make it extra convincing. Another favorite in the book was the Pulse Stop. Parr describes it this way: "Someone checks your pulse and then feels it fade away until there's nothing. You're dead. It's like

something out of an Edgar Allan Poe story. I was thrilled by the reactions it got. I'm still fascinated by that stuff."

Parr notes that he found some important early influences outside the realm of magic. One was the writing of Ray Bradbury, who grew up in Waukegan, Illinois. By coincidence – or maybe fate? – Bradbury became a writer after seeing Blackstone perform when Bradbury was himself a child. "I read Bradbury's work when I was young," says Parr, "and I fell in love with it. There was so much magic in his writing. He made you believe things that were impossible, because he wrote about them so vividly. I think the way I write scripts is still influenced by Bradbury. Reading his stories made me a better writer."

Early inspiration was also provided by Christopher Lee's portrayal of Dracula. "I saw the Hammer *Dracula* films on Saturday-afternoon creature features. Aside from the first film, Lee's Dracula never spoke. The role relied solely on his physical presence. He didn't slouch or shuffle around. He strode with confidence. He seemed to float up staircases. He could be stock still or suddenly vault over the furniture. It left an impression."



David at age eleven.



Vincent Price vibes, from The Magic Hour.

Vincent Price films were also a fixture of the *Shock Theater* creature features. "Even though Price was doing gruesome things in those movies, it seemed like he always had a twinkle in his eye and a lilt in his voice that indicated it was make-believe, that he was having fun. Watching Christopher Lee and Vincent Price taught me how much of a performance rests on the performer's tone, posture, and attitude."

Parr recalls the time a magician messaged him after purchasing one of his marketed effects, a routine called *A Game of Life & Death*. (Note: The routine is available on Parr's website.) In the plot, an audience member plays a game of cards with the Grim Reaper, and the twist is that the Reaper lets the volunteer win – by the narrowest of margins.

Parr got an email from someone who questioned whether he was doing the routine as described, because the sender thought it would creep people out too much. "The simple answer," Parr says, "is that I actually do the script I published. But I really gave his question some thought. And I realized that there probably *is* a way to perform it that would be heavy-handed and overbearing and creepy. But the tone



Henning's influence is evident in Parr's teen years.

I use when I perform that routine is what I would call 'playfully macabre.' I always think back to the Vincent Price movies I watched as a kid, and that twinkle in the eye that reminds us it's make-believe. That's the tone that runs through much of my work, even when the material is dark. Tone, posture, and attitude matter. Two actors can say the same words, but there's a difference in their delivery that changes how the audience perceives the material."

Doug Henning was another big influence. In the 1970s, Henning was arguably the most famous magician in the world, and Parr eagerly watched the Canadian magician's television specials and went to see his live shows. Later, at a magic collectors' conference in Chicago, Parr was able to meet him and other magic luminaries such as Ricky Jay and thank them for being such an inspiration. Parr says that what he learned from Henning was the importance of sincerity. "It turned

out that the person I'd grown up watching on TV was the same person I had a conversation with at that magic convention. The friendly hippie persona was *him*. I realized that if I want to connect with an audience, the easiest way to do that is to be myself, to be sincere. So by the end of my show, the audience understands a bit about my background, what my interests and obsessions are, and they feel like they've gotten to know me – not just as a performer but as a person."

For Parr, performing magic is a conversation between him and the people in his audience. If people think his onstage persona is a put-on, they'll be defensive and difficult to engage with. Parr explains, "I think we all have an inner radar that detects falseness. If my contribution to the conversation comes across as fakey, I'm sunk. But if I genuinely share who I am and the things I care about, people will be more invested in the performance. That's

my goal. To be sincere and honest, even in an art form that involves deception.”

Storytelling is a vital part of the conversation. “Storytelling in magic gives me a chance to talk about things that exist outside the performance. I can refer to actual historical figures and events. I can refer to my own past. It extends the show outside the walls of the theater. People who have seen my show sometimes message me to say that they looked up the Fox Sisters or the Davenport Brothers and went down the rabbit hole of learning more – which is a thrill, because it makes the show last longer than the performance itself.”

Eugene Burger was a pivotal figure in Parr’s approach to magic. “He was the first magician I recall meeting who spoke about magic in theatrical terms. He talked about rehearsal and how it was different from practice. He talked about the importance of having a script. He talked about costume and setting. I wondered why all magicians didn’t talk that way.” Burger encouraged Parr to think about other elements that go into a good performance, beyond the magic. What makes a great story? How do lighting, sound, and atmosphere affect the experience? “Think about performing the same piece of magic in a haunted house or in a crowded bar,” Parr says. “Context is key. It can enhance the magic. It can undermine it. It can change the game completely.”



Mattel Showstoppers Showcase magic set Parr received as a gift at age seven.

For many years, Parr followed a path set by a number of prominent Chicago magicians, including Burger, performing magic in restaurants and lounges. And Parr admits that, at first, he found the challenges of those settings exciting. Later, though, they became frustrating. “I realized I had no control over the circumstances in which people were experiencing my work. If I was performing the Card in Wallet and someone dropped a tray of dishes just before the final reveal, the show was essentially over.” This led Parr to develop shows that would be performed in environments where he could shape the audience’s experience from start to finish. The first was *Haunting History*, a show that took place in an old mansion that is now a museum. Parr describes it as “part historic home tour, part close-up magic show, modeled on the walk-through haunted houses I worked in when I was a teenager. An audience of about twenty people follows me from room to room of the house. In each room, something magical and mysterious happens. And then we end up in the grand hall at the center of the house, where we have a séance.”

Pursuing this new avenue also led Parr back to the theater, a place where he always felt at home. The latest example of this is *David Parr’s Cabinet of Curiosities*. “I was just wrapping up a ten-year run at a theater when the folks from the Chicago Magic Lounge contacted me and said they were building a multimillion-dollar facility devoted to magic. They said ‘Pick a night of the week and the stage is yours.’ So I pitched them a title and a concept. It would be a kind of ‘choose your own adventure’ magic show. There would be a cabinet on the stage, with weird artifacts on all the shelves. And people from the audience could choose which artifact to examine next. What I was hoping to capture was the feeling I got when I walked into a magic shop for the first time – looking at all the stuff on the shelves and wondering what it was, and wanting to explore it all.”

The format offers clear advantages. Built-in flexibility would encourage people to come back to see the show again, because the choices would make it fresh each time. It would also give Parr an opportunity to mix spooky routines with funny routines, close-up magic with stage magic. The Bell and the Pincushion routines from *Fool Us* could both go into the same show, because they could be artifacts in the same cabinet. Parr could easily incorporate new pieces into the show and swap out old material if he chose, allowing the show to grow over time.

But wait. Doesn't the format for the *Cabinet of Curiosities* affect the structure and flow of the peaks, plateaus, and pacing typically found in a show? The answer is yes, and Parr learned along the way how to address this challenge. "When the show originally opened, there was no structure. And I discovered that didn't work. What if, at the beginning, the audience picks the piece that's usually my closer? What if they pick two pieces that are similar right in a row? I had built flexibility into the performance, but I built in too much. I learned that it required a beginning, a middle, and an end. What happened in between could change from show to show. That way, I could give the audience agency in the performance without entirely giving up structure." Parr says there are about ten different effects in the seventy-minute show, and he has nearly double that waiting in the cabinet, ready to be explored.

After the *Cabinet* show concluded its yearlong run, Parr created *The Magic Hour*, a show about perception and how our senses can't always be trusted. And speaking of perceptions, Parr shares an amusing – and enlightening – anecdote about performing the Bell routine. One night, his onstage volunteer kept choosing the wrong card, not because he was trying to trip up the magician but because he was colorblind! "Apparently, a red-backed card in a blue deck is close enough to red-green color blindness that he couldn't see the difference until it was pointed out to him.

It made me rethink my close-up magic. All of a sudden I realized that, for years, a significant part of my audience wasn't seeing certain effects the way I thought they were."

Which brings us to *Penn & Teller: Fool Us*. Before Parr flew to Las Vegas to record his first appearance, he asked the producers for one favor: find out if Alyson Hannigan, the show's host, is colorblind. He was assured that she is not.

But we're getting ahead of the story. How did Parr get booked on the show in the first place? Well, it happened almost by accident – or more accurately, *because* of an accident. A year previous to his *Fool Us* appearance, he'd been hit by a car, leaving him with a broken leg. Parr sets the scene: "I didn't know what being immobilized for months would do to me psychologically. I was not only cut off from the outside world, I was cut off from my creative outlet. To avoid spiraling into depression, I decided to give myself a project to focus on."

Parr directed his focus to an antique service bell that had been collecting dust on his shelf. Over the years, he'd glanced at it occasionally and tried to think of a way to work it into a routine. After the accident, with nothing but time on his hands, he finally landed on an idea that worked. And it had a beneficial feature: the routine could be performed sitting down, which would keep pressure off his injured leg. He gave it the name Copycat.

Surprisingly, when Parr contacted the *Fool Us* producers to propose ideas, he left Copycat off the pitch list. "I assumed they wouldn't be interested in card magic, because they probably saw hundreds of card tricks every casting cycle. So I pitched them five or six ideas, none of which involved cards. No response. Time passed. Then, just as an afterthought, I sent a link to a video of Copycat. That was the one that caught their attention. First, because the bell set it apart from other stuff they'd seen. Second, because they agreed



David Parr with Penn and Teller: *Fool Us* host Alyson Hannigan. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CW

that Alyson Hannigan would have fun with it. And third, because it fooled them.”

The experience of being cast on *Fool Us* was illuminating. “I learned that you shouldn’t hold back ideas because you’re trying to anticipate what the producers want. They don’t know what they want until they see it. They’re looking for good television, they’re not looking at it from a magician’s perspective. What will viewers tune in for? What will keep them engaged? So the lesson is, pitch them every idea you have. Don’t hold back.”

If you’ve watched the video of Parr’s performance, you know what happened. Parr wasn’t expecting it. “I was shocked when Penn said that they didn’t have a theory. I had estimated my chances of fooling them at about forty percent. My hope was that the principle was buried deep enough in the back-and-forth game with the bell that they wouldn’t recognize it.”

Parr had asked the producers how long Penn and Teller usually confer to come up with a theory. The answer was three minutes. But what’s not shown in the episode is that the famous duo mulled over the problem for about twice that long. “Alyson ran out of questions and I started interviewing her!” Finally, after being

interrupted by Hannigan, Penn admitted “We don’t think jack. We have no idea.” Parr’s brain froze with astonishment. “I was handed the trophy. I thanked everyone, waved to the audience, and walked off. And as soon as I was off camera, a production assistant wrapped a towel around the trophy and whisked it out of my hands. Suddenly I was standing outside the theater and thinking *what just happened?* The door behind me opened, and Penn walked by on the way to his dressing room. As he passed, he said ‘Seriously. Not a clue.’ And then Teller walked by and said ‘You know what I loved about what you did? It was one simple idea.’ That’s when it sank in. I fooled them.”

Parr adds one more detail: “If you watch the video carefully, you can see that I was trying not to put weight on my left leg. That’s because I had only recently stopped using a cane.”

Three seasons later, Parr made a return to the *Fool Us* stage. “The producers were interested in the Pincushion Thumb because they thought Alyson Hannigan would really react to it. I knew it had zero chance of fooling Penn and Teller, but I thought it would be fun to see how Alyson would respond.” Parr was asked if he could



Two decks, a bell, and thirty-three words equal a win! PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CW

make a change to the routine, though. The producers wanted him to add blood. Parr resisted, in keeping with his thinking about what makes the routine work. “It’s a game, like P.T. Barnum’s museum. Some of the displays were real and some were false, and to what degree something was real or fake was up to the audience to figure out. The Pincushion Thumb stops being a game if people think I’m really harming myself. What makes it fun is that it looks real, but I’m not bleeding or passing out, so it *can’t* be real. Or is it? That’s the game.” As it turned out, blood wasn’t needed. Hannigan’s reaction was so strong that it was all Parr could do to keep her from running away. “She turned her back on me and refused to look! I kept saying her name to try to keep her engaged and involved. I do feel a little badly about traumatizing her. But it looked great on TV!”

Parr is continually developing new shows and new material. “I enjoy the challenge of it, picking a theme and then digging through my files in search of material that might fit. I might rediscover ideas I haven’t explored in years. I might find ideas I’ve never explored. It’s a good creative exercise, and the results are often surprising.” Just as the accident unexpect-

edly inspired Copycat, the COVID-19 pandemic turned out to be a productive time creatively. “At first I thought I’d just take a year off. But then I wondered, *and do what?* I didn’t want to be cut off from my creative outlet *again*. So, I decided to do a livestream show. And to my surprise I found it liberating, because I could take advantage of the limited frame of the screen to do all sorts of things I couldn’t do elsewhere. I ended up developing more material in a shorter time than I ever have, because this new medium let me experiment in ways I hadn’t before.” Other performers took notice.

Peter Samelson, a friend of Parr’s, says “David does not rest on his laurels; instead, like all great artists, he continues to push at material he has already created and incessantly explores new ideas. During the lockdown, he found ways to bring his sensibilities into the Zoom experience and I, for one, was enraptured and entertained by his presence and material. And did I mention fooled?”

As the pandemic wound down, the creative exercise changed. Parr turned his attention to finding ways to perform some of his new material in person. This led to new ideas and new discoveries. Parr says,



David ponders the next mystery.

“I tend to look at everything as an experiment. No matter what, if it works or it doesn’t work, I’m going to learn something. The goal of an artist is to never stop growing and changing, never stop expanding the parameters of what you do.”

We seem to have arrived in philosophical territory. But Parr disagrees. “Philosophy is only philosophical until we put it into practice, at which point it’s practical. I’ve dedicated a lot of thought to defining my terms and understanding who I am and what I hope to accomplish when I’m in front of an audience, and that’s because that understanding shapes all of my work, from start to finish. It’s not just abstract and theoretical, it’s practical. Because the end result is my show.”

Earlier, Parr shared his working definition of the word *magic*. But what does magic mean to him personally? “Magic has been with me since I was seven years old. At this point, it’s not a thing I do, it’s part of who I am. And the fact that I’ve been a magician for more than fifty years means that magic gives me something I can’t get anywhere else.” And what is that? Parr answers without hesitation. “The

same thing my audience gets. Direct experience of mystery, the feeling of awe and wonder that comes from *not knowing*.”

Of course, it’s easy to see how magic can provide the experience of mystery to the audience. But how does it provide it to the magician? “Two ways,” says Parr. “First, knowledge is always limited. So, magicians can still be fooled by magic. I still get that feeling of wonder that’s a reminder of why I got into magic in the first place. And second, the creative process is often mysterious to me. Where do ideas come from? Some have an identifiable source, but others just seem to pop into my head. Ideas for my shows have even occurred to me while I was asleep. Creativity is sometimes methodical, and sometimes coincidental. It can be slow and frustrating. But it can also be surprising and wonderful. The process is different every time. That’s the mystery of it. And the fun of it!”

Visit David Parr’s website, including his digital store, at www.davidparr.com. Jason Goldberg is an Associate Editor for The Linking Ring.

MILT LARSEN

APRIL 9, 1931 – MAY 28, 2023

If there's such a thing as a modern Renaissance man, Milt Larsen was about as close as they come.

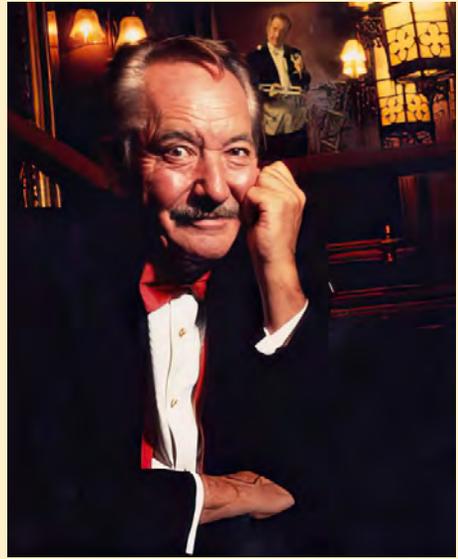
Although magicians will always remember him as a co-founder of the Magic Castle in Hollywood, Larsen also contributed to American popular culture writing for television, composing songs, and acting.

He died May 28, 2023, asleep in his home at age 92.

Milt teamed with his brother William Larsen Jr. and sister-in-law Irene to turn the Lane mansion below Yamashiro's in Hollywood into an enduring icon for magicians. Although they called it the Academy of Magical Arts, it became known simply as the Magic Castle. Beginning in 1963, the trio leased the gothic property belonging to Thomas O. Glover on 7001 Franklin Avenue and made it a home away from home for magicians and a sought-after venue for working professionals. Having performed at the Magic Castle could be an instant reputation maker. "For decades, he brought magic to so many lives and his legacy will continue to do so. We will miss him tremendously," said Chuck Martinez, chair of the Board of Directors for the Castle's Academy of Magical Arts.

Randy Pitchford, a magician and video game mogul who founded Gearbox Entertainment, bought the mansion last year with a promise to preserve the Magic Castle and its legacy.

Larsen also wrote for radio and TV, spending eighteen years (from the 1950s into the 1970s) with the famed game show, *Truth or Consequences*, one of the longest-running programs in history and the first to succeed in syndication. The show was produced by Ralph Edwards, who also brought Larsen on as a writer for a show called *This is Your Life*, which presented the biographies of famous people in front



of a live television audience. It was one of the first successful unscripted TV series, spanning more than four decades.

Milt Larsen also teamed with Bobby Lauher to write the book for the stage musical "Victory Canteen," starring the Andrews Sisters' Patty Andrews. Milt later joined songwriter Richard M. Sherman, known for his work with his brother on some of Disney's most famed soundtracks, to write novelty songs. Their wacky tunes included titles such as "Bon Voyage, Titanic," "General Custer," and "Congratulations, Tom Dewey." The latter became the theme song for the stage production *Give 'Em Hell, Harry!*, a one-man play about President Harry S. Truman starring James Whitmore.

Milt Larsen produced the *It's Magic* stage show in Los Angeles for fifty years and owned the Mayfair Music Hall in Santa Monica. Milt Larsen and brother Bill were given a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame in 2006.

He was preceded in death by Bill (1993) and Irene (2016). His survivors include his wife, Arlene Larsen, nephew Dante Larsen, niece Erika Larsen, and great-nieces Jessica Hopkins and Liberty Larsen.

A tribute will appear in the July issue.

Houdini's Message from Beyond the Grave

By Dan Kamin

I spent much of my enforced confinement during the pandemic practicing magic.

It was the great Harry Houdini who got me into it.

As a kid, I was enthralled by the movie *Houdini* starring Tony Curtis. For the sake of good storytelling, the film, like most biopics, fictionalizes his life considerably. It would have you believe, for example, that he died performing his daring water torture escape in full view of a horrified audience. As most magicians know, his actual death was more mundane: in a hospital, from complications of a ruptured appendix. Yet despite its fabrications, *Houdini* perfectly captures the spirit of the man and his art. In my view, it is the best movie ever made about a magician.

Watching it again recently, it was easy to see why it had so enchanted me as a child. In the very first scene, Houdini is working as Bruto the Wild Man in an arcade, caged and wearing a hideous mask that makes him look like an angry Neanderthal. Bess, a young woman watching with her girlfriends, upbraids the keeper for his cruelty, and Houdini is instantly smitten with his beautiful defender. As the women move on, he makes a quick costume change and reappears as his handsome, tuxedoed self to perform some magic. He pulls Bess onto the stage and charms her with a trick while staring at her with naked adoration. Bess, played by Curtis's wife Janet Leigh, rebuffs him for being so forward, as any proper late-nineteenth-century girl would. She then proceeds to discreetly stalk him as he performs at other venues around town, dragging a clueless date along for cover. Houdini, in turn, flirts

outrageously and woos her with magic. It's very romantic, but with enough humor and magic sprinkled in that my pre-adolescent self could watch without gagging.

The courtship now dispensed, the couple marries and she becomes his assistant. Now the film gets down to its real business, showing how Houdini overcame numerous obstacles and perils on the way to becoming the most famous magician the world has ever known.

Dangers of Magic

A couple of years after I saw the movie, a kid sitting next to me in a school assembly did a trick with sponge balls. He was the first real-life magician I'd ever met, and I wanted to see more. His name was Neal. I visited him at his home and he showed me several more tricks, then generously invited me to team up with him. Soon, the two of us were being hired for kids' birthday parties and other events. I was not only learning to perform magic, but being paid for it as well, an amazing turn of events in my life.

Like me, Neal had been inspired by the Houdini movie, but unlike me he had found a way to enter Houdini's world – namely, a key grinding machine, like the ones in hardware stores. He'd been using it to fashion master keys, and he began cutting copies for me as well. While we never figured out how to actually use these keys in a performance, we nursed the vague but thrilling notion that if we accumulated enough of them we, too, could become master escape artists.

One day at school, Neal handed me a copy of a key that opened all the school

lockers, and I dutifully added it to my growing collection.

The next day he was caught breaking into one.

When the school authorities asked him where he got the key, he told them that he had made it himself. When they asked him if he'd made any for anyone else, he turned me in.

That's when I discovered that practicing magic could be dangerous, even if you weren't lowered headfirst into a giant thermostat.

I was summoned to the school office, where I was interviewed by two tough-looking city detectives. It was illegal, they snarled at me, even to possess such a key. Houdini would have scoffed at their threats, knowing that he could laugh off their futile attempts to constrain him with mere handcuffs and jail cells. But I wasn't Houdini, a fact made evident by the presence of my mother, sobbing hysterically beside me.

I was offered the choice of a five-day suspension, which would go on my "Permanent Record," or three swats with a baseball-bat sized paddle wielded by the Dean of Students, who, in my terrified eyes, could have played Bruto the Wild Man without the benefit of a rubber mask.

So, a week's vacation versus a violent beating. Hmm, let me see . . .

In retrospect, it seems like an easy choice. Who would choose pain over pleasure? But at the time, I genuinely thought the blight on my "Permanent Record" (ever since, I have always pictured those two words capitalized and in quotation marks) would brand me as a criminal and ruin my life. So, I chose to take my punishment.

Little did I realize that I'd soon be consorting with real criminals.

Among the Cardsharps

Needless to say, my partnership with Neal did not survive his ratting me out. Miraculously, my love of magic did, and before long I discovered a group of magicians who met every Saturday for lunch at the

Mayflower Restaurant in downtown Miami. That's where I met the criminals.

Miami in the 1960s was one of the country's premier vacation destinations, with a string of opulent hotels along the ocean in Miami Beach. Like early Vegas, it was also a magnet for criminals, as evidenced by the string of television crime shows set there.



Newspaper publicity for Danny Kamin as a fifteen-year-old in 1962.

And indeed, at the Mayflower I met colorful characters who might have stepped out of a production of *Guys and Dolls*. They included Jimmy Grippo, owner of the 21 Club on Miami Beach. Jimmy somewhat resembled Larry from *The Three Stooges*, except that the shock of hair that exploded from each side of his head was jet black, and he had a glass eye.

Even though I was underage, Jimmy invited me to his nightclub one evening to meet John Scarne, the legendary card manipulator whose hands doubled for Paul Newman's in *The Sting* when Newman's character executes an impressive series of flourishes and deals some seconds. Scarne had a sinister look that made me uneasy, and it did little to calm my nerves when the man sitting next to him was introduced as Evil Eye Finkle. Although I had no idea who he was at the time, Evil Eye was a well-known figure in the boxing world. Promoters would hire him to sit ringside and glower at the boxers going up against their men. Al Capp

turned him into a cartoon character named Evil Eye Fleagle for his “Li'l Abner” strip.

While Scarne used his card skills to entertain and educate the public about crooked gamblers, some of the card men I met at the Mayflower had less noble ambitions. One fellow, who worked the small coal-mining towns in West Virginia to finance his jaunts to Miami and his ranch in Texas, dealt seconds as smoothly as Scarne. Luckily for me, he was quite willing to share his craft, as was José, a former casino dealer from Havana who fled to Miami when Castro took over. When I reached the tender age of sixteen, José offered me a job dealing on one of the gambling boats that operated outside the three-mile limit. To allay my reservations about embarking on a life of crime, José imitated the way his casino patrons reacted when he would “accidentally” slip them an extra twenty with their winnings. Invariably, he told me, they would look down, register the overpayment – then look back up at him with big, innocent eyes. “So, you see, Danny,” he would proclaim triumphantly, “*everybody* cheats when they get the chance.”

But one brush with the law was enough, and I respectfully declined.

Staring Contest

In my favorite scene from the Houdini film, Harry, having succumbed to Bess’s demand that he give up magic for a more stable job (in a lock and safe factory, no less), tricks her into attending the Society of Magicians Halloween Dinner. The main attraction is a contest to see whether anyone can escape from a straitjacket. There’s a nice bit of comic pantomime when the silver-haired magician serving as emcee asks for volunteers, and Harry gets on his knees to silently plead his case to Bess. The diners around them laugh, embarrassing her into relenting.

But the rest of the scene plays out in dramatic fashion. As soon as the five men are securely strapped in, the orchestra begins playing Strauss’s lively “Perpetual Motion” waltz, and four of the five begin hopping,

writhing, and rolling over each other on the floor. One even falls off the stage and onto a table in the dining area. The audience is mightily amused by this spectacle. Harry, however, stands rooted to the spot, bending forward and laboriously working his arms under the black leather straitjacket.

He doesn’t seem to be making much progress until he looks up and notices a small, faceted crystal globe revolving beneath the chandelier. The Strauss waltz becomes subtly infused with the eerie sounds of a flute and several violins emulating the theremin-inflected movie scores of the period.

Harry straightens up and relaxes, putting all his attention on the hypnotic orb. Both Bess and the old magician, who is also watching from the audience, follow his gaze as he appears to enter a trance state while staring at the glittering object.



Tony Curtis portrays the great escape artist in the 1953 motion picture, Houdini.

The eerie theme builds and becomes more suspenseful as the scene cuts between the old magician, Bess, Harry, and the globe. The old magician leans forward, galvanized by Harry’s furious concentration. Finally, sweat droplets break out on Harry’s face as the camera slowly pans down to the bottom edge of the straitjacket, where his right hand emerges like the claw of some prehistoric creature. The hand snakes around to the back of the jacket to unbuckle the straps, and moments later, with a tremendous effort, he peels the jacket over his head and collapses to the floor, drenched in sweat.

The scene is a cinematic tour de force in

which all the elements – but especially the music, the editing, and Tony Curtis’s mesmerizing performance – contribute to the almost unbearable tension.

Watching the scene also turned out to be excellent preparation for the endless hours of patient concentration and effort required to master the kind of sleight-of-hand magic that can be done right in front of your nose. Every hour was worth it, because there’s no thrill like astonishing people who are sitting or standing right next to you, conjuring up an enchanted realm in which miracles seem possible and the very air seems to sparkle.

Up Close and Personal

In time, I learned other ways to play with people’s heads, such as appearing before unsuspecting groups as a keynote speaker having a meltdown, or turning symphony concerts into comic theatre. But close-up magic was my first love, and I remained faithful to it.

I’m glad I did, because close-up magic turned out to be the only performing art form that was specifically designed to be performed for an audience of one. This made it ideal for a world in lockdown, where millions had to communicate via Zoom and other video meeting apps.

With a little help from some magician

friends, I devised a new routine, “The Quarantined Cards,” which in turn led to my developing an hour-long online program I called *SHAZOOM!* I turned my dining room into a magic parlor and upped my technical capabilities with a professional microphone and high quality second camera aimed at my hands on the tabletop. I spread the word about it in an earlier version of this article, which was published in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* on May 24, 2020, just a couple of months after the pandemic shut down every school and theatre in the country. I saw this as a COVID-respite program, and offered it gratis to individuals and families, charging only institutions. I didn’t record and post my performances, because close-up works best when it’s live and interactive.

Close-up is, of course, red hot now, thanks to practitioners like David Blaine and *Penn and Teller’s Fool Us*, which introduces masters of the craft who would never have come to the attention of a mass audience without the intimacy of television.

Pittsburgh has been riding the crest of the wave with Liberty Magic, a boutique theatre on Liberty Avenue downtown. With less than seventy seats, the theatre showcases world-class close-up performers in five-week runs that regularly sell out.

The front window display features a full-size replica of Houdini’s famous water tor-



In Pittsburgh on November 6, 1916, Houdini draws a massive crowd to watch his straitjacket escape.



Houdini's bridge jump in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, March 13, 1908.

ture cell, with a figure representing Houdini inside it. On November 6, 1916, Houdini himself performed just down the street. Thousands gathered to watch him dangle upside down from the *Pittsburgh Post* building and escape from a straitjacket.

On an earlier visit to Pittsburgh, in 1908, handcuffs made of Pittsburgh steel were clamped tightly over his wrists and he jumped forty feet from the Seventh Street Bridge into the Allegheny River. The crowd cheered when he broke the surface, free yet again.

Having lived through our own lockdown, you might enjoy watching Tony Curtis's exhilarating portrayal of a man who could not be confined. And since we're still feeling our way through an uncertain recovery, take note of what the film so vividly demonstrates – that every one of those escapes was the result of meticulous planning and perfect timing. Houdini was no fool. That's the secret of how he cheated death again and again.

It's his message to us from beyond the grave.



*Dan Kamin is an internationally renowned movement artist who trained Robert Downey, Jr. for his Oscar-nominated performance in *Chaplin* and created Johnny Depp's comedy moves for *Benny and Joon*. He is currently developing a new show, *Dan Kamin's Pandemic Pastimes*, based, in part, on the magic he created during the lockdown and the stories he recounts in this article. You can find out more about Dan at www.dankamin.com.*

Lost in the Shuffle



Jon Ornoy directing Richard Turner in San Antonio.

URSULA ROGERS PHOTO

When Vancouver-based filmmaker Jon Ornoy had the opportunity to see Past International President Shawn Farquhar—a two-time FISM world champion—perform at a little pop-up space that Farquhar had opened in 2019, he scarcely could have imagined how that one night would go on to shape his life. “I’d seen Shawn on TV before,” says Ornoy, “but there’s something entirely different about having all of these incredible, impossible things happening right in front of your face, especially when he seems just as amazed by what’s happening as you are.”

Emboldened, Ornoy reached out to Farquhar a few days later to invite him for a drink. The rest, as they say, is history. “I didn’t have any big expectations for where this was going to go,” he continues, “but the opportunity to pick the brain of one of the best magicians in the world was one I wasn’t going to pass up.” Now three years later, the collaboration that was born on that fateful evening is ramping up for the next stage of its evolution. Ornoy and Farquhar will embark on a whirlwind trip through six countries to film material for their upcoming feature-length documentary *Lost in the Shuffle*.

The connection between movies and magic dates to the 1890s, when illusionist Georges Méliès was first introduced to an early prototype of a motion picture camera, inspiring him to bring his stage work to the screen. Fascinated by the possibilities that this new medium held, Méliès became one of cinema’s first notable directors as well as visual effects pioneer. His inspired imagination attracted audiences from around the world. Drawing from this long history, Ornoy and Farquhar explored the possibility of documenting Farquhar’s relentless touring schedule, which used to have him on the road upwards of two hundred and fifty days a year. When the COVID-19 pandemic closed that door, it also opened new possibilities: Farquhar shared a PowerPoint presentation on the “Court Card Conspiracy,” a research project he was working on but wasn’t quite sure what to do with yet.

As a fourth-generation magician, Farquhar learned to count from a deck of cards. He had always looked at cards as tools without once considering their origins or why they look the way they do. That all changed a few years ago when he took a sightseeing

tour of France's Loire Valley. The tour happened to bring him to Château D'Amboise, a castle that dates to the tenth century. While wandering its ancient corridors he noticed a familiar symbol – one that he couldn't place at first, but upon realizing that he knew it from the King of Hearts (KH), he wondered if there was a connection between the two.

Traditionally, the KH is thought to commemorate the emperor Charlemagne. Farquhar contends that the card is meant to represent the lesser-known King Charles VIII, who died at his ancestral home in Amboise in 1498, cutting short his brief reign at the age of twenty eight. While history textbooks tell us that Charles died as the result of an unfortunate and innocent accident, Farquhar believes that he actually met his demise at the hands of his wife, Queen Anne, and that the truth was encoded in the playing cards to make the story accessible at a time when most people couldn't read. Given that the court cards in today's standard poker decks have a direct lineage to these original French designs, the idea that the clues to this centuries-old cold case murder may have been lying in plain sight was an intoxicating hook. It immediately grabbed Ornoy's imagination and the rest of the film fell quickly into place.

On his journey to learn more about the history of cards and their design, Farquhar and the film's crew will make stops in the U.S., England, Belgium, Spain, and France to meet some of the world's top sleight-of-hand artists and discuss how these unassuming pieces of paper have become the Swiss Army Knife of magic. With so many talented artists from which to choose, Farquhar assembled his dream casting list and was pleasantly surprised when the first four people he approached agreed to participate. Thanks to this stroke of luck, viewers will be treated to enlightening conversations with such luminaries as Michael Vincent, Alexandra Duvivier, Juan Tamariz, and Richard Turner, something that delights Farquhar to no end. "This is going to be so exciting," he explains, "first, because I'm to get a chance



(from top down): Jon Ornoy and Shawn in London discussing the upcoming interview with a card collector. ANDY HAYNES PHOTO

Alexandra Duvivier and Jon in Paris filming at Le Double Fond. ALEXANDRA BRETZNER PHOTO

London at the Magic Circle Headquarters with Michael Vincent, Jon, and Shawn. ANDY HAYNES PHOTO
In Madrid, Spain, having a fun conversation about cards with Juan Tamariz. JULIA CARBALLADA PHOTO



(l to r): Jon Ornoy and Shawn backstage at *Hidden Wonders*. • Filming the final scenes at *Hidden Wonders* in Canada. • Shooting a street scene in New Westminster, BC Canada. • Candid photo of Director Jon Ornoy.

PERLLA FASCHOWAY PHOTOS

to spend time with some of my favorite people in the world, but I also can't wait to show them all of the clues about Charles' murder that I've found in the cards so I can see their reactions – it's going to be great!"

For Ornoy, the film is a love letter to an art form that he feels often doesn't get its due. Says the director, "It's a creative process that I find endlessly fascinating because it's so different from my own and requires the mastery of so many different skills. I never thought I'd get to immerse myself in this world and meet all these phenomenal artists, and at a time when we could all use a little more wonder and joy in our lives. I can't wait to share this experience with everyone." That immersion has already begun: in 2021, the team ran a highly successful Kickstarter campaign which the magic community em-

braced. It drew more than five hundred backers from seventeen countries – including luminaries like Chris Ramsay and Shin Lim – and almost tripled their initial funding target.

"Making a movie is such a collaborative effort," says Ornoy. "Obviously the crew on set are a huge part of this, but so is each person who's put some money towards this to help us make this the best-looking and most engaging movie possible." With a theatrical distribution deal already in place in their native Canada and interested buyers reaching out from several other countries, the team hopes that *Lost in the Shuffle* will forever change how we look at a deck of cards.

To learn more and find out how you, too, can get involved or even become an executive producer, head over to lostintheshuffle-film.com.



Final cast and crew photo at Chateau Amboise in France. (Note Tiffany Allen and Boris Wild.)

CHRISTOPHE DEMIGNE PHOTO



Ring Events

THE INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF MAGICIANS

Ring 160 (Auckland, New Zealand) Fundraiser for Victims of Tropical Cyclones

In February 2023, New Zealand experienced two tropical cyclones that caused billions of dollars in damage. Eleven people died and hundreds of people were left homeless as a result. At their February meeting, I.B.M. Ring 160 decided to put on a dinner and show to raise funds to help the victims of this devastation. Just a few weeks later, on March 22, the club presented “A Bombardment of Bewilderment” at the Surrey Hotel in Auckland.

Before dinner, the guests were entertained at their tables by Alan Watson, Eduard Todor, Stefan Sageman, and Chris McConoughy, who provided a wide variety of commercial close-up magic. Michele Watson provided balloon animals for the children and many of the adults.

After dinner, the guests enjoyed a fast-paced ninety-minute show of magic and men-

talism, with emcee immediate Past President Andy Wonder. The performers were Andy Wonder, Stefan Sageman, Roderick Mulgan, Terry Von Pein, and Richard Webster.

The dinner and show attracted an audience ranging from three-years-old to over eighty, and all tickets were sold days before the performance, enabling the club to make a good donation to an extremely worthwhile cause.

We were extremely fortunate that professional photographer and Ring 160 member, Jason Fell, was able to attend and record the highlights.

As a result of this success, Ring 160 members are planning to put on similar evenings, as the combination of close-up magic, dinner, and show was easy to sell, and was thoroughly enjoyed by the guests and performers.

Richard Webster



(l to r): Michele Watson, Alan Watson GMM, Eduard Todor, Chris McConoughy, Stefan Sageman (President), Andy Wonder, Richard Webster GMM, Roderick Mulgan, and Terry Von Pein.

Ring 202 (Valletta, Malta) Charter Night Dinner 2023

After missing the Charter Night Dinner for three years, Ring 202 set a date for January of this year. However, because of an unusually strong downpour and subsequent flooding, it had to be postponed. But nothing could hold the magicians from eventually staging it in mid-March. The chosen venue was a restaurant that was once a one-hundred-and-fifty-foot schooner. The Black Pearl, originally called The Black Opal, was built in Pukavik, Sweden in 1909 and is one of the last surviving wooden trading schooners, having survived two world wars. In 1973, it became a luxury passenger vessel in Australia. But it had to return to the UK because it developed weevil worms in its hull. On its way, a fire broke out and it sank in the Maltese waters. Six years later, it was refloated and refurbished by enthusiasts and was used in the filming, in Malta, of the musical *Popeye* directed by Robert Altman and starring Robin Williams. Once more, it sank in 1981 and was taken to Ta' Xbiex harbour where, since 1987, it has been used as a wonderful restaurant with character and with a beautiful view.



Black Pearl.

The magicians, their families, and their friends enjoyed a three-course meal that pleased everyone's tastes. A small stage was set up for some magic shows. But, while the orders were being taken, TVP Alfred Mifsud and Daniel Attard entertained the guests with their brand of close-up magic. Meanwhile Robert Ellul, the Balloon Man who was all

rigged-up for the occasion, made very colourful balloon models for the children present.

Before the cabaret commenced, Ring President Glen Mercieca welcomed the guests and thanked the staff. He then presented a special memento made out of Medina Glass to past International President and honorary Ring President Vanni Pulé, for his work mentoring young magicians and his decades of dedication to the welfare of our Ring. Gwilym Bugeja was the host of the evening, and he introduced the acts while performing some hilarious comedy magic. Some of it was very topical, like producing an unexpected hare (hair) and "Dove." One of his other great items was "I Hate Kids" by past International President Stephen Baratzte and a hilarious burst and restored model balloon trick.



Alfred Mifsud.



(l to r): Robert Ellul. • Past International President Vanni Pulé with Glen Mercieca.

The first magician to be introduced was again Vanni Pulé who presented a version of "Cardiographic" based on a St. Valentine's theme. He followed this with a bottle routine, set to music, in which bottles vanished,



(l to r): Daniel Raven. • Geoffrey Buhagiar, Gwylm Bugeja, Vanni Pulé, Glen Mercieca, Michael Mock, Alfred Mifsud. • Gwylm Bugeja. • John McKellar. • Michael Mock (center). • Vanni Pulé.

a glass floated, and the crate holding the bottles disappeared.

John McKellar followed with a very elaborate “Cups and Balls” routine with diverse patter, puns, and productions and vanishes of multiple objects until an unexpected appearance of a large melon got him resounding applause.

The last magician to perform was our treasurer, Michael Mock, who presented part of his mentalism act featuring a “truth and lie test” where audience members had to lie about whether they had the golden ball, and

he could fathom who actually had it. He then performed a series of divinations of details about a person from the audience with an astonishing climax.

After the show, the president, with the help of some children, drew the winning tickets of the raffle for some gifts donated by the members themselves. It was a very pleasant evening enjoyed by all and long overdue because of the dreaded pandemic.

*Photos and Report by
Geoffrey Buhagiar*

SUBMITTING RING EVENTS

All articles about special activities in your Ring – shows, banquets, public service projects, etc. – should be submitted to Dr. Steven Schlanger at ringreports@magician.org.

Articles should be submitted as soon as possible following the event and must include the name of the author. We prefer articles to be submitted as Microsoft Word documents, attached to your e-mail. Captions for photos should be included in the document at the end of the article and coded to match any accompanying photos.

For those without e-mail access, cleanly typed events and traditional photographs may be mailed to Dr. Steven Schlanger at the address on page four of each issue of *The Linking Ring*.

2023 Florida Magic Collector's & History Conference



February 3-5, 2023 • Holiday Inn Resort • Lake Buena Vista, Florida

The third Florida Magic History & Collector's Conference of Orlando, Florida is now, well ... history. A wondrous, whirlwind weekend brought together a cornucopia of conjurers who spoke about and demonstrated some of the highlights from the golden years of magic past.

Entering the registration area was a festive gallery of original vintage lithographs, parading some of magic's past superstars like Kellar, Mahatma, Beneval, Julianelly, and more. The display also included very rare French posters of J. Savard and Maletzky, and a variety of posters for movies in which magicians starred.

After a soiree on the first evening at the hotel poolside tiki bar, where we mingled with beverages flowing, we proceeded indoors for our first official magic forum on the topic of original vintage magic sets. Each presenter displayed and gave a brief talk about a kit from their collection. At our 2021 Conference two years earlier, our first night forum was all about vintage posters. This year was a colorful adventure of background stories about each magic set and its acquisition.

The next day, Joe Zimmer was the auctioneer for a brisk, one-hour auction in which one hundred items were on the block. That evening, a group of our attendees ven-

tured to the Great Magic Hall in Orlando's Old Town district. This amazing venue and show were reserved for conference attendees only! We witnessed a wonderful forty-five-minute show starring Remy Connor and the entertaining Jafo, who was recently seen on *Penn & Teller: Fool Us*. The venue, or "hall," is actually a five-room performing arena and museum of vintage magic, which was perfect for our group.

Vintage and collectible dealers filled the hotel hallways with plenty of books, props, posters, and even illusions.

The next evening, attendees poured into the Holiday Inn Resort ballroom for the open mic event, where a dozen magicians each performed one trick (or no more than five minutes) and the audience voted for the magician who they believed gave the best presentation. Clifton Mitchell of Johnson City, Tennessee, won a spectacular trophy for his very nice mentalism presentation. Special mention must be given to I.B.M. Ring 170 (Orlando, Florida) Secretary Dennis Phillips, who provided the stage backdrop, lights, sound, and music for the conference.

The conference's many celebrated speakers included collector expert Tom Ewing, who spoke about his good friend and one of



Top row: Clifton Mitchell (left) receives a trophy from Dan Stapleton for his open mic performance. Chip Romero assists Remy Connor at the Great Magic Hall. Tom Ewing lectures on Ron Urban, one of the first bird manipulators. Bottom row: Chip Romero performs Doug Henning's Flexible Mirror. Dennis Phillips gave a lively talk on the history of the flea circus. Sterling Steal performs a silent ring routine during Dr. Ken Schreibman's lecture on the history of the Linking Rings. DAN STAPLETON PHOTOS



Top row: Dan Stapleton lectures on Channing Pollock. Jim and Alex Green find themselves on a vintage magazine cover in the dealers' room. Gale Molovinsky and Phil Schwartz enjoy some laughs over lunch. Bottom row: Luciano de Pazos translates for Genobebo Aguilera (Mago Codine), following Maria Ibañez's lecture on Cuban magicians. Sammy Smith and Steve Thomas visit in the dealers' room, a popular gathering spot at the conference. Rob Allen and Ken McCreedy stop for a photo while exploring Dan Stapleton's colorful gallery of magic lithographs. SPS PHOTOS

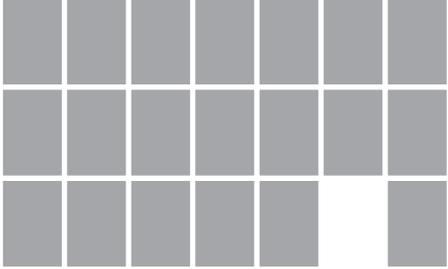
the original bird manipulators, Ron Urban. Maria Ibanez, who sadly passed away just two weeks after the conference, gave a compelling history of magic in Cuba. Chip Romero, who owns one of the most extensive collections of Doug Henning props, costumes, and paraphernalia, displayed a few of Henning’s props and illusions. He also demonstrated one of Doug’s favorite effects. Wonderful! Dan Stapleton gave an inside look into the performing and personal life of Channing Pollock. Bob Fellows spoke not only about performing the legendary Water Torture Cell, but about his correspondence with Houdini’s niece, Marie Blood. Dr. Ken Schreiber gave a fascinating history of the Linking Rings, and displayed some of the more unusual sets in his collection. As part of his talk, guest performer Sterling Steal performed his silent,

wonderful act with a large set of rings. Dennis Phillips gave us a history of the Flea Circus. He wore a vibrant costume as he recreated the full Flea Circus act for everyone’s enjoyment. What a treat!

The final event of the conference was another room filled with Flea Market tables, not necessarily “vintage” but rather a free-for-all of anything magic to sell. This room and the conference dealers’ (vintage) room were open to all magicians, including those who were not registered for the conference.

Magicpalooza producers Benjamin Mason and Dan Stapleton are working to stamp their unique vibe on the next Florida Magic History & Collector’s Conference scheduled for 2024. Five presenters have already expressed their desire to take part in it. We can’t wait for more of the magic history that will surely come to light by then.

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*.



A Portrait of the Professional

DALE SALWAK

Neil Foster's Secret Life

All professionals need a secret life. By this I mean a soft retreat from work and the unrelenting clamor of the world to the private province of themselves, where they are neither distracted nor judged and from which they come back, restored and refreshed.

Leo Tolstoy, for example, turned to chess, Emily Dickinson baked gingerbread, Beatrix Potter studied botany, J. R. R. Tolkien invented languages, Madeleine L'Engle played the piano, and – like his moral hero, Winston Churchill – Neil Foster found refuge before an easel.

“Quiet is quieting,” Neil said. “Whenever I feel out of sorts, I go to a calm place where thoughts drop off and, sometimes far into the night, I paint.”

In 1940 he enrolled at the Chicago Institute of Art with the serious dream of pursuing a career. Although fate intervened and he replaced the canvas with the stage, his love for painting never left him, preferring, with some exceptions, the richer hues of oils to those of watercolors. Discerning eyes find the evidence of his talent everywhere:

- Scenery for the Children's Musical Theater, the Opera Guild, and the Purdue University Glee Club productions on Columbian Park Memorial Island in Lafayette, Indiana where he and his wife, Jeanne, lived during the off-season summer months of 1955.

- Framed paintings (and a kitchen floor à la Jackson Pollock) in his Colon, Michigan home (1959-1986); and in the backyard, an “Enchanted Garden” with its bird, squirrel

and rabbit feeders, profusion of colorful flowers, and statues of Michelangelo's David and the Blessed Mary in their “quiet corner.”



The “Enchanted Garden” behind the Foster's home in Colon, Michigan, circa 1957.

- Pen-and-ink illustrations in the Abbott's Magic catalogs #15 through #19 and #21 and *The New Tops*, which he edited (1960–1979).

- Still lifes and portraits given as gifts to be hung in his friends' homes and businesses along with pencilled drawings accompanying his private correspondence.

- Over forty years of visually elegant, picture-perfect stage performances in twenty-four countries and across the continental United States.

One look at his work and we know that here was a magnetically real, natural-born virtuoso of image who felt deeply and thought profoundly about what mattered to him. As with his magic, so with his paintings, he was a minimalist in style. There is always something more lying beneath the



(l to r): Neil painted large sets for operettas, children's plays, Purdue Glee Club, and other productions, 1955. • Neil painted a set for "Stars of Magic," 1955. • Before painting a set for the island stage, Neil did a small painting in color to be sure he had all the details "just right," 1955. • Neil painted a circus tent interior in front of which Bob Hurt, assisted by his wife Velma, performed his clown magic act, 1955.

Photos courtesy of the late Dota C. Brown and Ron London.

surface, therefore producing a captivating experience for the viewer.

In his early work it is clear that he was experimenting, in the tradition of Paul Cézanne, with the layout of objects, treatment of space, and effects of light on shapes.

A still life from 1945, for example, shows a half-emptied decanter of wine, two emptied glasses, and two half-smoked, still lit cigarettes in an ashtray. Nothing more need be said. The brush strokes take their strength from what he doesn't tell us, and our imagination completes the story. Neil always was a romantic.



Still Life, 1945 (22" x 16")
COURTESY RODGER LOVINS.

Another painting also dated 1945 captures the beauty and mystery of his favorite instrument, the violin, set against a background of

pure cobalt blue blended with white to evoke the attributes he sought in his own life: calm, tranquility, peace.



Violin, 1945 (26" x 23.5")
COURTESY JOHN C. SHERWOOD, NOW WITH
THE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF MAGIC, BATTLE CREEK.

He chose this subject because of its technical challenges with curved surfaces and reflected light. The sheet music has a barely legible title, "Indian Love Call," whose lyrics echo Neil's own yearning at the time for a life partner: "Then I will know our love will come true / You'll belong to me, I'll belong to you." Seven years would pass, however, before he met his future wife, Jeanne Hammond.

In 1946 Neil's creativity was spurred with the return to Aurora, Illinois (his hometown), of a Mardi Gras celebration after four years of cancellations during the War (on three occasions he had tried to enlist but unsuccessfully because of a longstanding problem with asthma).

The expected symbols are there: ribbons and confetti, red costumes speckled with gold, sparkly headdresses and Cézanne-like

faces turned into masks – allowing wearers to escape society and class constraints. The festive scene is crowded against a dark background as dense and complex as their lives. In the figures’ expressions we see (from left) the eyes of his father and mother, his younger brother, Dean (to whom he was closest), and the masked artist himself.



Mardi Gras, 1948 (27" x 21").
COURTESY GARRY HAYES.

Neil was a sincere man whose deep faith and touch of the mystical are apparent in the *summa theologica* of his art – “The Cathedral of the Soul” from 1947, inspired by the Rosicrucian booklet with the same title, dated 1934.



The Cathedral of the Soul, 1947 (26" x 23.5").
COURTESY RICK HEATH, NOW WITH DALE SALWAK.

Although not a member of this spiritual and cultural movement that arose in Europe

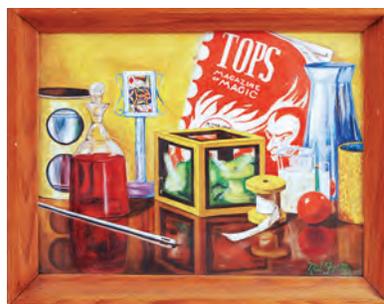
in the early seventeenth century, Neil found in some of its doctrines a confirmation of his own faith, including the unity, immutability, and goodness of God; the ultimate defeat and extinction of evil and sorrow; and the immortality of the Soul.

Therefore this painting, which is reminiscent of the Impressionist Claude Monet’s highly textured depictions (to convey the grain of old stones) of the gothic Cathédrale Notre-Dame de Rouen.

Neil created this after his mother had died (his father having passed three years earlier). At a loss what to do, one evening while walking close to home he heard the voice of abiding love say, *You are not alone*.

On the strength of that, he travelled fearlessly to enroll at Southern California’s Chavez Studio of Magic – suggested in the painting by the cathedral, rising in the background like a divine presence and veiled in a misty, evanescent, blue twilight. “Haven’t you had some kind of deep, very deep experience?” he once asked a friend. “You’ll know it when it happens.”

Neil’s twin passions for painting and magic are fused in a childlike (not childish) work from 1957 showing some of Abbott’s props and an issue of the *Tops Magazine of Magic*. As a youngster he had sent away for their Catalog #3 and devoured its contents, never imagining that much later he would attend a Get-Together or that in 1959 Recil Bordner would offer him a position as vice-president.



Magic Props, 1957 (27" x 21").

The painting draws us in with bold sweeps of orange (symbolizing energy), red (love and joy), and yellow (optimism) – favorite colors of Marietta Hubbard Earl

(“Nanna”), a great-aunt who helped to raise Neil when his mother fell ill and from whom he learned, “There can be happiness, you know, in acceptance of what can’t change.” He called her “the dearest soul I ever met.”

In another work his winking sense of humor comes across in a painting which he gave as a 1960 Christmas gift to his close friend, Donald “Monk” Watson. The scene depicts a spotlighted conductor’s music stand, baton, wig, and copy of *Esquire* as visual reminders of Monk’s frantic and hilarious Orchestra Conductor act, an audience favorite on Abbott’s Get-Together shows.



“Monk” Watson, 1960 (24" x 16").
COURTESY RICK FISHER.



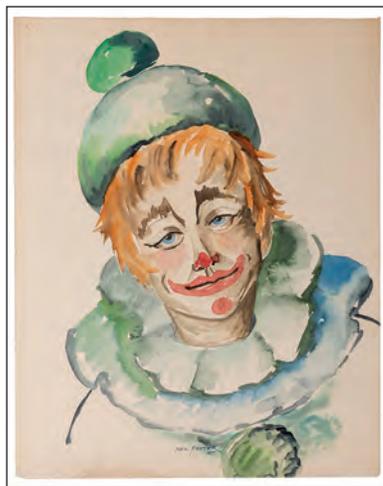
Harry Blackstone, Sr., 1966 (23.5" x 17.5").
COURTESY GREG BORDNER.

His sense of admiring someone through art is also found in a 1966 half-length, classic profile pose of Harry Blackstone, Sr., whose *Show of 1,001 Wonders* inspired in nine-year-old Neil a lifelong love for magic. In

this textured painting of vibrant colors, he captures the eminence of the man with his white hair, stylized mustache, and expression both intense and determined – a fitting personal tribute to Blackstone to whom he felt indebted.

“Happy are the painters,” wrote Churchill, “for they shall not be lonely.” As Neil knew all too well, however, beneath the joyful creativity of the artist’s life there is something or someone missing. “Be patient and tough [or endure],” the Roman poet Ovid advises in his *Amores* from 16 BC. “Some day,” he promises, “this pain [or unhappiness] will be useful to you.”

In 1977 Neil employed watercolors to create the portrait of a clown. Its tan base make-up, customary red nose, and nobleman’s ruffle collar do not surprise us. Looking closer, we discover that the blue eyes, saddened and haunted, are Neil’s, and that the smile, enigmatic and forced, is Jeanne’s. Then if we invert the painting, the smile becomes a frown, and the eyes become those of an innocent child, lost and searching, and suddenly we understand.



Clown, 1977 (23.75" x 18").

I first learned of this secret while spending Thanksgiving week with Neil and Jeanne, the same year as the painting, when he was recovering from his first heart attack.

One sleet-lashed evening we bundled up to go out for an after-dinner stroll. Jeanne,

unable to endure the cold and barely able to walk, stayed behind, peering through the frosted front room window.

Neil and I walked slowly, arm in arm, imagining the mist as the boundary between time and eternity. We walked into the mist, and came out the other side, and he told me the story of their “little angel.”

Early in their marriage, Jeanne had become pregnant. It was a time of great joy and expectation for both of them. I cannot imagine a more loving set of parents, but it was not to be. In the second trimester severe complications developed, and they found themselves faced with the excruciating decision between the life of the mother or the life of the child.

They prayed over this mightily, that there might be another choice, but there wasn't, and they had to act fast. So the child was aborted and a hysterectomy performed. By mutual agreement, that child for which they longed was never mentioned again – although certain looks between them, unexpected messages over the radio or television, would cause them to sink into reverie. Without asking, each knew what had passed through the other's thoughts.



Hinckley, Illinois Cemetery, where Neil and Jeanne are buried. “Come and pour a bottle of gin, light a Kool, and put it down,” Neil wrote in 1981. “Go back down the hill. If I can come back, you may see me up there, puffing away.” COURTESY DALE SALWAK

Melancholy fell like snow as we turned the corner and approached the house. “Just think,” he said. “If events had turned out differently, there would now be a person on earth, a person twenty years old, who would be my son or daughter.”

He asked me to promise never to tell Jeanne what he had confided, and of course

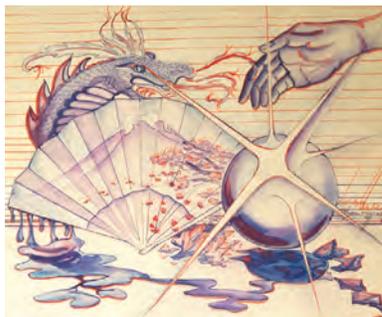
I complied. To be taken into one's confidence: there is no higher compliment. It's then, I think, that I began to appreciate how Neil's artistry was for him a kind of consolation and healing.

“Grief has no time frame,” he whispered as we stepped back into the warmth. “The artist's pain becomes the audience's pleasure.”

In spite of its many challenges, life together was marked by a quiet but steely resolve to stay fully engaged with the world. One of their plans was traveling to the Far East, a region they had studied in depth as evidenced by the many artifacts in their home, both bought and handcrafted. Because of Jeanne's fragile health, however, they were unable to fulfill that long-cherished hope; and so they lived vicariously through books, videos, and firsthand experiences of friends.

Hanging in my studio is a 1977 pencilled drawing that he created in anticipation of my first performance tour of Japan the following year. Its shades of blue (the country's dominant color) and violet suggest dignity, stability, fidelity. In the background looms one of Japan's three sacred mountains, the majestic Mount Fuji, symbolizing the quest for beauty and perfection that has shaped much of the country's culture.

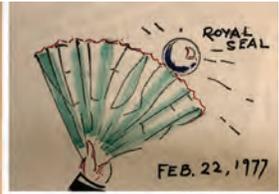
Melting snow from the mountaintop becomes silver flakes, the climax to my Zombie Floating Sphere routine; and hovering over everything is the active presence of a dragon (good fortune) and, to the right, a protective hand, the Almighty's hand, evoking Michelangelo's fresco painting in the Sistine Chapel, The Creation of Adam.



Japan, 1977 (20" x 16").
COURTESY DALE SALWAK



The Zombie, 1955 (20" x 14.75").



Sketches from private correspondence.
Fan and Zombie, 1977.
Magical Island, 1978.

If Neil became the artist's artist, and he did, then he also grew into the magician's magician; and if he had featured only one effect, the Zombie, we would remember his name. Many imitators have come and gone, but few have understood the secret to its visual power.



Neil's handcrafted vases with an Asian magical theme.

In the early 1950s he painted for friends a picture (not included here) of two Spanish dancers. Measuring 5' wide x 4' high, it depicts a man and a lightly flirtatious woman wearing a black satin dress lined in red with an open fan in her hand. This image became the inspiration behind the series of poses that structured his routine.

"The magic is in the fan, the cloth," explained Neil, "and the heart of the performer. I guide the ball, just as in the painting the man leads the woman, never controls, during their courtship dance." Like the lady, the ball has a will of its own.

A watercolor from 1955 and now in my safekeeping shows the silver sphere, fan, and double-weight, red-and-black dragon foulard made especially for him by Harold Rice. Creating the routine, Neil said, was "a mystical process."

From all this it is quite clear that every brush stroke, like an experienced magician's every move or a composer's every note or a writer's every word, is a fingerprint of the artist's soul. "Anything essential that you want to know about me," he said, "you'll discover in my work. It's all there." Neil Foster's secret life is not so hidden after all.

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 Greg Bordner, Rick Fisher, Garry Hayes, Rodger Levins, Kurt Ritchie, and John C. Sherwood for their contributions; to the late Dota C. Brown and Ron London; and to Rick Heath who took time away from his own work to give this effort his detailed attention.

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.

Youth Trivia Contest



June's Question: A magician once compared finding the name of the inventor of playing cards to identifying the first person who decided to eat a lobster. *Who was the magician who made this comparison?*

Answers must be postmarked by July 20, 2023.

March's question was: This trick is usually performed for kids, is approximately four-hundred-years-old, and is believed by some to have inspired the "Egg Bag." Some others feel that it was inspired *by* the "Egg Bag." *What is this trick, and where was it first published?*

Several of our Youth members did venture to guess at the answer to this question, but unfortunately, nobody guessed correctly. Here are the basics of what we were hoping that you'd tell us . . .

This wonderful little bit of conjuring first appeared in print (in the English language) in the book HOCVS POCVS IVNIOR, The Anatomy of LEGERDEMAIN. You might recognize this as HOCUS POCUS JUNIOR, the first known all-magic book published in English. The highly collectable volume was first printed in 1634, but the tricks and techniques inside of it were likely in use for quite a while before that year. The effect in the question has been called by many names, including "Nuntius Invisibilis" and "Jean de la Vigne," but is generally referred to as "Bonus Genius."

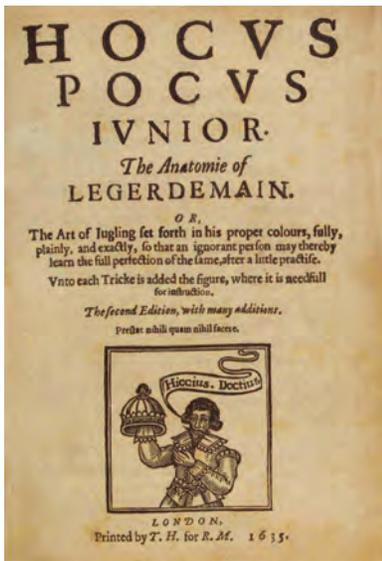
The "Bonus Genius" was originally presented for adult and family audiences. Today, it's not seen very often, and when it is, it's usually part of a children's show. This narrowed target audience is probably due, in part, to the thing at the center of the effect: a small doll.

In the usual routine, a small figure of a

man about five inches tall – or about thirteen centimeters – is openly displayed. The little fellow is then dressed in a cloak or collared cape, draped over his shoulders with his head still visible through the top. The performer explains some reason for the covering or delivers some other patter; and then, very suddenly, the figure vanishes leaving only the cape. In some cases, the storyline continues and the doll reappears wrapped in the cape, with the head above the collar.

The name "Bonus Genius" is sometimes, incorrectly conveyed as "Bonus Genus." In Latin, bonus means good, that is, benevolent, and genius means a guiding spirit. So, the correct name, "Bonus Genius," means a benevolent guiding spirit. Interestingly, the Latin word genus refers to a tribe, family, or race classification, and this doesn't really make sense in reference to the little figure.

The method behind the effect of this vanishing doll uses gimmicked equipment as well as sleight of hand. The cloth cape which covers the doll from the neck down has a secret: a pocket with a nearly invisible slit-opening inside the lining of the small garment. Additionally, the body of the doll is easily and secretly detachable from the head below the neck. So, during the performance, after the body of the figure has been hidden by the cape, the torso and limbs are separated from the head, which remains in view above the cape's collar. The body is then secretly removed. The head is allowed to slide



The cover of HOCVS POCVS IUNIOR, The Anatomy of LEGERDEMAIN, second edition.

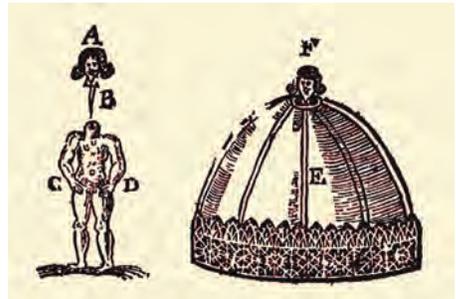
into the collar and is deposited into the hidden pocket, and the cape is quickly and immediately unfurled to reveal that the figure has completely vanished. This whole process can then be accomplished in reverse, and the “Bonus Genius” doll reappears.



Image of a performance of “Bonus Genius” on the cover of HOCVS POCVS IUNIOR,

You may have noticed a similarity between the vanish of the small doll’s head into the cape, and the vanish of a comparably sized egg in an “Egg Bag” routine. Both the “Bonus Genius” and most of the models of the “Egg Bag” use a hidden pocket. The actual loading of the small, round object into

the hidden pocket is done using very similar movements of the hand and fingers inside of the cape or “Egg Bag.” This similarity in the method has led many folks to believe that the “Egg Bag” was, more or less, inspired by the “Bonus Genius.” While there are several items in magic that use a pocket hidden in fabric to vanish and produce items – the “Devil’s Handkerchief” for example – the actions of the hand and fingers inside of the “Bonus Genius” cape and the “Egg Bag” are very much alike. This makes the theory that one led to the other logical and believable.



The illustration from the instructions inside of HOCVS POCVS IUNIOR, The Anatomy of LEGERDEMAIN.

When compared to the “Bonus Genius” and its popularity in today’s world, the “Egg Bag” has eclipsed the little vanishing-doll trick. And, if you had the chance to see Johnny Thompson perform the effect, you’ll understand why. Francis Menotti’s version is also fantastic, as is the incredibly creative presentation by Arthur Trace. And then ... there’s Jeff Hobson. His personality, routine, and audience interaction are so side-splittingly funny that you almost forget that magic is happening – almost. Hobson’s management of the audience and surprise finish to the “Egg Bag” ensures that nobody forgets the magic.

Regarding the name HOCVS POCVS IUNIOR, or HOCUS POCUS JUNIOR, there are some very good reasons to believe that this was not intended to be the title of the book, that it’s actually the pseudonym of the author, and that the author intended the book to be titled The Anatomy of LEGERDEMAIN. The evidence behind



A French magic set from the 1880s, including a “Bonus Genius” just below the “Cups and Balls.”
 (Photo courtesy of Potter & Potter.)

this theory of the author’s-name-above-the-title is elaborate, but convincing. It would also be outside of the scope of this column for us to address it fairly and more completely.

You can find more information about “Bonus Genius” in books, such as MODERN MAGIC by Professor Hoffmann. There’s also quite a bit written about the history and performance of this effect in back issues of periodicals including Gibecière, MAGIC, M-U-M, Genii, and The Linking Ring.

If you sent us an answer to this question, but you didn’t send us the *correct* answer, please ... try, try again! These puzzlers aren’t intended to be simply solved using Internet search engines like Google, Yahoo, or Archie. Take your copy of *The Linking Ring* to your local Ring meeting and ask the more experienced members to help you come up with the answer. Show the whole world how much you know, get your name published in *The Linking Ring*, and win some fantastic prizes from one of our best brick-and-mortar magic shops!

Attention, All Youth Members!

If you truly believe that you have a question that’s suitable 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

Please make certain that you include a few references. If we decide to use your question, we’ll send you either a crate of woefully inferior “Amaze Box” knockoffs ... or a really cool magic book – our choice.

See if you can win! Follow the Contest Rules on page 144 and mail your responses to the address above. Answers must be postmarked by July 20, 2023.

From Our UK Correspondent

BRIAN LEAD



Top news in the UK for the past few weeks has been the coronation of King Charles III.

I didn't realise until I saw the front cover image of *The Magic Circular* for February this year that the cups and balls props which Charles used for his Magic Circle initiation bore an engraving based upon Egyptian hieroglyphs. They are similar to the images found in a burial chamber in Ben Haan, painted around 2500 BC and thought initially to be a depiction of the cups-and-balls trick. This theory was subsequently discredited, when it was realised that they were part of a domestic scene and probably illustrated the baking of bread.



The Magic Circular: cover detail. Etchings based upon the Egyptian tomb paintings.

Interestingly, however, the Prince Charles cups were purchased by twenty-one-year-old Lieutenant Robert de Pass (the man who taught the trick to the then-prince) from a gillie-gillie man in the old bazaar in Cairo in 1942 – hence their Egyptian artwork. Tommy Cooper, also twenty-one, was based in Cairo at the same time, and it was there that he adopted his trademark fez. It so happens that my father (but not yet my father, at the age of twenty-two) was also stationed in Cairo in 1942, and

had his photograph taken in a bar which resembled the set for the final scene from *Ice Cold in Alex*. It is unlikely that the three ever met, but I cherish a fantasy in which their individual circles overlap in a Venn diagram.



Leonard Lead, 1942.

As a piece of unashamed self-indulgence, I have slipped in a photo of myself at the time of the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II exactly seventy years ago, in June 1953. I was ten months old. Not a magic trick in sight, but I hope there was a magician at the party.



Queen's Coronation party, 1953.

I met Jez (Jeremy) Mansfield, a long-serving member of the British Ring, when I was asked, as regional representative, to examine him for membership of The

Magic Circle. He passed with flying colours, and we had been friends ever since. Jez performed some close-up for me at my British Ring President's dinner, and he was booked to visit my local magic club in October. We invariably bumped into each other at the Blackpool Convention, and this year he was complaining about what he thought was a nasty chest infection. He was going back to see the doctor that week. Tragically, he passed away just eight weeks later, on the very day on which he was to present the cabaret following the welcome meal at the Northern Magic Circle convention, for which I was joint organiser.

Jez's wife, Emma, is equally talented, playing keyboard and banjo and writing and singing her own songs. She is a professional signer for the deaf and works closely with Lip Service Theatre as well as signing at the Lowry for performers such as Derren Brown.

We dedicated the Northern cabaret to Jez, with eight performers each presenting a quick trick. Such is the camaraderie of the Northern that everyone I asked immediately agreed to participate. Brian Sefton, known as an international award-winning manipulator, opened with the "sucker" silk-to-egg trick. Recently while performing this effect, when breaking the egg into a glass as a surprise climax, it exploded,

showering him, his props and the surrounding area with evil smelling gunge. He had inadvertently picked up a rotten egg! Fortunately, this time he didn't have any problems.

Circle Chaplain Alan Clarke did Sidewalk Shuffle to rhyming patter, while former President and current Chairman Clive Moore couldn't be prevented from showing his vanishing bottle and his notorious spotty can; the audience by now being able to join in with the patter. President Roy Field, a regular contributor to these pages, had a dramatic book test in which the chosen page caught fire (the secret being in a book sold at auction later) and another Past President Rick Tynan did some tongue-in-cheek mind reading. In-coming President Neil Roberts had a "just chance" effect combined with a story about *Abracadabra* magazine in honour of long-time Editor Donald Bevan, who had just received an award for half a century of Northern membership. Another Past President, Ray Roberts, recalled the spoon bending skills of Uri Geller by means of a drawing on a pad, and British Ring President Oliver Tabor concluded with an effect with the same premise as the Vanishing Bandana, but using an old vinyl record, an upper-class British voice and a ring-on-rope. I linked the proceedings, with a running gag about



Jez lighting up a room.



Jez and Emma: The Mansfields.

a classic magic trick, eliminating coloured envelopes to arrive at a calculated, and hopefully amusing, anti-climax.

So . . . it turned out to be a Parade of Presidents in honour of Jez, who was taken from us far too soon.

Born in 1971, he soon gave up his early career in a sheet metal factory to enter the world of professional magic, and did his first joint gig with Emma on Mothering Sunday, 2006. They were regular performers on the East Lancashire heritage steam railway, based in their hometown of Bury, specialising in 1940s-themed days. The pair were also popular at music festivals, appearing regularly at Glastonbury with strolling magic and in a specially designed booth. Their magic ranged from close-up to full stage effects, always with the emphasis on comedy.

In 2008, Jez contracted a rare form of cancer which attacked the lungs and left him compromised health-wise, but he threw all his efforts into raising funds for the famous Christie's hospital, which had treated him so effectively.

Sadly, the illness returned this year with devastating consequences. After more than

eighteen years together, Jez and Emma were married in a poignant but joyful ceremony at Fairfield Hospital, just a short time before his passing.

Jez's funeral was attended by around three hundred people. From a lone violinist came the plaintive strains of *Danny Boy*, and a live band performed his favourite music. We heard a beautiful recording of Emma singing to the accompaniment of Jez, who could reputedly get a tune out of any instrument minutes after picking it up for the first time. Pot plants were requested instead of flowers, to create a memorial garden, and bulbs were given to friends, to plant in his memory.

Jez embraced the Maya Angelou philosophy: "People may forget what you say and forget what you do, but they will never forget the way you made them feel."

Emma said of him: "Jez's magic was like a candle. He approached a table and lit up the faces of the people sitting there. When he moved to the next table, he did the same for them. From table to table, the light never went out . . . and once every table was lit, the whole room was a brighter place."

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!

Magic and



Memories

David Ginn

Chanin: The Man with the Magic Hands

Jack Chanin was the first man I ever saw wearing an earring, which happened to be a tiny skull. And that scared me.



Jack Chanin.

The year was 1961. I had travelled to the Chattanooga Southeastern Magicians Convention (SEAM) with another teen magician, Danny somebody, accompanied by Gerry and Frank Furkey as our chaperones. Our parents had agreed to let us go as long as the Furkeys kept an eye on us. We shared a double room next door to the Furkeys and ate some meals with them, but we had our free run of the convention activities.

That brought us to magic lectures, demonstrations, and shows, plus we were

constantly in the magic dealers' room. That's where I encountered Chanin for the first time, when he was fifty-four years old.

When I first saw Chanin, he looked my idea of a Gypsy. I think his hair was slicked back and black, and maybe he had a mustache. He talked funny, too – which means not like a Southern teenager from Atlanta, Georgia.

On his dealer table were at least five books he had written: *Seven in One* (1928), *Hello, Sucker* (1934), *Encyclopedia of the Three Shell Game*, *Cigar Manipulation* (1937), *The Grand Finale* (1937), and *The Encyclopedia of Sleaving* (1947). To a green fifteen-year-old magician (me) on a tight budget, these books were more than I could handle. Imagine me manipulating cigars or performing the three-shell game at the Methodist Church in East Atlanta, Georgia USA! You can imagine it, but I could not.

Another thing about Chanin: He came across as a little gruff to me in both manner and tone of voice. At the time I had no idea that he was born in the Ukraine in 1907, fled from that former USSR state to Poland, and in 1926 at the age of nineteen immigrated with his family to the United States.

By the time I first met him, he had become a manufacturer, creator of tricks, and owner of Chanin's Studio of Magic, Philadelphia's oldest magic shop until it closed in 1981.



Chanin's Studio of Magic in Philadelphia, PA.

So I encountered and accepted Chanin for the man I saw at the SEAM, my first convention.

Chanin's demonstrations at his dealer table were unusual, I later learned. For example, he showed one of his creations called "Rip It," in which he performed a torn and restored effect with a dollar bill. If you wanted to buy it, Jack gave you written instructions, but he went a step further. He took you and maybe another buyer over into a corner near his booth and personally taught you the trick hands on. Years later the Magic Masters shops did the exact same thing.

In Chanin's case, I noted, everything he sold came from "the Private Files of Chanin." His books and instructions all carried that catchy phrase, plus others such as these:

- Remember, when in doubt about magic, always consult Chanin.
- All Chanin routines are audience-tested as performed by Chanin.

In other words, Chanin was constantly promoting himself, but that is neither good nor bad. His writing, teaching, and performing all came from experience. Here is an example:

In my autographed copy of *Hello, Sucker*, found in Charles Pecor's library in 2022, I caught this interesting bit of philosophy: "Do not tire your audience with the Shell Game. Be sure you know when you have done enough." That, I thought, is good advice to any magician about a lot of things. And that kind of advice comes only from experience.

Back to that first convention as my memory kicks in. Chanin presented a lecture with a variety of effects which he explained on stage. Two that I recall went like this (titles being mine):

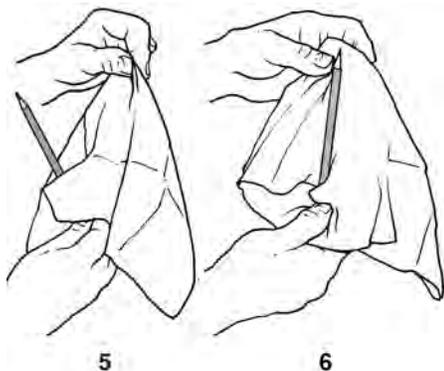
Pencil Hank. Chanin showed an ordinary No. 2 pencil and a plain white cotton man's pocket handkerchief. He laid the hank over his left hand as in **Figure 1**, and with right hand pointed the pencil directly into its center. Flipping the hank now over the pencil, he pointed the covered pencil straight up (**Figure 2**). He stroked down the hank around the pencil several times, holding the hank in place. Then he pushed the pencil with his right hand straight up and through the cloth hank as in **Figure 3**. He pulled the pencil out the top, then opened the hank to show no hole at all (**Figure 4**).

Seeing this for the first time, most of the magicians (including me) were quite impressed. Then Chanin explained it, and it was so simple. Once the pencil was covered and held straight up, Chanin's right fingers held the pencil, then did a tricky move.

Figure 5 shows what he did. With the hank and pencil in front of him, his right fingers swung the pencil directly back (away from audience) where it cleared the hank. Then he pivoted the pencil back up against



the cloth as in **Figure 6**. The audience was none the wiser. All he had to do then was to push the pencil from below up “through” the hank; at least that’s how it looked – a visible penetration that didn’t hurt the handkerchief at all.



Torn and Gone Paper. This trick started out like a torn-and-restored but had a different ending. Chanin showed a strip of white tissue paper, about one inch wide and eighteen inches long. He tore this in half, then in half again and again until he held about ten pieces of paper in his right fingertips. He curled his left hand into a fist, then pushed these papers into the left hand.

Very slowly he pulled an eighteen-inch red silk from his jacket breast pocket. He laid this silk across his left hand as in **Figure 7** and slowly pulled it through the left hand as in **Figure 8**, opening the hand as he did, ending with both hands empty (**Figure 9**).

The vanish was absolutely clean, with no gimmicks in sight and nothing to get rid of, even if performed fairly close up.

How did Chanin accomplish this?

Even though I had several thumbtips at the age of fifteen, and the moves looked

somewhat like thumbtip moves, I never saw Chanin pick up or ditch one. But sure enough, that’s what he used. Here’s how:

Chanin started out with a thumbtip in his left hand when he picked up the tissue paper strip. He tore the strip and pushed the torn pieces into the thumbtip (in the left fist). He stole the tip out of the fist using his right thumb (held behind the right fingers), then casually reached for the red silk tucked into his outside breast pocket. In grasping and pulling the silk out of the pocket with his right hand, he loosened the thumbtip and ditched it into his coat pocket. See **Figure 10**.

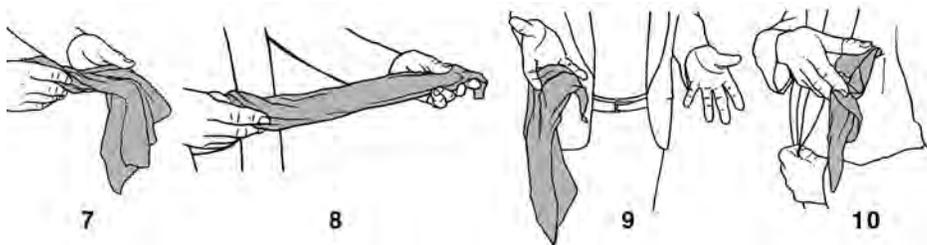
The rest was easy. Lay the silk over the left hand, draw it through the hand, opening the fingers at the same time, and show both hands empty.

What did Jack Chanin teach me with these tricks and others in his lecture?

Easy answer: Wonderful magic can be accomplished with very simple but secret methods because magicians think in different ways than members of our audiences. So those two tricks, plus the principle they illustrated, took me a long way forward in my quest of being an accomplished magician.

Here’s a funny Chanin story I did not witness. Somebody told me about it after it happened “the night before” at one of those conventions.

It seems a bunch of guys were doing magic in the hotel lobby about two in the morning. Some wanted to know how far sleeving could go. So Jack started performing vanishes and productions straight out of his *Encyclopedia of Sleaving*. It became a contest of “what can Chanin sleeve?” Different magicians were feeding Chanin from behind his back: coins, billiard balls, pens and pencils, wands, a Zippo lighter, cigars,



even a small flower vase that would fit in his sleeve. Using his sleeving techniques, Jack produced and vanished all these objects repeatedly, a very impressive performance at 2:00 a.m., and everyone was laughing at Chanin's skill.

This sort of thing, I believe, moved Chanin into the class of a magic convention "character," just like Duke Stern, Jay Marshall, and Karrell Fox were characters – and I mean that in a most positive, complimentary way. These days most of those old-time magic characters are sadly gone, and frankly, I miss them.



*At least four characters in this photo:
Jay Marshall, Jack Chanin, Karrell fox,
and Duke Stern.*

That first convention in 1961 started me on a lifetime of going to at least one convention every summer. Since most of my conventions were in the Southeast USA (Chattanooga, Atlanta, Birmingham, Huntsville, for example), I saw Jack Chanin at virtually every one of them.

Somewhere along the way, I went from being "Hey, kid," which Chanin called a lot of us young guys, to him sorta knowing I was David Ginn. Maybe that's why he taught me my next lesson in magic.

I'm thinking it was the SEAM in Birmingham, Alabama, that this happened. Following my first TV appearance on *Two Bells TV Edition* on WSB-TV, where I did my six-minute dove act, eighteen months later they invited me to perform a tail suit dove act at the convention in August. As it turned out, it was only two weeks after I returned from my Europe 1966 trip with Doug Henning.

On a Thursday or Friday night show, I did the dove act and it went well. I still worked in tails, not starting my mod style act yet, but I included the Dove to Silk Sensation with striped mat I bought in Italy, the month before. I used the red dove holder I bought, plus both of my French appearing canes.

This photo shows me with assistant Diana Bodron and the striped dove mat, maybe taken at that very convention.



Anyway, after the show that night, I didn't change clothes. Instead, I just took off the tails coat and donned a sport coat over my black tux slacks, white formal shirt, white vest and white bowtie. The show being over and my props packed away, Diana and I walked around the dealer room and hotel lobby. We talked to people about the show and magic in general.

Then we ran into Jack Chanin, who actually complimented me on the dove act. Wow, I thought, Chanin liked my act! But there was more, and he said this to me quietly so no one else heard it:

"Look, David," he said, "when the show is over, always change out of your show clothes." I looked quizzical, so he continued. "If you wear show clothes around people after a performance, it looks like you are fishing for compliments."

I had never even considered this point of view, and I tucked Chanin's advice away in my mind for the rest of my career.

Around this same time of my life, I read John Booth's *Marvels of Mystery*, a book that became like a Bible of magic to me. John Booth covered the other side of what Chanin told me, saying that a real pro should never wear his show clothes to the venue. Instead, carry them in a suit bag and change shortly before performing.

So for most of my career, I have followed

the advice of both John Booth and Jack Chanin, always changing into and out of my performing clothes before and after my shows.

My only exceptions have been pre-school shows within ten to fifteen minutes from home. In those cases I work more casual clothing, bright colored shirts with a tie and slacks with clean, polished shoes. In my entire career more than fifty years, I have never worn a tuxedo for daytime performances at schools, libraries, or preschools.

On more than one occasion growing up, I witnessed Jack Chanin perform his Chinese act. Shown to the right is the program from the 37th Annual SEAM Convention in Chattanooga, where Doug Henning and I met. I am sure we ate together at the buffet banquet, then watched the banquet show which opened with Jack Chanin doing the Chinese act.

For this act Jack called himself Cha-Nin or sometimes Chan-Jak. According to David Haversat's biography of Chanin published in 2001, Jack had five special robes made for himself to play the Chinese character. On his head he wore an embroidered cap, which might have had a black pigtail hanging from it to match his black hair. He also applied lots of stage make up to fit the part.



Above is a photo of Chan-Jak dressed for a performance. This act he worked to music without talking. It included a long, long version of the never-ending Salt Pour, blowing sparks and flames from his mouth, and lots of colorful silk productions.

I loved watching this act because it was my kind of magic – colorful silk magic. Whether it would go over today (a Ukrainian man pretending to be Chinese) is not the point. It was acceptable at the time, and the

THURSDAY - August 12, 1965	
6:00 P.M.	- Registrations Open
7:00 P.M.	- Dealers Open
8:00 P.M.	- Night Before Participation Party - Impromptu Magic by all. M.C. John Haymann
10:00 P.M.	*til Midnight - Dealers Open
FRIDAY - August 13th.	
9:00 A.M.	- Registrations Open Dealers Open
10:00 A.M.	- Elmfield Drive by "Bobo" Cromale. Drive through downtown Streets, starting at Fatten Hotel.
10:30 A.M.	- Contests - Order of Contests will be announced and posted on blackboard.
1:30 P.M.	- Lecture by Jack Chanin
2:30 P.M.	- "Harvest of Magic" Show Donald Quarryer; Madison County Magician's Club - Huntsville, Ala. W. E. Buford; Youth Show
4:00 P.M.	- Dealers Open
8:00 P.M.	- Public Show at the Tivoli Theatre - 2 hour Magic and Variety Show presented by De Young & Co. The Tivoli Theatre is at 709 Broad Street, about 3/4 blocks from the Fatten Hotel.
SATURDAY - August 14th.	
9:00 A.M.	- Registrations Open Dealers Open
9:30 A.M.	- Contests
10:30 A.M.	- Ladies report to the Registration Desk ready to board Bus for a Tour and Noon Luncheon at Loree Villa.
1:00 P.M.	- Business Meeting - Southeastern Magicians
2:00 P.M.	- Birmingham Ring 35 Show
3:30 P.M.	- Close-Up Show
6:30 P.M.	- Buffet Banquet
8:00 P.M.	- Banquet Show - M.C. Paul Smith (Klmer The Comedy Magician) Jack Chanin Col. F. H. Seymour & Frances Kandy the Magician
All awards will be given immediately following the Banquet Show.	

act was extremely well done. And I learned something very important from watching Chanin perform it.

After seeing Chanin do this act a second time at the Atlanta SEAM in 1967, I just had to ask him a certain question.

At that time in my life, age twenty-one, I did not realize that for the production of a very long silk streamer Jack employed U. F. Grant's Rice or Bean Cans. It was forty years later that I obtained the trick and used my version of it. In fact, I published it on my DVD *Colorful Magic on Stage*, during which I not only performed it but also explained my variation on the gimmick.

When Jack Chanin showed the two cans empty in his act, cans the size of large orange juice cans, he did what I thought was a miracle. He started pulling out a long silk streamer that got longer and longer and longer. It came out ten feet, then twenty, then thirty, forty, fifty, and maybe one hundred or two hundred feet long! Seeing that much silk come out of such a small can absolutely blew me away! I was extremely impressed.

That next day I caught him in the lobby

of the hotel and said how much I loved his act, which always pleases any performer.

My memory has him smoking half a cigar, which he moved to one side of his mouth to say, "Thank you." But then I had to ask him the important question burning inside me. So I did.

"I just have one question," I said, and he asked, "What's that?"

"How did you get all that silk streamer inside that little can?" I blurted out.

Chanin smiled and shifted the cigar again to speak. Then he said the words I have not forgotten in fifty-six years. He said, "Kid, you just keep *pushin*!"

With that, he patted me on the shoulder in a friendly gesture and walked off.

I stood there stunned.

Did Jack Chanin just slap me in the face with words? That's what I thought at first. Just keep *pushin*' indeed. But it was time for another convention activity, so off I went to learn something else, not pondering Chanin's words any longer at the time.

When the convention was over, I went back home and mulled over what I had learned. It was August, still a month before I went back to the University of Georgia for my senior year in journalism. Plenty of time to think and experiment.

So I asked my mom for a large Minute Maid orange juice can, the kind you make from concentrate. Not the little one, the big one about three inches in diameter and seven inches long. She had one and cleaned it for me, and I took it up to my bedroom filled with magic.

I got a bunch of eighteen-inch silks, maybe fifteen of them, because I didn't have a silk streamer. I tied them together with square knots. Then, one by one, I started poking them into the juice can. About ten of them filled the can, and I stopped. Suddenly Jack Chanin's cigar came into my mind's view, and his words resonated in my head: "Kid, you just keep *pushin*'."

So I pushed the eleventh silk into the can, followed by the twelfth, thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth silk. I just kept pushing, and they all went into the can. Won't they be wrinkled? I thought. Yes, of course – but they all fit.

Why did they stop going in at silk number

ten? Answer: Because I stopped trying to get them inside. Because I stopped pushing. Because I gave up and my head said it wouldn't work. But Jack Chanin told me I was wrong. It would work, if I didn't give up and kept trying. That is what he really meant when he told me to JUST KEEP PUSHIN.'

Many years later when I was doing lectures all over the USA, Canada, and Europe, I showed a neat Japanese version of Ali Bongo's Massel Tube called the Ultra Tube. It was made of a colorful heavy paper with a heavy plastic "sliding dye tube" mounted inside it.

With the Ultra Tube you could do silk color changes, or transform three silks red, yellow and blue into a multicolored blend silk. You could also produce a long silk streamer four inches wide and fairly long.

By that time I owned silk streamers in different lengths: fifteen feet, thirty feet, and fifty feet. I knew without trying that the fifteen-foot silk would fit. So I put the thirty-foot streamer (four inches wide) into the Ultra Tube, and yes, it fit. Then I looked at the fifty-foot streamer nearby, and Jack Chanin spoke inside my head. Surely by now you know what he said.

I started pushing the fifty-foot streamer into the Ultra Tube. Thirty feet went inside easily. Then I smiled and just kept on pushing – five feet, ten, fifteen, and finally twenty more feet of silk streamer. Believe me, all fifty feet fit inside. If you don't believe me, go into YouTube right now and search: David Ginn Magic #81: Ultra Tube. Watch me perform the Ultra Tube with a fifty-foot silk streamer, compliments of Jack Chanin.

You see, Chanin not only taught me how to fully load silks into a production device, he also reminded me not to give up, but to keep on trying in whatever I set out to do. Call it "The Little Engine That Could" mentality if you wish. Call it positive encouragement. Whatever you call it doesn't matter to me. I know where it started inside me, and I know where it came from, and I will always be thankful to Jack Chanin for three words that have helped me in so many ways for at least fifty-six years.



Marketing Magic

KENT CUMMINS

Artificial Intelligence

“Artificial intelligence can perform feats that seem like sorcery!”

Matthew Gwynfryn Thomas

“*Is Artificial Intelligence Magic?*” What does the anthropology of magic reveal about how people create and use AI?

This was the title of a 2019 article I found online by Matthew Gwynfryn Thomas and Djuke Veldhuis, two anthropologists. It made me think of that famous quote from Arthur C. Clarke, “Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic.”

In the article, they mentioned that quote and said, “We want to go one step further and argue that artificial intelligence is not merely indistinguishable from magic, it actually invokes elements of magic, anthropologically speaking, and is driven by magical thinking.”



Chris Walden used Stable Diffusion to generate this AI picture, using the following prompt: “Photographed from the back, Kent Cummins writing at a desk, in a magical office, surrounded by curious bunnies.”

As the late anthropologist Alfred Gell puts it, it is the “role of ‘magical’ ideas” that causes technology to constantly change. “Technical innovations occur,” he wrote, “not as the result of attempts to supply wants but in the course of attempts to realize technical feats heretofore considered ‘magical.’”

Let’s Chat

“Alexa ... what is ChatGPT?”

I asked the AI in our living room this question, and she (it?) defined it as, “ChatGPT is an artificial intelligence chatbot developed by OpenAI and released in November 2022.” It is described as a *generative AI*, because it creates (generates) content which is known as *synthetic media*.



ChatGPT’s developer, OpenAI, suggested this logo for their artificial intelligence chatbot.

How much do *you* know about ChatGPT? As I write this at the end of April 2023, it is the latest popular breakthrough in artificial intelligence. It is being hailed as the greatest invention ever ... or as the end of civilization as we know it! (To be fair, the invention

of the printing press in 1436 produced similar reactions.)

Just for the fun of it, I asked ChatGPT to create a “Marketing Magic” column for me. Here is the first thing it came up with, in less than sixty seconds:

Marketing is an essential aspect of any business, and magicians are no exception. For magicians, marketing is the process of promoting their shows, services, and brand to potential clients and audiences. Effective marketing can help magicians increase their exposure, attract more clients, and grow their business. In this article, we will discuss the various marketing strategies that magicians can use to promote their services and grow their business.

1. Define your brand

The first step in marketing for magicians is to define your brand. Your brand is the image or persona that you want to project to potential clients and audiences. It is what sets you apart from other magicians and makes you unique. Your brand should reflect your personality, style, and the type of magic you perform.

To define your brand, consider the following questions:

- What type of magic do you specialize in?*
- What is your performance style?*
- What kind of audience do you appeal to?*
- What sets you apart from other magicians?*

Once you have defined your brand, you can use it as a foundation for all your marketing efforts. Your brand should be reflected in your website, social media profiles, marketing materials, and every aspect of your business.

2. Create a website

A website is essential for any business, including magicians. A website is the primary platform where potential clients and audiences can learn about your services, watch videos of your performances, and book your shows. Your website should be easy to navigate, visually appealing, and contain all the necessary information about your services.

To create a website, you can use a web-

site builder such as Wix, Squarespace, or WordPress. These platforms provide customizable templates that you can use to create a professional-looking website without any coding skills.

Your website should include the following pages:

- Home page: A brief overview of your services, brand, and style.*
- About page: A more detailed bio about yourself, your experience, and your qualifications.*
- Services page: A list of your services, packages, and prices.*
- Videos page: A gallery of videos of your performances.*
- Testimonials page: A page with reviews and feedback from previous clients.*
- Contact page: A page with your contact information and a booking form.*

3. Optimize for search engines

Search engine optimization (SEO) is the process of optimizing your website to rank higher on search engine results pages (SERPs). SEO can help you increase your visibility, attract more traffic to your website, and generate more leads and bookings.

To optimize your website for search engines, you can do the following:

- Use relevant keywords in your website content, titles, and meta descriptions.*
- Create high-quality content that provides value to your audience.*
- Use descriptive and keyword-rich alt tags for your images and videos.*
- Build high-quality backlinks to your website from relevant and authoritative sources.*

4. Use social media.

Social media is a powerful marketing tool for magicians. It allows you to connect with potential clients and audiences, share your content, and build your brand. The following are the most popular social media platforms that magicians can use:

- Facebook: Create a Facebook page for your business and share your content, including photos, videos, and updates.*

- *Instagram: Share photos and videos of your performances, behind-the-scenes, and other content related to your brand.*
- *YouTube: Upload videos of your performances and create a channel for your business.*
- *TikTok: Create short, engaging videos showcasing your magic tricks and performances.*

When using social media, it's important to be consistent, engaging, and authentic. Post regularly, respond to comments and messages, and use hashtags to increase your reach.

5. Attend events and network

Attending events and networking with other magicians and industry professionals can help you build your brand,

(The column stopped abruptly, in the middle of a sentence, apparently because it was just my first free sample chat.)

What about social media?

My daughter Carolyn Cummins, a marketing coach who specializes in social media, suggested I have ChatGPT create a few social media posts, based on the above content. Here's what I got:

1. *"Abracadabra! Looking to take your event to the next level? Our magic shows will leave your guests spellbound! Contact us to book your next event. #magician #evententertainment #magicshow"*

2. *"It's not just about the tricks - it's about creating an unforgettable experience for your audience. Our team of magicians will help make your event a magical success. Contact us today to learn more! #magician #eventplanning #evententertainment"*

3. *"Want to add some excitement to your next virtual event? Our virtual magic shows will bring the wonder of magic straight to your screen. Contact us to learn more! #virtualmagicshow #magician #eventplanning"*

What do you think? Not bad for a robot who isn't a magician? I love that it even provided appropriate hashtags.

However ...

Use these and similar prompts as inspiration, not as final posts. Your personal brand has to shine through the words and phrases. One of the ways Carolyn uses ChatGPT is to ask for a specific number of posts about a topic. She then uses them to write one or more posts using the general ideas from the ChatGPT results while still using the persona and branding language of herself or her clients.

Send a message ...

When you are ready to have ChatGPT provide content, you will come to a page that has a text box saying, "Send a message ...". You can tell it to write just about anything you can imagine, and within seconds you will have a response.

But here is the secret: The quality of the content you receive will depend on the quality of the message you send. If you say, "Give me three social media posts," it will do it in no time at all. But will those posts actually be useful? Will they be different from other people's posts?

What if you say, "Give me three Facebook posts promoting my fundraising show on October 30." You are far more likely to get something that can be used without a lot of editing or rewriting. Think about what you really want, and then craft a message that is likely to produce useful results.

When I let ChatGPT generate the sample social media post, I was already in my chat about marketing magic, so the AI knew how to create the conversation.

How "artificial" is ChatGPT content?

ChatGPT has access to an incredible quantity of information, and can produce interesting content in the blink of an eye. It can write much faster than you can, and its extensive research happens almost instantly.

The content may actually be just what is needed for a particular project. But it is your ability to decide what content to use, and how to best use it. Otherwise, it may sound "artificial."

Ethical Issues

How do you feel about submitting work that is not your own, that was created by someone else without giving them credit? What if that someone else is an artificial intelligence? And what if you have paid for the use of that AI?

If you use existing technology to assist you in your marketing, that not only seems completely ethical . . . it is probably the smart thing to do. Houdini did not promote himself on social media, nor did he send emails to prospective clients. He never did a television special. He didn't even have a smart phone!

But Houdini used all of the resources that were available to promote himself to the public. David Copperfield also makes use of all the resources at his disposal. We should all embrace new technologies and discover how best to use them.

There is no law against using an AI to help you write advertising and marketing copy. I have used it in this month's column.

Caveat Emptor

Today's clients have an incredible amount of information about the marketplace, and can quickly check out your promotions and promises. If you use stock photos and clip art, someone will recognize it for what it is. In the same way, if your writing doesn't sound like you, it may not serve you in the end.

By all means – use ChatGPT and other technology to inspire your thinking. But make sure to put your unique qualities front and center. YOU are your brand!

How to use AI to market your magic shows

You can use ChatGPT or similar AI technologies to help you write scripts for your show. This directly affects your most important marketing strategy, which is to have a good (great!) product.

An AI can conduct market research faster

and with more depth than you might accomplish on your own . . . even with Google (which is run by AI).

You can use an AI to help you create original graphics and write marketing copy, including for social media, flyers, brochures, and your web site.

You can use an AI to write articles for publication and even create a book, which makes you an author, which enhances your credibility.

This is a brand-new technology. We don't know all of the possibilities. Let me know what innovative ideas you come up with, and I will share them. It's a Brave New World!!

Intelligent Summary

I asked ChatGPT (I'm still using the free version) to write an "inspirational closing summary." (Notice I didn't just say, "Write a summary.") Here's what it gave me:

Marketing for magicians is not just about promoting their shows and services; it's about creating a brand and an experience that leaves a lasting impression on their audience. By defining their brand, creating a website, optimizing for search engines, using social media, attending events, and networking, magicians can increase their exposure, attract more clients, and grow their business. With a little bit of magic and a lot of marketing savvy, magicians can create a world of wonder and enchantment for their audiences. So, if you're a magician looking to take your business to the next level, don't be afraid to unleash your creativity and embrace the power of marketing!

The Bottom Line

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. Magic matters.

I always enjoy hearing *your* ideas and experiences: kent@magichotline.com.

'HERE'S TO THE I.B.M.'

By Dr. Steven Schlanger

If you heard the music to “The Star Spangled Banner,” “Auld Lang Syne,” or “Here Comes the Bride,” you would probably be able to sing along. You might even know most, if not all of the words. But how about “Here’s to the I.B.M.”? Not ringing any bells?

Picture this: It’s July 1941 and you have driven to Cincinnati in your Buick Century or perhaps a Pontiac Streamliner. You are staying at the beautiful Gibson Hotel on Walnut Street, for the sixteenth annual I.B.M. Convention. Hitler’s army is ravaging Europe and is about to invade the Soviet Union. The Marx Brothers have just released their latest film, *The Big Store*. And Joe Louis just defended his heavy-weight title by knocking out Billy Conn in the thirteenth round at the Polo Grounds in New York.

You’ve browsed the dealers’ wares on display in their individual parlor suites, and perhaps made a purchase or two from Abbott’s, Joe Berg, or Nelson Enterprises. In the afternoon, Stewart Judah performed with Winston Freer, W.O. Jackson, and E. J. Oeinck in the Magicians Only Show. There’s a dealer demonstration in the late afternoon and then, at 6:30 p.m., Dell O’Dell welcomes you to the banquet. The Larsens are there, along with John Booth, to celebrate the investiture of new International President Robert C. Anderson. It’s a festive evening for sure, and you’ve been enjoying the music provided by Pat Gillick playing a Hammond Organ. And surely you are looking forward to the dance, upstairs at the Roof Garden, which will follow the meal.

However, before everyone leaves, sheet music is handed out to all those in attendance. It’s announced that the famous team of Bert Kalmar and Harry Ruby have composed a tune titled “Here’s to the I.B.M.”

It’s a sing-along, and John Booth and young Bill Larsen – along with his mother and father – let everyone hear how it sounds. Then, after a dry run, everyone lifts their hearts and voices to celebrate this wonderful organization, singing:

Here’s to the I. B. M.!

Here’s to the members one and all.

Let the magic tie that binds us

Be ever strong and stout,

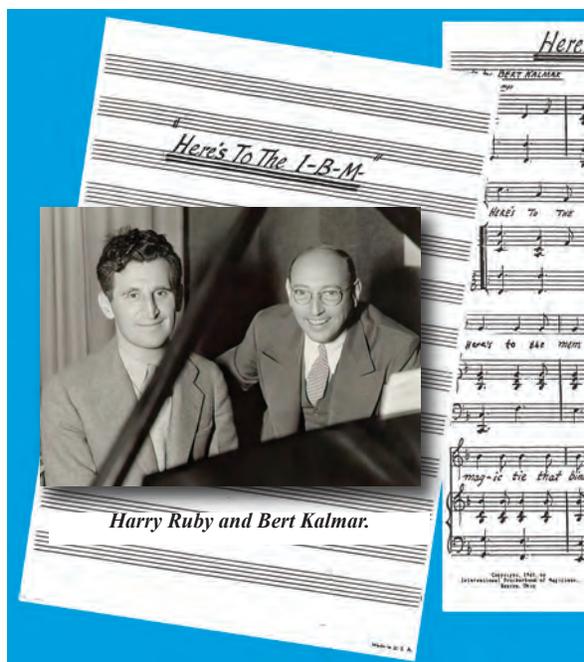
And remember that a member never lets a secret out.

Here’s to the I. B. M.!

*Let’s make each trick we do a gem,
and magicians will be proud of, and
sing the praises loud of,*

The boys of the I. B. M.

This simple tune, with its two stanzas, is a stirring number that brings everyone to their feet. If you were fortunate to attend



any of the subsequent conventions in the years that followed, you knew that “Here’s to the I.B.M.” would become a regular part of the ceremonies. It was a tradition that took root that night in 1941. When your Ring wanted copies of the music to sing at meetings and shows, the I.B.M. headquarters, then in Kenton, Ohio, sold the music and lyrics for twenty-five cents apiece. That year, *The Sphinx* (volume 40, p. 188) noted that “The words are superb and the tune has a fine rousing lilt.” It did indeed make you feel proud to be a part of such a wonderful organization.

Now, fast forward from this black and white remembrance to the color and splendor of last summer’s convention. The one-hundredth anniversary! A historic moment in the life of the I.B.M., and yet you did not hear voices ring out with a chorus of “Here’s to the I.B.M.” (And, unless I’m mistaken, Past International President Joe M. Turner didn’t slip it in when he entertained us at the piano.) It was a convivial affair. There was laughter, good food, and a few modest speeches. But the idea of singing along probably didn’t enter anyone’s mind. Other than

“Happy Birthday” and the three songs mentioned in the first paragraph of this article, the notion of singing along with a group is pretty rare these days.

Obviously, taste in music, just like our organization, has evolved and changed over time. Not to mention the line, “The boys of the I.B.M.,” would not fly these days – nor should it. Our notion of “Brotherhood” is now far more inclusive. Thankfully, we’ve come a long way.

Perhaps in the future someone will come up with a contemporary version of “Here’s to the I.B.M.” Maybe a rap song or a country and western ballad, though I seriously doubt it. Nonetheless, it’s important to remember what Shakespeare told us. “What is past is prologue.” I guess you never know.

Times have changed. The Internet brings us more magic in a week than most of us have time to learn or money to purchase. And thanks to Zoom and other platforms, we’re able to visit Rings anywhere in the world. More than one hundred years and we’re still alive and kicking. So, without having to hear me sing, I’ll just say here’s to the I.B.M.!





Ideas for Paddle Effects

By Shyamal Kumar
Order of Merlin Shield

EFFECT: The paddle is held in the magician's right hand. The thumb is on top and forefinger beneath. The paddle is pointed toward the spectator and at a slight angle, so that the face side is clearly in view (**Fig. 1**).

The object of the sleight is to show the same side of the paddle twice, making it appear that each of these sides have been viewed.

When the magician brings their hand back, they twist the paddle rod and bring their wrist back to the original position. They have now supposedly shown both sides of the paddle blank but are really showing the

each other, as shown in **Figure 3**.

SECRET: Previously drawn three linked rings (circles) as linking rings on the bottom of your paddle (**Fig. 3**).

PERFORMANCE: Remove the paddle from your wallet and show both sides, using basic move. Draw a ring (circle) on top of the paddle. Then another two rings, separately, on the middle and end (**Fig. 3**). Now, give it a little shake with your hand and, at the same time, twist the paddle rod. The rings (three circles) are linked with each other and now appear on top of the paddle, as shown in the figure.

Trick Number Two: Broken Match Stick

Remove the paddle from the wallet and place it on the table in face-up position. Take a matchstick from a match box and snap it in two at its middle. Now, with the help of a little adhesive, apply it to the surface of the matchstick and place it on the top of the paddle (**Fig. 4**).

Just like the previous trick, give it a little shake with your hand and twist the paddle rod at the same time.

Wow! The broken stick is back again in its original position now (**Fig. 4**).

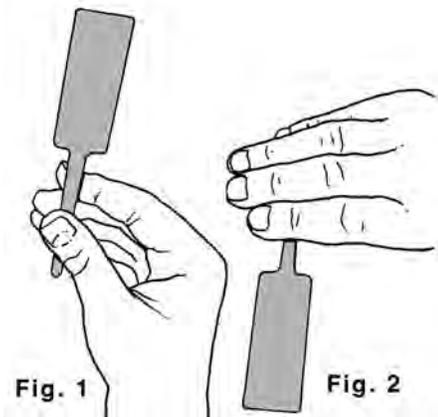


Fig. 1

Fig. 2

REQUIREMENTS: A paddle that is five millimeters thick, two and a half centimeters wide, and nine centimeters long. This is easily available from any magic dealer.

Trick Number One: Linking Ring

Remove a paddle from your wallet and show it on both sides, using your basic move as shown in the figures. Next, use a marker pen to draw three rings (circles), one by one, on top of the paddle face (**Fig. 3**).

Now give it a little shake with your hand. VOILÀ! The rings (three circles) linked with

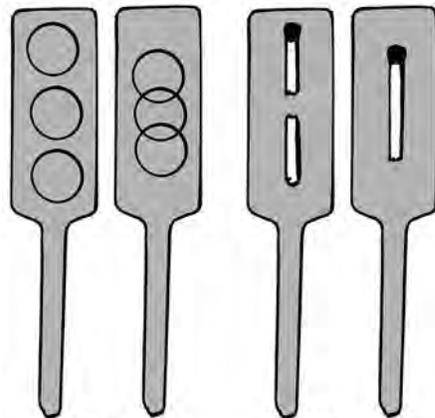


Fig. 3

Fig. 4

Did You Know?

By Joe Hernandez

Rollan B. Lane, a pioneer in the banking industry, built the classic Gothic-Victorian mansion, now known as the Magic Castle, in 1909. Lane's many famous neighbors included Frank Baum, the well-known author of *The Wizard of Oz*.

Harry Houdini and Bess were married three times. The first time they married, they used a justice of the peace over the objections of both mothers. Then, at the behest of Bess's mother a month later, they were married by Reverend G.S. Louis of Brooklyn in a Catholic ceremony. A rabbi married them for a third time at the insistence of Houdini's mother.

During the Cold War, the CIA hired magician John Mulholland to train their covert operatives in the art of sleight of hand. This eventually led to the publication of an actual training manual titled *The Official C.I.A. Manual of Trickery and Deception*.

Victor Farelli had a peculiar superstition. He would never allow a photo of himself to appear in any of his magic books, and only his hands could be published.

Johnny Thompson was among the early players for the Harmonicats. They were formerly known as The Harmonica Madcaps, and Johnny played with them in the late forties and again in the mid-fifties.

Al Flosso briefly appeared in the 1931 Marx Brothers film *Monkey Business*.

Dr. Vivian Hensley was a forty-three-year-old dentist who aspired to become a magician. In 1938, while trying to perform his "swallowing the rusty blade" trick that required that he only pretend to do so, it slipped down his throat. He died four days later.

In 1902, Harry Kellar offered a substantial reward – no questions asked – for the return of his stolen watch valued at \$600 (over \$21,000 in today's currency). Kellar suspected that the culprits were two pickpockets who had followed him on Madison Avenue in New York City. It makes you wonder how Kellar knew two pickpocket operatives were following him.

In Philadelphia, Walter Gibson once gave Harry Houdini a lift in his new Ford Model-T coupe. Unlike most cars built until then, which had door hinges at the rear so that the door opened at the front, the new vehicles were designed with the hinges in the front and the handle directly behind the passenger's elbow in the back. When Gibson and Houdini arrived at their destination, Houdini automatically reached for the handle in the front – but it wasn't there. He then struggled with the rear handle but still couldn't get the door to open. Houdini shouted at Gibson in an annoyed tone, asking, "Say – how do you get out of this thing?" Gibson reached over and opened the door. Houdini began to laugh. To think that the great escape artist couldn't get out of a car.



Polishing the Rings

SKIP WAY

Building for the Future

I once tried to build a shed from a chain store kit. This kit included the precut lumber, windows, doors, hardware, roofing materials, and a well-illustrated set of step-by-step instructions. I reasoned that it couldn't be any harder than assembling my childhood Revell model kits. After countless thumb strikes, bent nails, and unpublishable expletives, I stapled a white flag – and an errant corner of my favorite flannel shirt – to a battered stud and grumpily sought out someone with the proper skills. In retrospect, I had the same general experience with my Revell kits.

Building a successful club is like that. We gather a group of people who share our passion for magic, create a set of rules, snag a meeting space, and off we go. As my maltreated thumbs can attest, many of us soon learn that there is a significant difference between intent and success. It's not enough to reserve a meeting room, send out fliers and line up a few chairs. Building a shed or a successful club requires a specific set of skills. We need to fill those chairs with active and involved members.

1. You Can't Do Everything Yourself – Even If You Want. You may have started or resurrected the club. You may have organized the initial events. You may preside over the club and see it as your brainchild. But, once it's rolling, the best thing you can do for the sake of your club is to step back. Clear the way for other members to nurture their skills. When the same two or three people continue to dominate club leadership roles, other members fall into the habit of simply coasting along. While this may work

for a while, your once-active members will begin to drift away. Promote regular changes in leadership and encourage all members to participate.

2. Don't Rely Exclusively on Email. Email offers a quick and easy means of communicating with club members, but it shouldn't be your club's primary communication tool. Successful clubs incorporate a communication platform that encourages members to submit questions, start conversations, brainstorm ideas, and freely communicate in real time. This manner of open engagement between meetings keeps energy levels high and members involved.

Members may prefer to avoid Facebook, Twitter, and other social media platforms for one reason or another. They may choose one and avoid the others. Posting to various social platforms to reach everyone can be confusing and extremely time-consuming.

Free chat apps like Messenger, iMessage, and *Groupme.com* offer instant two-way communication, both one-on-one and with your full membership. Apps like *GroupWorks* take this concept a step further. *GroupWorks.com* offers a free and private club management platform that simplifies member communications, handles event scheduling, and collects payments.

3. Take a Long Look at Your Club's Name. I've often wondered at the effectiveness of club monickers like "I.B.M. Ring #000," "The John Smith Ring," or "Willowton Wizards." These names may mean something to the members, but do they

identify the club for the general public? Will a doting grandmother seeking magic lessons for her digitally gifted granddaughter find you? The goal here is to pick a name that clearly defines your club for non-magicians and stands the test of time. It's fine to include your I.B.M. Ring number or honorary title as a subtext, but your club's primary name should clearly tell the general public who you are and hold the same importance twenty years from now.

4. Engage Your Members with Content and Conversation. In 1996, Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates wrote an essay titled "Content Is King." He posited that the instant gratification nature of the Internet would generate a demand for data at our fingertips. This demand will cry out for ever-growing print, audio, and video information sources. This idea holds true as rising generations evaluate the value of our clubs. The successful club must create a steady flow of information that engages our members online and off. This can mean booking a well-known lecturer for your next meeting, encouraging in-house mini lectures, posting creative videos or hosting informative member blogs. Fresh content engages members, maintains interest and opens conversation. This flow generates an environment that keeps members coming back and inviting friends.

5. Examine Your Why. Do your members remember why they joined? Our members generally know what to do, and how to do what they do, at and between our meetings. But we rarely stop to consider *why* we do these things. Is our *why* based on sharing,

learning, fellowship, financial gain, community support, or some other deep need? Understanding this *why* – as individuals and as a club – and being able to share it with others can help members better connect with each other and reach out to potential members. Our *why* is our motivation, our driving force behind all that we do.

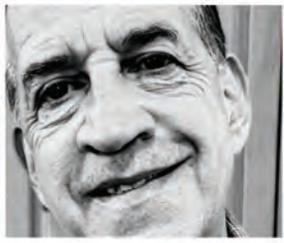
6. Keep Things Fresh and Fun! I harp on this A LOT! After a day of heavy labor or grueling meetings, no sensible adult chooses to dive into another drawn out, boring meeting. When was the last time your club tried something new? It is very easy for a club to fall into a routine. Routine leads to boredom. Boredom leads to people leaving. If you had to drop one project, social event, or cause today, what would it be? What new project, cause, or social event could you add today? How many purely family-centered social events do you host each year? When did you host your last feel-good charitable activity? So, you try something new and don't like it. You'll never know until you try!

The care and effort that you put into that backyard shed today may mean the difference between a sturdy structure or a decaying rubble heap years from now. The same holds true with your club. Think about that and act.

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

Sign up 1!

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



Teaching Magic

ROBERT DURANTE

Summer has arrived, and many of you are either running or teaching some type of magic camp or workshop.

You can run your magic camp two ways. You buy a bunch of cardboard or slum magic tricks, and then teach those effects. This gives students something to bring back and play with at home.

The downside of this, however, is the effects themselves. Most slum magic tricks cannot be examined. So, there stands Colton or Sarah, and they just did a great routine and all their friends are amazed. Then one of their friends takes the cards out of their hand and finds the flap or the gimmick. This creates an embarrassing situation for the new magician, and they decide to play Nintendo games all summer instead.

If you teach magic that can be done any time and any place, using everyday objects, you give your students a chance to succeed and grow. Your job is to teach them how to rehearse, practice, and present. Think of yourself as a director, and your students as performers in your play. Once they are more familiar with organic magic, you can throw in a gimmick now and then.

Magic Time: *Mental Match Up.* Math Magic is a type of magic that you can always have on hand. Today I would like to teach you a very good mental effect that uses numbers and sticky notes. First, remove two sticky notes and hand one to your helper. Now, tell them you are writing a single-digit number on your paper, write it on the back of the sheet, and “stick” your paper face down. Ask your helper to also write down a single-digit number on the top side of their sticky note. Place their visible number to the right of yours.

It’s time for some magic math. On another sticky note, have the following formula:

In this example your hidden number is 3. Have this formula written on the third sheet of your sticky note pad:

$$_ \times 2 = _ + 2 \times 5 = _ - 7 =$$

Example: Using the number 3 as your number, let’s say your helper wrote a 5. Remember, no one has seen your number yet, but everyone can see their 5. Do the following math.

$$\begin{aligned} 5 \text{ (their number)} \times 2 &= 10 \\ + 2 &= 12 \times 5 = 60 \\ 60 - 7 &= 53 \end{aligned}$$

Now reveal your number is the number 3 and their number is, of course, the number 5. This is a really offbeat effect.

Here is another example. Your number is 8 and their number is 7. This is the formula on the third sticky sheet:

$$\begin{aligned} _ \times 2 &= _ + 2 \times 5 = _ - 2 = \\ 7 \text{ (their number)} \times 2 &= 14 \\ + 2 &= 16 \times 5 = 80 \\ 80 - 2 &= 72. \end{aligned}$$

Their number is face up. Always place your number face down to the right of theirs. When you turn your number face up, everyone sees the two-digit number you arrived at is a match for both numbers. I write out the formula ahead of time, leaving a $_$ for their number to go. This way, they don’t think you use different numbers depending on the number they wrote.

Remember that whatever number you write down, subtract it from 10. **That is the number you use at the end of the formula.**

You could ask them for both numbers. Subtract the second number they give you from 10, and now your math creates their two-digit number.

Parents and educators love magic that uses math. It also shows students that math is something that is fun and not to be feared.

No video for this one because it's self-explanatory, but email me if you have any questions.

Until next time, practice – and practice some more.

Bob Durante

bobdurante55@gmail.com

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David Parr One-Man Parade

Written by David Parr • Edited by Rolando Santos • Illustrated by Tony Dunn

Transforming a random thought into an engaging, logical, and memorable audience experience is one of the most challenging aspects of magic. David Parr is recognized and respected for consistently producing and performing such material in almost every area of our craft.

Parr has been a featured columnist and editor for *MAGIC Magazine*, and his thought-provoking writings about the art of magic have also appeared in publications in Germany, France, Australia, Denmark, the Netherlands, the UK, and Sweden. Jon Racherbaumer included Parr on his shortlist of “notable theorists” in magic, alongside Tommy Wonder, Juan Tamariz, and René Lavand. And David Parr’s magical creations are performed by magicians around the world.



As you’ll see in this month’s Parade, Parr is a master at taking two or more classic concepts and putting them together to create something direct in its method, yet astonishing and entertaining for all kinds of audiences – including magicians.

In this Parade, Parr shares the moment he was struck by a spark of creativity and how he made the idea come to life. Each piece is audience tested and expressly selected to be well within the technical ability of most magicians. In addition, the descriptions of standard sleights have been written with unusual clarity, inviting you to revisit the method and perhaps discover a subtlety you have missed.

Like Maven, Burger, and Tamariz, Parr is an oracle with deep knowledge in diverse areas of magic methods, audience management, storytelling, theatrical arts, and creativity.

Parr has often said that “magicians routinely underestimate the power of simple, direct magic effects.” Most of the pieces explained here are variations on magic that you probably encountered as a beginner, but you’re unlikely to have seen them presented as thoughtfully and powerfully as this. – *Rolando Santos, Assistant Editor*

Coincidence

BACKSTORY: Sometimes the creative process is a gradual, stop-and-start accumulation of discoveries that takes months or years. And sometimes, it's a rapid series of ideas, like a line of dominoes falling in quick succession.

One night, during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, I woke up at a ridiculous hour with an idea rattling around in my mind: *I wonder if a Svengali Deck could be used to do an Any Card at Any Number type of effect?*

I didn't know what prompted that idea, but it was intriguing enough that I knew I wouldn't be able to go back to sleep. So, I turned on the light, got out of bed, and searched for a Svengali Deck. I found one in a box filled with random decks of cards. This allowed me to walk through the idea, step by step, with cards in hand. And it worked – not perfectly, but well enough that I continued working on it until sunrise. The resulting routine was audience-tested a week later at my virtual show, *The Sorcerer's Lair*, and I was very pleased with the response.

SET-UP: Preparation starts with a Svengali Deck, the standard forcing deck in which every other card is an identical short card. In this case, let's say the force card is the Six of Hearts.

My first task is to convert the Svengali Deck into a Mirage Deck by using a roughing stick to draw an inch-wide line straight across the center of the back of every card that is not a Six of Hearts (**Fig. 1**). When I'm finished, I can fan the pack with the faces toward the audience without showing any force cards.

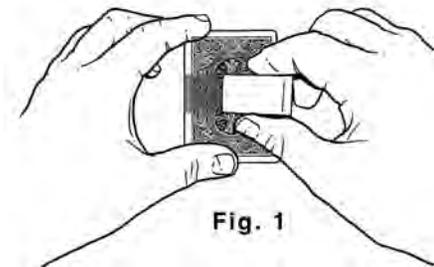


Fig. 1

Why don't I just buy a readymade Mirage Deck from a magic dealer? The answer is that isolating the roughing to the center of the card will facilitate the handling. Trust me on this.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION: *"One of the things that unites us is that we've all experienced coincidences. And I think there are two types of coincidences in the world. There are everyday coincidences, which are the kind of thing we might think about for thirty seconds and then dismiss. And then there are meaningful coincidences – coincidences that are so unlikely or uncanny that they stay in our memory. That will be our goal tonight."*

As I speak, I cut packets of cards off the top of the deck and drop them in a pile on the table, seemingly mixing the cards. But the working order of a Mirage Deck remains undisturbed by cuts like these. Picking up the deck, I fan the cards with the faces toward the audience. No force cards are visible.

"An experiment in coincidence, with this deck of playing cards."

I choose someone from the audience to assist. This is participant number one.

"Here's what we'll do. I will flip through the cards like this ..."

With the deck held squared in dealer's grip in my left hand, I apply my right index finger to the outer-right corner and riffle through the cards, **from the bottom of the pack to the top**. Anyone watching closely will see random cards flipping by; a subtle convincer that this is a legit, mixed deck (**Fig. 2**).

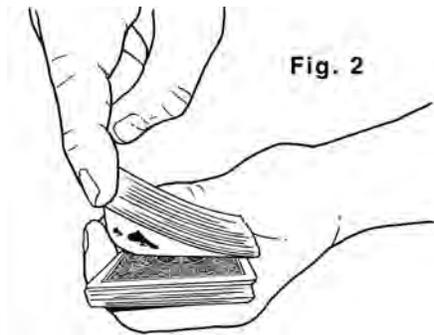


Fig. 2

“... and when you say stop, I will split the deck at that point so you can memorize a random card. Are you ready?”

This time, I apply my left thumb to the outer-left corner of the deck and riffle through the cards from **the top of the pack to the bottom**. When my participant says stop, I cease riffling (**Fig. 3**).

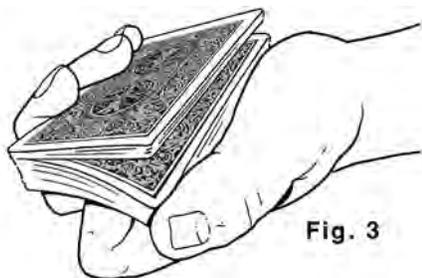


Fig. 3

I turn my head away and use my right hand to cut off the portion of the pack above the break and lift it to show the card on the face of the packet: the Six of Hearts (**Fig. 4**). I drop the packet onto the cards in my left hand and square the deck.



Fig. 4

I find another person to assist. This is participant number two.

“I can cut the deck once, twice, or three times – that’s entirely up to you. What would you like me to do?”

Let’s say the choice is three. I cut a portion of the pack from the top to the bottom and then repeat this action two more times.

“Your choice has determined where the pack begins and where it ends. I promise I

will not alter the order of these cards. You have my word on that.”

I find one more person to assist. This is participant number three.

“I need you to name a number between 1 and 52. But before you say anything, bear in mind that we are going to count to that number. So, if you say 51 or 48 or 37, it’s gonna to be a long night. So, what number would you like?”

My participant names a number. If the number is **odd** – thirteen, for instance – I proceed as follows.

The face-down deck is held from below, between my left thumb and fingers, on the long edges. I press the pad of my right index finger against the surface of the top card, near the short inner edge, and I peel the card off the top of the pack, toward my body, taking it between my right thumb and forefinger (**Fig. 5**).

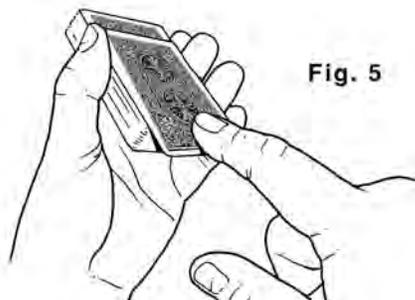


Fig. 5

The roughing is in the center of the cards, so it’s easy to pick up a single card by pressing near the short edge. Without showing the face of the card to the audience, I say:

“This is card number one.”

I place the card face down on the table. Then I peel another card off the top of the pack.

“Two.”

The second card is tabled face down on top of the first, and I continue counting cards onto the pile like this, until I reach the card just before the chosen number.

“This is card number twelve. Not your card?”

I flip the card over in my right hand and show it to participant number one, who confirms that it is not the chosen card.

“Good!”

I add the card to the face-down pile on the table. Then I peel one more card off the top of the pack.

“This is card number thirteen.”

My left hand places the remainder of the pack face up on the table. I gesture to participant number one.

“You realize it’s highly unlikely that this is your card. So many factors would have to converge precisely. I mean, you memorized a random card ...”

I gesture to participant number two.

“... and you told me to cut the deck as many times as you wanted ...”

And I gesture to participant number three.

“... and then you named a random number.”

I ask participant number one:

“What is the card you’re thinking of?”

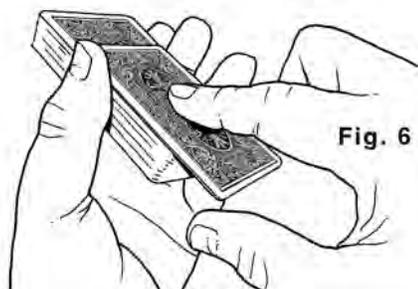
The answer is “The Six of Hearts.” I look at the face of the card.

“Hm. This – is the Six of Hearts!”

I flip the card over, and the audience begins applauding.

But what if my third participant chooses an **even** number? Let’s say the chosen number is six.

I start by peeling a single card off the top of the pack, counting it as card number one, and placing it on the table. Card number two is counted the same way. But on the third card, I press the pad of my right index finger against the center of the top card, peeling off two cards together (**Fig. 6**).



The roughing keeps the cards from separating as I pinch them between my right forefinger and thumb, count the pair as card number three, and then add them to the pile on the table. I then continue count-

ing the remaining cards singly. Card number six will be the force card.

On the very rare occasion that the chosen number is two, I point to the top card of the pack and say, “This is card number one.” I then peel off the top two cards together and transfer them to the bottom of the pack. The next card will be the Six of Hearts.

Houdini’s Secret

BACKSTORY: Over the past twenty years or so, I’ve been gradually reclaiming much of the magic I did between the ages of seven and thirteen. I reached the realization that I had discarded some very clear, direct magic effects simply because I associated them with my childhood. And that’s not a good reason to have stopped performing a lot of classic, time-tested magic. Reconsidering these effects now, as a grownup, I found that I can bring to them a grownup sensibility, along with years of knowledge and experience that I couldn’t bring to them when I was a kid.

Back then, I was irresistibly drawn to any magic that produced shocked or horrified responses from grownups. Eliciting that reaction from an adult was a taste of not just symbolic power but real power.

One of my favorite effects of this type was something I learned from the 1970s Dover edition of *Abbott’s Encyclopedia of Rope Tricks for Magicians*. (As opposed to rope tricks for fetishists?) The effect was titled Tenkai Rope Trick Through Neck. I will never forget the look on my family’s faces after I offered to show them a new magic trick and then performed this quick, startling mystery. So much fun! Too much fun, apparently, because my mom forbade me from performing it in front of her ever again.

SET-UP: Two items are required for this: a six-foot length of soft, braided cotton rope and a neck-cracker gimmick. The latter is a piece of corrugated plastic tubing that makes a loud cracking sound when compressed by pressure of the fingers. With the neck-cracker gimmick secretly in my left pocket and

the coil of rope in hand, I'm ready to begin.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION:

"I'm going to tell you a true story about the great Houdini, who was not only a famous magician but a famous escape artist. Which means they could tie him up with chains and locks and ropes, and he could always get out. But first, I'd like you to make sure that's a strong piece of rope."

The rope is given to someone in the front row.

"Unlike most stories, this one begins at the end."

"On October 31st, 1926, Harry Houdini died in a Detroit hospital. Peritonitis from a burst appendix. A short time later, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the creator of Sherlock Holmes, published a weird little book in which he claimed to have discovered the secret to Houdini's daring feats of escape. According to Doyle, Houdini was secretly a powerful spirit medium who was able to dematerialize his body – passing through chains, locks, and ropes – and then rematerialize.

"Unfortunately, Houdini himself was unavailable for comment, so he could neither confirm nor deny this theory. We'll have to test it ourselves. Is that a strong piece of rope?"

I retrieve the rope as my assistant confirms its sturdiness. With the middle of the rope stretched out between my hands, I lift it over my head and then drape the rope over my neck and shoulders like a fashionable scarf (**Fig. 1**).

The ends of the rope, hanging down in front of my body, are adjusted so the end on my right is at waist level while the left end is about knee level. After making this adjustment, I let go of the rope.

"Do not try this at home."

My right hand reaches across my chest and grasps the part of the rope hanging down on my left. My left hand reaches across and grasps the part of the rope hanging down on my right, just below my right arm (**Fig. 2**).

Now both hands go up and around the right side of my neck. My right hand goes behind my neck while my left hand lifts its end over my head and around the left side of my neck until the left end is hanging down in

front of my body. What this does is trap a small loop or bight of the right-hand part of the rope under the left-hand part of the rope (**Figs. 3-4**).



Fig. 1

Fig. 2



Fig. 3

Fig. 4

Once the bight of rope is trapped behind my neck, out of sight, I can let go with my right hand. Tilting my head back helps hold the hidden bight in place.

This next part, Tenkai did not do. But it really sells the perception that the rope is tied around my neck. My right hand regrasps the part of the rope hanging down on my right side, and my hands tie the ends as if making the first part of a simple knot and pulling it tight against my throat (**Fig. 5**).



Fig. 5

"This end is for your left hand."

I gesture with the right end of the rope, which my assistant takes in his left hand.

"And this end is for your right hand."

I gesture with the left end of the rope, which my assistant takes in his right hand.

"Please do not pull or my skull will pop right off into your lap, and that'll be disturbing for both of us."

Having entrusted the ends to my assistant, I let go of the rope with both hands.

"In a moment, I will count to three. When I reach three, hold tightly to those ends and pull them gently, not quickly, in opposite directions like this."

I illustrate by separating my hands widely apart as if pulling the ends of an invisible rope.

"Do you understand?"

My assistant answers in the affirmative.

"Okay, here we go. One, two – three!"

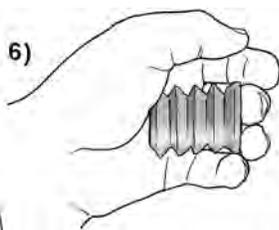
On three, I tilt my head forward and take one step back. The rope pulls free of my neck and forms a knot in the center, between my assistant's hands. I take a bow.

After the applause, I point toward the knot with my right hand while I turn my body to my left.

"That knot right there ..."

My left hand is now upstage, where it can surreptitiously slip into my left pocket and palm the neck-cracker gimmick (**Fig. 6**).

Fig. 6)



"... is where my neck used to be!"

As my right hand retrieves the rope and holds it up for everyone to see, my left hand emerges from my pocket, and my body turns forward again.

"There's only one problem with performing this regularly. It gives you kind of a crick in the neck."

Still holding the rope, I place my right hand flat on top of my head while my left

hand grasps my chin between my left thumb and forefinger. Tilting my head sharply to the right, I simultaneously squeeze the palmed neck-cracker gimmick. *Crack!* I then tilt my head upright while squeezing the neck-cracker again. *Crack!* The auditory illusion usually gets a horrified vocal reaction from the audience.

"That's better!"

The rope is presented to my assistant to keep as a souvenir.

Proof Positive

BACKSTORY: Publishing my work is a bit like watching seeds drift away on the breeze. Carefully cultivated ideas, some in print, others in digital form, are carried into the distance and out of sight, to take root and grow I know not where.

In the early 2000s, I created a prediction effect called Proof Positive. It was inspired by Max Maven's Positive/Negative from his *VideoMind* series (1997), but with a method more suited to my performing style. For many years it was my go-to routine when I was asked to perform magic on the spur of the moment – always with me, always ready.

In 2005, I contributed Proof Positive to Joshua Jay's column in *MAGIC Magazine*. In 2007, he performed it on the third volume of his *Talk About Tricks* videos. I made it available as an eBooklet on my website. The effect spread far and wide. (This led to more than a few encounters with magicians who excitedly offered to teach it to me without realizing where it had originated.)

And now Proof Positive appears here, which will ensure that it continues to travel on the jet stream of ideas, bound for places unknown.

SET-UP: The central prop here is an ordinary dime. It begins in my right pocket.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION: *"I'll need the help of someone with an active imagination."*

If no one volunteers, I designate someone to be my assistant.

“In a moment, I am going to hide an object under my left hand.”

I show my left hand empty while my right hand reaches into my pocket. The dime is grasped between my right thumb and fingers, the head side of the coin against my right first and second fingers, the tail side against my right thumb (Fig. 1). My right hand emerges from my pocket, keeping the coin hidden behind my right fingertips. The audience sees that I’m holding something pinched between my fingers, but they can’t identify what that object is.

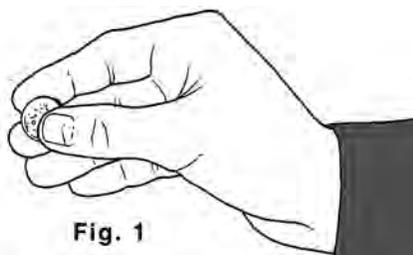


Fig. 1

“I’m telling you this because, later on, you might wonder if there really was an object under my hand.”

Resting the outer edge of my left hand on the table to screen the mystery object from view, my right hand apparently places the object onto the table. What actually happens is that as soon as my right fingertips are hidden behind the screen of my left hand, I regrip the coin so it’s standing upright, clipped between my right first and second fingers, with the bottom edge of the coin touching the tabletop (Fig. 2).

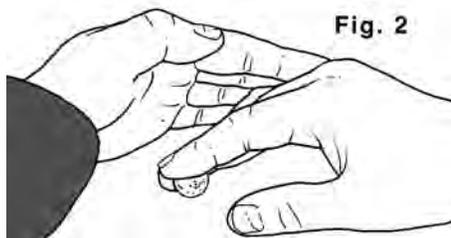


Fig. 2

“Or you might wonder if there was more than one object.”

My left hand hinges downward, closing like a book over my right fingers, trapping the coin between my left palm and the sur-

face of the table. When I withdraw my right fingers from beneath my left hand, the dime remains standing on edge, held in place by a slight downward pressure of the left palm (Fig. 3). In this position, the coin is effectively suspended between two states of being, like Schrödinger’s cat.



Fig. 3

“So, to dispel any suspicions you might have, I promise to keep my hand in this spot until it’s time to lift it and show you what’s hidden underneath it. Does that seem fair?”

My assistant acknowledges the sound reasoning of this procedure.

“Good. Now, imagine that there are three coins on the table. There’s a nickel, a dime, and a quarter.”

As I say this, my right index finger points, in turn, to three imaginary coins on the tabletop: the nickel is to my right, the dime is in the middle, and the quarter is to my left. It is here that we enter the arena of Equivoque or verbal forcing. It was once said that all roads lead to Rome. In this case, all roads lead to the imaginary dime.

“With your right hand, reach out and pick up one of the coins.”

If my assistant picks up the imaginary dime, the game is practically over. I say:

“That’s the dime, yes? Flip it, so it lands on the table.”

If my assistant picks up the imaginary quarter or the imaginary nickel, I employ a gambit suggested by Eugene Burger:

“And with your left hand, pick up another coin.”

If my assistant does not pick up the imaginary dime on the second try, I simply say:

“Those coins are yours to keep. I will take the dime and flip it, so it lands on the table.”

If my assistant picks up the imaginary

dime on the second try, I immediately hold out my right hand and say:

“Give one of the coins to me.”

If the imaginary dime is handed to me, I say:

“This is the dime, yes? I will flip it so it lands on the table.”

If the imaginary dime is not handed to me, I say:

“You kept the dime, yes? Flip it, so it lands on the table.”

Having completed the game of verbal control, my assistant and I watch as the imaginary dime spins through the air and lands on the table.

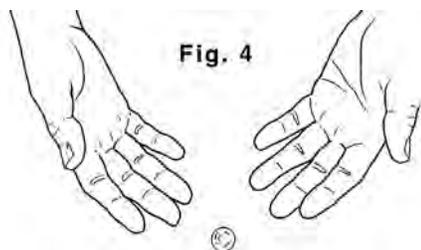
“It bounces twice, spins a bit, and then it stops. You tell me, did the dime land heads up or tails up?”

The real dime is still standing on edge, suspended between heads and tails beneath my left hand. All it will take is a tiny, imperceptible shift in the position of my hand to cause the dime to fall heads up or tails up.

I listen to my assistant’s response. If the answer is “Heads,” I lean forward to examine the imaginary coin, shifting my left hand the tiniest bit backward toward my body. Beneath my hand, the coin falls – head side up. I lean back, nodding knowingly.

“You’re absolutely right, the dime is head side up!”

I lift my left hand and gesture toward the coin with both of my hands palm up. I have nothing to hide (**Fig. 4**).



If my assistant answers “Tails,” I lean forward to examine the imaginary coin, shifting my left hand the slightest bit forward, away from my body. Beneath my hand, the coin falls – tail side up. I lean back, nodding knowingly.

“You’re absolutely right, the dime is tail side up!”

I lift my left hand and gesture toward the coin with both of my hands palm up. Only one question remains: How many seconds will pass before my assistant picks up the dime to confirm that it’s real?

Proof Positive can be performed on a tablecloth, a napkin, the arm of a comfy chair, or almost any other soft surface that prevents the audience from hearing the telltale sound of the coin falling beneath my left hand. If I’m seated and there’s no work surface nearby, the effect can be performed on top of my left thigh!

Cue Test

BACKSTORY: I’m a fan of Jim Steinmeyer’s *Impuzzibilities* chapbooks. I’ve often been asked to perform magic during television, radio, and podcast interviews, and these self-working magic effects are a great way to involve everyone in the viewing and listening audience.

One of the routines I marked for further exploration was Cue Card Mentalism from *Ensuing Impuzzibilities* (2013). In this presentation, the magician is able to predict a cue card that is chosen by someone from the audience. Well, in mathematical terms, the chances of that happening are about seventeen percent. Most times, the chosen cue card will be used for a spelling procedure that will lead to a different cue card, and that second card will be predicted. Being fond of the premise but preferring the more direct ending, I started casting about for a different method.

I remembered a Max Maven routine called Weather or Not, published in *The Linking Ring* in February 2000, that also involved predicting a chosen cue card – in this case, a weather forecast. But the method was based on Remote Control Improved, a clever effect marketed by Orville Meyer in 1932. (The “improved” part referred to Annemman’s original Remote Control from the previous year.) This method provided exactly what I was looking for.

SET-UP: First, I prepare seven cue cards. The ones I use are made of card stock, three and a half inches by five and three-quarter inches, but other performers might choose to use larger cards.

The following six words are printed or written, one word on each card: GASP, OOO, AHH, HUH, WOW, CLAP. On the back of these six cue cards, I print the message NOT THIS. The front side of the seventh card is made into a duplicate of the GASP card. On the back of the duplicate is printed the message THIS! with an exclamation point and underlined for emphasis.

The duplicate GASP card has one additional bit of preparation. I use a roughing stick to draw an inch-wide line along the bottom edge of the card, under the word GASP. I also draw an inch-wide line of roughing along the right edge of the card, overlapping part of the letter P (Figs. 1a-1b).



Fig. 1a



Fig. 1b

The cue cards are arranged in the following order from the front of the packet to the back: regular GASP card, OOO, AHH, HUH, WOW, CLAP, roughed GASP card.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION:
“As some of you might know, my background is in theater as an actor and director as well as a magician, so I tend to think about magic in theatrical terms, in dra-

matic terms. And we are going to test the theatrical skills of someone here tonight. Would anyone like to volunteer?”

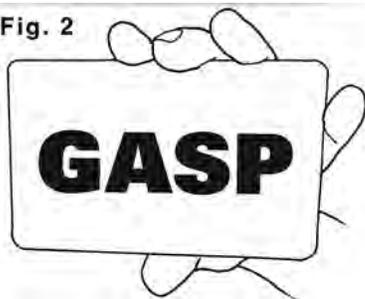
If no one offers, I select someone.

“You can stay right there in your seat.

Do you have any theatrical experience? I have a feeling you’ll be great at this. I have some cue cards here, on which I’ve printed common responses to seeing magic. And what I need you to do is to act them out visually and vocally, as if you were in an old-time melodrama. Which means you can’t phone in your performance because phones weren’t invented back then. Are you ready? Here’s the first one.”

I display the squared packet of cue cards, held between my left thumb and fingers, so my volunteer sees the word GASP on the front card. The volunteer gasps dramatically (Fig. 2).

Fig. 2



“Excellent! Now this one.”

My right hand peels the front card off the packet and transfers it to the back of the packet, revealing the next cue card. My volunteer responds with gusto, “Ooo!”

“Great! And this one.”

Again, I peel the front card off the packet and transfer it to the back, revealing another cue. My volunteer says “Ahh!”

“Perfect! How about this one?”

I transfer another card to the back of the packet to reveal the word HUH, and my volunteer acts it out.

“You made an interesting acting choice there. Because you could have gone, Huh?’ with a question mark or ‘huh’ like you’re pondering. I like your choice.”

The front card of the packet is moved to the back. My volunteer exclaims “Wow!”

“Well done! When I was a kid, this was my older sister’s reaction to seeing magic.”

I rotate my left hand at the wrist, turning the packet upside down so the WOW card now reads as MOM.

“Mom! He’s bugging me! With magic!”

The packet is rotated back to its original position.

“Let’s do this next one with the whole audience.”

The front card is transferred to the back, and the audience responds by bursting into applause.

“Thank you! And that brings us back to ...”

The front card is moved to the back, revealing the GASP card – but unbeknownst to the audience, this is the roughed duplicate card, not the one they saw earlier. I encourage the entire audience to gasp in unison. Then I address my volunteer.

“Now, a question. Which of these responses best matches your reaction to seeing magic?”

At this point, we are at a metaphorical fork in the road. If my volunteer chooses GASP, the cue on the face of the packet, I proceed as follows.

“It’s amazing that you picked that one. Because before we even started ...”

My right hand grasps the packet of cue cards and turns it around, revealing the back. The packet is returned to my left hand to display the message NOT THIS.

“I knew you would not pick this.”

I use my right hand to peel the front card off the packet and then briefly flash the other side, showing the word CLAP, before placing the card, cue side down, on my table.

“And I knew you would not pick this.”

The next card is peeled off the front of the packet, the WOW side flashed to the audience, and then the card is tabled, cue side down, on top of the previous one.

“And not this.”

The front card is peeled off the packet, the HUH side flashed briefly, and then it’s added to the pile on the table. The next three cards are each peeled off and discard-

ed in quick succession without flashing the cue side to the audience.

“Or this.”

The front card is peeled off and discarded on top of the tabled pile without showing the cue to the audience.

“Or this.”

The next card is peeled off and discarded, cue side down.

“Or this.”

And the next card is peeled off and discarded, cue side down.

“But this!”

I gesture toward the one remaining card with its emphatic message on the back, then transfer the card to my right hand.

“THIS! seemed to fit you perfectly!”

I turn the card around and replace it in my left hand, with the GASP side showing.

“Thank you!”

But if my volunteer does not select GASP, I proceed as follows. Remember, the roughed duplicate GASP card is currently displayed on the face of the packet. I apply my right thumb to the right edge of the packet and riffle through the cards, back to front, until I find the chosen cue (Fig. 3).



Fig. 3

Using my right index finger and thumb, I remove the selected card and transfer it to the front of the packet.

“It’s amazing that you picked that one. Because before we even started ...”

My right hand grasps the packet of cue cards and turns it around, revealing the back. The packet is returned to my left hand to display the message NOT THIS.

“I knew you would not pick this.”

I use my right hand to peel the front card

off the packet, briefly flash the cue on the other side, then place the card, cue side down, on the table.

“And I knew you would not pick this.”

The next card is peeled off the front of the packet, the cue side flashed to the audience, and then the card is tabled, cue side down, on top of the previous one.

“And not this.”

The front card is peeled off the packet, the cue side flashed briefly, and then discarded on the table.

“Or this.”

Again: peel, flash the cue side, and discard.

“Or this.”

And again: peel, flash, discard.

“But this!”

The message **THIS!** is now visible to the audience (**Fig. 4**). Two cards remain, but as far as the audience knows, there’s only one. Using my right forefinger and thumb to pinch the right edge of the cards, I transfer the pair, held as one, to my right hand. The roughing keeps the cards from separating.



Fig. 4

“THIS! seemed to fit you perfectly!”

Pinching the bottom edge of the cards between my left fingers and thumb, I turn the pair around to show the cue side. Again, the roughing keeps the cards from separating.

“Thank you!”

Past, Present, Future

BACKSTORY: On an otherwise unremarkable day in June of 1858, Charles Darwin is occupied with the ordinary task of reading his mail. Despite having been

warned that this day might arrive, the forty-nine-year-old naturalist is about to receive quite a shock.

Darwin has a pet theory that he has kept secret for nearly twenty years, sharing it with only a few close friends. Today, a package has arrived from a faraway island in the Malay Archipelago. Inside is a paper written by a man named Alfred Russel Wallace. The paper describes a theory almost identical to Darwin’s *Theory of Evolution by Natural Selection*. For Darwin, it is going to be one of those days.

Many years ago, I wrote an idea on an index card. My idea was to combine an impromptu cartomancy “reading” with a self-working card force that would allow me to predict the final card of the reading. I thought, *That might be worth putting in a book someday*. Then I filed the card away and promptly forgot about it.

About fifteen years later, Bob Neale and I were busy assembling material for the second half of our book, *The Magic Mirror*. Over the years, Bob had stockpiled a wide variety of effects from which we could choose the ones that best suited the book. While skimming through this material, I ran across a paragraph that caused me to go back and read more carefully. Sure enough, in an effect titled Quick to Tell, Bob proposed using the Balducci Cut-Deeper Force as the basis for an impromptu reading with a deck of playing cards.

A subsequent search through my file boxes produced the old index card I’d forgotten about until that moment. On it, I had written the words “Balducci Cut-Deeper Force – past, present, future.” For me, it was turning out to be one of those days.

As fate would have it, Bob’s description of Quick to Tell included the following story. “Many years ago,” Bob explained, “I had an idea for a quick and easy fortunetelling effect with playing cards. The handwritten note was in my file for over two decades. In October of 1995, I opened my quarterly copy of *Minotaur* magazine

to discover that Mike Maxwell had independently arrived at the same basic idea ...”

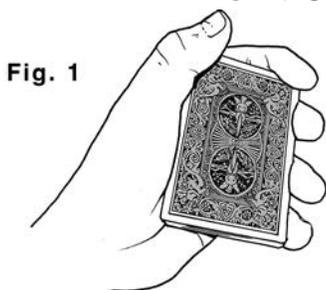
And that’s how Bob, Mike, and I – and many others – invented the wheel.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION:

A regular deck of cards is presented to someone in the audience, who is invited to give the cards a mix. When the mixing is finished, I collect the deck with my left hand.

“Every once in a while, after a show, someone comes up to me and says “So can you read the cards and tell me my future?” And my answer is always no, I can’t. Because I’m not a fortuneteller, I’m a magician.”

The deck is face down in my left hand. My left thumb rests against the back of the top card at its outer-left corner. The outer-right corner of the deck rests between the ends of my left first and second fingers (**Fig. 1**).

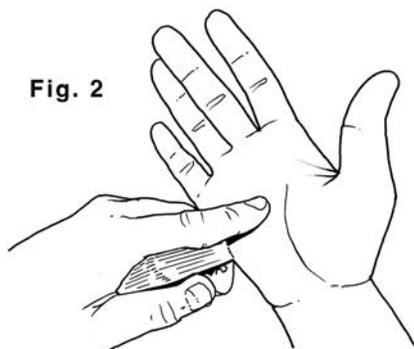


In a moment, I will glimpse the top card by using a technique called the bubble peek.

“But it’s fun to make-believe I can read the cards. Just as it’s fun to make-believe I can see the future in the lines on my hand ...” As I say this, my right hand is held palm up and my left hand is rotated inward so I can use my left index finger to point at my right palm. In this position, the top of the deck is obscured from the audience. By pushing downward with my left thumb against the outer-left corner of the top card, the outer-right corner of the card is buckled against my left second finger (**Fig. 2**).

A quick glance down, ostensibly at the palm of my right hand, allows me to peek into the bubble and see the index corner of the top card. Let’s say it’s the Two of Diamonds. As soon as the top card is commit-

ted to memory, my left thumb releases pressure, the buckled card flattens against the top of the deck, and my hands separate.



“... or in the dregs of a cup of tea. So here, let’s do a make-believe reading of the cards.”

I give the deck to another person in the audience. This person will be my assistant and the focus of the reading.

“Cut off a small portion of the deck.”

My assistant cuts a small block of cards from the top.

“And flip that entire bunch of cards face-up on top of the pack.”

The block of cards is flipped over on top of the deck.

“You’re looking at a face-up card. That is the card that represents your past. What card is it?”

After my assistant tells me which card is face up on top of the deck, I do a brief reading based on the card. If the card is, say, the Ace of Clubs, the reading might be:

“Clubs are the cards of creativity, and the Ace represents a beginning. So this card would seem to indicate that, in your recent past, you were at the beginning of a significant creative project. Does that make sense?”

Most people respond by saying yes, perhaps because they understand that this is a game of make-believe or perhaps because they think the reading is surprisingly on target. If my assistant answers no, I smile and say “Well, maybe the next card will be more accurate.”

“Now cut off a larger portion of the deck. And flip that entire bunch of cards

over on top of the pack.”

This is where the Cut-Deeper Force gets its name. My assistant now cuts deeper into the pack and then turns the block of cards over on top of the deck.

“You’re looking at the face of a new card. That is the card that represents the present. What card is it?”

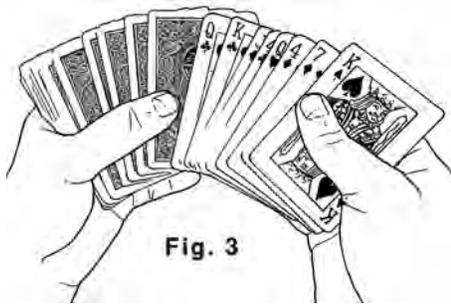
Let’s imagine that the card is the King of Spades. The reading for this card might be:

“Spades are the cards of power and influence, and the King represents authority, someone who might provide advice or guidance. So, this card would seem to indicate that there is currently an important figure who has a great influence in your life, maybe a guide or mentor. Does that make sense?”

After my assistant responds, we move on to the final phase.

“Search through the deck and find the place where the face-up cards meet the face-down cards. Did you find it?”

My assistant searches through the deck until the juncture of face-up and face-down cards is located (Fig. 3).



“Take all the face-up cards and move them to the bottom of the deck. Have you done that?”

This action brings the glimpsed card, the Two of Diamonds, to the top of the pack.

“So, there’s a face-down card on top of the deck, right? That is the card that represents your future. The face of the card is hidden from us because the future is a mystery. The aim of fortunetelling is to reveal that future.”

I proceed to give a brief reading of the glimpsed card:

“I sense something about the development of an important business relationship, maybe even a partnership, in your future. Diamonds is the suit of business or finance. And a relationship would be the Two. Yes, your future is best represented by the Two of Diamonds. Show everyone!”

My assistant displays the card to the audience, and we receive a pleasing round of applause.

The make-believe readings are based on a system described in *Max Maven’s Book of Fortunetelling*, a reference book that is out of print. Fortunately, there are plenty of other systems for reading cards; some are old, some are new, and I’m sure many more await creation – perhaps by you!

Bob Neale’s version of this effect, *Quick to Tell*, can be found in our book *The Magic Mirror* (2002). There is no sleight of hand in Bob’s version, and his presentation is not about fortunetelling. Instead, Bob opted to use the cards as tools for creative thinking and problem-solving.

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The Card Corner

MIKE POWERS

Chuck Fayne had a very clever Oil & Water routine on his *Chuck Fayne Live* DVD called “EZ Oil & Water.” The use of one extra card made the routine very effective. I’ve borrowed the idea of the extra card and used it to create a Four Card Monte routine. You’ll find a video demo of this routine at www.vimeo.com/825645913. The demo is slightly different from the routine described here.

Four Card Monte

EFFECT: The magician says that he’ll work with two red Queens of Hearts and two Aces of Spades. Two more Aces of Spades are shown and placed in his vest pocket. A quick Three Card Monte sequence is executed, showing that it’s not easy to know where the money card (QH) is. The operator suggests that it would be easier if only two cards were used. An ace and a queen are placed on the table as the other ace and queen are shown in the magician’s hand. The scam is then revealed. Both tabled cards are aces. The two queens are in the magician’s hand. A secret switch must have taken place.

This sequence is repeated. Evidently the operator can switch an ace for the tabled queen without being caught. For the big ending, the magician shows that all four cards in his hand are aces. The two queens have been secretly switched for the two aces originally placed in the vest pocket.

SET-UP: Six cards are needed – four identical aces and two identical queens. I use Aces of Spades and Queens of Hearts. The set-up is shown in **Figure 1**.

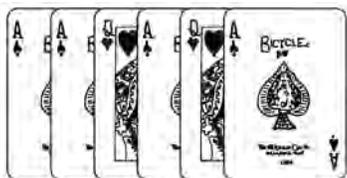


Fig. 1

PROCEDURE: Introduce the six cards as you say, “As a public service I’m going to show you why you should never play the game of ‘monte.’ You know, the one where you have to follow the money card. You try to follow the queen, but you always seem to lose. I’m going to show you why.”

“We’ll use four cards. I’ll put two of the aces in my pocket.” Square up the six cards as you get a break over the bottom ace. Pick up the five cards above the break and table them face up. An Ace of Spades shows in your left hand. The spectators assume that there are two aces there. Place the ace, as two, into your jacket or vest pocket with the back facing outward.

Now pick up the tabled packet in left-hand dealing position and spread the five as four by keeping the bottom two cards as one. Drop the top three cards (ace, queen, ace) face up on the table and place the remaining double, squared as a single card, face up off to the side. Say, “We’ll start with Three Card Monte.”

Perform Trevor Lewis’ “Monte Plus” sequence from the June 1978 issue of *Apocalypse* as follows: Spread the three cards face up, outjogging the queen. Hold the packet spread in the right hand with thumb on top and fingers beneath. Move the palm down left hand over the packet as shown in **Figure 2**. Move the right hand

away with the top ace as the left hand turns palm upward with the remaining two cards. As the left hand is in motion, use the left thumb to push the ace to the right. The right hand simultaneously turns palm downward. You end as in **Figure 3**.

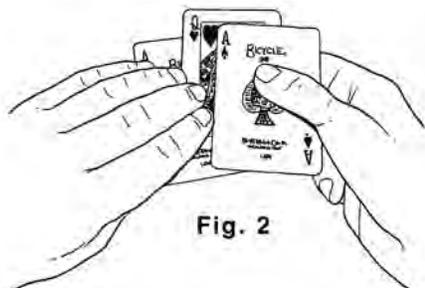


Fig. 2

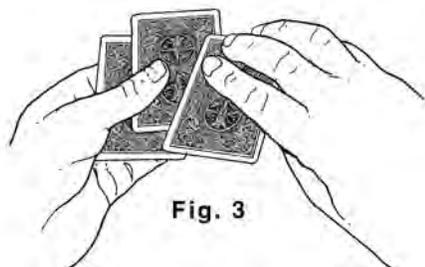


Fig. 3

Finish by placing the right hand's ace face down on top, leaving the outjogged card in its outjogged position. The outjogged card (ace) will be assumed to be the queen. Remove the outjogged card and place it face down on the table. Place the other two cards face down next to it. Say, "The game looks fair until you find out that the card you thought was the queen has already been switched for an ace. You're destined to lose."

Turn the three cards face up and place the queen in the middle of the spread. Now pick up the two tabled cards as a single card and place them onto the three-card spread, squaring up all five cards (as four).

SITUATION CHECK: You have a single ace in your pocket thought to be two aces. From the face, the packet is Q, A, A, Q, A. The spectators believe you have four cards – two aces and two queens.

You must now openly move the bottom two cards to the top. I just backspread the bottom two cards and then openly move them to the face. The new order from the

face is: Q, A, Q, A, A. Spread the five cards as four by holding the last two aces as a single (**Fig. 4**).

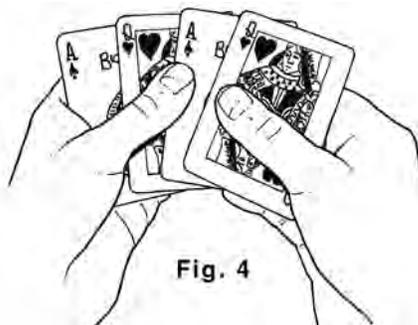


Fig. 4

Flip the packet face down in left hand dealing position. Spread the five cards as four. Then square up obtaining a left fourth finger break under the top three cards. Cleanly turn the top card (AS) face up and then face down. Deal the ace face down to the table. The break allows you to now cleanly turn over a double, showing a queen. Turn the double face down and deal the top card (AS) to the table next to the other ace. Both tabled cards are aces. However, the extra card will allow you to show that you have a queen and an ace in your hand. This means that there must be an ace and a queen on the table. Show that you're holding an ace and a queen by buckling the bottom card (QH) and sliding it to the left as you take the three cards (as two) in right-hand Biddle Grip*. Rotate the right-hand palm upward, ending as shown in **Figure 5**.

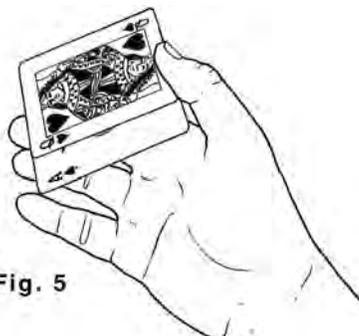
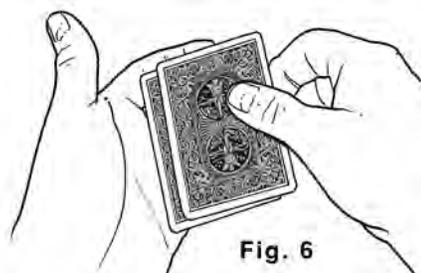


Fig. 5

Square up the three (as two) and hold them face down in left-hand dealing position. Explain that the switch has already

happened. Use your right hand to turn the two tabled cards face up. They're both aces.

You'll now show that you have two queens in your hand as follows: Take the packet by its right long edge between the right thumb on top and fingers below and move it to the position shown in **Figure 6**.



The left long edge is stabilized against the left fingers. Pull the top card to the right using the right thumb and then flip the remaining two cards, as one, to a face-up position in the left hand. The left fingers can immediately square any flaring, making the two cards appear to be a single card. Flip the right hand's queen to face up and outjogged a bit on the pair. Two queens show. Place one of the tabled aces under the top queen and one to the bottom of the packet. From the face you have: Q, A, Q, A, A.

Say, "Perhaps you didn't see the switch. I'll do it again." Flip the packet face down and repeat the entire sequence, again showing that the secret switch is impossible to detect. This time, at the end when there are two face-up aces on the table, drop the queens packet face up onto the aces. Now, from the face, it's Q, Q, A, A, A. Flip the packet face down and take it into right-hand Biddle Grip. Peel the top two cards (aces) face down onto the left hand and place the remaining cards on top.

Continue with the concept of the invisible switch by saying, "I don't think you saw me, but I switched again. This time I switched both queens for the aces in my pocket." Flip the packet face up and Elmsley Count*, showing four aces! Spread the top two aces to the right and drop them face up on the table. Say, "I need to put the queens back in for the next demonstration. Supposedly the cards you're still holding are the other two aces. Place the three, as two, into your vest/jacket pocket in front of the ace that's there. Immediately remove the front two cards (queens) and drop them onto the two tabled aces. Apparently you put two aces in your pocket and removed the two queens that supposedly were there.

You can reset by putting a queen on the bottom and one second from top, i.e., A, Q, A, Q from the face. Place these cards behind the two aces in your pocket and you're reset.

FINAL THOUGHTS: Clearly you can use any two identical picture cards as money cards and any four identical spot cards of contrasting color, e.g., two Jacks of Diamonds and four Tens of Spades, etc.

One other thing: Prior to showing that secret switches have taken place, you might make that concept more believable by moving your right hand over the packet in the left hand and then near the tabled cards. Use your own judgement on this concept.

Have fun with this. There's a lot of room for interaction with your spectators. NOTE: "*" means that there is a video tutorial for the move at www.mallofmagic.com/themoves, password "marlo7d."

Mike Powers

mpowers@mallofmagic.com

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



Money on the Spot

This one is a real fooler, because we use two different methods during the effect.

EFFECT: The magician shows the spectator an empty manila envelope. They proceed to remove their wallet, followed by a credit card. The magician inserts the credit card into the envelope and withdraws a one-dollar bill, to the astonishment of all. Then, the magician offers the spectator a turn. The spectator inserts the magician's credit card into the envelope and the magician again miraculously removes another bill.

PREPARATION: Two manila envelopes (4.25" x 2.5"), two duplicate credit cards, glue, a pencil, scissors, two different denomination bills, and either a colour scanner, colour printer, or photocopier.

SET-UP: The two credit cards do not have to share the same account numbers, but the designs on the face of the cards must be an exact match. The cards must also show the same account holder's name. Turn over one of the credit cards and either photocopy or scan it. Next, print the image of the back of the credit card so that it's the exact size of the real credit card. Once you have made a copy, cut out the printed photo.

Fold one of the bills in quarters and place the short edge of the bill against one of the

short edges (in this example, the right side) on the back of one of the credit cards. Using the pencil, trace the outline of the bill (Fig. 1).

With the back of the printed credit card photo, cut out a small semicircle at the centre of the right edge (Fig. 2). Next, apply glue to the entire back of the credit card, excluding within the small rectangle previously drawn. **It is highly recommended that you allow an eighth of an inch around the rectangle. If not, the bill will be extremely snug in the pocket.** Now, align the color print to the back of the gimmicked credit card. Allow time for it to dry. Insert a smaller denomination inside the gimmicked credit card's newly created pocket. If you have bulldog clips, attach them to the edges of the glued areas. Allow sufficient time for optimized adherence of the glue. Place both credit cards in your wallet.

Cut the face of one of the manila envelopes. Insert this piece inside the other manila envelope. With the envelope facing you and the cover flap on the right side, insert the second higher-denomination bill to the right of the inserted divider, or the front compartment of the manila envelope (Fig. 3). Fold the flap to the closed position. Place it inside your pocket. We are now ready to begin.

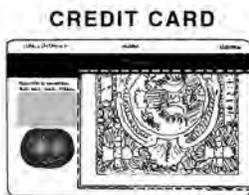


Fig. 1



Fig. 2

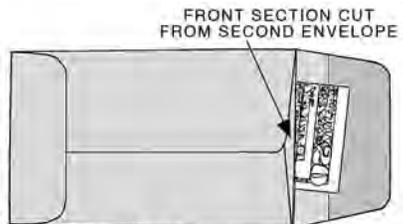


Fig. 3

PRESENTATION: “Magic can be used in everyday applications. What I am referring to is a matter of convenience,” you claim. You then continue, “Let me show you what I mean. You see, there are times where it is not very convenient for me to find an ATM machine or banking institution, when I need to get my hands on some cold-hard cash.” Remove the envelope, lift the flap, and squeeze the long edges so that it bows the manila envelope open. The inserted divider will be pressed against the side with the flap. Show the spectators the empty manila envelope. Place the manila envelope on the performance surface so that the opening of the mouth is towards you.

Remove the wallet from your pocket. Next, remove the gimmicked credit card. Flash the face of the credit card and say, “I am going to use my Capital One MasterCard.” Quickly flash the back of the credit card, ensuring that the semicircle is hidden. Slide the credit card inside the envelope and close the flap. After uttering a magic word or snapping your fingers, declare, “That is all it takes.” Lift the manila envelope’s flap, reach in with your thumb and forefinger, and slide the smaller denomination bill from the gimmick. Confidently state, “Now, that is convenient. Right?”

Immediately return the credit card to your wallet. Pretend that you’ve had one of those instantaneous, bright ideas. Turn to the spectator and ask, “Hey, would you like to give

it a try?” Before completing the sentence, switch the gimmicked credit card for the regular credit card. Hand it to the spectator. Again, show the manila envelope empty. Hold the manila envelope open at the spectator’s eye level and ask him to drop the credit card inside the envelope. Once he has done so, flip down the flap of the envelope and ask him to recite a magic phrase or word. If it seems that he is struggling, then suggest, “Show me the money!” Open the envelope and insert your fingers on the other side of the inserted divider. Remove the higher denomination bill.

Now, remove the credit card. If you wish, you can quickly show the empty envelope before putting it away, but it is not necessary. Make sure to retrieve the cash if it was handed out for examination. Put the money and the credit card in your wallet.

NOTE: You can decorate the manila envelope with a myriad of designs and colours that are appropriate for your patter. If you use digital printing on thicker stock paper when creating the back copy of the credit card, it will add to its durability and extend its life.

I do hope you rejoice in performing this unpretentious yet amazing production. I will see you next month!

Andrew Woo

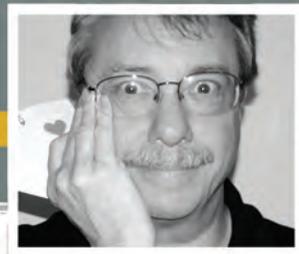
andrew@magicalwoo.com

www.magicalwoo.com



Get Thee Published in The Linking Ring!

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



If you have been following along for the last ninety-three months of “Auto-Magic” insanity, you’ve probably recognized my predilection for card tricks and mental effects. I love all forms of magic but find myself spending more time with these two categories. Still, there are areas like rope magic and classic prop magic (cups, linking rings, etc.) that I adore; I just don’t perform that much.

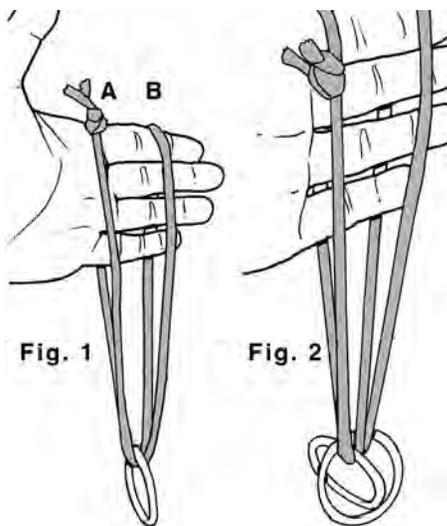
Over the next few months, I will explore with you some “rope and ring” effects I think are terrific, fun, and great for any program close-up to stage. Let’s start with ...

“Ringers”

In conjunction with additional bits of rope or ring (or rope and ring!) magic, you show a colorful shoelace about four feet in length. You tie the ends of the lace together, making a simple loop. Now you introduce two metal harness rings. These are chrome-plated metal rings around two and a half inches in diameter. The loop of lace dangles from your left hand while you clink the rings together showing how solid they are. A spectator threads one of the rings onto the lace loop. It sits in the middle of the loop as you bring the end of the loop up towards the knotted end. You hold the loop/ring combo in your left hand as seen in **Figure 1**.

You comment, “The twine of the shoelace holds the metal ring in place, and the strength of the looped metal ring, firmly locks a second ring in place.” With that, you take the second harness ring and pass the knotted and looped ends of the lace (A and B, supported by your fingers) through the ring. The ring drops to the bottom of the looped lace clanking the ring caught in the

middle of the lace. The second ring is clearly blocked from falling off the lace by the first ring. Make this point clear, inviting your spectators to try to remove the second ring passing it off the far end of the lace loop. See **Figure 2**.



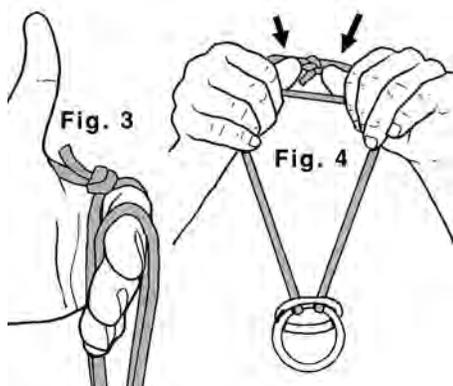
Give the rope/rings a bit of a shake. Let the rings jump up and down a little, clinking and clanking while they remain steadfastly locked in place. “This shows the scientific density of the molecules of metal all held in place by some rather strong, but thin, rope. But even physical laws are made to be broken sometimes. Still, you need a bit of magic to make this happen.”

You give the rope one more shake and both rings loudly drop to the floor. You are still holding the knotted shoelace in one piece.

Two Rings Make a Right

This is an astounding bit of magic, but it is too short an effect to stand alone (in my

view). However, as part of a longer routine, or leading into a linking rings or longer rope routine, it is perfect. The concept for this piece comes from an Allan Lambie idea in *Magigram* (Vol. 1 No. 3, 1967) called “Rope and Rings.” Aldo Colombini also teaches it in his *Magigram Volume 1* DVD. The method is straightforward and simple. Follow the presentation above. After you drop the second ring onto the loop and as you shake it up and down for effect, turn the fingers of your left hand towards you as shown in **Photo 3**, then stick both your thumbs into the space between the uppermost section of the loop (with the knot) and the strand of string just below – **Photo 4** explains all.



Now, give the rings one more resonant shake and move your hands apart. As you do, let the rope slide off your fingers, but

hold things in place with your thumbs. Essentially, the rope unthreads itself from the rings. The rings noisily drop to the floor creating great misdirection for you to move your hands closer together. The illusion is perfect! It looks exactly like it is supposed to: both rings penetrate each other and the strong shoelace itself!

The variations of this are unlimited and could easily be tied to (sorry for the pun) other routining and presentational structures. You could use bigger rings, for example, or varied colors. Just be sure they are the same size (or have the second “outer” ring visibly smaller in diameter than the first). If you have plastic coffee mugs, you could loop the rope through the handles instead of using rings. How about the handles of a child’s plastic bucket? Or, before, during, or after a linking ring routine, grab a length of soft rope and two single rings from the linking ring set and demonstrate the “porous nature of natural topological circle made of strong metal.” (whatever *that* means!). Once, I even used a shoelace and two large safety pins as a prelude to the linking pins effect.

Give the basic routine a try using simple props. You will quickly see the possibilities and I am sure will come up with ways to add it to your routines.

Give me a ring at:
mbreggarmagic@gmail.com.

SUBMITTING RING EVENTS

All articles about special activities in your Ring – shows, banquets, public service projects, etc. – should be submitted to Dr. Steven Schlanger at ringreports@magician.org.

Articles should be submitted as soon as possible following the event and must include the name of the author. We prefer articles to be submitted as Microsoft Word documents, attached to your e-mail. Captions for photos should be included in the document at the end of the article and coded to match any accompanying photos.

For those without e-mail access, cleanly typed events and traditional photographs may be mailed to Dr. Steven Schlanger at the address on page four of each issue of *The Linking Ring*.

Broken Wand

"...ANY MAN'S DEATH DIMINISHES ME BECAUSE I AM INVOLVED IN MANKIND..." —JOHN DONNE



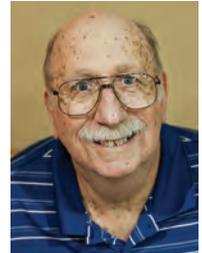
JERRY FARRELL

Jeremiah "Jerry" Paul Farrell, 84, of Indianapolis, Indiana, died July 4, 2022. He held I.B.M. number 62373 and had been a member since 2001, belonging to Ring 10 (Indianapolis, Indiana). Jerry was born in Hastings, Nebraska and was the oldest of three children. He attended Hastings High School and graduated from the University of Nebraska in 1963, with degrees in mathematics, chemistry, and physics. He later obtained a master's degree in mathematics and joined the mathematics faculty at Butler University in 1966. Jerry officially retired as professor emeritus in 1994 but continued to teach courses. Beginning in the 1970s, he designed crossword puzzles and word games, his most memorable puzzle being the "Election Day" crossword for the New York Times. It included two possible solutions: "Bob Dole elected" and "Clinton elected." Jerry helped organize the biennial Gathering for Martin Gardner (G4G) conference in 1993. From 2006 to 2017, he and his wife edited and published *Word Ways: The Journal of Recreational Linguistics*, which was established in 1968 and is archived at Butler University. He was a member of MENSA, Dictionary Society of North America, Lewis Carroll Society, Mathematical Association of America, International Puzzle Party, Gathering for Gardner, and National Puzzlers' League. Jerry is survived by his wife Karen, stepdaughter Kirstin Ellsworth, and stepson David Wright.



JOHN HOPPER

John Hopper, 77, of Maryville, Tennessee, died April 18, 2023. He held I.B.M. number 36190 and had been a member since 2001, belonging to Ring 58 (Knoxville, Tennessee). John served on the Ring's board of directors, was president for several terms, and helped produce the Ring's annual Winter Carnival of Magic. He worked as an umpire for the Eagleton Little League, was a U.S. Army veteran, a member of the Everett Hill Baptist Church, a Mason, and a Kentucky Colonel. He is survived by his son, Adam (Amanda Walton) Hopper; granddaughters, Cameron and Kylie Logan; girlfriend, Jennifer Holsopple; sister-in-law, Charlotte Hopper; and several nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends.



BILL PITTS

Osgood Wilburn "Bill" Pitts III, 97, of Fayetteville, Arkansas, died April 3, 2023. He held I.B.M. number 6816 and had been a member since 1941. He belonged to the Order of Merlin Excelsior (sixty years of continuous membership) and Rings 29 (Little Rock, Arkansas) and 75 (Fort Smith, Arkansas), the latter of which he organized, and served as International President for the 1978–1979 term of office. Bill



was born on February 5, 1926, in Fort Smith, Arkansas. Influenced as a child by his own father's interest in magic, Bill traveled with his parents to perform magic and watch some of the most famous magicians of his young life. Their home at 701 Lecta Avenue, in Fort Smith, became a regular stop for magicians on tour, including Harry Blackstone, Sr., Jack Gwynne, and Loring Campbell. As a young man, Bill spent his summers performing magic and working as a counselor at Cheley Camps in Estes Park, Colorado. There, he met his future wife, Margot Scott. During World War II, Bill served in the U.S. Air Force Special Services Branch and also performed for the troops. Bill organized Ring 75 in 1964. His magic and involvement in the Masonic Order led to his membership in the Invisible Lodge. He performed at the famous Magic Castle in Los Angeles and served as a mentor to Nathan Burton. As his day job, Bill served as president of McKee-Pitts Industrials, Inc., an industrial supply business started by his grandfather. Bill retired from McKee-Pitts after the 1996 tornado destroyed his and many other spaces in downtown Fort Smith. Bill also had an intense interest in UFO sightings and worked on Project Blue Book, a code

name for the study of unidentified flying objects by the United States Air Force from 1952 to 1969. He was the founder of the Ozark Mountain UFO Conference, a Commander in the American Legion, and a supporter of the Fort Smith Little Theatre. Bill was a lifelong fan of the music of Glenn Miller, the islands of Hawaii, and Whoppers malted milk balls. He loved to wax poetic about "tales of yesteryear," and you would often find him laughing hysterically and then crying within the span of telling the same tale. He never said no to an opportunity to perform, whether it was on a famous stage or in front of his great-grandson's boy scout troop. He also never said no to a buffet. He regaled magicians with tales of tricks gone awry at home that involved his exasperated children. At a house party in the 1960s, a teenage Debbie was trapped in an upright cabinet meant for cutting a person into three pieces by means of large blades. On stage, he had a quirky storytelling presentation. He was preceded in death by Margot and his second wife, Ruth Pitts, also an accomplished magician. Bill is survived by his daughter Debbie Moulton, his son Bill David Pitts, and several grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

When a Magic Friend Dies

While it is a responsibility of Ring Secretaries to notify our Headquarters Office or Executive Editor of the death of a member, many members do not belong to Rings, and even the deaths of Ring Members often slip through the cracks. 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 to Editor or Headquarters Office. Addresses on page 4. Thank you.



Ring Reports

THE INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF MAGICIANS



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. 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 Ring report headings (such as changes in officers' names, addresses, or times of meetings).

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

Steve Zuehlke shared the following: "Our April meeting was one of the best of the year with a strong attendance with quite a few members we have not seen in quite a while. Keeping with the theme of April Fools, member Mike McClure put together a Fool Us (a.k.a. Penn and Teller) meeting. The Ring broke into smaller groups with each taking a table. Similar to a trivia night, each table consisted of four to six players. Host McClure would then show a video of a magic effect being performed and the first table to buzz in would give their explanation as to how they thought the effect was done. Yes, each table had a wireless buzzer which lit up on a display. After the first group reported their thoughts, the other tables could offer their explanation. For some of these effects, there was no right answer. For example, Mike showed a few clips from *Penn and Teller: Fool Us* featuring past winners. We all know Penn and Teller don't reveal the secrets, so the Ring got to give their own take on how they thought the effects were accomplished. Some of the answers were quite interesting and definitely made you think outside the box. The amount of time Mike put into this evening was much appreciated. Table displays, buzzers, video, two laptops, etc. Any Ring interested in this type of meeting should contact Mike McClure as I am sure he would be happy to help. This really was a fun evening for all. Mike ended the evening giving all the members their own Fool Us Trophy! After the meeting, we all were treated to cakes, cookies, soda, candies, etc., compliments of hostess, Susan McClure. A job well done by the McClures!"

Michael W. McClure reports: "I want to

thank the twenty-two members who attended our April Fool Us challenge on April 5. It was a crazy idea I cooked up for us to have a different kind of fun, the same kind that Penn and Teller experience with every episode that they film. The evening could not have gone any better, since I was most worried about whether the members, split into four teams, would enter into any discussions at all. My premise was to have a team building, fellowship promoting, yet educational night where our talented Ring 1 members would offer various possible methods once an effect was showcased on the screen. Only public trailers and archival footage were used when presenting different genres of effects for debate. I could not believe my ears when the first film, a 1938 newsreel, generated so much controversy! My selections that followed never paled in prompting points and counterpoints. The smiles and laughter quickly convinced me that this format for an occasional meeting was acceptable. Again, my thanks go out to the membership for being the true stars of the night. Their clever reasoning sparked fresh ideas in several members I've since spoken with. I have never had so much fun creating a program for any group as I had while selecting the video performances, working some app magic on illustrated faces, and virtually animating some of our leadership to include song and dance. I'll never forget the joy I had sharing this event with the Brotherhood!"

Steve Finkelstein shared the following: "Giving back to the community is one of I.B.M. Ring One's core values. We had another wonderful opportunity making kids smile and adults act like kids at the 2023 St. Louis Kidney Walk on Sunday March 25th that was held at Westport Plaza located in Maryland Heights, MO. There were about 1,000 people at the event. Ring 1 had seven magicians (Steve Finkelstein, Dan Todd, D. Jay, Zi Tang Wang, Paul Gregor, John

Skarin, and Dave Goldfarb) entertaining and teaching magic nonstop from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. It was a great time for all. We are looking forward to entertaining at next year's event."

Christian Misner shared the following: "On March 25, 2023, Christian the Magician performed his comedy magic show *You Deserve Better* to a full house at Old Time Magic Shop in High Ridge, Missouri. This was the first time Christian performed seated at a table, and the audience loved it. Several local magicians were in attendance, along with lay people from around the greater St. Louis area. Christian used music, humor, and audience participation to keep the audience engaged throughout the hour-long show. He even brought up an eight-year-old magician to help out during the performance, and as a thank you gift, Christian gave her his Ultimate Magic Set. After the show, guests had the opportunity to meet and greet with Christian, who was happy to take photos and answer questions. The audience left thoroughly entertained, with many commenting on the unique and intimate setting of the performance. 'I loved the show! Christian's humor and magic were spot-on and kept me on the edge of my seat the entire time,' said audience member, Karen Schellin. 'I especially enjoyed the opportunity to meet him after the show and get a photo with him. He's such a great performer and a really nice guy.' Christian the Magician's *You Deserve Better* show was a huge success, and attendees are already looking forward to his next performance at the Blue Strawberry on May 8th at 7:00 p.m.

Dan Todd shared the following: "On Friday April 7th the magic show on CCTV at Children's Hospital was really fun. While performing the "Six Bill Repeat" with million-dollar bills, a patient called in saying that she collected two-dollar bills, and I gave them a million! The lineup was close to the same at Ranken Jordan on Monday, April 10th. It was also a big hit! I performed the following effects: 'Haunted Handkerchief,' 'Diamond (egg) Bag,' 'Bubble Gum Machine' (my version), 'Miser's Dream,' 'Human Xylophone,' 'Inside Out Bag,' 'Mr. Bill Transports' (giant Play Doh tube for the square circle and an Oriental Production Cabinet for vanishing); 'Six Bill Repeat,' 'Slydini Silks,' 'Comedy Handcuff Escape,' and a teaching effect, 'The Cunning Card Trick,' which was jumbo for stage."

Silly Jilly had large crowds for her many Easter shows at Eckert's Farm in Belleville, Illinois. Two sets of bleachers were not enough seating, so Silly Jilly invited the kids to sit on the stage for added room. The kids were more

likely to not stay seated when not seated next to their parents, but a trick Silly Jilly learned from a Washington, D.C. magician, The Great Zucchini, gets the energetic kids sitting back down quickly. She would say, "Who's sitting crisscross applesauce?" and the kids quickly sat back down. She shared that this works with most (not all) kids, but for only a few seconds and then she would have to repeat this phrase. One grandmother commented on Facebook the following: "Just wanted to tell you my granddaughter had the best time at your show. She had to tell her great grandma all the funny things. She can't wait for your May first show (Broughton Park sponsored by the Brentwood Library)." Silly Jilly is quite busy. She is performing at Syberg's in Chesterfield weekly (plain clothes) and at Pediatric Dentistry in Sunset Hills once a month (as a clown). She has several upcoming events which are listed on her Facebook page. Here is the link, www.sillyjilly.com.

Trudy Monti-Monteith has been instrumental in keeping the St. Louis Magic Roundtable meeting every Saturday. She regularly advertises the event and magicians who attend thoroughly enjoy themselves. On April 8th, Harry Monti brought two special souvenirs that he gave each person in attendance. One was a program from the week of November 11, 2013 when he performed at the Magic Castle. The other was his PR brochure that he sent to clients. The Roundtable meets at 1:30 p.m. at Dierbergs, 1080 Lindemann Road, Des Peres, MO 63131. Everyone is welcome. Trudy advises those interested to check the website for the latest information and to make sure there is a meeting before attending.

The Ring was really excited that Jay Sankey was scheduled to lecture on May 23rd. However, Jay needed to cancel due to family obligations. Hopefully, Jay will be able to reschedule his lecture in the near future. *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

Vice President James Killmeyer opened our April meeting by presenting Tom Craven with a special award for winning the club's Magician of the Year award more often than any other member. The following Ring 2 members and friends were present: Susan and Warren Campbell, Fritz Coombs, Tom Craven, Bob Gurdak, Larry Henderson, James and Eric Killmeyer, Jim Klayder, Peter Lucke, and Gary

Morton. The theme of the evening was a card effect.

Peter Lucke opened members' magic with Jörg Alexander's "Sympathetic 10." Peter began by displaying a new card deck. He removed the Ace through Ten of Spades and placed them upright in a wine glass. Peter then gave the Ace through Ten of Hearts to Bob to mix up. After taking back the shuffled hearts, Peter displayed them to show the random order, and he asked an audience member to select a card which Peter turned back to front. The hearts were placed in a second wine glass, the Five of Hearts faced the audience. The magic occurred when Peter held a handkerchief in front of the wine glass containing the spades. In place of the ace facing the front there was now a Five of Spades. Peter then removed the cards, one at a time, from each wine glass. Each spade matched each heart, including the reversed card.

Bob Gurdak continued with "Separate the Reds and Blues" attributed to Galaxium and Mark Miller. Bob opened by explaining that one might be able to distinguish the black cards from the red cards just by how they feel. He invited Eric to assist by dealing a deck of cards into two face up piles without looking at the cards. Bob then checked how well Eric had done by spreading out each pile. It was about as expected, each pile had about fifty percent blacks and fifty percent reds. Bob then explained that he really wanted Eric to separate the reds from the blues. He gathered up the cards and spread them face down on the table, all the red backed cards were on one end of the spread, and the blue backed cards on the other end.

Jim Klayder entertained us with "Kannibal Kards." He announced that some of his decks had fewer than fifty-two cards. He attributed this to the four kings, saying they were cannibals, and had eaten some of the other cards. Jim proceeded to show us how by selecting three random cards and interspersing them between the four kings. He made some munching sounds as the kings ate the cards and showed us that the three cards had vanished and only the four kings remained in his hands.

Tom Craven amazed us with "Blue Collar Aces," an old routine. Tom began by placing the four aces on the table. Three in a row were face down, and the fourth below the row was face up. Next, he dealt three cards face down onto each ace. Taking up each of the three packets, Tom showed us that an ace was the bottom card. He then moved the top card to the bottom, so the ace became the second from the bottom. Then for each packet Tom left its ace on the table and

showed the three other cards were random cards. He replaced them in the deck. The three aces on the table were revealed to be random cards, and the remaining packet contained all four aces.

James Killmeyer invited us to explore the countries of the world. He held up a series of pages, each of which had the names of ten countries on it. He asked Gary to look at the pages and remember a country from one. Gary wrote down the name and concealed it. James asked Bob to do likewise. Then James showed the pages again one by one. As he did this, he asked Bob to stop him when he saw his chosen country. James then asked if the country was the United States; it was not. So, then James asked if it was Argentina; it was. James then confirmed with Gary that Gary's choice had been the United States.

Larry Henderson followed with "Split 7" by Justin Miller. Larry invited Warren to assist him. Larry shuffled a deck of cards and had Warren select one of the cards and place it face down on the table. Larry then asked Warren to face away from the table so he could get a feeling for the card. Larry closely examined the back of the card with a magnifying glass. After Warren turned back toward the table Larry replaced the card in the deck and shuffled it. He then dropped two cards on the table and asked Warren to name his card; it was the 7C. The two cards on the table were turned over, each was a Three and a Half of Clubs.

Our next performer was Gary Morton with "Knots off Silk" attributed to Jeff McBride. He performed, accompanied by music, and the assistance of Susan. He had Susan hold a wine glass. Gary displayed a large silk which he stretched along its diagonal. He tied a knot in the silk, pulled off the knot, and placed it in the wine glass. He continued this procedure to produce two additional knots making a total of three in the glass. Gary finally held up the silk to display three holes in it, along the diagonal.

Fritz Coombs closed the magic with "Chicago Opener" by Frank Garcia. He invited Bob to come up and assist him. Fritz spread a red backed deck in his hands and asked Bob to pick a card, remember it, and show it around; it was the 4D. The card was then cut back into the deck. Fritz then spread the deck face down on the table and located a single blue backed card. He turned it over to show it was the 4D. Fritz left it face down on the table, and using a Hindu Shuffle asked Bob to again select a card; it was the KS. Fritz concluded by showing that the face down blue card was now also a KS.

Following members' magic, Gary Morton

showed us a number of DVDs that he had. He gave them away to various members by a random drawing of names. Gary then gave a repeat performance of his “Egg-in-a-Bag” routine with several improvements.

Peter Lucke

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

T.I.P. lecture - Brian Robert “Lucid Dreaming: Concerning the Mysterious Production of Coins from Thin Air... The Miser’s Dream.” Brian demonstrated and discussed three variations of The Miser’s Dream: Jack Chanin’s coin productions from silk, with a vanish; Brian’s grandfather’s version tossing the produced coins into a bucket (Brian created a soft holdout inside the rim); and David Ben’s “Conjurer’s Dream,” placing the produced coins into a silk, followed by a vanish credited to Gary Kurtz. Some of the sources mentioned: Levent’s *Ultimate Guide to Miser’s Dream*, *Genii Magazine* (for David Ben’s); Joe Monte; and *Bobo’s Modern Coin Magic*.

Business Meeting: President Steve Langston greeted thirty-three attendees, including two members online and three guests. Several upcoming conventions were mentioned, including the I.B.M. in Pittsburgh (7/11-15) and Atlanta Harvest of Magic (9/28-30). Past International President Ken Scott encouraged everyone to register for the Harvest before the March 26 price increase.

In Health & Welfare, we heard updates on Gary Koepke, Steve McCoy, and Bill Cress. It was great to have Eric Schuster back with us.

Secretary/Treasurer Bill Packard passed out theme winner certificates to Steve Langston, Phillip Mosness, and Gary Vaughn; and new member certificates to Ravi Navarre, Mike Frisbee, and Marco (Marc Butkiewicz).

The Georgia Magic Book Club is discussing *Magic and Showmanship*, by Henning Nelms. The next Zoom meeting is April 12.

Community Committee Chair Ken Scott reported that Brian Robert and Matt Baker performed a show for the Children’s Healthcare & Miracle Network.

Lecture Chair Debbie Leifer reported that the recent Mark Leveridge virtual lecture was recorded and is available on our club’s website. Chris Philpot’s in-person lecture is scheduled for April 13. Another in-person lecture to look forward to is Matthew Garrett on September 14.

Equinox editor Anthony Vinson says that the next issue should be available in mid-April. There is an in-person Magic Meetup scheduled

for April 30 and a virtual Meetup on May 3.

Membership Performer: Mark Zirpoli had two spectators each cut the deck to select a card, removed the jokers who “told him” the positions of the selected cards (which were then dealt to), then revealed that the jokers had predicted those positions, their having been written on the jokers’ backs.

Theme Magic (“Take a Load Off”) 1. Walter Fields attempted to make a coin vanish from under a glass but caused the glass to penetrate the table instead. 2. Clark Kjørlaug invited Brian Robert to eliminate cards from a five-by-five grid with numbers on them until there were five remaining, then showed that the total was predicted and that the other sides of the cards spelled B-R-I-A-N. 3. Murl Harmon had a spectator select a card, then another spectator went through the deck and located the one card that stood out to him – it was the selected card. 4. Stan Konter invited a volunteer to choose one from each of four packets of printed cards displaying drinks, appetizers, entrees, and desserts respectively, showed that the pricing on only the selected cards were “compliments of the house” (except dessert) and opened an envelope that contained the bill (with all prices predicted) as well as the correct amount of cash to pay for the dessert, thus providing an entire meal “on the house.” 5. Ken Scott produced a filled shot glass from an empty (and examined) bag, then displayed ten cards in a circle, had I.B.M. International Vice President Mike Dunagan throw “invisible dice” to select a card, and that card was the only one with Mike’s name on it. 6. Mike Dunagan openly displayed a prediction list of four cards, and with the help of a volunteer, cut the deck into four stacks and there was an ace on the top of each packet. Cards were reassembled and the volunteer dealt about a third of them into four piles, the top cards matching the original prediction, and the next top cards were the four aces again. 7. Eric Schuster performed a “Double Open Prediction,” where he named a card, stopped dealing face up at a spectator’s instruction (keeping the next single card face down), repeated with another named card, and the two reversed cards were shown to be the two named cards. 8. Mike Frisbee displayed the contents of a “Boys Night Out” cigar box (cards, coins, flask, shot glass, and napkin), performed a Poker Deal with the dealer winning with a Royal Flush, then after doing a couple bar trick gags with a coin and shot glass, caused the full shot glass to penetrate the top of the box and into the box without spilling. 9. Gary Vaughn (via Zoom) spread a deck of cards face down,

had a spectator choose one, showed that the identities of the neighboring cards were different, then tore open a prediction envelope to show a duplicate of the selected card. 10. Ravi Navarre, with some apparatus, caused a ball to vanish from a tube and reappear in a cage. 11. Steve Langston had two spectators each mentally choose a card from a spread deck, then cut right to the first selected card (before it was named) and found the second selected card (again, before it was named) at a spectator-named location. 12. Past International President Joe M. Turner performed his signature “Kaps Dice” routine (multi-phase number-changing displays with two dice held between fingers), then performed similar effects with six dice while they were confined to a small box. 13. Jamey Evans escaped from being tied up with rope to a chair, then as an afterthought produced a bunch of stuff from a dove pan. 14. Anthony Vinson used four spectator-rolled dice to count to the only four “non-defective” cards in a “defective” (blank) deck.

General Magic: 1. Rob Rutherford brought to life a story of how he performed street-style “Cups and Balls” with a final load of money and food that he had stolen from his audience. 2. Jim Mangham linked two long pieces of rope behind the back of a volunteer while she held all four ends in front of her. 3. Joe M. Turner performed a “Ring and Rope” routine credited to Tom Craven, followed by a similar effect using three rings and the rope. 4. Jamey Evans performed a geeky “Nail in Nose” effect, showed the clever switch he used to obtain a fake nail, then did it again for real!

President’s Spot Giveaways: Prizes went to four lucky attendees and Jim Mangham gave away a few items to anyone who wanted them.

Congratulations to Mark Zirpoli for passing his audition, and to Joe M. Turner for winning the Coveted Royal Blue Pin for March.

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

BOB GECKLER, Secretary,

485 Pine St., Lockport, NY 14094 / (716) 434-5644

We haven’t had a lecturer in a couple months, we had one today. I’ll get to that after the teaching table.

Tom Dennaro taught us many card effects using the Sy Stebbins stack. We even got a handout about the stack. Gotta love physical handouts. I’m one of them old folks who prefer handouts and notes to PDFs. I like DVDs more than downloads. I still buy CDs at Target. Target

seems to be the only place still selling and the selection is pitiful. Just to go on a rant. I remember late ‘90s, early 2000s when CDs were still popular and I went to Sunrise Record on Yonge St. (I don’t even know if it still exists) but I mentioned to the manager that he should stay open past midnight when new CDs were coming out, because there is usually someone excited about a new album. From then on, if I came in after ten p.m. on Monday nights, I could buy a CD that is scheduled for Tuesday release.

Anyhoo. Back to the lecture. We had Toronto’s Andrew Woo. We get lots of Canadian talent, being on the border. We have Canuck members, a Canuck president, and Canuck Ring report writers. I’ve been a legal resident since 2007, but I’ll always stay true to the great white north, eh! I got off track again, sorry. Andrew Woo wanted us to get back to basics. Magic isn’t about fooling other magicians, except for on TV and unfortunately, many other places. Magic should be giving average people moments of joy and fun. There were still many cool effects we were taught. Some were with a Rubik’s Cube, some with a toy robot finding a chosen card, a Ouija board, and even variations on “Out to Lunch.”

There was so much more, but unfortunately my wife and son were very ill so I had to leave. Luckily, Andrew Woo, agreed to go over what I missed. Got to love when a magician is so kind to fellow magicians. I can’t wait to learn with him again.

Shlomo Birkan

RING 13, PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA – Tampa Ring

Meets 1st Thu., 8:00pm Eat ‘N Park, 1250 Banksville Rd., Pittsburgh, PA
MARK ZAJICEK, Secretary / E-mail: mtz@sei.cmu.edu

Web site: www.ibmring13.org

In April, we held the third in our series of six sessions to distribute to our members the magic items that had been donated to us from the family of the late Dick Recktenwald. Our suggested performance theme was April Fools, and Lucy Hall introduced the performers. Several people shared items that they had purchased recently during the Real Magic Roadshow that traveled to Pittsburgh in March.

Visitor Jeff Ashkettle arranged five, restaurant gift cards on the table, and he instructed Ted to move a voucher card back and forth to eliminate cards until only two remained. Ted turned over the voucher and read the statement printed on the back, which correctly named the restaurants left for Jeff and Ted (Martin Peirce’s “Foods For Thought”). Jeff then showed four, different colored wallets, and he asked three spectators to each choose one of the colors and remove a folded slip of paper inside. Each spectator read their papers, which merely stated the

color that they had chosen; but when the final slip of paper was read, it correctly stated the colors that each of the spectators had picked as well as the color that remained for Jeff (Adam Wilber's "Color Psychology"). Jeff later performed "The Incredible, Inevitable Two Coin Trick" in which he repeatedly placed a silver coin or a copper coin in his pocket, but two coins still remained in his hand each time. At the end, Jeff vanished both coins.

Ralph Kelly fanned the faces of a deck of cards and asked John to think of one. Ralph claimed he could name John's card, and Ralph said that the name of that card was Oscar. After Ralph asked John what card he thought of, Ralph removed that card from the deck and placed it face up on the table. Ralph showed that the backs of all the cards had different names written on them, and Ralph turned over John's card to show that it was indeed named Oscar.

Ted Knoblach donned an *Indiana Jones* fedora hat as he showed two boxes containing wooden cut-outs of a lion and a cobra. Ted pretended to make the animals change places as he turned the boxes around (like "Hippity-Hop Rabbits"). But at the end, Ted turned around the animal cut-outs to reveal the image of a skunk on the back of each (Paul Osborne's "Lion and Cobra").

Eric Meredith riffled the corner of a deck of cards, and he inserted his business card in the deck when Roger said, "Stop." Eric removed the two cards above and below his business card, and he turned over his business card to show a prediction that correctly identified the two cards at that location. Eric asked Roger to sign one of the cards and place it inside his wallet. Eric signed the other card, and then he made the two, signed cards switch places. Eric next performed an effect where he asked Levi to use his phone's camera to take a picture of a solid black card. Eric asked Lucy to choose a card from the deck, and that same chosen card now appeared in the photo on Levi's phone (using Higar's "Rainbow Phantom Card").

John Pedrotti demonstrated one of his favorite card forces using a Svengali deck. John also shared with us some improvements that he made on a jumbo card prediction effect that he performed in March. John then performed a rope routine in which a length of rope turned into five, separate rings of rope (SEO Magic's "Mexican Rope DX"). John later showed a card prediction effect in which his prediction seemed to fail until he sprayed water on the sketchpad to make the Ace of Diamonds visibly change into the selected queen.

Levi showcased a deck of Emily Sleights' Lighthouse Beacon playing cards, and he used

those to perform an "Ambitious Card" routine to make a chosen card repeatedly jump back to the top of the deck. Levi shared some methods and controls for bringing the card to the top without using a Double Lift (including Eric Jones' "Pass-less Pass").

Visitor Alan Fisher joined us online again, as he removed a prediction card from a blue deck and placed it in a glass. Alan asked a spectator to say stop to pick a card from a red deck, and he placed that card in a second glass. Alan turned over both cards to reveal that they matched.

Michael Strough shared with us Danial Ka's "Linking Ropes" routine, in which three, knotted loops of rope would link and unlink before the knots pop off to leave one long length of rope. Next Michael placed a prediction envelope on the table, and he asked Ralph to remove any four cards from the deck and place them on the table. Michael dealt more cards on top of each of those, and then he added the values of those cards to reach a sum total. Michael dealt that number of additional cards until he reached a random card. Ralph opened the prediction envelope to reveal that the ace inside had a message that correctly named the selected card ("Perfect Prediction," from *Scarne on Card Tricks*).

We look forward to seeing everyone here at the I.B.M. Convention in Pittsburgh in July! Please come share the magic here! *Mark Zajicek*

RING 15, FORT WORTH, TEXAS – Ren Clark Ring

Meets 1st Thu. each month, 7:00pm at 4055 International Plaza, Ft. Worth, TX 76109

GEOFFREY GRIMES, Secretary / ggrimes@aol.com

Facebook: Fort Worth Magicians Club

President Ron Wilson called the meeting to order, welcoming members and guests. Ron initiated the transfer of club officers, demanding (with tongue in cheek!) a "recount" of the votes! With "no second," the motion collapsed! New officers including Michael Smith, Bill Irwin, Matthew Martin, and Ron Wilson accepted "Certificates of Appreciation" for last year's good work(s).

The first order of business was the installation of new club officers including 2023 President Michael Stein, Vice President for Program Aaron Stone, Vice President for the Flashpaper Matthew Martin with the assistance of Pix Smith, Club Treasurer Jordan Burgess, and Club Secretary Geoff Grimes, and Steve Darelik, as Club Member-at-Large."

Michael Smith announced new performances by club members, including Will Baffle's "Show of Wonders with Matthew Martin,"

Braden Daniels' "Thought Sender/Mind Bender" mentalism show featuring Michael Smith, and Zak Mirz's Wednesday, January 11th four-day weekend in Lower Greenville (recording for a TV special).

Geoff Grimes and Mike Smith announced the "GoFundMe" project supporting the purchase of a car for Ukrainian magician Dmitry Mosin. Mike Smith reviewed *Performing Deception: Learning, Skill, and the Art of Conjuring*, by Brian Rappert. Ron Wilson demonstrated a Tenyo magic effect that he received for the holidays. Michael Dimsdle met with Andrew Deruiter from whom he received the red and blue dragon back card decks. He also received a "Brass Monkey," a mental magic piece. He discussed verbal coding in mentalism work. He received a Jay Fortune print of Larry Heil, our 2013 past president.

From Christmas magic to "News Resolutions," several members offered their pledges: Mike Smith and Geoff Grimes introduced the idea for the club's annual public magic show, a tribute to Mark Wilson and Nani Darnell. Michael Dimsdle is working on a book of fifty illusions. Ron Wilson asked us to resolve to get our membership rebuilt this year. Derek Kennedy is thinking about restarting the live "Second. Saturday" magic sales at Magic Etc. in Fort Worth. This represents a good idea to learn about our club. Steve Darilek suggested that we create a club postcard for mailing.

Magical performances closed the evening. Randi Rain stepped up to perform an illustration with a dollar "Bill to Orange." She introduced a "transmitter that breaks up the bill, shoots it across the room as energy, and then remanifests itself inside an orange." Unlocking the "transmitter," she aimed the magical "beam" at the orange extended in Michael's hand. It wheezed, and howled, and wound up to a point of penetrating screech, popped a (lightening) bolt, and shot itself into the ether!

Michael Dimsdle offered to perform some restaurant work with cards. Introducing a "blank" deck, he changed the back to red, took suggestions for number/face cards at random, the imaginary cards materialized in his hands. He explained his switch from a blank back deck to a full deck, generating the appearance of a magical transformation!

George Ferrin explained "Card CSI," a project he has been developing. Michael Stein selected a card that George returned to spread deck, revealing one card with streaks of blood. He went on the investigative trek to find the "murderous" card. Now, turned bloody, accept Michael Stein's selection, the "J-Hearts," the alleged murderous card.

Michael Stein reviewed Martin Lewis' *Making Magic* and its corresponding DVD. Highly recommended. He also reviewed one of Jim Steinmeyer's admonitions, that effective magic must be made "personal," artists are expert at deception in the small details and elements of an artistic product to create "effective fantasy." Michael noted that magicians are no different than other artists in that all are experts at deception.

The meeting adjourned after announcing the topic for the February meeting, "When does the show begin?"
Dr. Geoffrey Grimes

RING 16, MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE – Society of Memphis Magicians

Meets 1st Tue., 7:00pm Memphis Botanic Gardens, 750 Cherry Rd.

KATHY KALAGIAS, Secretary

Web sites: www.ring16.org / www.ring16magic.com

This month's Ring 16 meeting had a good attendance with one visitor, Jim Eubanks. He said that he had practiced magic in the past but had stepped away from it for a while. He is now "getting back into magic again," which is always a great thing to hear from a fellow magic colleague. One of Memphis' great magic entertainers was Richard Oakley. He had a long magic history and was an inspiration to many magicians in the area. Jim Eubanks sent me a link to a video of Richard Oakley's memorial that was put together by Ring 16 member John Sorrell, who did a wonderful job with the slideshow. Ring 16 thanks you John Sorrell and Jim Eubanks!

During the business portion of our meeting, we discussed our upcoming lecturer, Chris Philpott! We're all very excited to host him. Most of our Ring 16 members are mentalists, so you can understand what a thrill this will be. I believe I personally have everything he has produced, and there's not a bad apple in the lot. We also discussed possible lecturers Matthew Garrett and Bill Wisch!

After the business part of the meeting had finished, we proceeded to some performances. Dr. Jon Stanford did an exceptional job with his "Boo Boo Bar" routine. The routine itself was funny in his handling, and the surprise ending was quite humorous. Jeffrey Day presented "One Card Poker," which is what the title suggests. Using just one card for each player, a game of poker is played. Considering that the magician never touches the deck after the routine starts, it has everyone wondering "how is that possible?" This effect is by Chad Long, with suggestions by Ben Earl, Jay Ose, and Harry Lorayne. Doug Green (winner of last month's SMMURFFF award) showed us all his mystifying version of a "Drawing Duplication"

effect. He always adds a bit of humor to his magic, which is always appreciated.

Much thanks to all the members who came to this April meeting, Jeffrey Day, Michael Clayton, Richard Hiller, Mike Waits, Bill Canaday, Jon Stanford, Grayson, Smith, Jim Eubanks, and Doug Green.

If you are going to be in the Memphis area and would like to attend our Ring 16 meeting, contact anyone one of our officers to get details of time and place. You can go to our website by going to www.ring16magic.com. Once there, you can get all kinds of information regarding performances, lectures, meetings, and Magic Jams.

Jeffrey Day

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)

PARKER WILLIAM, President / Web site: www.IBMRing19.com

Oh, April – our first in-person meeting sans winter outerwear! Our usual stalwart group was joined by Mike Barnard and Harry Entwistle who ventured south from Duluth (where they still have tons of snow).

We spent the next three hours entertaining each other with card tricks, coin tricks, and rope tricks. We are continuing with our tradition of showing an effect and then waiting to reveal the secrets or explain how it is done until we've given everyone an opportunity to figure it out for themselves, which is half of the fun!

Jack Boyd shared that he finished the Chavez Course and will be putting together a video presentation as his final project. Jack shared a few card effects for the group including an ace assembly trick.

Mike Barnard shared a trick by Ryan Pilling whereby a playing card is passed through a small cut-out square in a piece of paper, without manipulating the card (folding, rolling, tearing) in anyway. Mike also presented his version of "Undue Influence" based on Simon Aronson's Undue Principle.

John Harrell brought in a large spool of rope and Tyler Erickson shared his methods for creating the appropriate lengths for "Professor's Nightmare." We all assisted with the coring and tucking exercise! We also discussed Karroll Fox's rope count from *Clever as a Fox*. John Harrell performed his "Ring on String" and other rope tricks (well, why not, he had all of that rope with him).

Rick Hinrichs wowed us with his "Pen through Rubber Band" trick and performed "Ace" by Richard Sanders with Harry Entwistle.

Dan Norat, in a nod to the late, great Harry

Lorayne, performed some card magic with Fast Eddie Olson.

Fast Eddie, then performed a prediction card trick and also shared some coin assembly tricks. This let into a discussion of obtaining coins and where to find soft or unique coins for magic work.

We ended the meeting by discussing the Glide and Tyler Erickson shared an ace routine utilizing the move. We also talked about self-working magic and how important it is to understand the principle of the trick in order to offer an effective presentation. To round out the live meeting, we shared ideas about how to utilize items around us to build routines and tricks. Pick a topic of interest – animals? You can use cards with animals on them or stuffed animals as props – perhaps create a character fashioned after a zookeeper? Interested in automobiles or gardening? Exploring a passion and how to fit magic and items that go with those topics/passion. Being creative is half of the fun.

Our Monday Zoom meeting opened up with a talk about the passing of magician and memory expert Harry Lorayne. David Hansen performed an effect out of Harry Lorayne's *The Magic Book*, where two shoelaces link mysteriously behind your head. He followed this with another Harry Lorayne effect called the "Force Sandwich," which for some mysterious reason does not use a force.

Tyler Erickson performed a sandwich routine inspired by Jay Sankey and Harry Lorayne.

Rick Hinrichs shared a card balancing on the hand effect by Losander. He talked about ways to carry and retrieve the gimmick.

Andrew Miller reviewed different types of loops on the market, which led to a discussion about their uses. He also offered the merits of hookups with other types of thread.

Tyler did a card routine by using jacks for our spectator Jack. He cut to the jacks, turned them in to aces then back to jacks. No one saw the move that accomplished this! Magic! Tyler followed this with a "Coin to Pocket" routine.

Andrew Miller shared the "Egg Bag" routine he is working on and asked the group for ideas of what items can be substituted for an egg.

Tyler once again performed and showed a new way for catching a break that was very deceptive and sure fire. Then he went on to perform a new version of Sam Walton's "Smiling Mule" followed by a blank deck effect.

President Parker William, in honor of Harry Lorayne, performed a memory feat where he was given a verbal list of twenty random items. He was then able to recite them back, whilst also listing an item selected at random, based on

where the item landed on the list. As always, an entertaining time was had by all!

Jennifer Graham

RING 22, METRO DETROIT, MICHIGAN – The Warren Stephens Ring

Meets 3rd Tue., 7:15 pm – Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, 749 W. 14 Mile Rd., Clawson, MI 48017

JOHN "JOHNNY NEW YORK" SMITH, President

Email: jonsmi7646@gmail.com

Our March 21st meeting was packed with magicians! There were forty-eight magicians in attendance, and we ran the spectrum from full time magicians to first time attendees and even some brand-new members. And it was going to be a memorable night with a lecture, a little discussion, a spotlight performance by a magician who makes all of their own effects and routines, and our usual open stage for performances.

Our Ring 22 President Johnny New York started us off with some brief but important announcements about Michigan Magic Day and other area magic events. Johnny then announced that some of our members had done really well at some of the regional magic conventions the past month. Eric Bedard placed first at the Colon Close-up magic Convention, Dreygon Hibbler placed second at the Pigeon Forge, and Ferran Poage did really well in that contest too.

Our Spotlight performer for tonight's meeting was Ken Foley. Ken is an amazing magician, and he makes and creates all of his own effects and props! Ken had an unusual entry into magic in that there were no magicians where Ken grew up so the only time he saw a magician was on TV when Doug Henning had a special once a year. So, Ken had to learn all of his magic from books in the library and also had to make all of his own props.

Ken started off with an effect where he showed a small bag empty and then produced a small stand with a U.S. flag on it and a red silk, then another small stand with U.S.A. on it and a white silk, and finally another small stand with a map of the U.S. on it and a blue silk. And all from the same empty bag. Ken then placed the red silk, white silk, and red silk back into the empty bag and produced several mis-made U.S. flags until he produced a correct one! Ken ended the effect with bunching up the mis-made flags and the U.S. flag and producing a giant silk with God Bless America on it.

Ken then did a rubber band effect with two bands that is similar to the "Chinese Handcuffs" routine but continued on by making several different forms with the two rubber bands in his hands including the Eiffel Tower, the Leaning Tower of Pisa, a star within a star, and several more. He then ended with the bands forming a

shooting star and when he relaxed the bands, one of them had taken on the form of a star.

Ken then introduced his wife Janice, and he twirled a large diameter spiral and after looking at it his wife's head appeared larger, but when he reversed it her head shrunk back to normal size! Ken then twirled another spinner he had made and when he stopped it, Janice's head had fallen to the middle of her chest! It was very entertaining.

Ken then did several different card cuts and that led to a card routine that produced a matching card to ones a spectator had chosen. Ken ended his show with placing a box on his wife's head and shoving ten to twelve arrows through the box, showing that his wife's head had actually vanished, and then after he pulled the arrows out, his wife's head had returned. Ken was great and Janice was just an amazing assistant for him!

Tom McCormick, one of our members, then showed us an elevated platform he made for the club for close-up magic effects and demonstrated using it to perform a triangle effect where several pieces made up a triangle but when he removed one of the pieces, he could still make the same size triangle! Thanks Tom!

Chris Philpott then gave us a preview of his upcoming magic lecture tour. Chris has some great experience as a movie producer and writer and also creates magic. Chris demonstrated three of his effects and then explained them including cutting through several pieces of a looped rope and then restoring the rope, a matching card routine, and a card routine where two spectators chose cards from a shuffled deck and end up having chosen the card that their first name was written on the back. Chris is very creative!

It was now time for our open stage and Benny Kirshner started us off with showing us a ventriloquist's puppet that was made many years ago by John Osborn. Benny thought it was over fifty years old. Dreygon Hibbler was next and did an effect where he showed his notebook in which he wrote ideas in and showed us an envelope drawn on one of the pages. He asked a spectator to name a celebrity and he then pulled the envelope of the page (it turned orange when he did that!) and then he opened the envelope and pulled out a picture of the person that was named – Johnny Depp!

Bill Brang then showed two banners that rolled up and looked like magic wands but when they were unfurled it was a picture of a leprechaun and an Irish fairy that a boy or girl could stand behind and have their face appear on for a picture.

Bob Whitford then did a super quick Blackjack routine where the folded-up ace in his hand turns into the Nine of Clubs and the ace is now his down card, so he got twenty-one to win.

Then one of our guests, Anthony, did a card routine where a spectator selects the only actual card from a blank deck.

Keith Fields (our Artistic Director) then did a very humorous "Rising Card" routine where every card rises one by one out of a card box. It was hilarious.

And then finally our President, Johnny New York, closed out the performance with a card effect in which a deck of cards is split up among eight spectators and each spectator is then asked to think of one of the cards in their hand. The cards are then returned and shuffled by another spectator and given back to Johnny. Johnny then goes through the deck naming off the cards in sets of five or more and when one of the spectators says he hears his card in the group just read, Johnny names the card he was thinking of. Amazing and very mysterious!

Well, time had flown by again and another meeting was over. This is why I always so look forward to a Ring 22 monthly meeting. Every meeting is like a mini convention and our attendance keeps on growing. And after the meeting a bunch of magicians head over the Hideout Pub for what we call "The Afterglow," where there is more magic and conversations about just about anything. You are more than welcome to join us as we meet the third Tuesday of every month. Visitors are always welcome, just contact John Smith at the email above.

Norm Cattell

RING 26, NEW YORK, NEW YORK – Harry Roz-On Ring

Meets Last Fri. each month at 7:30pm at Musician Union Bldg. 322

West 48th St., NYC / Web site: www.80-20.org/meeting

JAMES R. STRANGES, President

E-mail:

magicjim@optonline.net

March 2023 and "We're Back!" After some time away from each other due to the pandemic, many members made their way to our new meeting place to see some live close-up magic.

Before the start of the meeting everyone took the opportunity to chat and catch up with each other's past years' experiences and adventures. A couple of visitors were introduced and welcomed to the meeting and a few housekeeping points were discussed.

First up was, Past President and the night's emcee, Frank Reyes. After inviting two members of the audience to join him at the close-up table, Frank had one of the members shuffle a deck, select any five cards from the deck and hand them to him. Frank then tore the five cards in half and proceeded to perform, "Will the Cards Match?" After the faced down cards were

divided and paired based on the spelling of the words, "Will the Cards Match?" he revealed that the halves matched their mates. He followed up the routine with "Smith's Myth."

Past President Rene Clement was introduced next. Rene had a spectator think of a card and commit it to memory. Rene, with deck in hand, asked if the card was black or red? After the spectator responded "red," Rene then asked if it was a diamond or heart? Diamond. Finally, Rene asked for the value which the spectator revealed was a nine. Rene then produced the Nine of Diamonds from the deck. What made this astounding? Rene showed the rest of the deck was not only blank on its back but also on its face. Rene ended with a mind reading effect involving pages from a book which were distributed to various members of the audience and having one spectator look at a page and remember a word. Rene next wrote down a prediction which, when revealed, did not make any sense. But he then explained that his prediction was actually instructions for another spectator to turn to a page, go to a line, and look at a word. That word matched the word that the first spectator looked at.

Resident coin manipulator, Sheldon Lippman was next up with a beautiful coin assembly which was accompanied by a story involving a recent dining experience. Coins invisibly moved, gathered, vanished, and re-set in a very entertaining manner. Sheldon ended with a surprise finish which will not be revealed here. You just have to have been there.

"The Man Who Knows Too Much" a.k.a. "New York City's Favorite Mind Reader," a.k.a. Tommy Burnett, was next at the table. Armed with a deck of Tarot cards, Tommy had one spectator divide the deck in two piles and had another spectator remove a certain number of cards from one of the piles. After revealing the suns and moons markings on the cards, Tommy revealed a prior prediction. Tommy shared a neat aspect of the routine to those present. Again, you had to be there.

Visitor and hopefully future member, Adrien Pierard, volunteered to perform a couple of effects. Adrien started off with a beautiful "Coin and Handkerchief" routine wherein the coin appeared, vanished, and re-appeared. He finally ended the routine by causing the coin to visibly penetrate through the handkerchief. Adrien ended with a very nice card effect.

Robert Wallner followed with his published effect called "Pile On." Rob invited a spectator to shuffle a red deck of cards and to deal the cards face down into two piles. The spectator was then asked to choose a pile. The spectator

was then told to turn over the top card of the selected pile. The spectator was then given a sealed envelope. Upon opening the sealed envelope, the spectator revealed one blue backed prediction card which matched the selected red card. Excellent.

Frank was up again with a coin prediction. James O'Brien volunteered to assist when Frank asked if anyone had any change in their pockets. James was instructed to shake the coins in his hand and drop them to the table. That done, James was instructed to remove the coins that were showing tails and to continue the process until one coin was left. Frank had a prediction showing on a card. When all was done, Frank not only predicted the value of the coin that remained but also the year of the coin.

Current S.A.M. Parent Assembly President and Ring 26 member Sterling Lee was up next with an amazing version of the "Three Fly" coin routine. Three coins held at Sterling's fingertips were seen to "fly" from one hand to another in open view. Very nicely done.

Doc Sasko stepped up with a very clever effect. With the help of a spectator, Doc displayed several cards depicting works of art. The spectator was asked to look at one of the cards and concentrate on the image. Doc picked up a small sketch pad and displayed a blank page. With a small spray bottle in hand, Doc sprayed the page and an image slowly started to appear. The image was the Mona Lisa, the image the spectator mentally selected.

We were surprised by an impromptu performance by one of the audience members. Magick Balay, owner of New York's newest magic shop, Don't Blink, closed the evening. Magick has lectured for many groups and even has a lecture on Penguin Magic as an instant download. It is enough to say that he is one of the best, if not the best, demonstrator of all time. Magick brought up a spectator and had him pick a card from a blue backed shuffled deck and sign the card. Another card was selected to find the signed card. The card selected was a red backed card. After some shuffling, the red backed card located the signed card. But that was not the best part. The best part was that the signature that was on the blue backed card was now on the red backed card. Magick followed this routine with the selection of a card, signed and vanished from the deck only to appear folded in an Altoids tin.

All in all, a great meeting. Thanks to all who came down and performed. Thanks to Jeff and Adrien for coming to join us. Thanks to Wendy Pincus for taking notes of the evening activities

and making my job easier. For photos of the evening, visit us on Facebook, IBM Ring 26.

Frank Reyes

RING 29, LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS – Little Rock Magic Ring

Meets 1st Thur. each month, 6:45 pm., Conference Center at Baptist Hospital, Little Rock, AR. / Web site: www.LittleRockMagic.org
MARTY HAUGHN, Secretary

Little Rock Magic Ring 29 members and guests gathered for a very special visit from a Ring friend. We all met at the Stagecoach Village clubhouse, thank you Bob White, and spent the evening with two very funny and excellent magicians, Tom Burgoon and Todd Lamanske.

After a little business presented by Ring Vice President, Joel Nicholson, the torch was handed over to Jim "Mr. Magic" Henson for the introduction. Jim and Tom have known each other for many years and have a little comedic banter between them. Tonight, was no different. Jim had some great one-liners that got everyone in the mood.

Tom opened with his corporate comedy opener called "Crazy Eyes." I'm not sure how many really expected to see what they saw but it got some good laughs. If you have not attended a lecture by Tom Burgoon, you are missing out on some great fun and crazy magic. Tom's lecture consisted of so many different things it would be difficult to list them here and they came at you at a rapid fire which made things even funnier. Some of his most memorable comedy bits that come to mind consists of one of my favorites, "Chicken Delite." You had to be there. Truly unexpected and very funny bit. Another favorite that I have seen Tom perform with kids is his balloon and change bag routine. Although we had no kids at the lecture, we found one who is a kid at heart, Treasurer James Kinsey. This is a routine which was performed at this year's Cavalcade of Magic by Paul Carlon. Very funny indeed.

It wasn't long before Tom turned the show, I mean, lecture, over to Todd Lamanske. Todd was on *Penn & Teller: Fool Us* about five or six years ago. The card routine he performed on the show was pretty darned good. You'll have to look it up on YouTube to check it out and the results. Todd demonstrated some of his gems like "The Time Machine" with the assistance of member Dan Hecke. By starting and stopping the time machine (one minute hourglass timer) Todd and Dan were able to move back and forth in time using a deck of cards. Interesting and entertaining. Todd's "Copper Silver" routine was an eye grabber as he used an English penny and a half dollar. Sweet and simple yet complicated for the mind to track down.

Further demonstrations by Todd were an easy fix for the perfect “Mercury Fold,” and his Penn and Teller routine. For the latter, his volunteer was Tammy Haughn. A gamble was made by Todd stating he would give Tammy a dollar, which he laid out for display, if the trick did not work. Todd stated that the card chosen would be the Ace of Diamonds. First, the cards were mixed, and Tammy was asked to begin dealing the cards face up and in the process she was to stop anywhere she liked. The next card was kept face down and placed on her pile. She then continued dealing the now face up pack onto the face down card and was to look for her card.

Well, her card never surfaced which made everyone suspicious about the face down card. Todd took the pile, straightened them and spread them face down on the table. What was found shocked everyone including Tammy, it was the predicted card! Impressive and a lot of fun but he wasn’t finished yet. The dollar he had placed on the table, on the back, written in large bold letters, was the Ace of Diamonds.

The lecture was then turned back to Tom and more craziness followed. Some of the crowd favorites were the “Master Blaster,” a “Pop-up Glove” that found cards, bending spoons on cards, “Baby Wallet,” and “Baby Card.” One of Tom’s classics, and a favorite of mine, is “Snake Eyes.” Susan Bucher was asked to assist with looking at dice that when shook in the cupped hands of Tom, Susan was to identify the number shown as Tom tried guessing. Of course, he was wrong on all counts but one lucky guess. When he called out snake eyes, meaning two ones, Susan peaked into the cupped hands only to be greeted by a snake! Her reaction and expression said it all.

Overall, we were pleased that Tom and Todd took time out of their busy schedules to make a special trip to Little Rock just to lecture for us. Time spent with these two gentlemen was invaluable and I do believe they made some new friends and visited with some old ones (so to speak) as well. It was a great night for Ring 29.

Marty Haughn

RING 31, MADISON, WISCONSIN – Ben Berger Ring

Meets 1st Wed. each month, 6:30pm.at the Sequoia Public Library,
4340 Tokay Blvd., Madison, WI.
WAYNE PETERSON, Ring Contact
(608) 274-9411 / E-mail: magic@waynethewizard.com
Website: www.ibmring31.com
<http://www.facebook.com/BenBerger.IBMRing31>

The February 2023 meeting of Ring 31 opened with a summary of the Magifest convention from several members who attended. We next discussed the initiative for the Ring to “mix things up” by having a mini convention for our

April meeting. We are hoping to break up the routine a bit and do a few of these each year. There are different segments planned, including Move Monkey, a member spotlight, a book review, teach a trick, a dealer demo, and a mini lecture. I will report on how things went and the club members’ thoughts once we have the event.

Ben Talbot led off “Audience Does a Trick” by Al Leach from his Parade in *The Linking Ring*. Ben always says that you should read the Parades in *The Linking Ring* – that there is some gold in them.

Dr. Lynn Miner explained that the hand is not quicker than the eye, it is the sensitivity of the magician’s hands that is key. It was interesting to see how Lynn moved from a four-ace production into “Out of This World.”

Mark Pepelea performed “ESP Match” where he tapped into the collective consciousness of the room and made a closed prediction of which number (one through five) the group would assign to five ESP cards. Because it is a great club, Mark was successful in predicting which ESP symbol card would be assigned to which number with all five cards matching.

Wayne Peterson had Ed Reid select a card by riffing through deck and having Ed say stop. The single card was shown to Ed, and he memorized it. Wayne then pulled four cards from the deck and placed them in Ed’s hand. The cards were joined together and when the assembly was unfolded, it was a large version of Ed’s card. Wayne also shared a hot rod trick that was in the form of a pen. He closed his segment with a “Torn and Restored Tissue” that was restored into a thumb puppet.

Tal Kunz performed David Regal’s “Memento.”

Dan Feaster closed the performance with the Geneve prediction watch.

As always, it was a wonderful time sharing magic with friends.

Ring 31’s March meeting started with discussion of upcoming magic happenings. We also talked about our upcoming mini convention for our April meeting. As a teaser for the mini convention, Wayne Peterson delivered a short lecture on the different magic wands in his collection. He presented breakaway wands, tippie top-ple wands (including one that had disappearing polka dots), a wand that takes a bow, snake wands (David Ginn), rising wands, color changing wands, light up wands, tear apart wands, flower from wand, fishing wand, silly wand (Silly Billy), multiplying wands and of course a *Harry Potter* wand. Whew! Wayne didn’t even bring all his wands – he left the giant ones at home.

Tal Kunz opened the performance part of the meeting with a coughed-up donut a la Past International President Oscar Muñoz. In a version of “Gemini Twins” the backs of the cards were shown to be the only two bicycle backed cards in the deck.

Ben Talbot performed the “Imagine” card trick that he learned when he was ten years old.

Mark Pepelea performed the seven-card trick which is a variation of Jim Steinmeyer’s “Nine Card Problem.”

Jim Sandstrom was next with a trick he called “Jumping Jacks.”

Dan Feaster was next with a variation of the “Phil Deck.”

Dr. Lynn Miner closed the evening with a performance of the three-coin trick with four coins taught to him by Eugene Burger.

As always, it was great to gather with fellow magi. The hybrid in person/Zoom format is working well and allows more members to participate in our meetings. *Mark Pepelea*

RING 43, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS – Harlan Tarbell Ring

3rd Fri. except July and August, 7:30 p.m., at St. Francis Hospital, S. Conference Room, First Floor, 355 Ridge Ave., Evanston, IL 60202
MIKE KAMLET, President / E-mail: kamlet@ameritech.net
175 E. Delaware #8502, Chicago, IL 60611 / (312) 266-2129
Web site: www.ring43.org

Attendance is picking up at the meetings and those who can’t make it are increasingly taking advantage of our Zoom meeting link. We had a number of guests at the meeting: Johnathan Kohler, Jay Basso, and Jake Bozsmán. Kevin Owens opened the meeting and after a few announcements, introduced President Mike Kamlet who did a Front Table on presentation. For each of the effects presented in the first half the group brainstormed on ways to improve the effect, its presentation, handling, etc.

Mike Kamlet began the section on presentation. He wrote “peanut butter and jelly” on a sticky note, tore it up and, when he restored it, it now read “jelly and peanut butter.” He went over the mechanics of how to do the effect and then we brainstormed on how to present it. Lynn Miner chipped in with a whole list of compound words, the best of which was “Beaver Dam.”

John Hutsebaut showed a simple tennis ball production from an empty gift bag and went over the mechanics of the move and several variations on the theme.

Brielle Kawalek picked Terrence Hunter to assist. She had a pack of cards with famous movies and Terrence picked one. He named several movies and when he said *Shawshank Redemption*, she claimed that the inflection of his voice indicated that that was his movie. He confessed that she was correct. Again, the group

brainstormed on different presentations for the effect.

Terrence Hunter went next. Terrence explained that among his other talents, he was an influencer. He had a clear plastic bag full of slips. He let Jonathan and Jay each pick a slip. They chose a banana and an orange. Terrence produced a lemon which he changed to a wadded-up piece of yellow paper (“Super Lemon”). When he un-wadded it, the paper had a picture of an orange and a banana.

Mike did another effect where he said criminals were now targeting magicians, unlinking their rings, cutting their rope and not restoring it, etc. Mike had Johnathan draw some graffiti on a card (4D). He then caused the graffiti card to vanish from the deck and appear in the box. He showed the card was, in fact, the graffitied card. He then caused the graffiti to disappear and finished “clean.”

Terrence said they were coming out with a new GI Joe with a kung fu grip that was also a magician, and he could produce a card fan from nowhere. He demonstrated by instantly producing a fan of cards.

Andrea Solembergo explained how to answer when spectators ask, “How did you do that?” The best answer came from Picasso who asked a critic “Have you ever heard a songbird singing? Did you like it? Did you understand it? That bird’s song is magic.”

After a few stretching exercises, and a few announcements by Mike, we did our A. B. C. “Anything But Cards” portion.

Brielle went first with a trick from her Halloween show. She showed three “haunted objects,” a key that belonged to an actress named Ethyl, a C.I.A. challenge coin, and a vial of corn. Kevin volunteered to assist with the spirits. He kept one object in his hand, put one in his pocket, and handed her the third. Brielle then showed her prediction which correctly showed the location of each object.

John Hutsebaut did his “Scrunchy Rabbit Production.” He sipped from a coffee cup with a sealable lid and proclaimed, “Waiter, there’s a hair in my coffee!” whereupon the top popped off and an eighteen-inch toy rabbit popped out of the cup! He also showed a DVD case titled *Butterflies* that, when opened, released a number of mechanical butterflies!

Johnathan showed how everything was connected with the help of Mike and Jay. He pulled out a pack of matches. He lit the match, blew it out, then grabbed the smoke with his hand and pretended to eat it. He then opened his mouth and blew out a plume of smoke. He then put the ashes in Mike’s palm and had Jay slowly open

his hand and show he had the same ash marks on his palm.

Andrea did a three-coin routine for Jay. The three coins were placed in his fist and then one was produced from his elbow, one from his knee, and one from his neck.

Martin Mercy picked Brielle to assist. She was a princess, and he was the handsome prince. He showed a slip of paper with a pair of kissing lips on it. He lit it on fire, and it vanished to be replaced by a Hershey Candy Kiss.

Mike showed a Tenyo trick where a cleaning cloth performed a nice effect.

Daryl Rogers (via Zoom) mentioned that they had published his book of easy to do card tricks. He then did a rope routine where he instantly tied three knots in a rope. He removed one by untying it, one by blowing it away, and the last he slid off the rope and tossed away. He then showed that the rope was now unknottable as he tied several knots that untied themselves.

Terrence got Johnathan to clench his fists. He then showed a picture of a hand and had various people draw on it. When Johnathan opened his left fist, there was a black spot on Johnathan's palm.

After the meeting members met at a Mexican restaurant for food and fellowship.

John Hutsebaut

RING 44, PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND – William E. Baker Ring

Meets 1st Wed. each month from Sept. to June, 7:00 p.m., at the VFW Hall, 354 Fruit Hill Avenue, North Providence, RI 02911
JEFF SMITH, President / 79 Weeden Rd., Fairhaven, MA 02719
Contact: JeffSmith-RISM@comcast.net

Money, Money, Money! That was the theme for February's meeting at Ring 44. Regardless of one's proficiency, be it changing a one-dollar bill into a one-hundred-dollar bill or plucking a quarter out of a child's ear, all were welcome to participate.

President Larry Stangel started things off with Paul Curry's "Penny For Your Thoughts." He followed that with John Cornelius's "Vanishing Nickel."

Next up was Jeff Smith who visually turned a dollar bill into a credit card. Then he "printed" a dollar bill using the Delben Blotter.

Corkey LaVallee's Gnome's Hat was the hit of the night (in this author's humble opinion).

Corkey was followed by Dennis Pimenta who performed "Casino Coinsz" and his famous "Five Bill Repeat."

Closing out the pre-break set was Stan Skrabut who demonstrated his handling of the Okito Coin Box.

After a refreshment break Rob Martin and Dave Hill each performed and discussed their

handling of Nick Diffatte's "Play Money." Dave also performed "Slow Burn/Extreme Burn" by Richard Sanders.

Jeff Smith baffled everyone, including himself, with the mysterious Bermuda Triangle coin trick.

Mark Thomas' "Two Coin Illusion," a stage size Hopping Half routine, was the finale of the evening.

At the conclusion of the meeting, President Larry Stangel presented a certificate and pin from S.A.M. National President Rod Chow to Bob LeBlanc for reaching twenty-five years of membership in the national society. A fine evening of magic and sharing was enjoyed by all.
Jeff Smith

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 kicked off our April meeting by performing a routine with a miniature baseball bat and baseball. He performed a "flurry" type effect and ended with the bat and ball both vanishing. Cassidy then attempted a book test with a book titled *The Word of God*. Rick Martin chose a word from the book and Cassidy divined the word "Jesus." Not the right word, but Cassidy asked, "Wouldn't it have been a miracle had I been right?"

Our theme for the evening was "Let's Make Magic," which has been one of our most popular themes over the years. Members are taught new tricks, often with "some assembly required," and go home with new props and routines.

Cassidy Smith taught the principle of the "Eight Card Brainwave" and provided several variations. David Teeman taught an effect where a participant chooses one of four aces and the magician shows that it is the only card with a blue back, while the other three aces have red backs. Best of all, the magician ends clean, and the playing cards may be examined.

Inspired by Thomas Henry's "Rediscovering the Buddha Papers" article in the February 2023 issue of *The Linking Ring*, Lee Woodside supplied all the materials for making up this timeless miracle. Lee themed his effect around a 1939 quote by Winston Churchill that Russia is like "a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma." Lee added "puzzle" as a fourth layer and noted that the papers remind him of nesting Russian dolls.

Grant Vincent gave us a brief review of his experiences at the annual Cavalcade of Magic in Eureka Springs, Arkansas. He said that it was his first ever magic convention, and he had a wonderful time and bought a few things from the vendors

in the awesome dealer room.

Gary Trosper gave a review of the book *Magic is Dead*, by Ian Frisch. He said that it gave an inside look at an organization of card magicians which included quite a few people that many magicians are familiar with. He also said that the book is available through our Metro Library.

Lee Woodside offered copies of our Ring's annual *Grimoire* on flash drives and sold out. He promised to bring more to the next meeting.

David Teeman removed a deck of playing cards from a wrapper that had pictures of a face up deck with one face down card. He had visitor Calli Brasier select a playing card from the deck. He asked if the card she selected was among the face up cards on the sheet. When she said, "No," he said that meant that the face down card had to be hers. When she appeared skeptical, he turned the sheet over and showed that the one face up card was now her selected card. He said that Bob Caldwell had made this for him.

Michael King invited Calli and her sister Molly to assist him "on stage." He showed a ribbon and four Chinese coins and proceeded to perform amazing magic, sometimes right in the girls' hands. The coins melted off the ribbon. It was a charming routine. (Inside pun intended.)

Kevin Brasier turned on a table lamp. He borrowed a one-dollar bill from Michael King and recorded the serial number. When the bill vanished, the lamp went out. Kevin unscrewed the light bulb and showed that there was a bill inside. He wrapped the bulb in a bandanna and shattered the bulb. Sure enough, the serial number on the bill matched what was written down.

Cassidy Smith performed a sponge ball routine using miniature basketballs. He then went from "Conjuring Cassidy" to "Cowboy Cassidy" and demonstrated his expertise with spinning a rope a la Oklahoma's own hero Will Rogers. He next demonstrated several trick knots. He finished by having a playing card selected and returned to the deck. He dribbled the cards into a paper sack and used a rope to lasso the selected card.

The names of the performers were placed into a hat and two names were drawn. David Teeman became the proud owner of signed lecture notes and Kevin Brasier took home a card magic DVD.

Lee Woodside

RING 48, PEORIA, ILLINOIS – Harold Martin Ring

Meets 3rd Mon. 7:00 pm, Peoria Pizza Works, 3921 N. Prospect Rd., Peoria Heights, IL. Website: peoriamagicians.com
MICHAEL BAKER, Secretary / E-mail: themagiccompany@aol.com

The March meeting began with President Rodney Nordstrom opening discussions regarding various business topics. These included the Riverfront market, where the members will perform on the first and third Saturdays through the

summer, the upcoming banquet in April, the HOI Fair, and upcoming conventions such as Abracorndabra, and CIMGT.

We then introduced ourselves to our guests, a mom and dad with two young sons. The older son, JT performed his first trick in front of our group. He was given a lot of praise and encouragement.

Michael Baker enlisted JT's help with an impromptu saltshaker through the table. Ian Munk succeeded in finding a selected card, and Walter Smith had a pair of jacks finding another pair of jacks. Yort made a silk scarf disappear and end up in someone's sleeve. He then made a quantity of salt disappear and reappear magically. Rodney Nordstrom was able to determine which hand held a quarter. Jim Cox then performed Chris Smith's "Ignition," a key through bill effect. Gambit performed "Art Attack," a really cool puzzle-type trick with a surprise ending. Phil Raso was able to correctly predict which coin a spectator would select. Michael Baker showed an optical illusion with a couple of coiled wires. Yort found a playing card that appeared stuck to his forehead. Finally, Gambit performed "Extreme Trilogy."

The rest of the meeting was devoted to fun magic discussion.

Michael Baker

RING 50, WASHINGTON, D.C. – The National Capital Ring

Meets 1st Wed. 7:30 pm, Lyceum, 201 S. Washington St., Alexandria, VA 22314 Web site: www.IBMRing50.org
CRAIG FIFER, President / E-mail: president@ibmring50.org
TOM BEUTNER, Secretary / E-mail: secretary@ibmring50.org

Ring 50's March meeting was held March 1, with thirty-six members attending. The evening featured a dealers' night. Three local magic dealers, Mike Hummer, Mike Rose, and Mike Kaminskas took turns showing their latest tricks, old favorites, and unique items available only from them. Some of the favorites from the evening included a new version of an old mind reading trick with a cube in a box, some new takes on paddle tricks, and some beautiful chop cups.

The evening allowed members to be entertained by the stage demonstrations, then leisurely talk with the presenters, handle the props, and in most cases, take a few home with them. And there was some extra time available for some members to perform their favorite routines for other attendees.

Tom Beutner

RING 56, EVANSVILLE, INDIANA – The Mystic IKI Ring

Meets 2nd. Mon. of month at home of Norris Priest, Henderson, KY
FRANK FINDLEY, Secretary
E-mail: secretary@ring56.com
Website: www.ring56.com

Twelve members and one guest attended our March meeting at the home of member Norris Priest.

President Joseph Franklin opened the meeting asking for member reports on recent conventions. The Winter Carnival of Magic was praised for having two strong shows, a packed dealers' room, and great giveaways for the attendees. Members were excited to hear the plans for the upcoming year and the following fiftieth anniversary convention. No members in attendance were able to attend the close-up convention in Colon, MI but several had heard very positive feedback. Members also discussed their plans to attend the upcoming Cavalcade of Magic convention in Eureka Springs, AR and the Real Magic Roadshow in nearby Indianapolis, IN. Several members expressed disappointment that the I.B.M. Annual Convention once again conflicts with the Vent Haven international Ventriloquist Convention.

The conversation then turned to recent member gigs. Joe gave an update on his emceeing of burlesque shows. Daniel Herron reported on some of his recent youth-oriented performances. Frank Findley shared experiences from his virtual Pi Day Mathemagic shows for schools. Frank also reported that birthday party bookings appeared to be returning to pre-Covid levels. Joe then told the group that planning for the annual Ring 56 benefit show at the Henderson Kentucky Tri-Fest had fallen behind schedule as contacts for the festival had changed. He will reach out to the newly identified liaison to finalize the date and time.

The performance theme for the month was "The search for the Holy Grail: Magic with Cups." Daniel kicked things off with an act that included an Airborne floating glass and a comedy rendition of Mizoguchi's "Tape Cup." Joe followed with a very smooth Chop Cup routine with a surprising double final load. Frank finished the performances with a "Best Ever Knots Off Silks (BEKOS)" with glass routine and his triple mind reading variation of Craig Petty's "EDCepts."

After the performances, Norris hosted an estate sale for a fellow magician who had retired from performing and was downsizing. Great deals were found on many quality items from close-up to stage magic. There was even a table covered with lecture notes from greats including General Grant, Steve Dusheck, Fukai, Dale Salwak, Tom Craven, Michael Close, and many others.

Frank Findley

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: ibmring58.com

VICTOR AGREDA, Jr., President / (865) 223-1401

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Talk about "March Madness" – the Ring hosted

a glorious Winter Carnival of Magic for the 48th year in Gatlinburg/Pigeon Forge, Tennessee on March 9-11, then had their normal meeting on the fourth Thursday ready to show off some magic of their own. We had seventeen members on hand including five participating via Zoom with the (Past International President and First Lady) Stratmans checking in just before showtime at Esther's Follies in Austin, Texas. Our Ring pride after the WCM is running high!

We kicked off the performances with Jim Stott's initiation performance. Jim has moved to Maryville from Kentucky, and graciously gifted the Ring over \$1000 worth of magic kits for the "swag bag" at the convention, then proved his talent as a magician and storyteller as he did a little "brain de-molecularization" first with a clear balloon and a long needle-like probe, then with our President Victor's head and a long sword that passed through. The Ring unanimously and quickly welcomed Jim to the Ring!

Our theme for the night was "Shadows" and our Vice President, Michael Messing, did a little demonstration of the "Gambler versus the Magician" and just "the shadow" of his hand. Michael went on to teach the trick which he first learned from the Garcia/Schindler *Magic with Cards*. Victor Agreda talked about Teller's beautiful shadow effect with a rose, then showed a very bright USB light and recommended trying the "Six Guests in Five Rooms" that Roberto Giobbi put on page two of *Secret Agenda*. Tom Vorjohan shared *PlayingCardDecks.com*, offered some black silk top hats, and talked about the Ginn book and a Ricki Dunn book called *Zapped!* about the electric chair effect.

Steve Jerden used Cayden Goodman's assistance with a glass, silk, ball, and coin instantaneous penetration (using a 1962 penny!). Bill Osburn let us see the light about almost losing his home to George Lucas back in the early '90s and shared a bit about the dark shadows of his legal fight. After he sold the surplus of Pat's Mats with the WCM logo to members attending the meeting, Jack Wilson "a shadow of his former self" performed "Magical Dozen" from Harry Lorayne's latest last book: *Essential Harry Lorayne*. Tom Raidy, also on Zoom, had a great shadowy presentation of the Ghost Key explaining that his granddaughter "has the key to my heart." With a wonderful set up of several effects, Bill Sturgis shared the story of a Princess and a Wizard, with an appearing and vanishing necklace, doves (silks) that vanished and reappeared, and the king's crown jewel that also vanished and reappeared back in the crown. It was a great evening – and month – of magic!

Tom Vorjohan

RING 59, NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT – Frederick Eugene Powell Ring

Meets 1st Mon. each month, 7:00 p.m. at 101 Oakview Dr, Trumbull, CT.
CJ MAY, Secretary / E-mail: cyril.may@aya.yale.edu
Web site: www.ibmring59.org

Willy Nilly with Silly Billy – The Greater New Haven Magic Society enlisted a powerful ally to jumpstart the return of magicians to in-person meetings and other gatherings. We brought David Kaye, a.k.a. Silly Billy, to deliver a lecture. We offered this free to all magicians and David worked his magic in bringing people together!

David's lecture style is an amazing counterpoint to his delightfully outrageous performing style. He approaches the art of performing for children with a very rational approach and his lecture carried that as well. He has gone so far as to measure the number of response interactions that he has with child audiences (call/response, laughter, do-as-I-do hand gestures, etc.) and proudly noted that he has seven per minute; one every nine seconds or so.

David performed some of his routines as a means to illustrate this important secret and so many other splendid tips on how to create better magic for children. *CJ May*

RING 60, AUSTIN, TEXAS – Carl Moore Ring

Meets 1st Mon., 7:00, at the IHOP, 11654 Research Blvd., Austin, Texas.
TRIXIE BOND, President / E-mail: trixie@trixiebond.com
Web site: www.ibmring60.org

I.B.M. Ring 60 gathered on April 10, 2023, and in keeping with an April Fool's Day perspective, met to enjoy the meeting topic of Gags, Gimmicks and Gotchas. It was an evening of levity and also of remembrances.

President Ken Dickensheets opened the meeting, welcomed guests, and announced upcoming Ring and magic events. Each month at the start of the meeting, a Ring member teaches a trick to the group. Tricia Heil Davis used a Mene Tekel Deck to teach a variation of a card prediction and transporting effect.

Next, we held a free drawing for vintage magic effects donated by Jim Gentil from the magic collection of his late father, magician Alvin Gentil.

This year, Ring 60 has embarked on an exploration of the Ring's history. Tricia Heil Davis presented part two of the series, with a brief presentation about magician Herman Yerger. Herman Yerger was born in Rangoon, Burma, and immigrated to the United States in 1909. He became a fulltime magician in Brooklyn in 1928 and was known at that time as the Human Volcano, performing on Coney Island. Yerger recovered from a devastating tightrope accident in 1923, only to be struck down by muscular

influenza in 1928. He moved to Austin, Texas and ran the Patent Medicine Drug Store on Red River, near his magic tent show. In 1945, working with Dr. Carl Moore and others, Yerger helped bring to life the first full scale Texas Magic Convention in Austin, Texas on September 2 and 3, 1945. Heralded as the Wheelchair Magician, after years of performing and zealously contributing to the magic community in Central Texas, Yerger died in 1962. He was celebrated in the February, 1965 edition of *The Linking Ring* with a memorial conclave book. Tricia brought copies of many of the sources for her presentation for those members interested in learning more.

After the history presentation, we fittingly moved on to remember and honor the great magician and comedy writer Robert Orben, who passed in February 2023. Kent Cummins shared his personal history with Robert Orben, and the history of Orben's contributions to magic and his prolific comedy writings. Robert Orben was a master of one-liners and a brilliant creative talent. He wrote for many famous comedians such as Jack Paar, Red Skelton, Dick Gregory, as well as President Gerald Ford. Orben published *The Encyclopedia of Patter* in 1946 and went on to write numerous books including *Bits Boffs and Banter* and the *Emcee's Handbook*. He wrote a comedy newsletter through 1989 and continued working as a consultant to IBM.

Kent Cummins described the symbolism of the broken wand, and the meaning the ceremony holds for magicians. Chris Walden made a special wand for the occasion and worked with JD Stewart to enable the Broken Wand Ceremony to be viewed via Zoom by Robert Orben's family and friends. In a moving tribute, the ceremony proceeded, and the wand was broken for Robert Orben.

The evening's program of gags gimmicks and gotcha's was introduced by Tricia Heil Davis and her color changing silk scarf. First up, Dylan Love divined a name an audience member wrote on a playing card. He shared with the group his creative and expert handling of the trick behind the trick. Glen Watkins followed with tried-and-true gimmicked coins, a real crowd teaser and pleaser. Tricia Heil Davis demonstrated the connections and differences between science and magic by making a splash with an aerostatic glass of water. Peter the Adequate had the group in stitches with a "Professor's Nightmare" routine filled with comedy wands, gimmicks, and jokes. Peter's giant card prediction seemed to go wrong- but didn't! We were hooked!

The fantastic Kent Cummins used magic gags

and gimmicks in a story telling format to teach about the beauty of doing something nice, which makes the giver and recipient both feel good. Kent then hilariously turned a willing audience member into a rabbit.

Robert Castillo was up next and did the impossible, making corks appear and disappear, and cutting a playing card in such a manner that a person's hand and arm could pass through it. He stumped the audience with an arrangement of quarters into a triangle, challenging anyone to move three coins and point the triangle in a different direction. He ended his performance by cleverly changing a one-dollar bill into four quarters of a one-dollar bill!

Jim Gentil ended the program with a tribute to his father, magician Alvin Gentil. Alvin Gentil was an early force in magic in Texas, and in 1924 was reported in *The Sphinx* as the Assistant Director of the newly formed Texas Society of Magicians. He was an early member of the I.B.M., and Jim did him proud with captivating performances of the "Houdini Paper Tear" trick and a comedic card select trick.

We held one more drawing for lecture tapes and magic slates, again graciously donated by Jim Gentil. The evening ended with appreciation for our current fellowship, and gratitude for those that have gone before. *Tricia Heil Davis*

RING 63, GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA

Meets 1st Wed. monthly, 7:30pm, at the Commerce Club,
55 Beatttle Place, Greenville, SC 29601

PAUL DILELLA, Secretary / E-mail: magicmanpauld@yahoo.com
Web site: www.ring63.com

The March 2023 meeting of the International Brotherhood of Magicians Ring 63 was held at the Commerce Club in downtown Greenville, SC. The March meeting theme was Perform a New Trick.

Our first performer of the evening was Don Carpenter who performed an excellent four ace routine which culminated in a very unusual "McDonald's Aces" routine that many had never seen before. Jim Alexander, one of our newest members, performed a sponge ball routine producing an adorable little sponge bunny and his carrot too! Moving right along, John Dahlinger performed a well-conceived and entertaining coin routine involving a very attractive Okito Box and Morgan silver dollars.

Guest and future member Ken Ball performed a commercial magic trick called "Art Attack" involving pieces of postcards of famous paintings that are mixed by the spectator and then laid out on a table. The spectator makes all the moves, but despite the moves, the magician's prediction matches the only four pieces that were face up in a face down pile. Whew! Nicely done. Another

guest and future member Tim Evanchick performed magic with a playing card and sponge ball and solicited advice from our membership regarding the moves and opinions on the routine. Looked great to me.

Bruce Meyer performed a classic magic trick, in miniature form, the "Mini Linking Rings." The rings may have been small, but the magic was outstanding! Next was Larry Colombo who performed an "Instant Art" routine and produced a real twenty-dollar bill from a clearly fake twenty-dollar bill. Then Larry followed up the production with the old chestnut "Piano Card Trick," but this time performed with colored candy and a shot glass. Nice application of an old classic magic trick using different props!

Professor Rhett Bryson demonstrated yet another of his newest magic toys, a 1968 version of the Magic Switchboard. Two lights on a board that were red and blue and turning on and off seemingly following a color pattern. Proving to all present that electricity does indeed follow color. Weird but very magical. Paul DiLella was our next performer and performed Marc Paul's "Summing Up The Numbers" routine from his Penguin Live lecture. Paul used Post-it notes with numbers on them and spectators freely manipulated the numbers to create new numbers. The new numbers were totaled and matched Paul's prediction which was clearly marked before the trick started. The prediction also coincidentally matched today's date, 3/12/23. Now that is magic!

El Presidente Mike Noonan performed a new magic trick called "EDCepts" which is a multi-phased mentalism trick involving saved business receipts and choices made by spectators. In the end, Mike correctly "guessed" all the spectators' choices and his predictions were always correct. Amazing!

And finally, Steve Taylor, a.k.a. Mr. Faro, performed a demonstration of the Galbreath Principle, followed by a flawless card divination correctly identifying a spectator's card after a Faro Shuffle with half the deck. Huh? Very impressive, as usual.

As usual, lots of magic, fellowship, and sharing on this night. If you are ever in the Greenville, SC area on the first Wednesday of the month, please contact our secretary and join us! *Paul DiLella*

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 held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, April 11 at our usual meeting place The Kosair Charities Center, 782 Eastern Parkway in Louisville, KY 40217.

There were twenty-five members present, plus we welcomed a new member to the club, Jonathan Brown. Welcome Jonathan.

The meeting was called to order by Club Technical Director and Moderator, Brett Sohl. After a few brief announcements regarding the club's activities and events since our last meeting the fun began. We didn't have a formal guest lecturer for the evening, heck, we didn't even have an informal one, but that didn't stop us from having a magical good time. We treated the evening as one huge magic jam session. Club members were encouraged to bring one or two or however many of their favorite tricks or effects with them in order to show, teach, and then just talk magic. There were books, cards, coins, cups and balls, and ropes; just about every magical prop or item was there.

An invitation was offered to anyone who wished to perform a trick and longtime club member Jim Harris took the opportunity to do so. Jim showed us a solid block of wood that had a hole drilled into it that went through and through. There was a piece of rope passed through the hole and was further shown to move freely back and forth through the hole. The rope was then tied and wrapped around the block preventing it to move freely up or down or through the block of wood. Jim's patter was similar in nature and based on the great magician and escape artist Houdini, pointing out that Houdini could escape from anywhere or anything, including a jail cell while chained and handcuffed. After a few undetectable moves, the rope was able to be passed through and removed from the block of wood smoothly and effortlessly. Houdini (the rope) had escaped! Amazing.

Members then broke off into smaller groups of one two or three and spent the balance of the evening showing, teaching and just talking magic. I for one thoroughly enjoyed the evening and learned a new trick or two. Plus, I was able to show and teach one of my favorite tricks to the new guy. A poll was conducted of those in attendance, and it was found that everyone considered the evening to be a huge success and that everyone enjoyed the evening. If you are ever in Louisville on the second Tuesday of the month, stop by and pay us a visit. We'd love to see you!

Carl Loud

RING 70, TACOMA, WASHINGTON – Great Virgil and Julie Ring

Meets 4th Sun., at LeMay Car Museum, 2702 E. D St., Tacoma, Fife, WA.
RICK ANDERSON, Ring Contact,
501 S. 43rd St., Tacoma, WA 98408 / (253) 473-5456
E-mail: rickandersonmagic@gmail.com

Our club meeting brought together five members: Dave Peltó, Frank Giaquinto, Mike

Hoyles, Mike Losk, Karl Hilsenberg, and Rick Anderson.

Frank Giaquinto showed us the Apex Wallet. This little gem can do lots of interesting stuff (load, peek, switch, etc.).

Mike Losk demonstrated a computer program he wrote for his lap top computer. It's a modification of the Fitch Cheney's "Five Card Trick" except his version uses four cards. He also demonstrated a deck of marked cards that can be "read" clear across the room!

Karl Hilsenberg mixed up a pack of twenty-five ESP Cards and had one selected by a member of the audience and kept face down on the table. He dealt the remaining cards to the table for two stacks of twelve. He then removed and showed a card from the top of each pile. If they happened to be the same symbol he set them aside, face up. If not, the pair was discarded. At the end the face up cards and the chosen one were all the same symbol!

Dave Peltó showed a Buddha Okito Box and a discussion ensued on these coin boxes and several moves demonstrated by club members.

For the "Guess a Prop" segment of the meeting, Mike Hoyles, showed a can with lid. Inside was a glass tumbler. The prop was at least sixty years old, and it was anyone's guess how it worked. Frank Giaquinto figured it out, however. Eventually, we learned the name of the prop was Nu-Way Milk. The can had a hole in the bottom whose purpose remained a mystery.

Michael Hoyles

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 February Ring 71 meeting was held on February 23, 2023. The theme of the meeting was "My Favorite Trick." Our President, Larry Payne, started the meeting with a Ghost Kleenex demonstration. Larry provided gimmicks and Kleenex for all those present so they could practice using the gimmick.

Steve Mollett demonstrated how to get his hand in and out of an animal trap. Steve specializes in escape effects. He also showed us the Houdini style handcuffs that he uses in his escape act.

Greg Hamilton followed with a unique effect using a large deck of cards, a miniature toilet plunger, and a small toilet from his daughter's doll house. The plunger was used to select five cards that turned out to be an ace through ten, a "Royal Flush."

Mike Kuhn demonstrated his version of Criss Angel's color changing deck.

Gerald Ralston showed us a "Coincidence" matching card routine using large size playing cards. He then used a see-through net change bag to find a selected card.

Charlie Meyer did a unique card trick using eight cards that were used for a psychological "Stroop Test." Then he demonstrated the matching of a prediction using casino cards and a casino chip.

Larry brought his dog puppet, Toby, and after some humorous byplay, Toby found a selected card.

Our March Ring 71 meeting was held on March 23rd and was attended by fifteen members. The theme for the meeting was "Teach a Trick." Ron Frank started with a twisted straw penetration routine that was similar to an old Stewart Judah routine. Ron also demonstrated his voice actuated lie detector.

Thomas Nguyen demonstrated a modified Larry Jennings routine called "Close Up Illusion."

Larry Payne with help from Rick Ross performed his "Super Chicken" act.

Gerald Ralston entertained us with a find the cash routine. He then demonstrated an antique zig zag card holder.

Cindi Wolf showed us how an Easter Egg color prediction routine could be adapted to routines for other holidays. She then did a routine based on selecting a card with a picture of a fruit from a deck of eight fruit picture cards.

The meeting ended with Charlie Meyer demonstrating his lie detector and thought transmitter routines.

Al Scheide

RING 75, FORT SMITH, ARKANSAS – Bill Pitts Ring

Meets 2nd Sun. each month, 1:30 p.m., Fort Smith Library, 3201 Rogers Ave., Fort Smith, AR

KEN ZELNICK, Secretary / E-mail: kzelnick@suddenlink.net

The April meeting of I.B.M. Ring 75, Fort Smith, AR was held Sunday, April 2 at the Fort Smith Public Library with six people in attendance.

This month's meeting revolved around a "post-mortem" of the 2023 Cavalcade of Magic, held in Eureka Springs, Arkansas on March 24 and 25, with a night-before auction on March 23. We discussed our most favorite and least favorite moments, and how we can improve next year's Cavalcade, currently scheduled for March 22 and 23, 2024. The Cavalcade included some stellar lectures as well as stage and close-up performances by several of the attendees. This is always a fun event, small enough to get a chance to visit with old friends we haven't seen in a year.

After the business portion of the meeting, everyone present performed a bit of magic. Jody Birchfield started us off with a "Ring and Rope" routine and a dose of his always hilarious humor. Clyde Hayre followed with a discussion of the handling of a "Square Circle" that was shown at the Cavalcade. Patrick Kelly, a newcomer to our group, performed a very good version of coins from hand to hand. Ken Zelnick did a quick unlinking of rubber bands. Ron Ingram demonstrated "THIS" (Things Hidden In Silk) using some of his own revisions to the standard handling. Larry Bean closed us out with a Silk Cabby routine and discussion.

After the meeting, several members reconvened at a local coffee shop for continued camaraderie. It is with great sadness that we note the passing of the founder of our Ring and Past International I.B.M. President Mr. Bill Pitts, who passed away the night of April 3. He was a friend and mentor to many, a collector of all sorts of magic, and a walking encyclopedia of all things magic. It was once suggested (jokingly) that a prospective member of our Ring, in order to join, must name a magician Bill hadn't met. It was decided that wouldn't work because Bill had met them all. He will be sorely missed, and our thoughts and prayers go out to his family and friends.

Ken Zelnick

RING 81, SARASOTA, FLORIDA – Inez Kitchen Blackstone

Meets 1st Thu., 6:00 p.m. "Social Gathering," 7:00 p.m. start time. First Methodist Church, 104 S. Pineapple Ave., Sarasota, FL

GALE MOLOVINSKY, President / (240) 483-9774

E-MAIL: Gamol@aol.com / Web site: www.ibmring81.com

Our April meeting had fifteen members and three guests (Will Houman, David Finsterle, and Sisuepahn Phila) and a full night of magic ensued. President Gary Roberts made a few announcements including the opening of the Paranormal Circus which is in town April 6-16 and the Tampa Ring 175 will be hosting an all-day "Tampa Bay Festival of Magic" on May 20 with Erick Olson Jafo and Doug Conn! Scott Correll also informed us the "Magic on the Beach" is back this year the first weekend of October in Myrtle Beach.

Our Secretary, Tom Vorjohan, offered to do a mini-lecture to start the meeting; Tom has been a huge Nick Trost fan for many years, and he taught four of his absolute favorite effects and provided everyone with a six-page set of lecture notes. Tom announced that he had just received the final volume (number 9) of the *Subtle Card Creations* series on Monday, but he did not include any of that material in his teachings; instead, he performed and taught "Cards Coincidence," "Equalizer Reveal," "Triple Transposition," and Tom's version of Trost's

cutting the aces he calls “Cut Ten.” A great start to the evening!

Since April starts with “Fools Day,” we wanted some great foolers as our theme this evening. Nick Benevento did a beautiful Aldo Colombini rope sequence where the rope was cut into three unequal lengths, made the same length, changed to one rope with four ends, then two ropes, and finally restored to one long piece. Dick Stevens, who is about to head back north at the end of the month, did a sort-of mental effect where Lois Hillard chose a card that said, “Red Wine,” but Dick predicted a bottle of water... but when he poured the visibly clear water, it came out as red wine. In fact, he wiped out the glass and did it again! David Pitchford also did a piece from Colombini where blank cards were shown, a random card was stated by the audience members, and then four blanks came down to just one that matched the requested card.

It is great to learn that Sisuepahn Phila (who previously lived in California and worked with Brian Gillis) has moved to Bradenton. She’s been performing at the Magic Castle since 1996 and shared a couple stories before she went into a multiple card selection and revelation sequence.

Tom Vorjohan was working on a piece he discovered in Volume 3 of *Tarbell* and could reveal the serial number on a one-dollar bill.

Stan Hillard did a new piece he put together called “Numbers” where he correctly predicted a total sum from the number cards of a randomly called out suit when three-digit numbers were seemingly randomly derived and then added.

To end the evening, Scott Correll of SWC Magic offered some of his products to the group including a chopped coffee cup, the Flick Wallet, Coin Funnel, mini wood cups for Cups and Balls, and wooden ESP blocks. If Scott doesn’t have it, he can get it for us. It was a great evening of magic!

Tom Vorjohan

RING 84, MELBOURNE, VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA – Charles Waller Ring

Meets 1st Mon. 7:30 p.m. (except January), at the Welsh Church, 320 La Trobe Street, Melbourne
AIDAN THOMPSON, President/Secretary
E-mail: aidan.thompson@fultonhogan.com.au

Our March 2023 Ring meeting saw a small but enthusiastic group in attendance. Peter Rowe performed an interesting effect involving eight kings and one queen. He explained that holding a ring on a chain over a face down group can determine the sex of a card – side to side for a male, a circular motion for a female. Sure enough, Peter determined the location of the queen in this manner. Peter further demonstrated his handling for a “Ring on Chain” rou-

tine – a straight drop and a rotation method which never fails. Very worthwhile.

Graham Etherington presented an alternative handling to the number mystery he showed us last month, followed by an effect involving movie titles placed in a grid and totaled, resulted in matching a prediction from an insurance policy. Novel and well thought out.

Aidan Thompson performed an alternative handling to the “Grey Elephants in Denmark” effect where a thought of number was multiplied and added to, the result being combined with a thought-of colour. Noting that there are “No orange kangaroos in Denmark” the climax proved that animals and countries match up and, in this case, the Koala would have been a safer bet!

Turning to mathematical predictions, Aidan wrote down a number on a piece of paper then asked for any number between one and nine to be thought of. Following some brief calculations, he successfully revealed the correct result.

Aidan Thompson

RING 90, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

Meets 1st Thu. of each month about 7:00 pm at Heights Cumberland Presbyterian Church, Academy & Moon NE.
BILL FIENNING, Secretary
(505) 298-0743 / E-mail: wiefenn@att.net

President David Dunlap opened the April Ring meeting. Treasurer Tom Plunkett reported that a couple of planned lecture tours will not happen for various reasons. Our topic for April was Magic with Cards (regular size and jumbo). Oversized cards are not appropriate for the use of most sleights.

Secretary Bill Fienning opened our presentations with a very abbreviated version of his “The Exorcism,” which uses an oversized deck of tarot cards. His deck had a breather card and a block of six cards glued together. Still, sergeant-at-arms David Ryan did not notice anything odd about the deck when he handled it.

Larry Marken demonstrated his “negative space” idea. He has a sign with meaningless lines drawn on it, but the message is in the white space separating the marks from each other. His suggestion has now been turned into a commercial item. Larry also told an interesting story, first asking a spectator to name a significant age in the person’s teenage years. Using an “intelligent” deck of cards, he eventually spelled out the name of the selected card and ended up with a Royal Flush including the selected card.

Tall Paul Cochran did a great “Ambitious Card” routine. V.P. Jim Oliver introduced us to a “universal card” that, like a chameleon, could change itself into any card it touched. Tom Plunkett gave everyone four playing cards.

After asking everyone to tear the cards in half and select one of the half-pieces, we mixed the halves in a very convincing way. But when everyone was finished, the top half-card on our packets matched the selected half-card.

Dave Dunlap showed six pairs of jumbo cards. Each pair had one red and one black card. In an “Oil and Water” effect, the pairs became three red pairs and three black pairs. It is a Barrie Richardson effect.

Brenda Lamont concluded the evening with an eight-card “Brain Wave type effect” using the Orlam Subtlety. *Bill Fienning*

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 Vancouver Magic Circle’s monthly meeting took place on Thursday, March 23, 2023. Some members arrived at the hall early for a chat session. Then President Yoosik Oum officially opened the meeting by greeting the attendees.

To start the evening’s activities, Charles Gauthier, Jack Schwartz, and Blake Aleong did some close-up magic. The workshop for the evening was on rubber band magic presented by Henry Tom. During his workshop he demonstrated different moves, techniques, and routines. He also handed out rubber bands to the members for practice. Everyone enjoyed the workshop. Well done, Henry. Thanks.

The competition for March was for the Cecil Ackery Trophy. This trophy is awarded in recognition of excellence in comedy magic. At least one magical effect must be performed in the routine. This is an adult competition. Last year’s winner, Roy Hopwood was the emcee and host for this competition, and he also read the rules. The competitors were John Stenning, Henry Tom, Scott Barker, and S.A.M. National President Rod Boss. The timekeeper was Simon Cassegrain. The winner was Rod Boss. Congratulations to Rod and to the rest of the competitors. Winners of the Vancouver Magic Circle competitions will no longer be able to keep the trophies as it was done in the past. This is to keep the trophies from going missing, damaged, or “I don’t know” who has the trophies. The trophies will be returned to Dennis place for safe keeping. And in the future the trophies will be on display at Hidden Wonders.

In between the acts Roy Hopwood was discussing and reading extracts from his 2003 mini lecture booklet *Comedy Magic: Some thoughts*. Rod Boss has designed a new sign-in sheet form. For the refreshments, Graham Kita pro-

vided the coffee and bottled water. Rod Boss brought cookies. Cameron Minty brought a dish called Baba Ghanoush which is like a vegetable salad with mini pocket pita bread. Thanks everyone. It has been decided not to take a coffee break during the meeting. Coffee and bottled water will be available throughout the meeting. Loose change will be appreciated to help offset the costs of the coffee and bottled water.

Photography was done by Vincent Lee, Rod Boss, and Graham Kita. Thanks to Kim Fabbro for giving me a ride to and from the meeting. There were twenty-eight members and one guest in attendance. *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 March meeting of Ring 93’s Magic Club began as usual with emcee Rob Gomoll singing the club song and reciting a poem (below).

Spring is here! Let’s not spoil it! / (Even if all our New Year’s resolutions went down the toilet.) / March 20th is the first day of spring. / Get out the magician’s wax and invisible string. / It’s the spring equinox, / So get out ye olde magic box. / Here is an old spring equinox legend: / On that day, an egg can be balanced on its end. / Let your friends try it. / They’ll fail and say, “Might as well boil it or fry it!” / The secret is a bit of salt. / Surreptitiously put a few grains down and you’ll do it without fault. / It’s an easy trick that will amaze, / But be careful... with the price of eggs these days!

Rob also did a mentalism card trick. On a blank card, he had a spectator write anything he/she wanted to; and after burying the card in the middle and cutting the deck, he told what the spectator had written.

President Bob Beardsley did his famous “Three Different-Sized Rope Trick.” He then stabbed a knife through a box of cards, but when removed the knife and opened the box, it contained a solid piece of metal.

Phyllis Fishnick was next with a mathematical card trick, counting down with the phrase, “Your card is here.” The last card was the one the spectator had drawn. She then entertained us with a host of puns, for example: “I worked in a muffler shop and found it exhausting!”

Mark Pepelea did a trick he called “Collective Unconscious” which used Zenner ESP cards. No matter what the spectator said, the order matched.

Adam Kieffer did some cardistry and then performed a trick called “The Color-Changing Deck” where the back of the chosen card was a different color.

His daughter Bella Kieffer did a mentalism trick using colorful pictures of fruits. She determined which one her spectator had chosen.

Chris Westemeier did a trick proving he could see through a little box and tell what color dice was inside. He also put a ring on a rope which became stiff causing the ring to side off.

Rick Frazier did balloon animals and mentioned how he uses balloons as metaphors to spread the Gospel. He has even evangelized in the Philippines using his expertise with balloons.

Andrew Thill did his "Bill Switch" where a dollar would change to a larger denomination without leaving his hands.

Reverend Jim McCrea, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Galena, Illinois, did a version of the "Three Color Monte."

Ring 93 had its biggest attendance ever! It seems more and more people are realizing what a great hobby magic is. We did some club business regarding hiring Chris Philpott as a lecturer and electing new club officers. *Rob Gomoll*

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@verizon.net

September 18th was the date for the latest meeting of Ring 96. We began with the pre-meeting. Kevin Papke gave a workshop on a three-coin routine. In this routine, coins were vanished and produced from various parts of the body, knee, elbow, and neck. The coins kept moving in this fast-paced series of effects that Kevin said came from Daryl. The routine included several points where hands are shown empty and clean. We had ten magicians attend the pre-workshop.

The theme for tonight's meeting was "classics of magic." We had several guests come to visit as this was an open meeting with no exposure allowed. We were there to entertain. Vice President George Reis arrived early to set up audio-visual equipment. Even those who were sitting in the back could see perfectly clearly thanks to George projecting the performers on a large screen.

Our first performer was Roy Ball. Roy showed us the Hunter Knot named for G.W. Hunter. This is the time-honored effect of can you tie a knot in a string without letting go of either end? Roy brought up a volunteer and had her tie a knot as well. The evening was off to a good start.

John Engman brought up his classic, "The Egg Bag." The egg appeared in an empty bag

and disappeared before the spectators' eyes. John made an excellent performance out of this wonderful classic routine.

Kim Hallenger performed two routines making good use of music as she did. Kim performed both "20th Century Silks," and the "Mutilated Parasol." It is amazing what a difference a little background music can make.

George Reis arrived on stage to demonstrate the classic effect of "The Torn and Restored Newspaper." George used Robert Baxt's version of the effect, and the audience seemed to enjoy it very much.

Alan Hanson came up wearing the chartreuse top of Captain Kirk from *Star Trek*. He used a temple screen to produce a phaser pistol and gave it to a young spectator along with a sticker badge making him a temporary Star Fleet ensign. Then, after a long story about his engineer being kidnapped by the Romulans, he used a die box, to vanish the engineer, only to have him reappear in the captured Romulan ship.

President John Piercy showed us his interpretation of the multiplying bottles. General laughter filled the audience as root beer bottles turned to glasses and vice versa, but all the while there were more and more bottles appearing on the table.

Treasurer Jon Strum had three cards selected. Two of them he guessed and predicted correctly, while the last one was put back into the deck and rose up seemingly on its own.

Marty Gorman showed us a cup of lead sinkers, along with a plastic blue cup and a red tube. The sinkers were poured into the cup, and the cup was covered with a red tube. Marty turned lead to gold as the cup was now filled with gold coins.

Vinnie the godfather of magic received strong applause when he had a volunteer pick a card and put it back in the deck. Vinnie had the deck wrapped in a handkerchief that the lady was holding. Somehow the selected card had passed through and was in the volunteer's hand.

David Fisher showed us an exciting classic, the color-changing handkerchief. White to purple and back, he seemed to be telling the audience how he did it, but there was a twist coming.

Jim Greene took us home with a classic "Ring on Rope" routine that ended with three rings forming a Mickey Mouse silhouette.

On Saturday, April 15th, Tom Ogden came to Ring 96 to give us his magical lecture. The pre-meeting workshop was facilitated by Kevin Papke, who taught us some of the subtleties of the moves most commonly used in "packet tricks." This was Kevin's fifth effort at doing pre-meeting workshops, and so far, all have been very successful.

President John Piercy opened the meeting with announcements and then Tom Began his lecture. Tom folded a one-dollar bill and a five-dollar bill in half and inserted one inside the other. He passed the one through the five bill and then did the opposite. Finally, he changed the one into a five. After that, he sat down with some bills and scissors and showed us how to make this effect. It is actually very clever. He also gave us some interesting history of where the effect came from.

Tom spent some time talking about the rule of three, and how it is used both on stage and on TV. Apparently *Tonight Show* host Johnny Carson used to mention it on the air from time to time.

Tom showed us how to take a signed twenty-dollar bill and tear the face out. He showed us how to show it is torn, and then how to restore it. He paid special attention to the noise that the bill makes and should make when you tear it. This comes down to the right way to tear it which he also taught us.

Next came a bar bet that came straight from the pages of Bobo and his classic book on coin magic. Many people don't know this effect as it is mentioned in a short two-paragraph section in the book. Tom counted pennies into a volunteer's open hand and gave the instruction to close their hand just before the last penny was dropped. No one could do it. The last penny always passed through their closed hand and fell to Tom's waiting other hand. I can see how you could win money in a bar on this one.

We were shown what looked like a simple "cards changing places" routine that was anything but. The routine involved fifteen random cards in two envelopes and three chosen cards that would move across the stage to go from one envelope to the other. The routine was complicated, but the result was worth it.

It is vitally important to know your audience. Tom has gotten in trouble for making comments that were not appreciated by one audience while being taken as hysterical by another. Tom showed us his handling of the "Mis-made Bill." Done right, with the right patter, this is a very powerful piece of magic.

Tom spoke of the type of venues he has worked out. He shared some tips and tricks for kids' birthday parties. "Always use the birthday kid for an effect early in the show." We heard all about how to get booked on cruise ships, and what the life of a cruise ship magician is like.

We were shown a business card effect to use at a trade show in which the sneaky magician who works for whatever the company is, ends up with a passerby's business card, and the passerby

gets a card from the magician. Connections are the goal of a trade show.

Tom ended his set with a standard sponge ball routine. However, the final load for the kicker was a small stuffed Barney the Dinosaur. We were shown how to use Roman numerals to equate the cute purple dinosaur with the mark of the beast, 666.

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.

DALE TRUEMAN, President / email: daletrueman@me.com

Three members had agreed to present a mini lecture for our March meeting "Improving Your Magic." Our emcee for the evening was Jack Sharp. Jack had recently returned from the Blackpool Convention and he interspersed the lectures with items that he had purchased there and was introducing to his new family shows. Jack started by displaying a birthday card, ideal for use at children's birthday parties, however it looked very dreary as it was only in black and white. With plenty of "bits of business," and audience participation Jack magically and visually coloured the card in, ready to be handed to the birthday child.

Jack then introduced our first lecturer of the evening, Anthony Dillon and his mini lecture "Eliminating Weaknesses." Anthony commenced by asking us to compare two questions. (1) Would you like to see a card trick? (2) Would you like to see something my grandfather showed me? Everyone agreed that the second question is much more interesting to your audience, and we had some discussion analyzing the reasons. Anthony then discussed Michael Ammar's "Two Coin Transposition" and asked the question, "Who Cares?" It's necessary to give the audience some meaning to your effects. Anthony then performed a "Ring through Handkerchief" effect that he had learned from the Mark Leveridge Zoom lecture to our club during the Covid-19 lockdown. Anthony explained that he always had a problem with one aspect of the effect. He explained that at an I.B.M. social meeting he had raised his concerns with member Peter Wood, and Peter showed him the classic move which is now the way Anthony performs the effect. That's one of the big benefits of belonging to a magic society such as ours. You can always discuss things over with your fellow performers.

Anthony then showed us an effect with three plastic cards. A Visa card, A social club membership card, and a work/business card. He had a spectator very freely choose one of these cards

and Anthony showed that he had predicted the outcome. The method, often maligned by magicians, but can be very astonishing for laymen was a three way out. The problem with this type of effect is that some of the “Outs” are always much better than others. After Anthony’s performance he lead a long discussion on how to improve the weaker “Outs.”

Jack thanked Anthony and brought forward our next lecturer, John Kanawati and his lecture on misdirection. John commenced by quoting the great Tommy Wonder. Most magicians start to learn a routine by practicing the mechanics, then they add the patter and then as a final step they work out the misdirection. Tommy Wonder told us that misdirection is integral to the whole effect/routine and should be part of your thinking from the start. John then performed his lovely multiplying billiard ball routine, explaining that it included twelve points of misdirection. He explained such techniques he used as mirroring, i.e., placing both hands in his pockets at the same time but just palming one ball. He explained how he looked at his elbow or where he wanted the spectators to look. He explained Juan Tamariz’s Crossing the Gaze and what and where to watch and he referred us to Tom Stone’s Penguin lecture. John explained “what’s higher gets more attention” and that “the bigger move covers a smaller move.” Performing a card effect John palmed cards as he asked a question, he demonstrated cover for the pass as he turned and gestures proving again that the large move covers the small move. He explained that what is closer gets more attention and the concentration of the performer’s attention will attract the spectator’s attention to what you want them to take in or away from what you don’t want them to see. John concluded by referring us to both the Tommy Wonder and the Tom Stone lecture notes.

Jack came back and advised that the Sydney Ring would be performing a family show for the Salvation Army in November and for all members to start to plan for the show. He then introduced our final lecturer of the evening, Barry Abkin to lecture on The Memorised Deck.

At a previous meeting Barry had impressed many of our members with his performance of Simon Aronson’s “Histed Heisted” which is Simon’s take on “The Miracle Divination” from *The Magic of Louis S. Histed*. It’s an effect from the 1940s that uses a Mem. deck. Barry had been using the Aronson Memorised Stack and tonight he said that a stacked deck was currently his favourite magic technique. He repeatedly had cards chosen and he apparently read the spectators’ minds to disclose the card. Barry was

using a stacked deck, he was cutting the cards as the cards were chosen, he then glimpsed the new bottom card of the deck, and he knew the next card in his stack’s sequence was the chosen card. Barry had originally learned this method from the writings of Gene Anderson; however, it is standard procedures with a stacked deck. Although Barry was using the Aronson stack, he did mention other memorised stacks such as Juan Tamariz’s Mnemonica and the Nikola Card System. He also talked about the Si Stebbins Stack which could be used for virtually all the effects that Barry performed tonight, but it does not need to be memorised making it much easier to learn. For those still interested in remembering fifty-two cards in order Barry suggested the *Rick Lax Mnemonica Trainer* or to just remember a few cards at a time as if they were phone numbers. He also suggested having an Invisible Deck in your pocket for a good finish or as a good ‘out,’ when an effect goes wrong.

Jack Sharp thanked our three lecturers and mentioned that they may be thirsty, he had a jug of water and a stack of glasses. He poured out three glasses of water for them, decided that he would have a drink too, but the water mysteriously turned to wine as he filled his own glass. Jack asked if any other members wished to perform.

Phouc Can Hua is always keen to perform and he managed to balance a ping pong ball on the edge of his hankie. After a few attempts Phouc got the ball to roll along the top of the hanky. During the supper break, which followed, Peter Wood gave Phouc a few hints to help improve his very old, but seldom seen routine.

Peter Rodgers

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, N.J.

ANTHONY FERRER, Secretary / web site: ibmring113@yahoo.com

Our usual venue for the Ring meetings was not available to us this April evening, so we met at the magician-friendly bistro, Scardino’s Restaurant, where Sal, the owner, kindly let the food and magic flow well past closing time, fueled by Sal’s gratis coffee.

Jay Paul performed David Jonathan’s phenomenal iPhone feat, “Vox,” where Siri aids the magician in locating a selected card!

Richard Micucci performed Matt Mello’s “MACAAN,” a downloadable card at any number routine where the card counted to matches the magician’s prediction card from another deck. Rich also performed “Metamorphosis Bills” and made a one and five-dollar bill change hands between the spectator and magician.

Next, Dan Silvestri performed an ultra-smooth coin transposition with his stealth Slippery Sam gimmick. Dan also demonstrated some of his favorite rubber band manipulations with some input and demonstrations courtesy of Jay Paul. Dan finished up with his take on the metamorphosis bills with a fiver and a twenty spot changing hands.

Dennis McSweeney performed a visually powerful card trick where a card is selected, lost in the deck, and found by spelling the question, Who Is the World's Greatest Magician? The cards are dealt down in an arrow formation that points to the magician. The last card spelled is the selected card!

Carl Morano

RING 115, SINGAPORE – The Great Wong Ring

Meets 15th of each month, 7:00 pm, Level 2, Hotel Grand Central, 22 Cavendish Rd, Singapore 229617. Website: ibmring115.org
JOHN TEO, President / Tel: +62504422, 97509017
10M Braddell Hill #01-49, Singapore 57931

March was our AGM (Annual General Meeting). The venue was Function Room 1 of Drama Centre. By 7.30 p.m., we got the required quorum (thirty-two members and sixteen guests) and the following persons were elected/re-elected: President - John Teo; Vice President - Enrico Varella; Hon. Secretary - Tan Jui Kuan; Asst. Secretary - Alvin Terence; Hon. Treasurer - Victor Heng; Asst. Treasurer - Ian Tan; Committee Members - Baharudin, Carson Goh, David Fillary, Ian Tan, Tommy Kian; Auditors - Kogi Oberoi and Curtis Choy (2023) and Priscilla Thong and Ng Yeow Chong (2024).

The AGM ended at 8.00 p.m. and all who attended were treated to snacks and drinks. After the break, Kenneth Chia was the first performer. He did "Card to Teabag," mouth squeaker, trapdoor card, and changed a Sin. fifty bill to three RM hundred-dollar bills. Kenneth was kind enough to give each one present a mouth squeaker.

JK Tan did a card trick with Chinese characters printed on the cards. This was similar to an effect performed by Harapan Ong at the previous meeting, but JK Tan had his own unique presentation for it. Several Chinese character cards mysteriously spelled out in the English language the English equivalent of the chosen Chinese character card.

John Teo transformed two sponge eggs into a sponge duck. He had a spectator randomly cut a long strip of paper with fifty different registration numbers for a rubber duck race and found the winning duck number. John then performed an effective Shepard tabletop optical illusion with a picture of two different dimensional gift box covers.

Zhang Jin Ming had several spectators shuffled a deck of cards, yet he was able to divine the identities of each card in a small packet of cards randomly taken from the shuffled deck.

John Shutler performed a chop cup routine using a paper ball and finished with a magical production of various fruits.

The magician of the month was Ian Tan. As a professional kids' magician, Ian shared several points on how to perform more effectively for kids from three to seven years old. He then did a "Rabbit in the Hat" card effect to illustrate how he used each of these principles.

Dealer Goh Yin Xian demonstrated miniaturised Square-Circle, three colours D'Lite wand, "Burn" (finger blister of chosen card), jumbo coins, hot sensation liquid, and three card effects from Do Ki-Moon.

Dealer Jeremy Pei showed "Bang-Gone," finger chopper, PK ring, "Everyone's A Winner," and frown/smile face.

There was time for magic sessions as well as patronage of the two magic dealers. The final item was a lucky draw of magic items for ten lucky winners.

John Teo

RING 122, WATERTOWN, MASSACHUSETTS – Silent Mora – Ray Goulet Ring

Meets in person and ZOOM the last Tue. 7:30 p.m., at Temple Beth Shalom, 21 E. Foster St., Melrose, MA 02176
DEBBIE O'CARROLL, Secretary
51 Olive St., Newburyport, MA 01950
(978) 462-9954

President (Crazy) Davy Penn was very excited to announce that the March 28, 2023 membership meeting will be in person! Our new meeting space is at Temple Beth Shalom in Melrose, MA. TBS has given us space for no charge so we hope to be there for a long time to come. It's not the first time that Melrose, MA has hosted magical folk. In 1924, Houdini himself visited renown spiritualist Anna Eva Fay in Melrose! Houdini considered Miss Fay the greatest mind reader of her sex and time."

Ring 122 is hosting a Spring Magic Performance nearby in Belmont, MA on May 20th at 2 p.m. Nine magicians will be performing including Ring 122's Past President Ryan Lally and mentalist John Bach! A show flier, Facebook event, and other social media postings will follow. We hope to have a Halloween magic show in October, as well. At our March meeting, we will hold a Broken Wand Ceremony for former Ring 122 President Bruce Fenton. A moment of silence was also held for Gil Stubbs, former Ring 122 member and NASA mathematician. Both men will be greatly missed.

Originally, we had planned on having a lecture from DJ Edwards of Ickle Pickle fame,

however, due to a conflict, his lecture will now be at our May meeting. Instead, members were wowed by a lecture from rising magician, *Penn and Teller: Fool Us* contestant, and Chicago Magic Lounge performer, Abby Segal! Ms. Segal was first drawn into magic by yours truly, David “Crazy Davy” Penn, who was actually teaching some sponge ball effects to Abby’s older sister at the time. Fast forward eighteen months, and Abby became Crazy Davy’s magical assistant, a position she did part-time for the next seven years! During that time, Abby began performing children’s magic on her own, and then magic for adults, and then some Cabaret Magic.

Abby made her first *Penn and Teller: Fool Us* submission video at the former Diamonds’ Magic in Peabody, MA. Abby was so into trying to get on Penn and Teller’s TV show that it was pretty much all she could think about her last two years of high school. Currently a senior at Bates College in New Hampshire majoring in Psychology, Abby wasn’t thinking much about Penn and Teller at that point because the Covid pandemic and quarantines began her freshman year. There was a run on toilet paper at school and that gave her a great idea for a Covid-themed “Cups and Balls” routine using toilet paper tubes. A video of the routine ended up getting a lot of views. Chris Ramsey, a magic YouTube personality, had a contest for best quarantine magic effect and Abby won an award and was featured on his YouTube channel. And that’s when her Facebook site really blew up! This also led to a piece in a magazine, and then magician Tom Stone reached out to her and asked if he could share the quarantine toilet paper magic effect on his social media. That also generated a lot of interest, and before she knew it, Ben Barnes of the Chicago Magic Lab was interested in Abby’s magical future. She also started a mentorship with magicians Elba and Evan Northrup. This all happened during year one of the pandemic!

About that time, Abby sent another video to *Fool Us* for another effect she was thinking about presenting on the show for season eight. Amazingly, she was selected, however, the producers felt that her original submission from her high school years, which incorporated an Etch-a-Sketch, would play better on TV. So, the fall of her sophomore year, Abby was really busy getting ready to present on *Fool Us*.

At that point, several Ring 122 members had questions about the process to appear on TV. Magi Felice Ling asked Abby how her creative process has changed in the last six years. Abby replied that, “First it was just working on that one goal of getting on *Fool Us*, with my original

Etch-a-Sketch effect.” However, Abby feels that the “Cups and Balls/Toilet Tube” routine had a real reason behind it and was something everyone could relate to. “I find that when I’m thinking of magic effects now, Abby stated, I’m thinking more about what patter I could use that would be relatable to most people and seems to fit my personality.”

The original taping was done on October 17th, 2020, and the show was broadcast on February 26th, 2021, and is available to see on Abby’s channel on YouTube. The summer of her sophomore year, she was still in quarantine because of Covid, so Abby started doing online magic lessons, and then the summer of 2022, she was hired to work at the Chicago Magic Lounge doing table magic seven nights a week. Doing table magic was super fun Abby stated, and repeating the same effects over and over at different tables got her very proficient with the effects, as well as helping her come up with new patter that seemed to match the people at the table. Abby added, “I also loved interacting with the people there so much!” The other cool thing was she got to meet and hang out with a lot of magicians, and this helped expand her network of magicians that can be helpful to me now and in the future.

At the Chicago Magic Lounge, Abby was also able to open for other magicians in the larger rooms. The 654 Club there is open Thursday through Sunday and it’s similar to the close-up Gallery at the Magic Castle in that it holds just sixty people in a parlor-like setting. There’s always a sold-out crowd with newcomers. “I was so lucky to be able to open for other magicians there twice!”

Magician Michael Charles asked Abby how a person creates an act for *Fool Us*? Abby answered, “You must be prepared to tear apart your act based on what the producers want to show on screen. You need to be open to change and to let other people help you out because the producers can see through the effect, especially since they’ve had so much experience with magic on TV. In addition, your effect needs to be short and direct.” Also new was learning to work with sound and light cues while on stage. Abby sometimes comes up with a song to use while running or using a song that made her feel good, or just had good visuals with the song. Abby has an effect that uses a ticking watch, and there’s a Madonna song that talked about time and they seem to work really well together. In fact, at the end of the effect, the sound engineer made the music louder which seemed to make the final reveal even more impressive. “You could see the audience reacting to the sound and

the lighting as well as to the effect.” Abby added, “On TV you need to be much more intentional and work on transitions between what you say and do including handling your props. Everything needs to be smooth and flow. You also have to focus on your character since this is how the world will know you from here on after.”

Abby’s plans after graduating this year are moving to Chicago and performing again at the Chicago Magic Lounge. She also had a part-time job working at the Potter and Potter Magic Auction House so she might try to go back to that position as well. The coolest thing she saw there was the first documented photo of Harry Houdini and his brother! *David Penn*

RING 130, JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA – First Coast Magic – Bob Hutchings Ring

Meets 3rd Tue at Hampton Inn, 4681 Lenoir Ave., S. Jacksonville, FL.
Meetings/Lectures at 7:30 (subject to change).
DR. DAVE COLL, Secretary, Secretary (904) 254-2460
E-mail: info@IBMRing130.com / Web site: www.IBMRing130.com

Our meeting and lecture were great for April. New lecturer and new venue with lots of new faces, or at least some seldom seen faces that came out to join. Chris Philpott joined us and presented a fantastic lecture to the club.

Chris opened with a poem, delivered in a tone that set the mood for the evening. Robert Frost’s “A Road Not Taken” provided an allegory into his thinking and structure into the lecture we were about to hear. His first trick was his “End of my Rope” trick, which is a fantastic opener. It’s simple and straightforward, easy for an audience to understand, and spans the length of the stage. This is “Packs Small, Plays Big.” He continued a variety of tricks ranging from close-up to parlor to stage. Everything performed was aimed at creating some sort of connection with the audience members, not just a show of skill.

Chris discussed elements of acting and how that can prepare you for a better role as a performing magician. At the end we were exposed to the numerous variations of “100th Monkey.” I believe this principle is now widely known in our community, but seeing it performed up close makes it almost a whole different effect. Overall, the lecture was wonderful, and, as always, it was good to see our magi friends.

Chris Sharp

RING 131, DENVER, COLORADO – Mile High Magicians Society – The Earl Reum Ring

2nd Thu., 7:00pm Knight of Columbus Hall.
4935 w. 1st Ave., Denver, CO 80219
GLENN PROULX Secretary / glennproulx@gmail.com
Web site: www.milehighmagicians.com

Our annual Flea Market was a huge success! Twenty-two tables and over fifty members

showed up to buy, see, and trade. There were lots of book, pamphlets, and book test books. Plenty of gadgets, gaffs, regular cards, magic decks, and pocket tricks. There was parlor, strolling, and stage magic for sale. Also, for sale were various illusions, and magic for beginners, advanced, and professional magicians.

Several members met afterward for food and gathering at the local Chili’s to look at and brag about their latest findings and treasures.

Glenn Proulx

RING 148, ADELAIDE, SOUTH AUSTRALIA – Garden City Ring

Meets 4th Weds., (except Dec. & Jan) 7:30pm The Bombshelter, South Rd., Thebarton. www.ibm148blogspot.com
DREW AMES, Secretary
E-mail: info@drewmagic.com.au

The meeting was held on Wednesday, March 22, 2023. Present at the meeting were Murray Cooper, Drew Ames, Tom Weil, Steve Burford, Ian Wiley, Kevin Casaretto, and two guests, Phil Ahrens and Benedict.

We had some comments on how the magicians performed during the Adelaide Fringe Festival. Much of this was on the high standard of magic that was performed during the festival. Good for magic and future festivals that are now annual in South Australia. (The Festival State.)

We also raised the idea of changing the Ring name. More to follow next month on that. The new name could be in honor of a current member.

Performers for the night were as follows. Murray did a “Cutting the Aces” routine and a disappearing Ace of Spades that finds a selected card. Fine job by Murray as usual. Drew did a John Carney trick called “Entrapped.” Very nice routine. Ian Wiley did a great trick called “Imagination.” Fine job by our newest member. Phil did “Fly Cards” by Aldo Colombini. And Benedict brought the night to a close by having a chosen red card found in a blue deck.

Kevin Casaretto

RING 150, FT. LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA – Dr. Mark Horowitz Ring

Meets 4th Thur. in Tamarac, FL 7:30pm
JOHN PETRUZZI, Secretary (954) 721-3054
E-mail: johnpetruzzi@hotmail.com

Folks were glad to get back to *live* meetings again when Ring 150 held its meeting on Thursday, March 23, 2023. After a short up to date information talk given by President Billy Byron and information on the upcoming magic convention, we got down to some magic. The themes for the evening were cards and coins.

Randy Goodman performed his version of the “Spread Wave” card trick which is quite an involved setup. He did a great job.

Bob Weinowitz did the “Market Research” card effect and also “ate” a couple of balloons as he somehow caused his stomach to “balloon” out as if he were actually swallowing them. Quite unique.

Mike Cartagene, who is very inventive but does not perform his stuff, named a card mentally chosen by a spectator by eliminating certain suits and values of cards.

Ray Eden did the “Oil and Water” card effect using the red and blue backs of cards instead of their fronts.

Nelson Osio and Tom Marino did coin manipulations making coins vanish from a spectator’s hand.

Grady Jacobs had selected cards magically appearing between other cards and cards appearing and “jumping” from one side of a wallet to the other side and also caused a spoon to change into a fork.

It was a fun *live* evening. *Billy Byron*

RING 151, OTTAWA, ONTARIO, CANADA – Ottawa Society of Magicians - The Roy Cottee Ring

Meets 2nd Tue., at one of three locations. Contact us for details.

JOHN PERT, President

5556 Van Vliet Rd., Manotick ON, K4M 1J4

The March 2023 meeting of the Roy Cottee Ring (Ring 151, Ottawa) was once again held in person in the private room of The Barley Mow. Getting together in person really drives home how important meeting, magishing, and kibitzing together is to creating that real sense of fellowship and camaraderie.

In attendance were President John Pert, John Freemont, Aurèle Constantineau, Réal Boucher, Glenn Brown, Luc Leduc, Chris Pilsworth, Stéphane Beaudoin, Kyle Leon, Austin Flannigan, George Sapounidis, and Mark Montreuil. We were joined by new prospective member Karine Larouche.

John Pert started us off by showing us four jumbo Fives of Diamonds. He turned them face down and then had them perform some magic front flips, turning face up one by one. For the big finish, John showed us that all the fives now had different coloured backs, a nice presentation of Obie O’Brien’s classic, “Kolossal Kolored Kards.”

Glenn Brown showed us a classic John Bannon trick, “Sizzle.” Glenn showed a packet of cards consisting of three red backed jokers and an Ace of Spades. One of the red backed jokers is set aside and replaced with a blue backed joker. Instantly the other red backed jokers magically change colour to match. Then, Glenn removed one of the blue backed jokers and replaced it with a green backed joker. The other jokers in the packet turned green as well.

Then Glenn did it again with a purple joker. Glenn then turned the packet of jokers into a Royal Flush in Spades, a very nice presentation of a classic routine.

Luc Leduc brought out two sets of five cards, dealing one set out face up. He then asked the audience to indicate where each of the face down cards should be placed. After each card was placed, Luc then asked if any of the cards should be switched. In the end, Luc showed us that each pair of cards was a perfect match, much to our amazement.

Aurèle Constantineau cut approximately half a deck of cards and asked a spectator to think of a number between one and ten. Aurèle showed the cards one by one, asking that the card at the thought of number be remembered. Then he had the spectator move the selected number of cards from the top to the bottom of the pack, and then deal three piles of cards individually. He then picked up the packs and reassembled them and showed a prediction, which said, “the sixth card” He dealt to the sixth card, and this matched the selection.

George Sapounidis performed a “Three Card Monte” that he has been working on using the classic three, two, and ace. After he had performed a few moves, the group had a productive discussion on developing a personalized routine along with some good patter ideas.

Prospective member Karine Larouche started by telling us the story of how one of her relatives had a pet rat named Pit during the war. As she was telling us the tale, she used a handkerchief to sculpt a model of Pit, and then had it run up her arm. Then Karine went into a classic Johnny Thompson gambling routine involving a story of triumph after defeat, chicanery, and sleight of hand. As she recited the full fifty-two lines of “The Gambler’s Ballad,” she demonstrated false shuffles and cuts, bottom deals, “Three Card Monte” and as a finale a switch of three kings for three queens. It was a very good presentation, and we look forward to Karine coming back to future meetings.

Chris Pilsworth brought out an empty purse frame, telling us that it was his invisible purse. Chris pulled out one, then another coin. He used the coins to vanish and reappear. He did a very nice “Coins Across” from hand to hand, the coins apparently travelling up one sleeve, across his back, and down the other sleeve. For a finale, he produced a large Chinese coin. Chris then produced three coins, from his elbow, knee, and neck, and made a coin vanish and appear under a glass on the table. As always, Chris showed us why he is a professional magician in great demand.

Austin Flannigan had a spectator pick a number. He then dealt down to that number and that card, the Nine of Clubs, was shown to the spectator. Austin tossed the pack on top of the cards and selected another card, the Three of Clubs, which he placed under the card box on the table. Austin then dealt down to the selected card only to find that it was not there and had instead travelled magically under the card box on the table.

Mark Montreuil ended the formal performances for the evening by demonstrating some fancy knots, starting with the classic tying a knot without letting go of the ends of the rope, then going into the snap one-handed knot, and topping it off with the Wild West or William Tell Knot, where the end of the rope gets pulled back and shot through a hanging loop tying the knot. He finished by performing the "Rope through Neck."

After much magic, chatter, and laughter, another magic meeting came to a close. Until next time, dear reader, I remain,

Mark Montreuil

RING 153, BILLINGS, MONTANA – Billings Magic Society

Meets 2nd Tue., 7:00 pm, at Reflections, 1140 Sixteenth Street West, Suite 13, Billings, MT.
KENT MESSEMER, President / E-mail: kmezmriz@qwestoffice.net
122 S. 36th St., Billings, MT 59101

While it was a little disappointing that a couple of prospective new members did not appear, we still had a great evening filled with a variety of magic in March. The six of us first had some good discussion of what magic was happening locally, who was performing at parties, and other gossip. Brent Cromley reported that on July 14, magician Grant Freeman will be bringing his "R-Rated Magic Show" to the Alberta Bair Theater in Billings. While none of us were familiar with the performance, we were all curious about what would be entailed in such an act.

In the magic portion of the evening, Tony started a good lineup off with a tale of mysterious happenings in various somewhat magical sites, such as the Bermuda Triangle, but also referring to some local examples. He then asked a volunteer to examine three wooden blocks with alleged gravitational abnormalities, similar to those he had discussed. Tony claimed he was proving the "less is more" principle when his volunteer visibly expressed surprise that one of the blocks could weigh more than all three.

Brent followed Tony with a mathematical prediction trick that he had seen performed on *Penn & Teller: Fool Us* television show. He then presented two card tricks that he's been working on and developing. The first was a variation of David Johnson's "Color Sync," but performed with ten playing cards, five red backed

and five blue backed, instead of the five colored cards used in Johnson's original routine. He closed his act with a rendition of Juan Tamariz's "Neither Blind Nor Stupid."

Kent Messmer also had a trio of tricks to show. He first used a deck of cards from which he surprisingly produced the birthday of Tony's fiancée, Debbie, his volunteer. He followed that with a prediction effect involving chips that were continuously dropped unto a table until only one remained showing its number. That number magically matched the hotel room key that Kent had been holding, as room number five. Finally, Kent had a cute set of cards with pictures of children's cereal boxes on them. The one picked by his volunteer oddly turned out to be the only one with the different colored back.

The evening's magic closed with a beautiful performance with sponge balls, performed by Joe Gastineau for a guest, Nancy Heald. Joe proved that he still had a great deal of skill as he repeatedly fooled his spectator as to which balls were in his hands, or just vanished. Joe also had brought some of his crafting projects that he's created using Paracord. He's made an amazingly wide variety of small gifts and gadgets.

Joe also brought along a trophy he had purchased at a Goodwill store and modified to make a trophy for "best trick of the meeting." After very little discussion, it was unanimously decided that Joe should receive it the first time, for his performance with the sponge balls.

The evening ended on a delicious note, as Debbie had brought some homemade, and deliciously huge, chocolate chip cookies. Her treats alone make attendance at our meetings worthwhile.

Spring seems to be upon us, allowing more time outside. If your summer plans have you vacationing in the Big Sky State, don't hesitate to contact us so we can schedule a time to share magic.

Brent Cromley

RING 167, DES MOINES, IOWA – Justo Hijo of Magic, Inc.

2nd Mon., 7:00pm Felix & Oscars 4050 Merle Hay Rd., Des Moines, IA
BRUCE ANDERSON, Secretary
E-mail: bga0128@gmail.com

President Steve Hinrichs opened our March meeting welcoming some special guest magic prospects that were interested in joining our club. They became volunteers in a number of routines shared by our members. Alan Koslow talked Swallow Yan through a deck of cards that were sorted into many piles that added the face values to thirteen. After completing the sort, Swallow chose the stacks and Alan talked him through a process to locate a JD by removing cards adding to the restaurant's name Felix &

Oscars... twelve, then add three more, and again three more to find the JD. Swallow was amazed to participate and reveal the correct card. Nice coaching Alan.

Mikayla Carpenter asked Zheyuun Walter Yu to help find the 7H buried in the deck by shuffling five times and then gave the deck back to Mikayla. Mikayla sorted through the deck and asked Walter to say, "That's it" and dropped all the cards on the floor except the JH. Great surprise!

Tom Miller started with a deck by taking out six cards, then four more, then to a last card a seven, which led to revealing all four aces. Neat trick!

PJ Wiese shared a Time Travel routine in search for the 10H. He shuffled and sorted the cards face up and face down that led to the 10H. PJ is a talented card shark that loves revealing amazing tricks.

Tex Thompson showed Tiger Wong how to choose cards and create a square. Then Rex brought out a crystal ball that he placed under a cup, then lifted the cup to find it gone, then lifted the cup again to find a bigger ball. He lifted the cup again and it was empty, and one more time to reveal a large tennis ball. Rex has a fun cup and ball routine that surprises kids of all ages.

Bruce Anderson showed a packet of three cards with red, yellow, and blue spots. He asked John Davis to choose his favorite color. John chose red. Bruce said he knew John would choose red, and opened the packet and pulled out a paper that read "Because of your personality, you will select red." Such a simple no brainer fun routine that is guaranteed to be right.

Lucas Mc Cannon showed Yzheyuanlol how to find a red 10H in the middle of all the black deck. Lucas is an expert card shark!

Steve Hinrichs had Yzheyuanlol choose KD and Mikayla the 6C and put them in three piles. Steve was able to quickly find the 6C and KD in the piles. Steve is a master magician that has brought his skills and leadership to Justo Hijo, and attracted and brought many new members to the club.

We look forward to bringing lectures to our meetings and the AbraCORNdabra Convention in May.

Bruce Anderson

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

President Ryan Stiner called the meeting to order. We had twenty-three attending. Ryan began by showing an antique compass coin said to come from an ancient tribe. He had hilarious patter about how it was used to find the way to travel. Yes, it was the old Hi Sign, but in a unique form.

He got a big laugh when ending the bit by saying the best way to use it, the tribal chief advised, was to just flip it.

There were announcements of local magic shows at the Orlando area attractions and upcoming events. Lots of magic is happening in the Central Florida tourist area. We then had a club raffle for a Rainbow Deck and an Insurance Policy effect.

The monthly meeting show began with Conner Kaplan. He presented a trick with four kings. In a matrix move, the king in each corner of a box shape mysteriously turned over one at a time, face up, when his hand passed over each one. He ended with the backs changing colors from blue to red.

Dennis Phillips did his version of "Stretching the Truth." It is a version of the Cardiographic effect using a box of animal crackers. He drew a simple nebulous animal and when the volunteer revealed the animal cracker that they chose, he comically altered the drawing, such as adding a trunk and ears to the elephant and humps to the camel. After two animals, the volunteer selected a giraffe, and he drew the spots and when the audience thought they had him, he explained that the animal had a rare short neck disease. Then the magic happened. The neck stretched to a full size and the drawing was torn off the pad and given to the spectator.

Paul Thomey had a clever card effect where a signed card ended up in a small box of mints. Then, he repeated it with another card and after the card was revealed folded in the mints, the box became filled with mints.

Greg Solomon predicted a volunteer's chosen card from three randomly dealt stacks.

Dan Stapleton presented some baffling number tricks and puzzles. He showed how you could fit twelve magicians into eleven hotel rooms and then how the hotel bellhop could pocket a dollar tip without anyone knowing. Much of the math was based on the old gag about demonstrating that you have eleven fingers. Dan really did show that he had eleven fingers of course, with the help of a Vernet fake finger.

Jacki Manna, our talented ventriloquist and magician, closed out the show by presenting a large marionette that could fly apart and rejoin itself. She also had many animal puppets that talked. She has been doing schools shows teaching ventriloquism and letting each child manipulate a puppet.

Dennis Phillips

Sign up 1!

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
E-mail: ring175magic@gmail.com

Ring President Tom Vorjohan opened the March meeting with announcements regarding our one-day magic convention and flea market to be held on Saturday, May 20, 2023, at the Lion's Eye Institute in Tampa. The most up to date details are available on our website at www.tampamagicclub.com. Our Social Media Director, Sara Kirkpatrick, offered several excellent ideas for the creating of social media content on various platforms to let people know who we are and what we do! Club Treasurer, Ken Spanola, proposed a magic class for kids as a payback to the church for the use of their facilities. This idea was greeted with such enthusiasm we may offer classes to the general public. Security clearances, facilities, and a budget for supplies will be investigated for continued planning.

Tom welcomed several guests visiting our meeting for the first time, including Austin, a talented Tampa entertainer who does everything from stilts to playing the Grinch at Christmas, and Jill "Jilly Bean" St. James, who used Jilly Bean's voice to explain how much she enjoys magic! Emy Fudge, four years old, came to the meeting with her dad and continually stole the show as our Ring's heavily chosen "volunteer" for the evening. We love seeing new faces at our gatherings so remember us if you are in town on the second Tuesday of the month!

Scott Correll let us know there will be a magic convention once again in Myrtle Beach, planned for October 5-7. Joe Dobson requested an eight-by-ten of Daniel Fite who will be tackling the Appalachian Trail in April, "just in case." Good luck, Dan! We can't wait to hear all about it.

The theme for this evening was "Tie One On," a chance to do some rope magic! Tom Vorjohan started things off with Dan Harlan's "Awakening" using some premium quality braided ropes. The ropes appeared to change size rapidly in Tom's hands, yet Tom could not explain how. Mystifying and amazing! The always friendly Greg Gaulden came out blazing with "Professor's Nightmare," "Block on Rope," "Ring on Rope," and "Rainbow Ropes" before club Vice President John Keever requested he "leave some for the rest of us!" Greg used some gospel magic patter for a number of his routines which seemed appropriate for the nave we were meeting in.

When it comes to ropes, our Ring leader is unquestionably the talented Rudy Hernandez. Rudy showed us a thread the needle type trick

called "Ropin' Hood," passed a rope through his neck, then two ropes through his neck, then two ropes through his torso! Then he showed us how he did it! It pays to attend our meetings.

John Keever impressed us all by placing a ring on a rope, plucking it off, putting it back on, then making it jump from loop to loop at will. Wow! Club Secretary John Holly "explained" to Tom Vorjohan how Dan Harlan's "Awakening" worked without explaining anything. John then shared Mark Wilson's "Cut and Restored String" trick for the thrifter magicians in the crowd. For the real cheap magicians in the crowd, John showed a Lonnie Chevrie gypsy thread trick using waxed floss from the Dollar Tree.

Goldilocks and the Three Bears, *Cinderella* and her stepsisters and the *Three Little Pigs* all played a part in Joe Dobson's fairy tale three rope routine. We are not sure what part they played but they were definitely too big, or too small, or just right, just like his ropes! Joe is a great entertainer.

The colorful Daniel P. Fite was up next, asking Emy to assist him with an ancient "Seminole Indian Rope Trick." The loud and surprising chants and dances Dan performed as the magic happened delighted Emy which delighted us! As Dan said, "It's not the magic, it's the presentation." And Dan knows how to present it!

The versatile Charles Garvey shared his mastery of the John Luka taught "Professor's Nightmare" count from our Ring lecture last month. Charles also demonstrated an Aldo Colombini technique and an easy initial setup for the routine. Both are great additions to anyone's rope work!

Scott Correll demonstrated his "Knot So Fast" gimmick which won him top honors in our last Magic Idol contest. That knot is so fast!

One of our newest members, Gilles "Lord Graybeard" Deacur performed "Laced Up" with original rhyming patter to fit his character. Gilles linked a ring onto his shoelaces, then moved the knot to the toe of his shoe and untied it, before he put it back where it started. Thanks for sharing, Gilles, and welcome to the club!

Ring President Tom Vorjohan returned to the stage to perform a great walking knot routine. When a switchblade was used to cut the rope, Scott Correll could not resist pulling out a Crocodile Dundee style blade and asking, "You call that a knife?" Ring 175 members are ready for anything!

April is a good time to bring out the often-credited *Tarbell Course in Magic* and see what our thirteen members and three guests (plus a couple family members) could find in the good books. We had a brief bit of business including the plans

for Doug Conn, Erick Olson, and Jaffo to be in Tampa for our Festival of Magic on May 20.

Our doctor, Rob Albergo opened with the assistance of John Keever in “shuffling” some sugar packets that each had a different card written on it. In the end, the only packet not eliminated was the Queen of Hearts, and that matched a photo Rob had taken prior to starting the trick with John’s iPhone! Our President, Tom Vorjohan, followed with a fooler he found on page 134 of Volume 3 of *Tarbell*: “The Quick Number Memorization.” He borrowed a one-dollar bill from Jonathan Fudge, and without seemingly looking at the bill for more than a glance, he could recite the letters and eight-digit serial number – forward, backwards, and from the inside out as requested!

Our visitor from Indianapolis, Daniel Lusk, did his favorite “carry” trick with a very quick transposition of two torn corners from two different playing cards. He explained that this was “Tornado” by Justin Flom and Rick Lax. John Keever went to Volume 7 page 86 for his “Die Duction” using three dice stacked to discover they led to a perfect match of a prediction on the table. Ken Spanola did one of his favorite card effects where three selected cards in a very mixed-up pack apparently flipped so that they were the only three face up in the face down deck. To end our official performances, Frank Velasco demonstrated “How to Win at Poker” with the assistance of Rob Albergo. There was a lesson in shuffling and one in cutting, and in the end, Frank turned over four matching kings... only to be beat by Rob’s four aces.

Most of the members stayed for a while to talk, visit, socialize and even entertain Mr. Fudge’s daughter, Emmy, who is four and loves magic. Tom Vorjohan did a couple of Nick Trost effects as well as “Holey Moley” by Sankey, Daniel Lusk showed the power of having a child “name” a card like they would a doll or pet – powerful lesson! And Joe Dobson showed Emmy a six-sided chip that had many different colors on each side. A fun evening was had by all (except our secretary, John Holly, who had to leave prematurely – we missed you, John!).

If you are ever in Tampa on the second Tuesday of the month, please stop by and say hello! We look forward to meeting you.

John Holly and 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

Our April meeting got off to a great start with Al Laverseur performing “The Girl in the Box,”

using a spoon to represent the girl, which was pierced, but became a fork. Al Skinner was next with “Psypher,” a mental exercise. Scott Smith did “Between the Red Queens,” a sandwich type trick. Kirby Romine executed the “Norm Nielsen Coke Bottle” effect. John Iacono demonstrated using an aluminum foil thumb tip, then did a paper tear and restore. David Wright showed us his take on “Triumph,” and Pepe Puglisi brought out “Quantum” for our enjoyment; it’s a Sharpie through card using “that something special” catalogs are so fond of.

Dale Lorzo hosted us to a picnic and then used his “basket” to clean a napkin that had been soiled with mustard and ketchup stains. John Jones amused us with “CardToon,” and Vikram Amasingh did a trick using “Kid’s Cards.” Scot Smith returned for “This one, That One and the Other One” with three mini purses, a game to win a dollar All in all a great line-up with some solid magic on display. *Jeff Tinker*

RING 193, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH – Len and Thalia Swinyer Ring

Meets 1st Tue., 7:00 pm, at the Swinyer residence, 4970 Waimea Way, Holladay, UT.

JOHN GONZALEZ, Secretary / E-mail: johngonzalez@mac.com

Web site: www.utahmagic.org

Our president, Mike Welch, called the meeting to order and advised that this may be his last meeting (or it may not) since he and his wife recently purchased a home in West Virginia and will move in the future. We will miss him. Mike reminded us of the Utah Magic Fest in American Fork, April 7 - 8, which is sure to be another great opportunity for all to enjoy magic. Michelangelo let everyone know he is trying to clear out his storage unit, and he has illusions and stage magic for sale. Reach out if you’re interested (illusionzone@gmail.com). Thalia Swinyer is trying to declutter Len’s magic closet. At our meeting, she gave away an unopened “Needle Through Balloon,” “Shrinking and Growing Head Spiral,” and several other items. Now there’s one incentive for attending Ring meetings!

After the announcements, we began our “Top ‘o the mornin’ to ya!” night with “a load of Blarney” and enjoyed an evening of “Anything Green” magic. Chuck Heller, inspired by Bizarro’s soda can switch, changed a box of Fruity Pebbles into a box of Lucky Charms. Javier Montelongo, sporting a new haircut, admitted he was a vegan. Asking for emotional support, he changed a celery stick to a cigarette and back to a celery stick. Influenced by Steve Dilla’s “Will to Read,” Rudy Chacon showed his power to influence a spectator’s free will to choose. After narrowing down his choices, the

spectator kept the coin. Rudy had accurately predicted this in writing.

Mike Welch showed a simple, everyday carry. He displayed a large marble and before our eyes we saw the marble melt, and then hardened into what looked like a diamond. Mike also showed his ability to produce a large coin in front of our eyes and then have it disappear as well. He repeated this several times.

KC Ushijima, our balloon guy, introduced Casey Jr., made of balloons. Asking for a volunteer who wouldn't mind risking his life in a dangerous act, Casey displayed a freely selected card (Three of Hearts). With a flair for the dramatic, Casey popped the center of Casey Jr's torso and produced a sponge heart with the number "3" inscribed in the center.

In honor of Dr Seuss' birthday, Mont Dutson offered a timeless Dr Seuss classic with "Chinese Sticks." He also had Javier, as spectator, open eight or more large envelopes, each containing a card with items or characters wearing green (e.g., Leprechaun, outdoor furniture, labeled "Patty O Furniture", etc.) When Javier narrowed his choice to a final envelope, the card revealed the character of Winnie the Pooh wearing an Irish sweater. Mont opened a large colored paper bag, which had been visible to the audience throughout Javier's selection process, and removed a stuffed toy, Winnie the Pooh wearing an Irish sweater.

Len Swinyer displayed a long piece of white rope that he repeatedly insisted was green (in order to adhere to the evening's green theme.) From that one piece of "green" rope, he flawlessly produced several rope circles, then tied them in knots to the point of a mass of "green" rope knots. When he appeared confused and started having difficulty, he ended up showing five separate "green" linking ropes.

We dismissed to the Swinyer's recreation room for snacks and chit chat with each other and a chance to meet a new "mucker." (A term used by the Irish for friend.)

April - We met on a snowy "winter storm warning" Wednesday night, April 4 in the home of Len and Thalia Swinyer. Very heavy snows have swept the Salt Lake Valley the last several weeks. Wednesday was no different. It cut into our meeting attendance. In addition to Len and Thalia, we had Mont Dutson Ring V.P., and Dale Stewart long-time member. We just sat around in a circle in the bomb shelter turned magic theater room in the Swinyers' basement and chatted about anything that came up. You should have braved the storms and been there. We heard amazing and amusing stories ranging from near private airplane disaster for Len and Thalia to

stories of finding the right mate and engagements, and even several X-rated jokes from Dale! We moved out to the snack bar for more conversation and veggie platter, home-made sugared walnuts, cinnamon bears, and Easter cupcakes all provided by Thalia. Man, there was a lot of snow around their place up on the east bench of the valley right at the foothills of the Wasatch Mountains. Hope we thaw out by May meeting. *John Gonzalez and Mont Dutson*

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

Nine hours before his lecture started, Chris Philpott kicked the sand off his shoes from Myrtle Beach, SC, then drove nine hours to present a great lecture for Ring 194. You readers would never, eh, know, Chris, eh, lives in Windsor, Ontario, Canada, eh, but his snowshoes, eh, were a dead giveaway. Chris's magic, not him, appeared on *The Illusionists*, *America's Got Talent*, and *Penn and Teller: Fool Us*. Now, Ring 194 knows why magicians all over the world perform Chris's magic.

The "End of My Rope Trick" started off his lecture. Wow. Chris took the time to go over the trick, until everyone understood it. "Intuition" will be another trick that many Ring 194 members will add to their shows. Packs small, plays big. Just when members thought what other miracles Chris can blow our minds with; he presented the "100th Monkey" effects. Wow, eh. Said enough! Thank you, Chris, eh. Below are April's minutes.

After March's meeting taking place in two different states simultaneously, it was great to be back at one location. Reports from the Winter Carnival of Magic were presented with so much enthusiasm that the Ring reporter could not keep up with the stories. Names were changed to protect the innocent. What happened in the WCOM may have stayed in the WCOM, but the magic was too good to leave it there.

Teach a Trick night is always a hit. Matt is responsible for the themes each month and is not responsible for members performing magic not associated with the theme. If not mentioned here, after teaching most tricks, someone showed another way to do the effect. Effects that affected us all. Kevin Oconnell taught some effects using mouse traps. Members knew they were real traps by the way, because they cut through raw carrots like hot butter on a humid evening in Belize on July 16, 1997. If you were there, you would have remembered. Members

debated if that was real rat hair stuck to one trap. Dean Carter counted the members' fingers to make sure no one was really hurt. Even Meir Yedid would be proud of the effect. Jared Cassidy took some of the hair to run through the DNA lab, something any cat lover would do. Kevin's daughter Riley performed and taught "Smoke Bomb to Cane," a trick no one in the room had seen before. She had all ten fingers. Patrick taught his version of Garnet Garven's "Last Valentine Standing" from *TLR* February 2023. Patrick added an origami fold (fortune teller) prediction and a game show theme. Harbor freight coupons were used as gifts. Packs small plays big.

President Matt Growden taught his version of Paul Curry's "Out of this World." Looked impossible, but we saw it twice. This is one members will use. V.P. Brett Boyer was excited about the "Apple-Banana" trick he found at the WCM, did not teach it, but taught a coin guessing trick. The coin trick would have been better if the coins were different denominations, since from across the room, all state quarters look the same. Treasurer Dean Carter pulled a red handkerchief through the bottom of a jar. Very visual and will be used by members. Dean, itching to make members feel uneasy, shouted, "Cook Books." Patrick deleted the shout from the Ring report.

Jumping Jack Baldwin started teaching tricks during the business part of the meeting. Included were forcing a card, double lift, and a "Three Card Monte." A few members taught their versions of the same three tricks, so new members could see there are many ways to do a trick. Bill Mullins did not teach a trick, but performed the "Sprite Zero Can" trick, not available in stores. Several members taught a coin vanish using a handkerchief, looked great, easy to do, but some members did not want to touch a handkerchief with amber looking deposits. They preferred to wait until home. Members left the meeting with enough new material to keep them busy until the next meeting, eh.

Patrick Brunson

RING 197, MARIETTA, OHIO – The Tommy Windsor Ring

Meets 2nd Thu., 7:00pm at 416 Colegate Drive, Marietta, OH
KEN BROWN, President / E-mail: kennyrb@msn.com

Our April meeting site was moved for one month only, to the Man Cave of Dale Wheeler. Being an avid West Virginia University Mountaineer fan, Dale has turned his room into a monument to WVU football and basketball complete with recliner chairs, huge screen television and walls, lamps and everything else in the room bearing the WVU logo. Although Marietta, Ohio is the current home to Ring 197 it was originally chartered in West Virginia and

a majority of our current members live in "Almost Heaven" West Virginia. So, the meeting site change, although temporary, was like returning home.

The club is planning a trip by several of our members to Canton, Ohio, which is one hundred miles north, to attend a meeting of the Fellowship of Christian Magicians. The meeting and lecture are May 8. We are also planning to attend a Michael Carbonera performance at our local theater in September.

Our little club is suddenly starting to grow again. Three former members have returned and a new member or two are in the works. The new blood has brought a new excitement for the old members.

Performing for the Member Magic portion of our meeting was Chad Davis with a nice presentation of the "Heaven and Hell" paper tear followed by a "Bank Night" routine. Both routines were expertly performed by Chad. Chad is one of our reinstated members and we are happy to have his fresh ideas back into the meetings.

Chester Gault was next with his tribute to Daryl and his magic. Chester presented "Crossed Thoughts" and "Hyper-Bentilation," two mind bending effects by the late, great Daryl.

Dock Cutlip, who will be our newest member soon, presented "Monkey in the Middle" accompanied by some hilarious patter. Dock has already shown us that although he is our newest member, he in no way is new to magic. We welcome his fresh and skilled magic to our club.

Jay Foresta presented and explained a very neat coin vanish. Jay then performed and also explained a rope escape. Jay gets better every month and is always entertaining to watch.

Dale Wheeler, our host, who owns more magic than anyone I have ever known, presented a card routine with the help of Siri. Siri, who was a bit stubborn at first, eventually cooperated and performed the effect perfectly. Dale then presented a seemingly impossible effect using the Gilbreath Principle.

Ring 197, although small, has an unusual amount of talent. Meetings are always fun and educational. Join us as a guest and see for yourself.

C.W. Gault

RING 199, RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA – Lee & Snavely Ring

Meets 1st Sat. of month, United Church, 820 E. Williams St., Apex, NC
DAN HARLAN, Secretary
E-mail: contact@danharlanmagic.com
Website: www.raleoghmagicclub.org

The April meeting theme... "Hare-raising or Hair-raising." You decide.

New to the club, Paul Syros had us whittle down five ESP cards to one. Who knew we were such good whittlers? His phone showed the

matching symbol which may have raised an eyebrow or two.

Next up, Tucker Goodman whipped out some new old stuff to impress us. The stuff was old, but new to him, and we were... impressed, that is. He also shoved some tiny swords through a full-size half dollar (the metal kind, paper's less impressive) without harming it, or us.

Another new (but familiar) member, Viranchee Lotia, risked it all by letting Rick DeNatale do all the work. It turned out fine as Rick's reversed card matched one reversed in another deck. Viranchee took all the credit.

Speaking of credit... when it comes to virtual banking (see what I did there?), Bhavish Malkani keeps up with the latest and greatest innovations as evidenced by his demonstration of an automatic withdrawal envelope that visibly filled with cash. He deserves a raise.

Then things got a little hairy as junior member Josh had five peeps each take five cards and think of only one. He attempted to identify all five with a modicum of success. In fact, he had perhaps three or four modicums of success. Enough to qualify as a passing grade.

Speaking of passing, The Great Pauldini (Paul Kokkelenberg), passed a multicolored die through a wooden tube and it slid out the other end. But wait, there's more! He did it again and the die changed color. Okay, you can stop waiting, that's it. Still, you can color us impressed.

Our next performer, Wayne Haarhaus, took this month's theme to heart with a multiphase routine involving a drawing of a rabbit on a card which came to the top (hare-raising) and went to the bottom (receding hare). Then, the deck became solid (how the hare did he do that?) and the card changed to say, "April Fools!" The original drawing was found folded in the card box. A "hare"owing adventure.

Marc Seelinger showed a "Three Card Monte" ending with a stick figure drawing holding both the other cards. I guess that guy must be Monty.

Rounding out the parade of fools, Dan Harlan annoyed a good-natured child named Vivian who he enlisted to help him hand out Easter eggs. She did a wonderful job by somehow giving Harlan eggs-actly the egg he wanted... the one filled with money!

Okay, that's done. Now, back to work.

Dan Harlan

RING 202, MALTA – The Magicians' Society

Meets on alternate Mondays at 19:00 Volunteer Centre, 181 Melitta Street, Valetta

GEOFFREY BUHAGIAR, General Secretary

E-mail: gfotoartist@gmail.com / www.facebook.com/groups/27850309211

Inspired by the Penn & Teller series *Fool Us*,

we nurtured the idea of having a small amusing competition where some of our members volunteered to fool our experienced members, I.B.M. Past International President Vanni Pulé and Chris Gové. It was a fun meeting, but the four participants truly made an effort and took it quite seriously.

Daniel Raven started by giving one of the judges a pack of cards which contained names of countries, some of which were written in red and others in black. He shuffled the cards and connected with Vanni's phone while he went far away downstairs in another location. He guessed which countries were being looked at even though he was at a distance from the deck.

John McKellar had several sealed decks of cards, out of which one was chosen, opened and shuffled freely. Six cards were pushed out, shown to another member, and jotted down for future reference and shuffled back in the deck. Notwithstanding this, John managed to find the chosen cards.

Alfred Mifsud had a card chosen and it appeared in various locations and situations, one of them even changing its back and another one ending folded and tied to the neck of a Jack in the Box toy.

Michael Mock presented a complex mental routine where chairs, names of singers and songs were predicted in various ways. Although all the acts had great merit and had some baffling moments, it was decided to give the trophy to John McKellar because he completely stumped everybody at the time. The whimsical trophy based on a Maltese language pun was spun on a 3D printer by yours truly.

A fortnight later, we planned to have a sales meeting where members would bring some of their unwanted props and sell them to other members. But it seemed that most of us preferred to hoard rather than dispose of magic. Therefore, it turned into a performance session.

It was opened by Michael Mock who first showed us an electronic version of the "Invisible Touch" and then moved on to a demonstration and discussion about an un-gimmicked version. Our President, Glen Mercieca, commenced with an "Invisible Deck" routine which ended with the invisible chosen card being scanned with a cell-phone and appearing visibly on the screen of the phone. TVP Alfred Mifsud entertained us with another combination of mentalism and visual magic. He had a pack of cards showing names of different cities. Three were chosen and two were eliminated. Not only did he guess which city it was, he then spread the rest of the deck face down and a picture of a famous landmark associated with the chosen country made its appearance.

Gwilym Bugeja gave us his honed and slick routine of the “Two Card Monte” and Philip Sammut demonstrated his original version of the “ACAAN” routine. He followed this with a baffling effect where a few jumbo cards that are manually turned over in a deck return to their normal orientation with just a wave of the hand. Vanni Pulé changed lottery tickets into Euro notes, penetrated a coin through the bottom of a glass, and predicted the number of dice rolled and the card that was in the position of that number.

We were lucky to host a guest from Berlin, Germany, who happened to visit Malta on holiday. Freddie Rutz is the Chairman of the Magischer Zirkel Berlin. He is a versatile artist with over forty years of experience as a professional dancer, musical performer, magician, director, choreographer, and producer. Since 1996 he has been one of the close-up magicians of the Wintergarten Varieté and has performed as the “Schneller Schweizer” on cruise ships, in variety shows, at Europa-Park, in Canal City in Fukuoka and at many international events. Although he was not prepared to perform, he gave us a short yet insightful treatise on an un-gimmicked version of the bill switch. He was thanked by our president for giving his time during his vacation and greetings were passed on to German magicians. *Geoffrey Buhagiar*

RING 203, ZIMBABWE, AFRICA – Hans Trixer Ring

Meets online only at this point in time. Contact Dominic LaVin for information.

DOMINIC JOHN LAVIN / lavin@iafrica.com

The magic scene is vibrant here in the southern part of Africa and a WhatsApp group started up last year probably driven by our experience with Covid. There are currently ninety-eight people on the group and much sharing of ideas and adventures while another group which is Strictly Buy/Sell Magic SA and stringently monitored with no negatives or chit chat as that goes on the former group. The local College of Magic has just brought out a *Magic Book* which is a collaboration with the college and Professor Richard Wiseman, and it is now on sale. French wizard Francis Tabary has been in South Africa lecturing, performing, and attending braai’s [barbecue’s] and meeting the local magicians and later this month yours truly will be a judge on the colleges next round of competitions which always prove a very high standard.

Ring 203 is in Zimbabwe and that country is forced to continue to bounce along badly and sadly. This year the South African government is ejecting about three million Zimbabweans from SA who came here after the collapse of that country when Mugabe evicted white com-

mercial farmers who created the breadbasket of Africa but destroyed when he took their farms without compensation.

As the last remaining member of The Hans Trixer Ring, I continue to be very active, but living in Cape Town and not Zimbabwe. I feel there will be a resurgence and anticipate it keenly and my friend Wolfgang Riebe and professional friends are travelling less so we can get together regularly. As you know distances here are vast and to put it into perspective, one could take Spain, France, and Great Britain and drop them into SA and still have room left for the Benelux countries!

I received this piece of advice so am sharing it with the readers: The questions What? When? Where? are answered by putting a ‘T’ in place of the ‘W’ and bob’s your uncle!

I have a photo from Corinda’s manuscript of the Gypsy Thread by Hans Trixer from circa 1960 and Hans passed unexpectedly and his special bespoke gimmicked apparatus like a silver dollar expanding shell and a ring in which a diamond moved along a rail which he used for misdirection, super valuable and full of style but treated like toys as the people who inherited his precious items did not know what they had. This is why the Buy/Sell site is so wonderful and items can be passed on to those magicians who will appreciate them.

Another bit of chit chat on the verge of magic is that the South African government’s Department of Health has instructed medical insurance companies to recognise and pay for traditional medicine as dispensed by Sangoma’s (traditional healer and diviner) so we will have to look into that one as we could have another career in the making!

Cape Town is blessed with all aspects of the arts and facilities which is why the movie making industry does so much here. Last year I was delighted to be invited again to the Cape Town College of Magic to adjudicate on the students and then honoured to make the closing address. As it was sprung on me, the content was taken from one of my openers and the rest from the obvious. “In the beginning (pause), well just after the beginning before there was geography, before there was geometry, before trigonometry, before gynecology; there was magic. Magic is the ability to do something which others cannot do. It does not contravene the Natural Law as that would be a miracle and only one can do that.”

I went on to extoll how wonderful and unique The College is and that here is nothing like it and how wonderful and fortunate the students are. I mentioned that to choose the winners in

different categories was difficult for us judges as the standards are remarkable high and perhaps due to the Covid lock down changing habits and allowing practice, practice, practice in the magnitude of Edward Victor.

Hans Trixer told me how hard and diligently they practised back in the day and I recall my first home in Lusaka with no TV and dawn and dusk being almost at same time all year round because of proximity to the equator, allowing time to perfect a number of routines “given” to me by the great Ken Brooke from his studio in Wardour Street in London, like Vernon’s “Symphony” and Fritzee’s “Ropesational,” which stand the test of time.

I should mention that Cape Town is one of the truly great cities in the world and stunning in every aspect, but we slipped over to London for Christmas and a real winter and on my last night before boarding a ship in Southampton, my son surprised me with a father son night out and tickets to the Derren Brown Show at the Apollo Theatre in Shaftsbury Avenue. All I can say is that he finished with a standing ovation from every person in the audience and from the chatter I picked up they all believed they had been hypnotised. I’ll leave it at then, there, and that!

Dominic John LaVin

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

Gary Friedrich opened the March 26, 2023, meeting at 7 p.m. at Mike’s house. We discussed several magic conventions and then Fr. Steve gave the treasurer’s report.

Performances began with Father Steve Blum under the guise of Sam Spade. He asked members or “witnesses” several questions and spelled out the answers with cards. Each spelling and counting revealed a selected card in the deck.

Gary Friedrich bounced a small basketball off of the table. Each time it bounced one of the fours from the deck popped up to correspond to “The Final Four.” He also manipulated three coins from his hand to his pocket to the change purse.

Doug Ferguson had the Jack of Diamonds chosen from the deck. He then caused three blank cards to change to the selected card.

Chris Topel had Fr. Steve hold a coin purse. Chris then fanned the deck of cards and asked someone to pick a card. The back of that card listed the exact change in the coin purse.

Gene Craft presented the evening lecture. He

selected five cartoon characters from the Sunday comics. He then had an audience member shuffle and deal out ten different pictures that all matched the given comic characters.

Mike Grubbs presented the evening show. He matched six different symbols from a shuffled deck, performed a card-find, and dealt four stacks of cards to the table revealing the four aces. He concluded by passing a bolt through a deck of cards with no apparent hole in the deck.

Gene Craft

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: Kebram@aol.com

The Central IL Magic Get-Together, hosted by I.B.M. Ring 239 in Springfield, IL., will be on Saturday, June 3. For information or to register online, use: www.ring239.com/general-6.

We opened the meeting with discussion of three possible lectures. Rob “The Professor” Higgins recommended reading up on Long Tack Sam. There was also discussion of the *5 Points of Magic*.

Andy Anderson opened the magic with his “Silk to Egg.” Randy Shields found a card by monitoring the spectator’s heart rate using a Night Flight Deck. Chris Bontjes demonstrated his “Traveling Knot.” Rob Higgins took the floor again with “Super Lemon” and Magician’s Flip Book. Bill Pierce showed his “Color Match.” Rob Higgins performed “Hide-a-Key.” Randy Shields showed us his “Disappearing Knots” and Justin Dudley did his “Linking Life Savers.” Someone also performed “Knot Unexpected,” but I didn’t write down who it was. Sorry about that.

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, April 19th at the Salvation Army in Champaign, IL. Come early and meet us at Manzella’s Italian Patio on First Street for fun and food. They open at 5:00. The topic for April is Paper Magic. See ya at the meeting.

Ken Barham

RING 243, CANTON, OHIO – Roth-Mills Ring

Meets the last Wednesday of each month (except December) at Mama Guzzardi’s Italian Restaurant (temporary site) 1107 N. Main St. North Canton, Ohio 44720

RANDY WEIDENHAMER, Secretary / (330) 933-8787

E-Mail: randy.weidenhamer@sbccglobal.net

The meeting was held at Mama Guzzardi’s Italian Restaurant, our temporary new site, on the 29th of March 2023 at 7:00 p.m. Eight members and two guests were present. Meeting was called to order by Brent Schneider, President. No minutes from the previous meeting were

read by Randy Weidenhamer, Secretary, as they were published in the monthly newsletter for all members to view. Treasurer's report was read by Mike Salvino, Treasurer. All reports were approved as read.

All members' health concerns were expressed along with the members' celebrations to be honored. Our auction chairman, Mike Bishop, once again thanked all members for their hard work at the auction. We have a new location for our 2023 family banquet and magic show. It will be at the Grace United Church of Christ in Uniontown; our previous location has been sold. Mike Bishop will once again be our entertainment chairman and tickets prices will be determined at the April meeting. Our April meeting will be at the Grace United Church of Christ in Uniontown and Mark Miller will be at our April meeting doing his lecture and magic demo. Free for members and ten dollars for nonmembers. Discussion was held for holding our lectures on the same night as the meetings. Report was given on the trip to Wauseon and the tour of the Vanishing Magic Museum. This concluded the business part of the meeting, and everyone readied themselves for the magical portion on the evening.

Up first was Daniel Schneider who did his initiation show. Daniel produced a stuffed rabbit from a box and then did a great job with a Rubik's Cube that was sealed inside a glass jar which he shook and turned it into a pile of M&Ms. Great job Dan and welcome to the Canton Magicians. Next came Ken Hutchinson as he told the story of the "Linking Rings" and performed a great routine. He even did a linking rings routine with a set of mini rings. All in all, it was a great night of magic. Let's plan on doing it again next month.

Randy Weidenhamer

RING 258, LEESBURG, FLORIDA – The "Magic Ian" Ring

4th Thu. at 7:00 pm, Community Room, Lake Square Mall, Hwy 441, Leesburg, FL

ROGER L. REID, Secretary / (321) 945-7500

E-mail: rogerreid1114@gmail.com / Website: www.Ring 258.com

The meeting began with Good & Welfare. Les Morgenstein is well on his way to recovery from his stroke. Allen Klein has returned from recent surgery and is feeling well.

Guests at the meeting were Daniel Morgan and Jeff Arnold, both of whom put in applications for Ring membership. The search for a potential new meeting place goes on; especially since there were no chairs or tables set up for us this month at the mall.

The Ring picnic will take place on May 21st at Hickory Point Park, from 3:00 to 8:00 p.m. The Tampa Festival of Magic will take place the day

before our picnic on May 20. Dave Lyons will perform close-up magic at Marion County Day. Jeff Arnold is looking for a Splendo silk. Andy Rohweder is looking for a lightly used Rocky Raccoon.

The after-meeting entertainment was a Four Corners Teach-In. Teachers sat at tables and students rotated every fifteen minutes.

Jim Moody followed up on February's discussion on Gimmicked Cards, by performing and explaining three effects, all using gimmicked cards.

Sandy Schwartz taught three card routines titled "Find the Cards in Piles," "357689142," and "Press the Cards," and handed out detailed instructions for all three.

Roger Reid taught the workings of various box and tube props including "Hippy Hop Rabbits," Die Box – Kids' Routine, Wrist Guillotine, Mini Producto Box, P & L Change Bag, Temple Screen, Phantom Tube, Jo-Ann the Magic Duck, Silk Cabby, etc.

Greg Solomon rounded out the teaching staff by introducing the name Lubor Fiedler and demonstrating the Lubor Lens and made a coin penetrate a rubber "Dam." Ring namesake, Magic Ian, wrote a book titled *The Best Dam Trick*, about this effect.

The theme for the April meeting will be Silk Magic.

Roger Reid

RING 265, LONDON, ONTARIO, CANADA – London Magicians Guild

Meets 2nd Wed., Labatt's Engineering Bldg. unless otherwise notified.

MARK HOGAN, Secretary

"And now for something completely different!" That was the theme for March's meeting. And we saw a lot of different gimmicks, props, and tricks.

Scott Hood showed off his collection of different change bags, including a Christmas stocking and even a large Crown Royal change bag! He also demonstrated a Die Box and a Zig-Zag effect – both using compact disks! He also had his own wonderful "Three Card Monte" routine using the story of Soapy Smith from the Yukon!

Mark Hogan performed Johnny Thompson's "Three Balls and a Net," Jon Armstrong's "Orbs of Power" using Toronto Maple Leaf coasters, Troy Hooser's "Charming Chinese Challenge" using metal washers, and his own Egg Bag routine ending with Denny Haney's idea of a shot glass in the bag!

Keith O'Brien showed us a host of different card effects: David Penn's "52 to 1" where he cut to a thought-of card; card switches with Rick Lax's "Tornado" and "Contact;" Calen Morelli's

“Quantum” (Pen through Card); John Bannon’s classic “Twisted Sisters;” Rick Lax’s new “Past, Present & Future;” and Keith’s own update to a set of Spirit Slates where a thought-of card and number magically appeared on the slates; a novel use of David Penn’s Overlaid with Mark Southworth’s Double Cross where a written X on Keith’s hand disappears from a picture on a spectator’s phone and reappears on their hand; and a demonstration of Benjamin Vienney’s great phone effect “RDigit!”

Andrew Olmstead performed two Martin Gardner effects using handmade dice he used like flash cards: “Digital Roots” where he divined a missing number in a sum, and “Heath’s Fast Summing Dice” where he revealed the total of a roll of the dice without looking!

Byron Berry exhibited his see-through blind-fold, a cool card in bread gimmick that blew Keith’s mind, and one of Roy Kuepper’s Toonie/Loonie coins.

Thanks to everyone for bringing something a little different!

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

Our March Ring meeting was a bit sparse on attendance, but we had some good fellowship anyway. We had eight people attend the meeting. Our Secretary, Erin King, performed a couple of short bits and also displayed a “Run Rabbit Run” effect. Jene Carroll did a great job showing his usual handling of that effect as well. David Gish instructed Paul Budd on setting up some newspaper for a gospel magic effect.

The club also discussed helping with the upcoming Maker Fair, set for April 15th at Discovery Science Place. That will be a fun event! We are also considering ideas to boost our Kids Club.

Ring 266 met at a local restaurant for our April meeting. Including visitors, we had fourteen people present. Our focus was to honor the late Dr. Kevin King with a Broken Wand Ceremony. One of our members, Andy Hickman, presided over the ceremony and he did a stellar job! Instead of breaking the wand, Andy presented it, unbroken, to the late Dr. King’s daughter, Erin. Erin is currently our club’s secretary and is carrying on Dr. King’s legacy. Dr. King served no less than nine terms as an officer in our Ring, and most of those as president. He would have been glad to hear us note that this evening was also exactly our

Ring’s thirty-sixth anniversary! April 1987 was a long time ago. Current member, David Gish and his wife were present. Also present was Eugene Wilkes from nearby Longview. David and Eugene are, as best as our records indicate, the last living charter members of our Ring. They are both still heavily involved in the art of magic.

We skipped performing any magic this evening. Eugene Wilkes brought a few things, in a doctor’s bag no less, however, we just got too carried away with our ceremony and chatting for him to perform. We took a break to enjoy our meal and had a brief business meeting, where Mark Kilsby was elected to serve out the remainder of Spencer Androli’s terms as Vice President. Many good things are happening in Spencer’s career as a juggler. We also voted to make a couple of very small tweaks to our Ring’s Constitution and By-Laws, mostly just cleaning up some confusing language and deleting the office of Sergeant-at-Arms.

Our main venue is Tyler’s Discovery Science Place, a fun and exciting place! Later this month, they are hosting a Maker Fair and our Ring will have a booth there. We will be strongly marketing our Kids Club and hope to garner some young new members! More on that in our next report.

Paul M. Budd

RING 273, CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA - Oliver Ring

Meets 3rd Thur., 7:30pm at the Burns Club

PETER FOSTER, Secretary

Email: pfooster@pcug.au

Hello all! Good meeting this month. There were five of us: Kieran, Richard, Chris, Kristian, and me. The theme was gambling.

I went first with a poker deal. This included reciting the Erdnase formula while running up the hand (“run eleven cards...” etc.). Spectators aren’t sure whether to believe what you are saying, but they’re impressed when you deal yourself the four aces. But then there was a second phase, involving a confederate, with lots of surprises and a royal flush kicker. An excellent routine, which can be done with a borrowed shuffled deck. This was “Erdnases” by Allan Slaight, which appeared in *The Linking Ring* in November 1990 (I had to dig through a lot of old boxes to unearth this one).

I followed with “Marked Cards,” a twisting the aces effect with blue backed cards. The story is that the subtle marks told me which ace would be turning up next. As a kicker, the backs of the aces suddenly turned red, with the name of the ace written in big letters! A fun trick.

I followed with another marked cards routine, a deck of cards from the world’s worst card cheat. The cards had ridiculous markings written

on the backs with a permanent marker. Lots of fun in showing some of the markings (a card has "SPOT" written on the back, "This one was named after his dog." Show the card, a jack. "A Jack Russell"). The markings were then used in fun and interesting ways to find some selected cards, with the routine finishing with the deck being in order. Different, interesting, and fun. This was "Foolish Cheater" by Woody Aragon (actually, my modified version).

Kristian went next with one that involved all of us. One spectator selected a card, that was lost in the deck. Then the deck was divided into four piles and we each took a pile. We then dealt and shuffled our cards, even discarding some. At the end we each had a small pile of cards. Surprisingly, the spectator's chosen card was the top card of his pile, and as a kicker, the top cards of the other piles were the other three cards of that rank. This was "C3" by R. Paul Wilson.

I followed with another poker deal. This was "Blessed Poker," Woody Aragon's version of the ten-card poker deal (it actually uses eighteen cards). A fun routine with multiple phases, each fairer than the last.

I put away the cards for a bit to show some lottery tickets. There were six tickets, which the spectators mixed and then numbered one to six. The spectators rolled a die to select tickets for themselves, leaving one final ticket for the magician. Then the tickets were turned over. They all said "LOSE," except for the magician's ticket that said "WIN." This used a forcing die. Actually, one of a set of six forcing dice, which allowed the spectators to number the tickets themselves.

Kristian now did a big gamble, betting his shirt on finding the spectator's card. But he failed. So, he took off his shirt and there, tattooed on his back, was the selected card.

Richard now did a packet trick with five cards. He explained that the Ten of Spades was a wild card. He then showed that each of these cards was the wild Ten of Spades. But then they turned into a royal flush. This was "Really Wild" by Harry Lorayne.

Kristian followed with another card trick. A card was selected and lost in the deck. The magician then dribbled the cards onto the table and plucked two of them out of the cascade. Neither of them was the selection. But taken together they made a number. The spectator then counted down to this number and there was the selection. This was "Pluck" by Christian Grace.

Chris gave us a break from cards with the "Unlinking Safety Pins." Then he showed us his new credit card. This was an old fashioned one that could only be used to withdraw cash. And

he did indeed withdraw a genuine banknote from it. This was called "Green Stuff."

Kristian now did a demonstration of cutting to the aces while blindfolded. He then put the aces back in the deck, shuffled, then found each of them again with Charlier one handed cuts. Very nice.

I then showed another ace cutting effect. The aces were lost in the deck, then they were cut to, one at a time. This was "Halo Aces" by Harry Lorayne.

Kristian followed with a very nice one, a monte effect with invisible cards! He started by dealing three cards face down in a row, but as he dealt them, they disappeared. There were then several phases where the invisible cards were mixed, and cards reappeared. Very eye catching and good fun. This was "Invisible Three Card Monte" by Erik Tait.

Kieran followed this with the classic "Three Card Monte."

Kristian finished the evening with another poker deal. This involved the spectator naming any four of a kind, e.g., the fours. After some clever shuffling the magician dealt the hands, and that spectator received the four fours. Impressive on its own. But then the other hands were shown, they were four aces, four kings, and four queens! This was by Jason England.

Next meeting is on 20 April. The theme is My First Magic Book. Cheers! *Peter Foster*

RING 279, DHAKA, BANGLADESH

Meets last Sunday, 4:30 pm, B-8/11, Tara Mia Road, Ganda, Savar,

Dhaka-1340, Bangladesh

ROBIN KHAN, President

E-mail: robin.khan77@gmail.com

In the beginning, condolences on the death of Magician Ulfat Kabir, a former member of I.B.M. Ring 279. Prayer offered under the leadership of Ring 279 Treasurer Md. Waliul Alam Khokon.

This is the first time the Magic Federation in Bangladesh will organize for two days (May 26 and 27) the Grand Magic Convention 2023 at Bangladesh Shilpokola Academy Dhaka. A celebration committee was formed for Grand Magic Convention. A sub-committee of thirty-three members was formed with I.B.M. Ring 279 President Robin Khan as convener and Vice President Ziamoni as joint convener. All the members welcome Robin Khan and assure him of all kinds of help. Robin Khan thanked everyone.

Last March 30 at Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy on the occasion of Holy Ramadan month, prayers were offered in memory of late Ulfat Kabir. At the proposal of magician Shaheen Shah on the occasion of Ramzan fasting, Tk.17000 thousand was given in cash to his

wife for Iftar on behalf of the Magic Federation. On behalf of Ring 279, 1 Baishakh (May 14) Bangoly New Year 1430 celebration and Eid Reunion organized the responsibility of cultural secretary of Ring 279 Prema Ananna and Debendra Chakraborty Chandy. Who is responsible?

A one-day magic convention organized by Magician Wasel was held at the Magic Theatre. President of Ring 279 Robin Khan, General Secretary Md. Fakhru Islam Shipuraj, and Secretary General of Magic Federation Shikder Abdus Salam were present. Ring 279 Treasurer Md. Waliul Alam Khokon suddenly fell ill, prayers for his speedy recovery.

President Robin Khan declared the meeting closed.

Md. Fakhru Islam Shipuraj

RING 284, FORT WALTON BEACH, FLORIDA - Conrad C. Bush Ring

Meets 4th Tue, 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

Business: (Mar 30th) Due to several members attending events on our usual day, we skipped the March meeting until the 30th. We adjourned from dinner at Fresh Greece to the meeting room at the Valparaiso Library again this month. President Jeff Sobel opened the meeting with a recap of the magic show that he and Secretary Ron Hudspeth both attended; The Pittmans, at 3rd Planet Brewing and we discussed both the show and the audience reactions. No one in the club had really been aware of them although they have been working steadily in the local area for a while, so we will keep an eye open for other opportunities to catch them. Jeff and Ron met with one of the owners of 3rd Planet who is planning on continuing with this kind of entertainment on a more regular basis, so hopefully we can look forward to more local magic shows and perhaps opportunities for club members to perform. He is also personally interested in learning magic, so we invited him to our meetings.

Ron then reviewed the events he attended in the last month, the Portland (OR) Magic Jam (PMJ; with Joshua Jay, Andi Gladwin, Carisa Hendrix, and John Carney) and the Cavalcade of Magic in Eureka Springs, AR. Both he and Robert Vinson attended the Cavalcade, which is sponsored by Ring 75 (Fort Smith) and held in the beautiful Ozark Mountains, although this trip we had to take their word for it – we had quite the wet weekend and a couple of tornado watches which fortunately did very little to dampen the atmosphere of this fun and friendly gathering. They start the event with an auction

night before the main events and Robert picked up a couple of items including a table for parlor/stage that he donated to the club this evening for future shows. For upcoming events, Ron and V.P. Brian Ward will be attending AbraCORNdabra in Des Moines, Iowa in May.

Magic: Jeff started the magic off with another version of the “Para-Norman” effect that he and Ron developed and have been working with for the past few years, using Pokemon monster cards instead of the original Zenner cards. Jack Chancellor then showed us his adaptation of “Spellatron,” a Vernon effect from Bruce Cervon’s L&L video *Vernon Secrets of Magic*. Jack has changed the spelling part of the trick in a significant way so that any card can be revealed using the under/down count, not just the original ten card slug that Vernon used. He also showed us his latest experiment based on Jack McMillan’s “Mind Mirror” effect from *Expert Card Technique*.

Another benefit of having skipped the meeting a week was that Ring 284 charter member Richard Coon and his wife were back in town and able to join us in person for the first time in quite a few years. Richard performed “Hot Card Trick No. 1” by Al Leech. If that sounds vaguely familiar to you, it’s because it is better known as “Red Hot Mama” and popularized as “Chicago Opener” by Frank Everhart in Garcia’s *Million Dollar Card Secrets*.

Robert then performed the “Russian Rings” effect from Duane Laflin and Brian did a bit of show-and-tell with some gorgeous rosewood magic wands he picked up from TCC magic.

Ron closed out the evening’s magic performing the latest version his “Duplicitious Jokers” effect with Jim Wise, which he most recently modified based on a John Carney workshop at the PMJ (including developing a vertical version of the Elmsley/Jordon Count) and finished the night demonstrating his new “Simon’s Dream” deck.

Remember that we meet for early dinner time on the fourth Thursday; 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. We text reminders for those so equipped too, especially to cover last minute/day of meeting changes. 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 and Crestview, so if you would like to car pool, feel free to call or e-mail RMHudspeth@spamcop.net for information.

Ron Hudspeth

RING 291, PALM DESERT, CALIFORNIA – Palm Springs Magic Club

Meets first and third Tuesday via Zoom
HENRY JUAREZ, Secretary / E-mail: henryjuarez1@hotmail.com
Web site: www.palmspringmagicclub.com

The Portola Community Center was transformed into a vintage magic store this past Tuesday night, March 7, as PSMC members and guest sellers gathered for a magic Swap Meet.

With tables set around the perimeter of the room, various members set out all manner of tricks, books, and gimmicks. Everything from a Séance Cloth complete with bells and tambourines to a vintage Gwendolyn the Duck card finder was on display. Members enjoyed discussing and reminiscing about various items, perusing extensive collection of books and magazines, and occasionally picking up a new treasure to add to their collections.

With brick-and-mortar magic stores now few and far between, it was great fun to see such a wide variety of magic props on display, and a wonderful opportunity for members to relax, socialize, and talk magic.

PSMC members explored some all-important (and oft-forgotten) performance aspects of magic this past Tuesday night, March 21, during a lecture titled “Making Your Presentation Magical!”

Our own Andy Cohen, longtime magician, marketing consultant, PSMC member and author of several books mixing magic with marketing insights including *Follow the Other Hand*, led us through several key steps for enhancing the impact of any effect. Andy began by introducing us to his ghost writer – an invisible friend named Gary, who had several interactions with different audience members in the course of helping Andy perform a unique version of the “Invisible Deck.” Andy used this to illustrate one of his main points regarding the importance of engaging the audience and making them part of the act.

With the help of various audience members, he went on to illustrate other points such as the value of creating complete, personal stories around tricks. He interspersed these points with stories about legendary figures like Houdini and Al Flosso, modern day performance artist Derek DelGaudio – and fond recollections of Andy’s own uncle, who was also a magician and first took him to Flosso’s magic store.

Andy closed with one of the most important keys to good magic: namely, that magic isn’t about the secret. The secret is only as good as what you do with it.

Following Andy’s presentation, new member Jerred Lockard showed us a multi-part card trick with some clever sleight of hand, after which George Hass and Gary Beutler joined in with demonstrations of additional card miracles.

Henry Juarez

RING 324, MIDDLETOWN, OHIO – Middletown Magic

Meets 1st. Fri. 7:30 pm, Tytus Avenue First Church of God, 3300 Tytus Ave., Middletown, Ohio 45042
LARRY HOLLINGER, Secretary
4515 Northglen Court, Englewood, OH 45322
E-mail: IBMRing324@aol.com

President James Butler officially welcomed us to our March Meeting. The Annual Magic Auction in Eaton will be May 27 - 28. We are still working on our “War of The Wizards” show with Rings 5 and 71 as well as video recording for a cable show. Ring 71 will be having a lecture on 3D printing magic items by our own Brad Morgan April 27th at their meeting. We had three neighbors drop by and taught “The Sorcerer’s Apprentice” by Paul Zenon to the two elementary aged girls.

Time for magic! Larry Payne started us off with his pet Bassett Hound puppet Toby. Toby attempted to find the card selected by a volunteer. After some tummy rubbing (Toby, not Larry) and a few false starts, Toby got it right. Ron Frank showed us “Pitata Hotel Prediction” with the selected number revealed on a hotel key chain. He then, with the help of volunteer Brad Morgan, had Brad choose one item from some receipts from local stores. Brad then separated the receipts containing the selected item. Ron revealed the item chosen using a combination of “Edcept” by Craig Petty and “Vox Users.”

I.B.M. President Elect Chuck Arkin asked volunteer Loa Morgan to select a card but had to use his “Magician’s Insurance Policy” to finally reveal the chosen card. Brad Morgan manipulated his 3D printed teapot with four very smooth Ikito Box/Boston Box moves. To finish off, Ron Frank asked volunteer Chuck Arkin to draw something we all would recognize while he looked away. With the help of his “New Memo Pad,” he correctly revealed the drawn picture.

We adjourned but stayed around and talked more magic. So, if you are ever in Middletown, Ohio the first Friday of the month, please stop by and join us. From Ring 324 – The Friendliest Ring Around. *Larry Hollinger*

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

RING 325, BRANSON, MISSOURI – The Tri-Lakes Tricksters

Meets 3rd Sat. of the month atlt's Magic & Joke Shop, 6:00pm, 124 South Business 65, Branson, MO
DR. CHRISTOPHER BECK, President
E-mail: beckibmring325@gmail.com

Branson, MO – I.B.M. Ring 325 would like to “tip their hat” to I.B.M. Ring 75 for all the work that went into creating such a wonderful Cavalcade of Magic convention in Eureka Springs. Our Ring was “well represented” at this year’s Cavalcade. Club members (and spouses) who attended included Duane and Mary Laflin, Yak Williams, Robert Morris, Richard Knoll, Thom Taylor, George and Mary Geise, Christopher and Dana Beck. The Cavalcade was a lot of fun, and one of the lectures was from our own Duane Laflin. His lecture about properly handling classic magic props was very well received!

As for March’s meeting (March 18 at 6 p.m.), we had a fine attendance! Club President, Christopher Beck, opened the meeting. Various items were discussed, including the upcoming Cavalcade of Magic event in Eureka Springs, the April lecture by club member Carl Wilson, as well as some newsletter items and the opportunity for someone to perform at a local writers conference. The club observed Caleb Martin’s birthday with a “rough but sincere” attempt at a rendition of “Happy Birthday,” and, of course, cake!

The first performer of the evening was Gary Geise. Among the effects Geise performed was a very nice poker effect, an effect he calls “Matchstick Poker Magic.” The audience of magicians enjoyed his presentation!

When Yak Williams took his turn to perform, he showed two wooden tubes (known as Buddha Tubes) empty and, then proceeded to produce an apparently unending white streamer. The length of the production was quite impressive!

Thom Taylor shared, with the help of a “volunteer” (EZ Hernandez), an amazing exhibition of “Blarney” and mind-bending magic. Using some cards and ten-sided dice, Taylor shared the power of “The Blarney Stone.” With a roll of the dice, EZ unwittingly selected the only card with a blue dot on the front. The rest of the nine cards were shown to have red dots. It was a mental miracle!

EZ Hernandez was one of the youngest magicians present. Hernandez attempted an amazing effect with a cellphone and a variety of numbers, including a PIN number from the phone’s owner. Technology was not cooperative; however, Hernandez then successfully performed a wonderful card location effect known as “The Trick that Fooled Elon Musk!”

Caleb Martin, another one of our young magicians, was up next. Martin took his “stage time”

to share an effect that was, literally, nuts! Martin had a card selected, and a walnut selected. After some entertaining byplay (which included use of an incredible walnut smashing machine), it was found that the selected card was inside the one and only walnut containing more than, well, walnuts! Martin’s was a very impressive performance!

Some magicians performed additional effects in a second round, prior to Christopher Beck’s performance of the final effect of the evening, a trick utilizing an autographed copy of *Miracles or Magic*, in homage to the late Andre Kole, who was not only an extraordinary magic creator, but one who used his magical talent to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with his audiences in hopes they would accept the Truth of Christ and turn to Him as Savior!

I.B.M. Ring 325 meets in beautiful Branson, Missouri! Branson is a great vacation destination. There are several magicians who host their own theater shows, and many other types of performers and shows, shops, attractions, and beautiful natural beauty surrounding it all! If you are an I.B.M. member and you plan on visiting 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 “It’s Magic” Magic Shop (located at 124 US-65 BUS in Branson, Missouri). However, on special occasions, the meetings are sometimes relocated to another locale. 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, Ph.D.

RING 327, CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA – Fred Petrick “Mombo” Ring

Meets 2nd Thu. of the month at the Iowa Magic Shop, 1090 Seventh Ave., Marion, Iowa
DON NELSON, President / Email: nelsondon@aol.com

Ring 327 had their traditional After-Holiday gathering January 29 at The Edison Pub & Eatery in Cedar Rapids. (Having the event in January minimizes conflicts with families’ other special events from Thanksgiving to New Years.) The dinner meeting is open to family members and interested friends as well as Ring members. Prior to the dinner, several also attended a performance that afternoon by Keith West’s Illusioneers at Grand Living. Keith and his assistant performed several stage effects including “Floating Lady in the Box,” the “Shrinking Lady,” “Candy to Necklace,” and some mentalism effects. At the Ring’s evening dinner party, Lee Bennett performed several

close-up card effects, including “Color Monte” and “My Favorite King,” with his own unique presentation and patter. Don Nelson reprised some effects he developed that are balloon parodies of classic magic effects: the “Cut and Restored Balloon,” “Balloon Dog to Silk,” and “Balloon-a-Rama.”

On January 31 three Ring members attended the Celebration of Life for Eugene Knepper, a long time Cedar Rapids resident and the father of magician and mentalist Kenton Knepper. Kenton grew up in Cedar Rapids and now lives in Phoenix, AZ. When in Iowa to visit family, Kenton has served as a lecturer and mentor for several of us in Ring 327.

At the March 2 Ring 327 meeting we discussed the re-emergence of local performing opportunities in the wake and waning of Covid. Ring member and mentalist James Scheer did a holiday show at a local restaurant. Kenton Knepper recently graced the cover of *The Linking Ring*. We discussed AbraCORNdabra, the upcoming Iowa magicians’ convention being held in Des Moines May 19-21. We had a general discussion and sharing of advice on performing for audiences that include both children and adults, and how to involve and entertain both groups at one time. We considered possibly having a public show by the Ring in the fall around the time of National Magic Day (October 31).

At the Sunday Magic Session March 19, we were honored with the participation of a grandparent couple and five of their grandchildren. The children had recently received a magic set as a gift and were eager to get ideas and to see the effects demonstrated. Don Nelson brought materials and demonstrated how to construct a simple “wilting flower” effect that can be carried for impromptu use and used as a giveaway. The children also had fun with appearing wands. Don also demonstrated a silk streamer production using a drawer box and performed the “Gemini SMS” card trick and “Nails Through Balloon.” In anticipation of the upcoming Easter holiday, the “He Is Risen” effect from Ickle-Pickle Magic was also demonstrated.

At the April 6 monthly Ring meeting, we reviewed the March 19 Magic Session events and ideas for future sessions. Lee Bennett performed the “Lazy Man’s Card Trick” by Harry Lorayne. *Don Nelson*

RING 364, BOISE, IDAHO – Chazz Treasure Valley Ring

Meets 2nd Thu., 7:00pm at the Idaho Pizza Co.
P.O. Box 364, Boise, ID 83707
JOHN SANUY, Secretary

After some quick club business, we immersed ourselves into the magic of Deane Stern, who graciously agreed to lecture for us on April 2nd. Deane was big into the hospitality business and

was a regular at the Magic Castle for decades, ‘70s and into the 2000s. He shared some of his prized secrets that he has held onto for many years and blew us away with top notch sleight of hand.

Stern could have had an in-depth lecture on coins alone, or cards alone, but treated us with a variety of close-up, and parlor effects. After the lecture, Wes Booth commented, “His work on the Linking Rings is gold!” The Great Stephan said, “The Ring and Cord he showed us, was worth the price of the lecture!” The card effect he performed on Joel Riemersma had everyone in the room baffled as to how it could have been done. Stern’s multi-phase coin/card routine called “There’s Money In Cards” was very clever, funny and no one saw the finale when the previously shown empty card box, was filled with random coins and a hundred dollar bill.

One of Deane’s favorite EDCs is “Coin Through Hand.” Once you see it you want him to do it to you to experience the wonder for yourself. Deane shared lots more through our time together. His work with cards and coins is like butter, and the added original comedic elements are sweet as honey. Personally, for myself one of the highlights of this incredible lecture was the stories and magic shared at the dinner table at The Amazing Garden after the lecture. He’s performed for Lucille Ball, John Lennon, and Sylvester Stallone. He’s had lots of experiences and stories with Dai Vernon, Johnny Thompson, Michael Skinner, and many more. It was really nice to have a fellow magician and State of Mainer share such awesome experiences with us! *Scot Grassetto*

RING 392, BLOWING ROCK, NORTH CAROLINA – William E. Spooner Ring

Meetings monthly at 2:00pm in various locations
DR. JOE MAZZOLA, President / E-mail: jcmazzolado@gmail.com

Ring 392 met at Cedar Rock Country Club in Lenoir, NC on 3/16/2023 at 2:00 p.m. Attending were President Joe Mazzola and wife Debbie, Vice President, T. J. Shimeld, Cato and Susan Holler, Gerry and Cara Hayes, Fletcher, Doug, and Joanna Roberts, Judy Anders, Albert Lawson, visiting guest Randy Shirley, guest lecturer, Doc Docherty, his wife Elizabeth, and their friends Tim and Scott.

First, we send our best to Bill and LaRose Spooner and Dot and Bill McLaury our dear friends whose presence we miss very much. These two families have provided entertaining and amazing magic for over one hundred twenty years collectively and we hope to see them again soon. President Mazzola welcomed the Roberts family back as new members. Look for Fletcher performing magic on the streets of

Garlinburg, TN, this summer! He'll be the tall guy with a fabulous mustache!

Our next meeting will be on May 21 at 2:00 p.m. at Marvel's Magic Theater in Statesville, NC. Featured will be guest lecturer Steve Perry. There will also be both matinee and evening shows at Marvel's Magic Theater on April 29 and 30. T. J. suggested we consider visiting Carowinds to see the magic show there. He also reported that Ricky Boone has had a medical setback and encouragement is needed.

The magic portion of our meeting began with President Mazzola introducing our special guest lecturer, Doc Docherty, who recently performed at the Magic Castle in California again. He dazzled us with a variety of magic beginning with his "Wonder Egg Bag" routine. Sue Ellen and Joanna were selected to be active participants. Using Crown Royal specially sewn bags, Doc produced an egg that kept appearing and disappearing. A final zinger was the production of a "dessert" glass filled with liquid (tea we think). Fletcher and Sue Ellen participated in a face up and face down signed card routine. Doc's handling was perfect and enjoyed by the group.

Doc then engaged Joanna and Sue Ellen to help with his version of "Las Vegas Leaper." Again, this was done to perfection. The group thoroughly enjoyed Doc's patter and humor! A "tilt palm" was demonstrated as an effective way to facilitate moving cards for the required transfer involved. Nice move!

A very interesting and challenging "Chop Cup" routine utilizing a chop cup and two small green balls was next. Ultimately, using excellent misdirection, the green balls appeared and disappeared flawlessly. Two billiard balls appeared in place of the small green ones at the conclusion of the effect! Well done, Doc!

Finally, Doc's "Solid Cut" routine was effectively used in losing and finding a signed card using Fletcher as his subject. The method used to accomplish this effect was one not seen before by several of the audience members. Subtle and devious techniques resulted in a confounding card illusion.

It was great to have Doc and Elizabeth with us for an afternoon of wonderful magic and fellowship! Many thanks go to President Mazzola for providing both lunch and the lecturer for this meeting. Following the lecture, everyone visited and enjoyed snacks and refreshment.

Nelson Brookshire

RING 398, APPLETON/GREEN BAY, WISCONSIN – Dr. Lynn Miner Ring

Meets last Tue. except Dec., 6:30 p.m., email for location.
RICK MOREIN, Secretary / E-mail: rmorein497@gmail.com

The meeting was held at Monty's Secret

Theatre in Kimberly and on Zoom. The theme of our Ring 398 March meeting was "Teach-A-Trick."

The first magician to perform (on Zoom) was Ring 398's namesake, Dr. Lynn Miner. Using a red backed Bicycle poker deck, Lynn riffled down the outside corner from the top of the deck, asking Bruce Hetzler to say "Stop" whenever he liked. When Bruce said "Stop," Lynn then asked if Bruce wanted the card above in the top talon, or the one directly under his thumb, to which Bruce replied, "Under your thumb." Lifting that card up and showing it to the audience and to Bruce, the Eight of Hearts was displayed, and then was replaced on top of the deck, and the deck was given a simple cut. Spreading the entire deck face down on the table, Lynn then said "Hey look, one card changed color. It's back turned blue." Correspondingly, after bringing that blue backed card to the top of the deck and turning it over, the Eight of Hearts was shown and confirmed by Bruce to be the card selected. Lynn then placed the blue backed Eight of Hearts face down on the table, and, after a bit of by-play, upon turning that card face up, it was shown to have changed to the Three of Clubs, a card previously shown on the bottom of the deck. Lynn explained that the trick he showed was called "Red Hot Mama" and had about one hundred and one different ways of performing it. Lynn then showed how he set the trick up to perform it. The trick was a classic, Lynn had a great explanation, and the magicians in attendance enjoyed it.

Our next performer on Zoom was Bruce Hetzler. Bruce showed a blue backed Bicycle card case, remarking that he was going to use this deck of cards. To his dismay, as he pulled the cards out from the case, the faces were all blank, with Bruce remarking "Ya know, they're cheaper to buy this way." While the laughter subsided, Bruce told all in attendance that he was now going to perform the trick that he really wanted to do anyway, and while spreading the deck of blank cards face up and then cutting it, the face of the Two of Diamonds appeared on one of the blank faced cards. Bruce remarked that the Two of Diamonds would be a pretty easy card to find as it was the only one in the deck. Bruce then showed the back of the deck which was also blank. After a bit of by-play, Bruce showed that the deck now had all regular faces and regular backs, and then, turned the cards into all blank cards again while putting them back in the card case. Bruce explained that the trick he just did was Don Alan's version of the Mental Photography Deck, also known as the Nudist

Deck, and was published in his book *Pretty Sneaky*. Bruce's performance, patter, and explanation were all well-received.

Next on Zoom was I.B.M. International President Elect Chuck Arkin, who showed a version of Dai Vernon's "Triumph" using the Slop Shuffle. Chuck explained that his version uses a Breather Crimp, facilitating finding the right spot to make "the move" for this trick. Chuck also explained how he uses a "Wide Card" to facilitate doing the trick, as well. Chuck then showed a new mentalism prop that he recently purchased called WAMI Writer, a new type of customizable thumb writer and a routine for using it. The information presented by Chuck was both informative and interesting, and the magicians in attendance enjoyed Chuck's presentation.

Ring 398 President Michael Schroeder was next to perform and presented a few tips and rationale for how to better utilize a double lift citing his experiences while performing strolling magic. Michael demonstrated using an ace, two, and three, placed on top of the deck, how to hold the deck, how to prepare the deck using a slight bevel, and how to be ready to hold a break and then do either a double or triple lift as desired. This was good and informative information and was well-received by those in attendance.

Next to perform was Ring 398 Vice President Daryl Rogers, who performed and explained his version of "Rope Through Body," using a patter starting point of magicians of old performing the famous "sawing a woman in half" illusion. With the assistance of Michael Schroeder, Daryl displayed two common "Razor Sharp" nylon ropes, each about nine feet long, wrapping them both around the waist of Tal Kuhn. With Michael's assistance holding two of the ends while Daryl held the other two ends, on the count of three, the twin ropes magically penetrated Tal's waist, joining each other in front of him. The trick was clever, played big, and went over well.

Ring 398 Treasurer Tal Kuhn was next and showed a "normal" deck of card that he said could be a borrowed deck. Tal asked Michael Schroeder to mix the cards up and select any

nine cards out of that deck, which Michael did. The remainder of the cards would not be used, so they were put away. Next, Tal asked Michael to come up to the table and deal three piles of three cards each face down on to the close-up mat. Then, Michael was asked to select any of the three piles and to look at the bottom card of the pile. That card, Tal said, would be Michael's card. Michael did that, looked at the bottom card, the Jack of Hearts, and then returned his pile to Tal, who instructed Michael to tell him his card, but to be clear, "Lie to Me." Michael lied to Tal telling him that the card was the Seven of Spades. Counting down cards from the assembled pile in his hand, Tal spelled "Seven of Spades" putting down one card at a time as he spelled. Once he was finished dealing cards, Tal remarked that the deck was a "Lie Detector Deck" and spelling the word "True," one card at a time, Michael's card, the Jack of Hearts, was revealed. The trick was well-received.

Ring 398 Sergeant-at-Arms Marv Roth was next, showing a trick with three cards that he called "The Marvin Buckle." Displaying three face up red backed cards, two red threes and a black jack, Marv did his "instant buckle move," and as a result, one of the red threes turned face down. Placing the jack in the middle of the three cards, Marv pattered, "Now I place the jack in the middle, so it can't turn over" and then doing the "Marvin Buckle," instantly the cards were displayed again, and the jack had turned over. Then Marv rubbed the back of the jack on his shirt, and turned the card over showing that its back was now blue. Continuing to do the "Marvin Buckle" two more times, all three cards now had blue backs. This trick went over well.

Monty Witt offered some tips and advice on doing an impromptu "Card Stab" using a borrowed deck. Monty showed several different variations, all being simple, commercial, and effective, and his presentation was well-received.

We are always happy to welcome guests at our meetings, either in person or via Zoom.

We also would like to encourage international guests to attend our meetings via Zoom, as well.

Rick Morein

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MARIANO, RONY, Quezon City, Metro Manila,
Philippines
FILLARY, DAVID, Singapore, Singapore

9 REINSTATEMENTS

MARCY, BARTON, Scottsdale, AZ
SASANO, WESLEY, Riverside, CA
MORIELLO, NICK, Trumbull, CT
DEHART, KEVIN, Tampa, FL
MURPHY, P.T., Galena, IL
KUNIAK, DAN, Tarentum, PA
MARTINEZ, LUCIO, Memphis, TN
RODRIGUEZ, ORLANDO, Lyford, TX
SPAETH, MICHAEL, Pasching Upper Austria, Austria

I.B.M. YOUTH TRIVIA CONTEST RULES

(Continued from page 50)

Send your answer on a single sheet of 8¹/₂" 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 50.**

Answer to Pictures from the Past – from page 14

Even if you have a small magic library, you probably own at least one of Al Baker's books. Al, who was born on September 4, 1874, in Poughkeepsie, New York, was responsible for great works like *Magical Ways and Means*, as well as the favorite of many magicians, *Pet Secrets*. As a teenager, his father piqued his interest in magic by performing a trick and giving Al a chance to figure it out. After Al exhausted all of his ideas, his father would teach him the method and a presentation for the effect. Not long after he became interested in magic, Al witnessed the Great Herrmann's show at a theater in Poughkeepsie. From then on, he was hooked. Al knew magic was going to be his life.

A few years later, Al was employed in a medicine show where it was his job to perform magic, pitch the product, and act as the barker to bring the audience into the sales area. It took time and talent to keep their interest, and since Al was young, he had to learn from the elder pitchman who traveled with the show. He learned how to handle the crowds, sell the product, and successfully work the show. While on the road, Al once took the place of a fellow performer and ventriloquist who was inebriated. Al and the ventriloquist's little animated friend filled the time on stage. According to his description of what it took to perform that night, ventriloquist Edgar Bergen would have been proud of the youngster's attempt.

Al got better with time and began to include a ventriloquism section in his show. He earned a mention for his "Ventriloquial Harangue" performance at a theater in 1907, although reading the mention could lead one to believe that the performance may have gone a little longer than the reviewer wanted. Two years later, Al received a better review after he performed at the Crawford Casino Club in Crawford, New Jersey. Al continued to book the act at small public clubs and other magic gatherings. He became so proficient that he could take his vent figure, Dennis, place him on a chair on stage, and then walk away. What made the audience applaud was that even though Al was off stage and walking among the audience, Dennis was still singing!

Soon, Al was being booked from New York to New Jersey and beyond. His act included his wooden pal Dennis, as well as a nice selection of magic and comedy. He published insightful ideas for his fellow magicians in 1910 and 1911 issues of *The Sphinx* that would still be effective today. In 1911, Al played one of the Chautauqua theaters in Plainville, Connecticut, to rave reviews. Along with the vent portion of the act (including drinking water from a glass while Dennis was still talking), Al delighted his audience with magic classics like the die box, rice bowls, flag staff, and a hat production.

Al continued to travel and perform for the duration of the 1920s and 1930s. He worked throughout New York and a few of the neighboring states, always performing at small venues and a few of the Y.M.C.A. facilities. He then booked a short tour of New England theaters with the Redpath-Horner Chautauqua touring circuit. The touring management liked Al so much they booked him for additional tours. Young and old audiences alike enjoyed his time-tested presentations of magic tricks. Whether he was presenting a cut and restored piece of tape or producing a signed playing card from the inside of a gum wrapper, Al held his audience spellbound with every show.

He performed at theaters and local magic clubs while volunteering his services, whenever possible, to fill in for a performer, assist a young magician, or act as a substitute for a Board member. In 1946, Al published his book *Magical Ways and Means* with ideas for performing effects with currency, silks, ropes, coins, cards, mnemonics, mindreading, linking rings, and more. It's one of those books that still has a place in a magician's personal library, for the ideas and possible additions it can bring to your show. His "Envelope Vanish for Cards or Bill," "Addition Slate," "Egg Glass & Silk Trick," and "Mind Reading Effect" tricks still sell at magic shops throughout the country. Al remained a prolific creator of magic effects and

would either advertise his ideas in magic magazines or include them in one of his engagements. In 1949, *Mental Magic* was published to high acclaim. It is still one of Al's most sought-after books by mentalists today.

Al Baker enjoyed great success when he was a guest star on the August 19, 1950 episode of the *Life Begins at Eighty* television program on New York's WNBT station. He and his friend Jean Hugard were set to be the Honorary Chairmen of the committee arranging the May 1951 Mid-Century I.B.M./S.A.M. Convention in New York. But while Jean was able to partake in the festivities, Al wasn't able to attend. In the January 1951 issue of *Hugard's Magic Monthly*, there was a mention that American mystery writer, editor, and amateur magician Clay Rawson was working with Al on a new book. Al told anyone who asked that the book, which later turned out to be his 1951 publication *Pet Secrets*, would be the best thing he had ever written. The book brimmed with a variety of effects that any magician could read, learn, and perform. Entertainers clamored to read Al's books and purchase his tricks, which could be found through most magic shops or magic magazines. Unfortunately, his health was on the decline. When Jean Hugard called to check up on him, Al said, "I'm miserable, but come visit anyway." Al was a true pal who wanted to just "talk shop."

Al published his article "Bottoms Down" in the March 1951 issue of *The Sphinx*. It described a surprising glass routine that would be easy for the reader to try and possibly even put into a performance. Al involved himself in magic as much as he possibly could, but his health continued to decline. He appreciated when his friends would call and fellow magicians would send him cards and letters to lift his spirits. But on October 24, 1951, Al passed away. His longtime pal Jean Hugard later gave this insight into his friend: "Al's magic was in himself, in his twinkling eyes, his grin and his humor. His greatest delight was to add just that certain something to a standard trick which would make it exactly right." As for Al Baker, he left countless books and tricks from which the rest of us can benefit. He also left this thought: "The big point [of magic], however, is not the mystery but the surprise." — *Gary R. Frank*

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