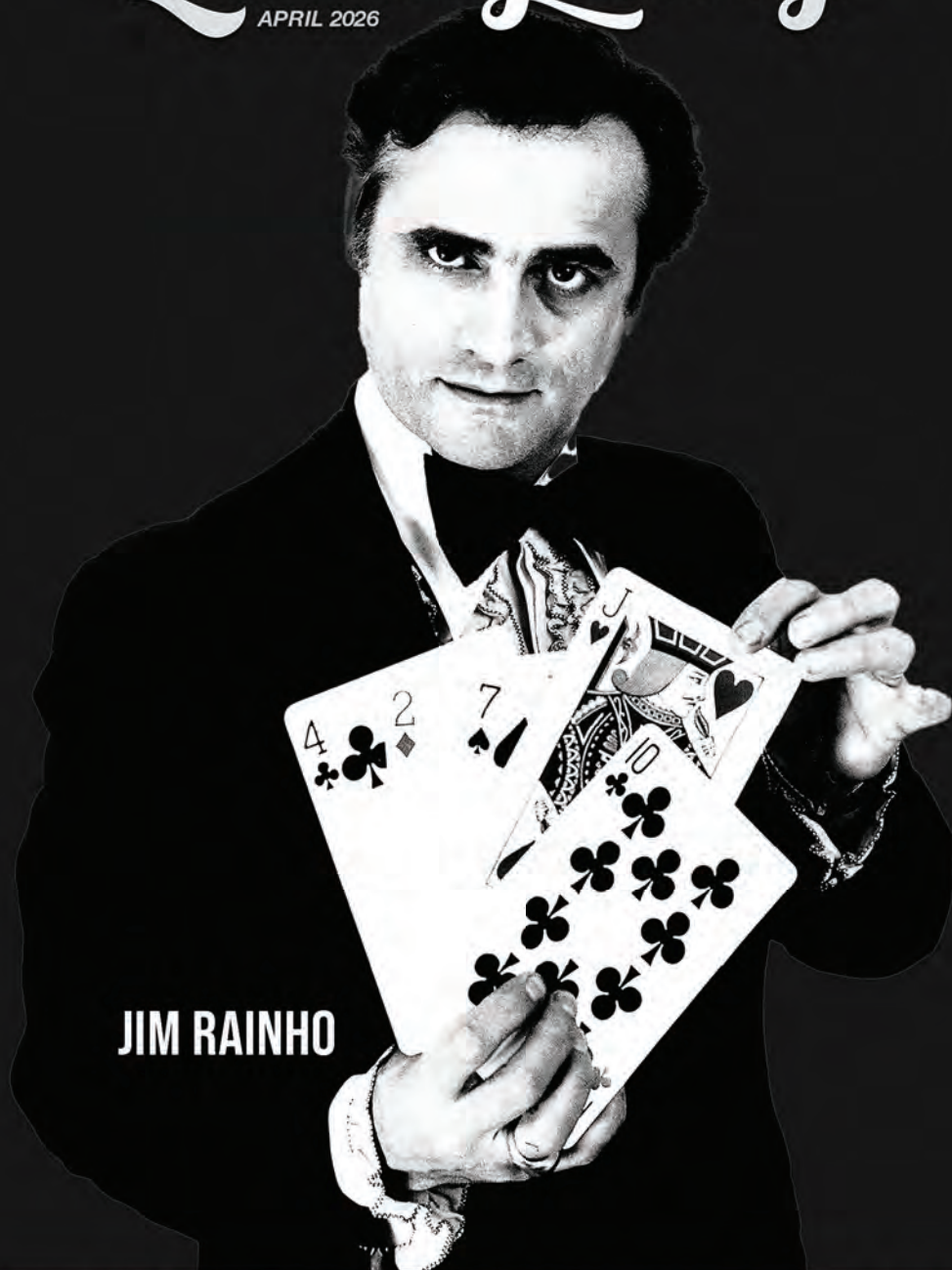


VOLUME 106 • NUMBER 4

The Linking Ring

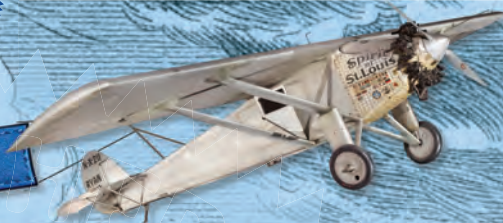
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23 THE MAGIC OF HOUDINI NEVER DIES

Did you ever want to be like Houdini? Kent Cummins did, so he wrote a book about it! Scott Wells reports on Kent's very untraditional book signing in Georgetown, Texas.

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Magic historian Dr. Reza Saberi documents the legacy of magicians performing for Persian kings centuries ago.

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When brainstorming a new routine, allowing the mind to flit about unfettered may open up new possibilities. Thomas Henry relates the fruitful results of a recent experience in magical creativity.



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— **Michael Weber**, from his Foreword

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

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

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

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

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

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From the Editor

SAMUEL PATRICK SMITH

This year will mark the one hundredth anniversary of Houdini's death. In each issue we will feature an article, essay, or photo of the great escape artist.

The Great Houdini. I was nine years old, and the final chapters of a wonderful book I was reading – *The Great Houdini* by Beryl Williams and Samuel Epstein – were fast approaching. I didn't want the book to end. Then a wonderful thought occurred to me: I could read it again. And I did! Next, I realized there were probably other books about Houdini, and I was off to the public library. Imagine my delight to find *Houdini: His Life Story* by Harold Kellock.

I carried the Kellock book with me wherever I went, reading and rereading it. I rechecked it from the library so often that Mrs. Beasley told me there was a limit to how many times one person could check out the same title – although the tale told by the library card in the back of the book implied that it hadn't exactly been in great demand until I came along.

No matter – I had bought *The Great Houdini* from Scholastic Books, so that one was mine. I added others to my collection, including *Houdini on Magic* and *Houdini's Fabulous Magic* by Walter B. Gibson and Morris N. Young. A friend sold me a 1915 edition of Burling Hull's *Thirty-three Rope Ties and Chain Releases*, and not long after that I met the author, who had known Houdini. Another elderly man – and I'm sorry I don't know who he was – brought a stack of scrapbooks to the Florida State Magic Convention, and I pored over these, amazed and thrilled to see the yellowed news-

paper clippings about Houdini pasted in their pages.

The more I read and researched, the more fascinated I became, not just with Houdini but with magic and the great magicians of the past. Along the way, I memorized legends and facts about Houdini: He was born in Appleton, Wisconsin, on April 6, 1874, the son of a rabbi. I later learned from Milbourne Christopher's *Houdini: The Untold Story* that the rabbi part was true, but Houdini had apparently fudged a little on the details of Appleton and April 6. The real place and date of birth, Christopher said, was Budapest, Hungary, on March 24, 1874.

Since these revelations about the month and location of Houdini's birth are now common knowledge, I suppose that a column about him should actually appear in March instead of April. But I didn't read the Christopher book until sixth grade, and that April 6 date has stuck in my head since fourth grade. When April comes, I always think about Houdini.



Harry Houdini.

The importance of the Houdini story, however, didn't center on particular dates or even the accuracy of stories about his exploits. The value of Houdini, for me – and for thousands of other adolescents, I'm sure – was symbolic. Imagining the struggles of a hero, admiring his determination, and celebrating his dramatic climb to success, was an essential part of growing up. Come to think of it, maybe you're never too old to benefit from having a good, old-fashioned hero. And since April has arrived, let me be the first to wish you Happy Harry Houdini's birthday (traditional).

President's Page

STEPHEN LEVINE



I want to discuss the many continuing projects and ongoing developments at the I.B.M. As you all know, our newly redesigned website is up and running and has received rave reviews. We will be updating it with more content and material. Many of you have reached out to us with some wonderful ideas that we will be implementing in the future. Do you have something you would like to see there? Please let us know.

Have you tuned in? The *International Brotherhood of Magicians Podcast* has been on the air for almost two years and has thirty episodes. This is one of the ways we help you keep up with the latest magic trends and information from your favorite international magic organization.

Magicians and I.B.M. podcasters Jason Michaels (also the I.B.M. President-Elect), Scott Cantrell, and Ben Young discuss everything magic and I.B.M., from the latest St. Louis Convention updates and interviews with I.B.M. members, to reviews of the hottest new magic releases and the trends reshaping the world of magic. I had the pleasure of being the guest on the latest episode and I hope you check it out. It's fun, entertaining, and informative, with just a bit of controversy thrown in to spice things up.

You can watch or listen to the episodes on Spotify, iHeart, Apple Podcasts, YouTube, or our website at www.magician.org/podcast. Please let us know what you think.

Speaking of watching, have you seen the new short episodes on the I.B.M. Facebook Page of *Thank You 5* with David Corsaro and Meadow Perry? They are very enjoyable and tackle some interesting and controversial issues affecting our art.

The third Thursday of every month is our Ring Leaders Zoom Call. This monthly meeting started with just Territorial Vice Presidents and leaders of local Rings, as well as an officer or two from the I.B.M. The meetings have expanded to include members who are active (or want to become more active) in their local Rings. Topics include lectures, conventions, public relations, programs, charity events, fundraising, member retention, membership growth, and a host of other issues. Please consider joining us at this monthly meeting. Check out the Member Resources section on our website to learn more.

The I.B.M. has had a great influx of new Life Members. Life Members receive many perks, including a free copy of the special I.B.M. edition of *Modern Magic* by Professor Hoffman. Life Members enjoy a significant discount on I.B.M. Convention registration and reserved seating at Convention shows, along with additional member discounts, virtual shows, and lectures. Recently, Life Members enjoyed a virtual show and lecture by Keith Fields. We have another virtual lecture planned before the Convention. If you are interested in Life Membership, please contact me or Matt Stanley, the chair of our Life Member Committee.

Our annual Convention is a little more than three months away, and we could not be more excited. The talent, the shows, the lectures, the camaraderie, and the location are all amazing. Ring 1, based in St. Louis, Missouri, will be celebrating its one hundredth year and we have some special events planned to mark the occasion.

(continued on page 15)



Pictures from the Past

THE LINKING RING



Australian magician Arthur Buckley was a consummate performer on the smaller platform of magic. Together with his wife Helena, they made a great team, performing a highly regarded mentalism act. Arthur was also known for his excellent card act. The couple found their success in the Windy City – Chicago, Illinois. To learn more, turn to page 145.

President's Page – from page 13

The I.B.M. Convention is more than a gathering – it is a magic family reunion where we gather and reminisce with our family every year. It's an immersive experience that can transform your craft, expand your network, and reignite your passion for the art of magic. Whether you are a seasoned professional or an enthusiastic hobbyist, attending the I.B.M. Convention offers benefits that go far beyond learning a few new tricks.

So mark your calendars, pack your coins or decks of cards, and step into a world where secrets are shared, friendships are forged, and the impossible becomes possible. Your magic – and your audience – will thank you.

I hope to see you at our I.B.M. magic family reunion in St. Louis from July 21-25, 2026. I also hope to see members in Las Vegas from July 13-17, 2027 (where the I.B.M. is hosting the FISM North American Qualifier), and in Houston from May 30-June 3, 2028.

Ring Reports Book Test

If you're looking for a ready-to-go book test that requires almost no setup, pay attention to Ring 23's report beginning on page 109. Ring 23 member Dr. Bruce Averbook has cleverly written the report to read like any other Ring report, yet it's structured as a book test you can perform with the magazine as your only prop. Just read the instructions below and you'll be ready to go!

SET-UP: Force the Ring 23 report on page 109 by cutting page 108 short. You can create a corner short, a slant short from above or below on the long or short end, or slightly trim the long edge of the entire page. Set it up however works best for you. Alternatively, you can actually use a hidden lower finger break to do this.

You will also need to memorize six words, in order, for paragraphs 1-6:

1. *February*; 2. *portion*; 3. *podium*; 4. *of*; 5. *astounded*; and 6. *Hand*. You can create a mnemonic if you need it (e.g., "FPPOAH").

Lastly, if you want, you can have a die to use for the effect. This is only an option.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION: Tell a spectator that in a moment, you are actually going to let them hold a magazine intended only for magicians. It contains secrets that they are not allowed to see. The magazine itself is actually magical, and you will show them and let them read a small segment that does not reveal a secret.

Force the selected page with Ring 23's report for the month by asking the spectator to call stop as you thumb through the pages. Ask the spectator to select the first, second, etc., Ring report on that page, thus directing them to Ring 23's report. You need to use wherever Ring 23's report is on that page. Ask the spectator to think of a number between one and six (or roll the die). Ask them what their number is and then tell them to go to that paragraph, counting the first paragraph in the report as number one. Tell them then to select a paragraph in the body of the write-up and not the header information. Then have them select the first sentence of that paragraph – they can either keep their previous selected number or a new number from one to six again.

Ask if they kept their number or what new number they have chosen (or have them roll the die again). If it's one, two, or six, say, "There are three letters in 'whatever the word number is,' so count over from the left word – which is counted as one, two, and three – then stop on that word." Tell them abbreviations count as a word, but numbers should be skipped. If it is "three," then have them count over from the left one, two, and three, then stop on that word. If it is "four," then tell them to count one, two, three, and four from the *right*, again skipping any number in the sentence as that is not a word. If it is "five," then say: "There are four letters in 'five,' so count over from the furthest *right* word – which is counted as one, two, three, and four – then stop on that word." For each of the six paragraphs in the report, you have had them stop on the same word location in the first line each time. Now all you have to do with some showmanship is reveal the selected word corresponding to your memorized paragraph. That's it. Have fun!

JIM RAINHO

By Jason Goldberg

Profiling Jim Rainho is a little challenging because it's hard to know where to start. That's what you get from someone who has been studying, performing, and creating magic for almost eighty years!

Born in Portugal in 1930, Jim immigrated to the United States at the age of nine with his parents, settling in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Like many magicians, he caught the magic bug early after seeing a magician perform at a Christmas party. One of the magician's tricks intrigued Jim, who had always heard that magic was just make-believe.

"I thought and thought about the trick," he said, "until one day, a light went on in my brain. A solution for the trick popped up. Maybe it wasn't the way the magician did it, but it was a way of accomplishing the same thing – how the trick could be done."

Jim's interest in magic was sparked. What were the methods and principles behind the tricks, he wondered, and how were they used?

He started buying simple tricks at a joke shop in Boston, where he watched the shop clerk demonstrate them. At home, before

opening each package, he would try to figure out how the trick worked. His trips to the joke shop became more frequent.

By chance one day in 1947, a local magician named Ed Arno (real name Edgar Arsenault) came into the shop while Jim was there and told the owner he was looking for someone to assist him during his show. Ed performed at Revere Beach, a local Coney Island-type beach just north of Boston that featured carnival-type rides, games, and shows.



Jim Rainho.



A teenage Jim demonstrates his magic skills, wand in hand.

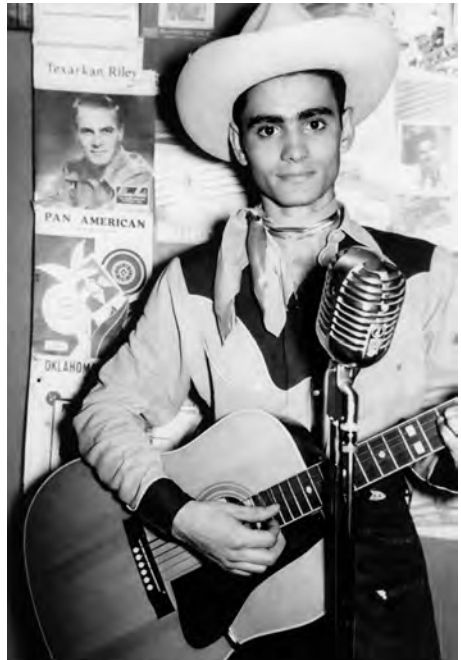
The shop owner looked at Jim. “What about you?”

Ed’s beach gigs became an opportunity for Jim to learn not only the fundamentals of magic, but also the fundamentals of showmanship. He worked with Ed for four summers. During that time, he created his first magic trick: the production of a lit candle from a handkerchief.

“I knew very little about magic at the time,” Jim said, “but Ed explained what I would be doing and said that he would instruct me, so I decided I would try it. I started at Ed’s show that summer with Ed guiding me on what I was to do.”

One of the responsibilities Ed gave Jim was igniting a cremation box with a girl inside. It was part of the show’s ballyhoo, performed on an outside platform to draw a crowd for the paying show inside.

At first, Jim just threw a lit match into the box. Then one day he surprised Ed. He took a handkerchief and showed both sides, produced a lit candle from it, and used the lit candle to ignite the cremation box. Ed was impressed.



Jim, who founded the country-and-western band The Rhythm Ramblers in 1945, became popular at county fairs for his character Sheriff Jim the Magic Lawman.

"He told me to use it in the show inside. By the time I was doing a five-minute segment in the inside show, I wound up producing three candles," Jim said.

Word got around there was a kid at Revere Beach who could produce lit candles. Soon, local magicians were showing up to see Jim.

"I got many requests to sell candles," Jim said, "but they were not a commercial product. Yet!"

In the winters that followed, Jim connected with an agent, Joe Ralston, who was providing variety shows for "hot dog and bean" suppers (a traditional New England meal of baked beans, hot dogs, and Boston brown bread), held monthly by social clubs and churches. It was in those venues that Jim honed his nightclub act featuring lit candles, which always received great rounds of applause.

Fire drew people's attention, it seemed, so Jim started to think of other ways to use it in his act. In addition to learning fire eating, he created a Double Candle Production, a Jumbo Candle Production, a Handful of Flames, and Flame of Kandel, which involves the vanishing and reappearing of a lit candle. Jim considers it to be one of his best creations.

By 1949, Jim had developed a silent act performed to music. In the fall and winter of 1949 and 1950, Joe started to book Jim at nightclubs, which proved interesting because Jim was technically underage and not allowed to work in venues that served alcohol. However, he looked older than he was and got by.

Around that time, Jim also created Color Symphony, a novel effect in which he changed the color of phonographic records. He began by changing only one record, but Joe suggested he change several records and work the trick into a routine. Jim's final record effect changed the colors of four records.

Jim has gone on to become a prolific creator and performer of magic effects.



Accepting the Milbourne Christopher Lifetime Achievement Award at the Garde Arts Center, New London, Connecticut, on September 29, 2018.

One of his first contacts in the magic world was Herman Hanson, an employee of Howard Thurston's show and, at the time, general manager of Holden's Magic Shop in Boston. Herman released some of Jim's early tricks and helped him develop and workshop effects. He also encouraged Jim to think of a safer way to light his production candles. Eventually, Jim found a way to operate the candle battery with an internal ignition lighting system.



A banquet appearance in 1953.



Donning a blindfold for his popular sharpshooting act, in which he shoots at different-colored balloons called out by the audience.

Jim was drafted into military service when he was twenty-one. While serving, he had little contact with the broader magic community but did join the International Brotherhood of Magicians in 1953.

“I did some performing after basic training for about two months, entertaining at several army bases through the military’s Special Services unit, until that branch was disbanded,” he said.

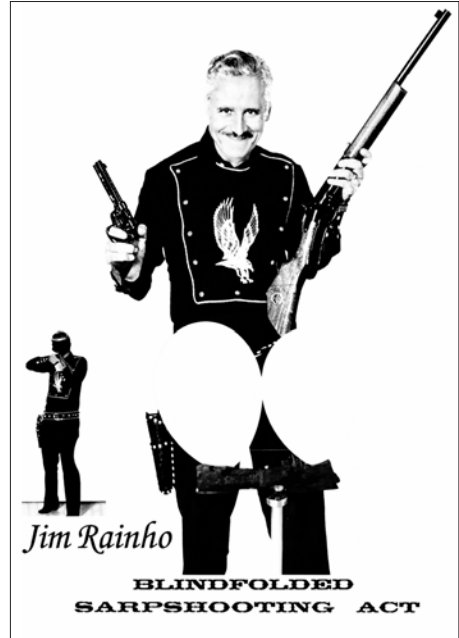
The experience added new layers to his knowledge of stagecraft, since Jim had to perform in places where set-up and performance areas were either nonexistent or makeshift. With the disbandment of the Special Services unit, Jim was assigned to Korea, where he finished his tour of duty.

Upon returning from Korea, Jim immediately set up a workshop to build his creations in bulk. Herman had retired as manager of the Holden Magic Shop and sold the shop to Ronnie Gann, who became the sole agent of all of Jim’s

effects. However, Ronnie focused more on performing than on managing the shop, and soon closed it.

With no outlet to feature his products, Jim started selling wholesale to magic shops around the world. He published the first of six magic catalogs and began advertising his creations in *Genii*, *The Linking Ring*, *M-U-M*, and other magic periodicals. He also attended magic conventions as a dealer.

These markets helped Jim turn his mail order and wholesale business into a profitable unit alongside his stage performances. Dave Cressey, well known for his Mouth Coils, helped Jim manufacture his products. It was Jim who started Dave making Feather Flowers and Mouth Coils. Jim has also contributed articles to magic periodicals, such as *The Linking Ring*, *M-U-M*, *Genii*, Bascom Jones’s *Magick*, Roy Miller’s *Vibrations*, and Laurie Ireland’s *Yearbooks*. *The Encyclopedia of Magic & Magicians* credits Jim for sparking the trend of using candles in magic acts.



Promotional photo for Jim’s blindfolded sharpshooting act.

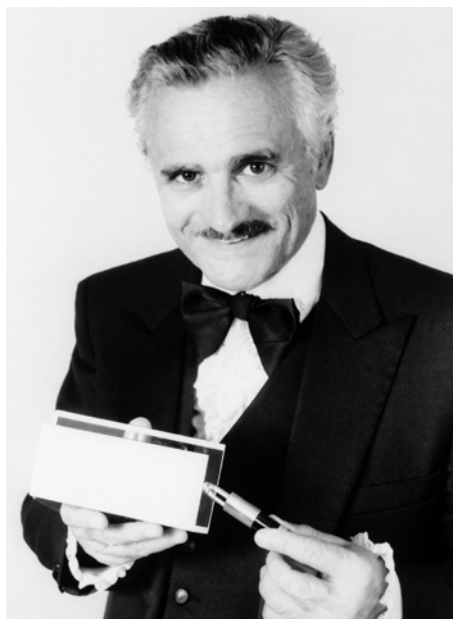
Jim occasionally pivoted into one of his other interests: music. Before he became a full-time magician and magic maker, he founded a country-and-western music group called The Rhythm Ramblers in 1945. His passions for magic and music ran side by side. Magic won in the end, but he continued to engage in songwriting.

In 1955, Jim took a real look at what he wanted from life: a family of his own. He married Alice Costa, a girl he dated in high school and corresponded with while in Korea. They have three girls and a boy: Donna, Diane, Rachel, and Stephen. Naturally, they helped him with making his items for sale when they were older. With a family to care for, Jim found other ways of using magic to augment his income. He created gift bags of tricks for hospital gift shops and placed racks for magic tricks in barber shops, variety stores, and other locations.

Jim has performed at all types of venues. His performance persona has morphed over time to include a pirate character and a character he calls Sheriff Jim the Magic Lawman. The characters became popular attractions at county fairs. He also had a popular sharpshooting act, where a blindfolded Jim shot at different-colored balloons as the audience called out the colors. For his finale, he shot two balloons at once by splitting the bullet in two on the blade of an axe ... or did he? In actuality, Jim simply devised a method to break two balloons with one shot.

Jim rarely overhauled his magic act, preferring instead to experiment by inserting one additional effect when he wanted to try something new. He began concentrating on mentalism in 1985, focusing on corporate events – including a twenty-year run with one company, where he performed at their training seminars and trade shows from 1990 to 2013.

When Alice passed away in 2013, Jim decided to retire from performing. He stopped manufacturing his creations in 2015.



Beginning in 1990, he spent twenty years performing mentalism effects at corporate training seminars and trade shows.

Over the years, Jim has crossed paths with some of magic's legends. He met Dai Vernon at a convention in Boston, fooling him with a card trick that pinpointed a spectator's selected card. In the trick, the spectator repeatedly places their fingers on cards that are spread across a table. Those cards are removed until only one card remains: the originally selected card. Jim used a special deck, but no one ever asked to examine it.

"I used a similar regular deck for prior tricks where spectators handled the deck themselves, so it was above suspicion. I switched it in for a special deck," said Jim, who smiled as he recalled the memory. "You can fool anybody under proper conditions."

Irving Weiner, a prolific author and performer in Boston, became Jim's close professional friend.

"Weiner's books are still in demand," Jim said, "and he was the only pro in the Boston area I really got to know."



Promotional photo of Jim's stage act.

Jim was also a friend of Cesareo Pelaez, of the *Le Grand David and his own Spectacular Magic Company* show, with whom he recalls having many conversations about classical magic. Jim also met David Copperfield and Jeff McBride for the first time at Tannen Jubilees. "I've known them since they were kids, hanging out in the dealers room," he said.

Jim has compiled instructions for all his creations – both commercial products and personal effects – in several thick binders. Copies exist in Roger Dryer's collection and the Copperfield and McBride Museums in Las Vegas.

Jim's creative process always starts with the effect, not the method.

"I would play with ideas," he said. "When I needed a lit candle for igniting the cremation box, I came up with a method for that. Likewise, when I needed a book test, I set conditions for myself that the spectator could examine the book,

tear off a page, tear that page into small pieces, select one of those pieces, and then I could immediately tell what words were on both sides of the selected piece, without any pumping or fishing for information. I wanted a simple handling that made it look as fair as possible to make the outcome seem impossible."

Once the desired outcome was clear, Jim devised a method that felt natural and seamless for both the performer and the spectators.

For aspiring creators and marketers, Jim's advice is straightforward: "Find something that will grab attention and use objects familiar to your audience." He believes magic's power comes from relatable visuals and simple, humorous dialogue that seemingly relates to incidents, events, or people.

Looking back on magic's evolution, Jim marvels at the technological advances. "Magnetic coin shells and precision machinery now let coin magicians do feats that were unthinkable in the 1950s," he said. "Computerized gimmicks and miniaturized electronics will only push the art further."

On the future of magic, Jim cautions against overhyped advertising.

"Many tricks promise to 'knock your socks off,' but then when you get the trick props and directions, the moves are somewhat obvious. Try to avoid obvious moves and dependence on misdirection alone. Try to come up with a new method, then create moves and psychological misdirection to accomplish what you want: focusing on entertainment. The spectator will not question what you are doing, or even care, if they enjoy your presentation.

He also says many tricks on the market today are quite clever, noting that as methods become common knowledge, magicians need fresh angles and new props to play with.

"Once the penny and half-dollar finally disappear from circulation, use what will replace them," he said. "Magic will never



Jim Rainho.

die, but you have to keep abreast with the times. In time, methods now used will become so well known that they can't be used anymore."

Jim's guiding maxim remains clear: "Come up with a new idea, then ask yourself, 'What direction do I want to take this trick?'" With that spark of curiosity,

Jim Rainho's legacy will continue to burn bright in the hands of future magicians.



More about Jim can be found at www.magiciansrus.com/index.html.

Jason Goldberg is an associate editor for *The Linking Ring*.

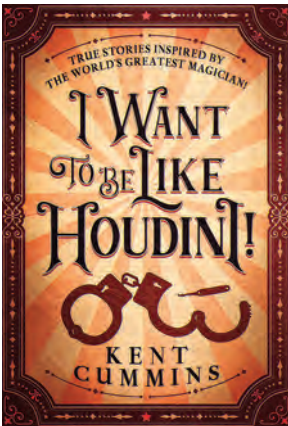
The Magic of Houdini

Never Dies

By Scott Wells

Did you ever want to be like Houdini? I.B.M. Life Member Kent Cummins did, so he wrote a book about it! And on a cool February evening in Georgetown, Texas, a small town north of Austin, Kent hosted a book signing event that was far from traditional.

Over the past twenty years, Kent has written about his seventy-five-plus years as a magician – starting in 1949 at the age of six – during which he was often inspired by stories of Houdini. This relatively small but lavishly illustrated book, hardbound with a stunning dust jacket, tells tales of Houdini's life and how Kent went through similar experiences. Not that Kent was an escapologist, but in his passion, marketing and keeping magic alive.



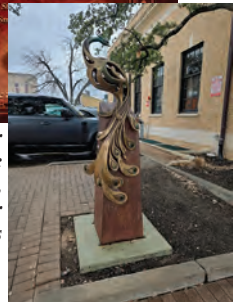
The cover of Kent's
I Want to Be Like HOUDINI!

A speakeasy called the “Brass Peacock,” located in the basement of the City Post Chophouse, his son’s restaurant in Georgetown, served as an excellent venue for an intimate evening of magic as Kent launched his new book, *I Want to Be Like Houdini!* The invitation-only event “A Little Night Magic at the Brass Peacock!” was limited to fifty-two

people who paid \$52 each (Houdini died at the age of fifty-two) to attend the unique event. It was an eclectic group of Kent’s friends who came from Texas, Louisiana, and across the country, including one person who traveled all the way from Portland, Oregon, exclusively for this event. Everyone in the group was someone who enjoys magic, but only a handful of those in attendance were actual magicians.



The program for
A Little Night Magic
at the Brass Peacock,
a book launch event for
Kent Cummins's
latest book.



After saying the magic word to get through the hidden speakeasy door (“Houdini,” of course), Kent greeted each guest by saying, “Take a card, any card!” and each guest picked a playing card from a special deck imprinted with the cover design of Kent’s book (fifty-two guests, fifty-two cards in the deck!). The cards were used as “raffle tickets” so winners could select something from the

magic gift shop and bookstore that was set up in the Cigar Lounge of the speakeasy. They also signed up for a “psychic reading” given by Saul Ravenscraft.

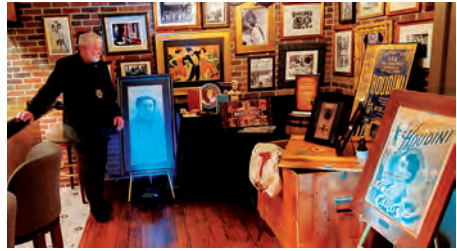
As the guests mixed and mingled before the stage show, they were able to imbibe specialty cocktails and small bites. One such drink was an Old Fashioned (since that’s Kent’s drink of choice and he is, indeed, old fashioned in some ways) made with a specially mixed concoction of bitters complete with a custom label sporting the image of the book’s cover.



Throughout the first hour, guests enjoyed the close-up, strolling magic of John Carter and Peter the Adequate. Tucked in the corner near the stage was a Houdini exhibit provided by the Texas Magic Center that included a substitution trunk, straitjacket, handcuffs, books, and some Houdini replica posters including the 1953 film poster with Tony Curtis, among other ephemera and memorabilia. This was curated by Scott Wells, who told interested guests about the exhibit as well as sharing stories about Harry Houdini’s life.



John Carter performs strolling magic.



Scott Wells looks over the Houdini display.

As the second hour of the evening began, guests were asked to refresh their drinks and take a seat as the show was about to begin. The show opened with Saul Ravenscraft and Peter the Adequate showing a giant “Book of Life” illusion that was adorned with an image of the cover of *I Want to Be Like Houdini!* (the book had 793.8 on the spine, of course!).



Spinning the empty book.

As the book was spun around, opened, and closed with a magical gesture, the front cover opened to reveal the author and host for the evening: the Fantastic Kent Cummins, adorned in a top hat, a flowing cape, and a tuxedo (sans tie).

Kent regaled us with magic from the story of both his childhood and adult life, much of which you can find by reading his book or listening to his podcast (four years ago, Kent began his free weekly podcast *Tales From the*

Fantastic Magic Center, available at www.fantasticmagiccenter.com).



The Fantastic Kent Cummins ascends the stage.

Throughout Kent's show, several performers took the stage: John Carter performed a "book test" using Kent's new book – picking it up for the very first time – followed by Saul Ravencraft's Houdini-themed chain escape, and Peter the Adequate, whose escapes filled the stage and room with laughter.



Saul Ravencraft performs the Siberian Chain Escape.



Saul prepares to tell guests their fortunes during a special psychic reading.

Following the ninety-minute stage show, guests mingled, ate, and drank for a bit longer while browsing the Houdini exhibit.



Kent's friend Chip Romero from Lake Charles, Louisiana attends the event.

While this was not a typical book launch – there were no readings by the author – we did get to view some of Kent's stories live and in person. Watching him on stage was like seeing him as a child again, relishing and sharing the wonder of magic.



Kent poses with his latest book, in honor of the one hundredth anniversary of Harry Houdini's death.

Harry Houdini passed away one hundred years ago on October 31, 1926, but his spirit and influence on magic and magicians never dies!

Signed copies of Kent's book *I Want to Be Like HOUDINI!* are available at www.like-houdini.com.



Ring Events

THE INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF MAGICIANS

Apollo Robbins Wows Ring 50 (Washington, D.C.) and SAM 252 with Pickpocketing Demonstrations and a Talk About the “Acts” of His Life

Apollo Robbins, the renowned sleight-of-hand artist and pickpocket also known as “The Gentleman Thief,” spoke to Ring 50 and SAM 252 about the “seasons” of his career on February 4 at The Lyceum in Alexandria, Virginia. He discussed the psychology of misleading peoples’ sense of touch and misdirecting their minds. For Apollo, “how we craft magic is really about experience design.”



Apollo’s lecture was a joint meeting arranged by Ring 50 Vice President Mitch Prayer and S.A.M. Assembly 252 President Alec Negri

Apollo first made national news when he pickpocketed the Secret Service in 2001 while entertaining former United States President Jimmy Carter in Las Vegas. He was able to pick the wallets of several magician spectators, fooling them every time. Apollo explained the trick involves sugges-

tion, analysis of how to distract a subject’s attention from their possessions, resourcefulness, and physical dexterity.

He also told the crowd that it’s helpful to be brash. For example, Apollo has used misdirection – “the economy of attention” – to take peoples’ sunglasses from their foreheads. “I hide things out on people rather than in my pockets,” he said.

He acquired these rare skills by disassociating himself from the guilt of taking people’s items, which he always returns. He learned to distinguish his act from others by performing as a gentleman thief, landing in Las Vegas shows by the age of twenty-two after spending his adolescent years as a magician, juggler, and clown. He was so brash at his Las Vegas shows that he would warn spectators he was going to take an item, then analyzed them and figured out how to do it on the spot.

Apollo lived up to his billing, demonstrating his skills on several of the assembled magicians. He described the process as a kind of guided dance. “When I shake someone’s hand, I apply the lightest pressure on their wrist ... I’m finding out what kind of a partner they’re going to be, and I know that if they follow my lead I can do work with them.”

When he started working Caesar’s Palace in 1998, Apollo entered a new “act” of his life and became the producer of the National Geographic television show *Brain Games*. Having already worked with people’s perceptions to great success, the self-taught



Sam Brothers, Scott Phillips, and Steve DeSimone help Apollo demonstrate how he can pick someone's pocket of someone even when he's being restrained. (Photo by Larry Lipman)



(l to r): Danny Selnick assists Apollo during a coin trick demonstration. • Geoff Weber helps Apollo demonstrate the "dance" he uses to pick someone's pockets. • Bob Weiman helps Apollo demonstrate how he controls the movements of a "mark." (Photos by Larry Lipman)

Apollo decided to pursue the subject more formally. In 2006, he used this knowledge to start a company to address fraud, theft, and scams. In 2012, he and his wife and business partner, Ava Do, founded another company that uses immersive training methodologies and experiential learning.

In addition to discussing thievery and the psychology of establishing false baselines to fool people, Apollo talked about more traditional uses for deception. For example, demonstrating card steals like the Andhao Steal, and his longtime collaboration with the Japanese sleight-of-hand artist Shoot Ogawa.

Todd Eisenstadt



Can you spot the difference between these two images? Apollo uses these pictures to illustrate how people often see what they expect to see. (Photo by Larry Lipman)

Magicians in the Courts of Kings

By Reza Saberi

Over the last millennium magicians have used different props for substitution of one thing for another, concealing objects and causing them to appear or disappear elsewhere. Some of the devices used for this purpose are thumb tips, cups and balls, and playing cards.

The earliest widely cited origin of thumb tip is connected with the English magician William Humpage, who performed under the stage name Professor Herwin. A report in the conjuring journal *The Magic Wand* (December 1934) recalled: “Some time prior to 1885, Prof. Herwin, attaching a scrap of silk to the inside of a false finger, devised the well-known proof that a silk is in the hand when the *mouchoir* has really disappeared. Then he thought of the thumb tip ... one of the early models is now in the museum of The Magic Circle.”¹

The magician Joseph Hartz was credited with an earlier related device. In the book *Later Magic* (1904), Professor Hoffmann wrote that Hartz used: “a sort of thimble, made of very thin copper, and arranged to fit over the end of the thumb, which it was modeled and colored to resemble exactly.”²

This suggests that a primitive thumb-cover device may have existed slightly earlier in the nineteenth century, possibly in the 1860s–1870s, though the documentation is weak.

But Persian literature and historical accounts of Persia (Iran) suggest that the use of thumb tips and other magic devices, such as coins, cups and balls, and playing cards – as well as magical methods of deception like vanishing, palming, object substitution, and sleight of hand – predate the nineteenth century.

Mirza Mehdi Khan Astarabadi, court secretary and historiographer to Nāder Shah Afšār (1736–47), king of Iran, reported in

his book *History of Nadir, the World Conqueror* (*Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā-yi Nādirī*) a magic trick performed in the presence of the king in which thumb tips may have been used. He writes:



Nader Shah, King of Persia (1736–47).

“Several Europeans who were in the royal service used to astonish and amuse His Majesty with various games, conjuring tricks, and strange feats of hand.”

He continues: “A European performed before the august presence various conjuring tricks and strange feats, concealing an object and making it appear otherwise.

The King – who was famous for the sharpness of his intellect – reflected briefly and then said: ‘The secret of this act is such-and-such.



An eighteenth-century painting showing Mirza Mehdi Astarabadi (far right) beside Nader Shah (center).

When the experiment was repeated according to his explanation, the trick was revealed, and the European was astonished at the royal penetration.”⁷³

One of the best eighteenth-century European eyewitnesses who actually reached the vicinity of Nader Shah’s camp is the English traveler Jonas Hanway. His book, *An Historical Account of the British Trade over the Caspian Sea*, contains descriptions of life in Persia during Nader’s reign, including the entertainments and performances common in Persian society at the time. Hanway had access to the Shah’s camp in the 1740s.

“Several grandees keep for their amusement a number of young Georgians who can sing, play on different instruments, and perform feats of tumbling and agility... There is likewise a class of people who divert the company with tricks resembling those of our jugglers.”⁷⁴

Another European who spent time close to Nader Shah was the Greek traveler Vasileios Vatatzes, who wrote a biography of the ruler and gathered information while staying at his court.

Although his surviving texts focus more on politics and campaigns, historians note that such European observers regularly witnessed court entertainment and performances around Nader’s military encampment.

European travel narratives from the eighteenth century consistently report that in Persia, rulers and nobles employed musicians, dancers, acrobats, and jugglers, and that performers entertained audiences at courts, camps, and elite gatherings.

This matches the Persian chronicle evidence (e.g., the account in *Jahāngushā-yi Nādirī*) describing European or foreign performers showing conjuring tricks before Nader Shah.

A useful European account from the period of Nader Shah comes from the Swedish orientalist and traveler Jean Otter, who traveled through Persia and the Ottoman regions in the 1730s–1740s. His observations were published in his book titled *The Voyage in Turkey and Persia*. Otter describes the kinds of performers and amusements common in Persian society during the era when Nader Shah ruled.

“The Persians have several kinds of jugglers who amuse the people with surprising

tricks. Some make coins appear and disappear; others swallow stones or knives and then produce them again. There are some who pass balls from one hand to the other with such speed that the eye cannot follow their movements. These people are often seen in the public squares and are sometimes summoned to entertain persons of rank.”⁷⁵



A sixteenth-century miniature painting depicting street performers.



A sixteenth-century miniature painting depicting magicians and street performers.

One of the earliest detailed European descriptions of a Persian conjurer performing a trick similar to the cups and balls appears in the travel account of the French traveler Jean Chardin, who spent many years in Safavid Iran in the 1660s–1670s.

His observations were published in a book titled *Travels in Persia and the East Indies* (first published in French as *Voyages de Monsieur le Chevalier Chardin en Perse et aux Indes orientales*, 1686).

“The jugglers of Persia perform many surprising tricks with cups and little balls. They place the balls under several small cups and make them pass from one to another with such dexterity that it is impossible for the eye to perceive how it is done. Sometimes they cause a ball to vanish entirely and afterwards make it appear in a place where no one suspected it to be.”⁶

Another Frenchman by the name of Jean-Baptiste Tavernier made six voyages to Iran and India between 1630 and 1668. In 1675, and at the behest of his patron Louis XIV, he published the report of his travels under the title *Les Six Voyages de Jean-Baptiste Tavernier*. He left Paris on his first journey in 1630 and arrived in Isfahan, then the capital of Iran, in 1631.

During his first journey, he attended the court of King Safi, but in his other voyages, he also attended the court of King Safi’s successors, King Abbas II and King Suleiman.

In his book, Tavernier reports about the entertainments, games and magic feats the Persians perform in public squares, “Among the Persian Games, there is one game at Cards which the Persians call *Gengefê*. We have but four distinct marks upon ours, but they have eight.”⁷

This game consisted of eight suits (crowns, silver coins, swords, servants, harps, gold coins, documents and merchandise) and twelve ranks (1–10, king, and vizier (prime minister), with a total of ninety-six cards. The cards were made of cardboard or thin wood with different paintings on one side.

The first written document regarding this playing card dates back to the Mamluk time.

A reference in the chronicles of the Mamluk historian Yūsuf ibn Taghrī-Birdī describes the events of 1417–1418, noting that a game called *kanjifah* was played for high stakes amongst wealthy and respectable people (i.e., elite Persian society) in Egypt and Syria.



A crown Gengefê card.

One of the earliest Persian texts that clearly describe sleight-of-hand-type tricks appears in the fourteenth-century encyclopedic work of the famous Persian physician Shams al-Din Muhammad ibn Mahmud Amuli (1300–1352) titled: *Best of the sciences on beauties for the eyes* (*Nafa'is al-funun fi 'ara'is al-'uyun*) which is a three-volume encyclopedia (1,726 pages) from Amol, about 120 miles northeast of Tehran. The book was written between 1335 and 1342 and dedicated to Mahmud Shah in Shiraz, Iran.

In a few chapters of his book, Amuli describes different magic methods and devices such as fire magic, mental magic, mind reading, and mathemagic.

“Conjuring is when, by dexterity and the quick movement of the hand, a thing is hidden from sight or another thing is shown in its place, so that the observer believes it to be the same. An example is when a coin or a ring is concealed in the palm of the hand and afterward made to appear elsewhere.”⁸

This description clearly refers to techniques identical to modern sleight-of-hand principles, including: palming objects in the



Different cards of Gengefe.

hand, substitution of one object for another, deception based on speed and misdirection, coin vanishes, object transpositions, ball or coin manipulations.

This fourteenth-century Persian text demonstrates two things: first, that the concept of sleight of hand as manual deception was already clearly understood; and second, that performers in the Islamic world were known to use hidden objects and palming techniques centuries before modern stage magic.

One well-known early Arabic source from the tenth–eleventh century that describes conjuring and sleight-of-hand techniques is Al-Mas‘ūdī (circa 896–956), who wrote in his thirteen-volume encyclopedic work: “In the markets there were magicians who amazed the people: they would make objects appear and disappear by skill of the hand, and substitute one thing for another, thereby deceiving the eyes; people thought that what they saw was real.”⁹

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Youth Trivia Contest



April's question: In the late 1800s, an established musical lyricist became so captivated by an act that he quickly booked them to perform in a variety show over a theater. *Who was the lyricist, and what was the name of the act?*

Answers must be postmarked by May 20, 2026.

January's question was: In his stage show, Harry Blackstone Jr. performed a very recognizable presentation of the "Vanishing Birdcage." In his routine, he would vanish the birdcage, and then state "I'm going to step backstage into my office to get another cage, and another canary!" Then he would repeat the effect. *Who originated this unique patter and presentation of the vanishing birdcage?*

A few of our outgoing Youth Members did send us answers to this month's question, but unfortunately, none of those were correct. Here are the basics of what we were hoping you'd tell us.

Harry Blackstone Jr. was one of the most entertaining and successful touring magicians of the 20th century. He was the son of "The Great Blackstone," the performer who we frequently call Harry Blackstone Sr. so as to distinguish him from his son. Harry Jr. rebuilt the show that his father had, in the 1950's, ceased touring. He put his own spin on the program, and updated many of the routines. Harry Jr. continued to present many of his father's most well-known pieces, including "The Floating Lightbulb," "The Cassadaga Propaganda," and the "Buzz-Saw" illusion.

One of the most memorable segments of The Blackstone Show was the presentation of "The Vanishing Birdcage." It was the perfect opener for the show; it was a visually stunning attention-grabber, and it established Harry Jr.'s style and personality for the audience.

*The basic flow of the routine was this ... Harry Blackstone Jr. entered the stage holding a small, wire cage between his two hands. Inside of the cage, there was what appeared to be a tiny bird; a "budgie." He explained to the audience that "While you're watching, this bird will disappear right from the tips of my fingers, and you'll **not** see where it goes ... I hope!" And suddenly – immediately – the cage and the bird were gone, accompanied by a cymbal crash and an exclamation of "**HUP!**" from Harry Jr.*

*Following a bit of banter with spectators, Harry explained "I'll step back into my office, get another cage and another canary, and I'll do it again ..." and he stepped off-stage, for just a moment. When he returned, holding "another cage," he asked for one or two children to come up onto the stage. It never failed – ten or more young children excitedly rushed onto the stage to assist the great magician. He spent a moment or two, interacting very entertainingly with the little folks. He instructed them to place their hands, one at a time, onto the six sides of the birdcage. Then, when the children had run out of free hands, there was another sudden and loud cymbal crash and a "**HUP!**" from Harry Jr. – and the second cage was gone.*

As the wording of our question suggests, Harry Jr. didn't create the "another cage and another canary" routine and patter. It was a part of the show that he inherited from his father, Harry Blackstone Sr. These two extremely successful magicians both featured this presentation over the course of



(l to r): Harry Blackstone Sr. surrounded by “helpers” during “The Vanishing Birdcage.” • Harry Blackstone Jr. and “helpers” performing “The Vanishing Birdcage.”

two careers, two generations, and nearly eighty years. As a result, that phrase alone, “another cage and another canary,” will bring to mind the name and likeness of one of the Blackstones, or the other – depending on the age of the person doing the remembering. In fact, when magician and creator Rich Bloch delivered the eulogy for Harry Blackstone Jr., he closed with the moving reference “... for the benefit of my own heart, soul, and spirit, I know that Harry has not left. He’s just stepped off stage for another cage and another canary.”

But ... Harry Sr. didn’t originate that presentation either. The first performer to repeat “The Vanishing Birdcage” by stepping away from the stage to “get another cage and another canary” is believed to have been Del Adelpia. While it’s not certain that he used that same patter, he did repeat the effect using that tactic.

He was born Adelpia J. Brown in 1868, and raised in Fostoria, Ohio, about thirty-five miles south of Toledo. He became interested in magic as a boy, and was earning money at it by the middle of his teenage years. Americans in the late 1800s were fascinated by the “Wild West,” so he decided to capitalize on that interest. He maintained a long, dark mane of hair – hair that flowed below the middle of his back – along with an impressive mustache, and he began performing as “Del Adelpia, the Cow Boy Magician,” and occasionally as “Del Adelpia, the Wizard of the West.”



“The Cow Boy Magician” with flowing hair and a magnificent mustache.

The name of Del Adelpia has not come up often in conversations about the great magicians of “The Golden Age of Magic.” However, reports and reviews from folks who were fortunate enough to see his show have indicated that he was a talented and charismatic magician. His egg bag routine was wonderful, and concluded with the production of two full-sized, live chickens. He performed manipulations, but instead of using billiard balls, he produced, multiplied, and vanished live canaries. Eventually, he added an “Asrah” levitation to his show, as well as a few other stage illusions, and



(left): One of the only known later photos of Del Adelphia holding "The Vanishing Birdcage." If you look closely, you'll see that the little bird was actually drawn with a pen by someone.

(Right): Son Jack Adelphia, who shared his father's presentation with Harry Blackstone. He briefly performed on the same bill with his father as "The Whistling Marvel."

(COURTESY OF MIKE CAVENY'S EGYPTIAN HALL MUSEUM)

staged them all marvelously. Over the course of his more than three-decade career, he earned the respect of some very big names in magic, including Claude Alexander Conlin, and A.M. Wilson. Del Adelphia finally shaved his mustache, cut his hair short, and adopted a more clean-cut image, sometime around 1912. He included his wife and children in his presentations, and was able to fill small vaudeville houses and large theaters with his shows. And, he performed "The Vanishing Birdcage" throughout his career.

We were unable to find any evidence that Del Adelphia's son, Jack Adelphia, ever performed "The Vanishing Birdcage." It's interesting to note however, that Jack Adelphia explained the details of his father's presentation of "The Vanishing Birdcage" to Harry Blackstone Sr. And that's how one of the most recognizable and memorable routines of The Blackstone Show flowed from father to son to father to son.

There have been many changes and improvements to the way magicians perform this effect, since it was invented by Buatier de Kolta, and first performed with a rounded cage in 1875. Most cages used now are rectangular; and there have been many manufacturers and variations. Some women have presented it, and made clever and necessary adaptations to their wardrobe. Most of the

magicians have been men, and the location (or locations) of the mechanism (or mechanisms) have varied, depending on whether or not the conjuror planned to remove his jacket for the audience, as an extra "convincer."



"Vanishing Birdcage" inventor Buatier de Kolta, with the original round-shaped cage. Today, most magicians use a square or rectangular bird cage.

There are bits of information about the life and magic of Del Adelphia in books, including *MAGIC: A Pictorial History of Conjuror's in the Theater* by David Price. You can also find material in back issues of periodical publications like *Genii*, *The Sphinx*, and *The Linking Ring*. There's a wonderful biography by Mike Caveney in the Summer 2006 issue of *Gibecière*.

Del Adelpia died in 1917. "The Great Blackstone," Harry Blackstone Sr., died in 1965. Harry Blackstone Jr. died in 1997.

We owe a great big "thank you!" to Gay Blackstone, Mike Caveney, Scott Penrose, and Bill Smith, for all of their generous help with this month's subject matter.

If you mailed us an answer to this month's question, but you didn't send the *correct* answer, please *keep trying!* These questions

can be tough, and they aren't intended to be easily answered using Internet search engines like Google or DuckDuckGo. Take your copy of *The Linking Ring* to your local Ring meeting and ask the more experienced members to help you find the answer. Show the whole world how much you know, get your name printed in *The Linking Ring*, and win some great stuff from one of our finest brick-and-mortar magic shops!

Hey there Youth Members!

Do you think that you have an appropriate question for the I.B.M. Youth Trivia Contest? Then, please send your suggested question and the answer, along with your name, age, membership number, telephone number, and address to:

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

Make sure that you include some good references. If we *do* use your question, we'll send you either a pair of tickets to see David Copperfield's show at the MGM Grand® this summer ... 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 May 20, 2026.**

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!



A Portrait of the Professional

DALE SALWAK

Meeting Ourselves

Although a man's [or woman's] life is compounded of thousands and thousands of moments and days, those many instants and those many days may be reduced to a single one: the moment when a man knows who he is, when he sees himself face to face.

— Jorge Luis Borges

As a sequel to my March column on “Consilience,” consider this: One of the epiphanies that can come our way while pursuing a career in magic, like so many other endeavors, is that eventually we unlock the truth of ourselves. For some it takes years to experience this. For the singular Neil Foster, Channing Pollock, and René Lavand it occurred as suddenly and instantaneously as the blink of an eye.

“Why am I so nervous?” This question ran through Neil’s young mind as he stood backstage, waiting to be introduced. Then with a sudden flash of recognition simmering below the surface he exulted: “After all, I am doing what I have always wanted to do.”

In that instant, like a vapor his controlling wave of nerves vanished for good, he knew who he was, and with the fulfillment of a conscious wish he walked out boldly and confidently into the glow of the spotlight.

I think, too, of Channing Pollock. According to an interview with his first wife, Naomi (née Brookes), from childhood through early adulthood he was very, very shy. At gatherings he would say little, sitting for hours in a corner feeling rather melancholy, as if he didn’t really count.

Then at a Sacramento carnival he bought a trick deck (before then he had never shown any interest in magic), and as he experi-

mented with the cards, a sudden rush of belonging surged through him, the mist cleared, and there awakened within himself an almost surreal feeling of joy and purpose: “I want to become a magician.”

In the days and weeks and months that followed, he acquired books on the subject, bought coins, started teaching himself, practiced every day with much sustained thought, and later enrolled with the GI Bill (he had served in the Navy) at the Chavez Studio of Magic under the watchful eyes of Benny Chavez, Marian, and Neil.

I am reminded, also, of the Argentinian René Lavand. After losing in 1937 his right hand (he was right-handed) at the age of nine in a car crash, he listened to a friend who suggested that he start experimenting with cards.

Soon – uncannily, eerily, stoically – his extraordinary latent talent began to emerge and evolve, and nearly three decades out from that accident he was thrust to the cultural forefront with appearances on *The Ed Sullivan Show* (1963) and *The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson* (1964).

“I went through hard times,” he said. “It took me a long time to get there. But I got an advantage: I couldn’t copy anyone’s techniques.” His catchphrase: *No se puede hacer más lento* (It cannot be done any slower).



René Lavand with Ed Sullivan.



Channing Pollock.

C.S. Lewis: Stay in your profession long enough, and ultimately you will discover your uniqueness as special people with a special purpose.

Thomas Mann: Stay with your work, and finally you will find your strengths and shortcomings. The day you realize who you are is the day that you begin to live.

Unfortunately, if not alert we can succumb to those in our society seeking to hold us back from fulfilling our potential.

Neil: "Every week we may encounter those who will try to control and live our lives for us. Be ever-guarded. Try and test another person before taking him [or her] into your confidence."

Also threatening to deter us from ourselves is the enduring temptation of ageism – the stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination against individuals based on their age.

And so he expunged any online references to his age. The irony here is withering: Regardless of what ratings or surveys or statistics might suggest, in most instances au-

Regrettably, ageism – a cultural lie that makes our world darker and smaller – is deeply entrenched in our contemporary Western society. This conundrum has no easy solution, but if we allow it to interfere with our work, it can hold us back from fulfilling our goals. We in the West have much to learn from Asia and Latin America, where age is not denigrated but honored and respected.

[illegible]

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.

Did You Know?

By Joe Hernandez



Dr. Saram R. Ellison in His "Shrine Den," circa 1913.

The magic of New York City's golden age shines at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts in the "Mystery & Wonder" exhibit, open until July 11, 2026. At the February 12 opening, magicians like Joe Devlin, Meir Yedid, Eric DeCamps, Dorothy Dietrich, Charles Green, and Ben Barnes mingled. Guests enjoyed Will Fern's close-up magic. At the heart of this exhibit is the remarkable collection of Dr. Saram R. Ellison (1852-1918). From his home at 118 West 103rd Street, Dr. Ellison assembled one of the world's premier collections of magic books and memorabilia, which he displayed in a room he called his "Shrine Den."

Dr. Ellison, a Canadian doctor with a private practice, also served as a New York City Medical Examiner. Although he never performed magic, he was instrumental in founding the first professional magician's organization in the United States: the Society of American Magicians.

(continued on page 92)



Inside the Wizard's Workshop

BILL WINTERS

Meet Paul Lembo

While browsing his local magic shop, Judge Gary Brown spotted an old and badly painted cube with a string hanging out of it. The owner stated it had come from a magician's estate, but he wasn't sure what the effect was.

Judge Brown suspected it was a variation of a prop he'd seen at the New England Mini Museum of Magic – a piece of history that went for two thousand five hundred dollars when the museum sold off its holdings after the death of the museum's owner and curator, Ray Goulet. The judge took a gamble, paid the thirty dollars asking price, and asked friends who they recommend to inspect and repair, if possible, this piece of magic history. One name kept coming up. When the judge received the prop back, it was in working order and restored to its original paint scheme. Judge Brown was now the proud owner of a rare piece of World War II-era magic, quite possibly the only one still in existence.

Who was this wizard of the workshop, able to bring an old, abused prop back to life? None other than Paul Lembo, master of magical restorations.

Born in Coney Island, New York in 1937, Paul found a mentor in Al Flosso. It was Al who taught Paul the Miser's Dream routine and encouraged his magic building efforts. Like most teenage magicians of his day, Paul couldn't afford the stage props he was drawn to. Instead, he would buy old props and repair them. Paul had the advantage of having access to various tools, due to his father being a general contractor. At other times,

Paul would look at a magic catalog, figure out how a prop most likely worked, and build it from scratch. With props in hand, he began performing in the New York area and, at age sixteen, auditioned for and was hired to be the magician on a Philadelphia children's program called *Contest Carnival*. The show aired on CBS on Sunday mornings in the early 1950s.

After Paul graduated from high school, he joined the Navy Reserve while working full time for the Grumman Aircraft Company. During the Berlin Wall crisis, he was called to active duty where he continued to perform magic as a good will ambassador during port calls. Upon release from active duty, Paul returned to Grumman and at the ripe age of twenty-five, found himself working on the Apollo Space mission, where he served as the liaison between engineering and manufacturing. It was his job to ensure that whatever the engineers dreamed up could actually be manufactured. On YouTube, you can find a video of Paul giving a TED talk regarding his support for the Apollo missions. Rarely does the construction of a magic prop entail life and death consequences, but Paul's time working on the lunar landing module – which did have deadly consequences – instilled in him a commitment to precision.

After retiring from Grumman, Paul started his own general contracting company, building most of the post offices in Houston, Texas, along with other commercial buildings in Florida. Despite a busy schedule, he still found time for magic. With

his wife, Rose, whom he married in 1959, they created an evening Victorian Magic Show and toured for several years with a cast of fifteen assistants. After Rose's passing, Paul traded the stage for his workshop, retired from being a general contractor, and now resides just outside of Asheville, North Carolina, spending his time producing magic props.



Paul Lembo at Magic Builders Workshop.

Paul still enjoys attending magic history and collector conferences. It was at one such event he befriended Dr. Robert Albo, noted collector of Okito props. Paul was asked by the good doc to restore the Okito No Assistant Nest of Boxes, which had locks that no longer functioned. Doc was so pleased with the quality of Paul's work he asked him to build a duplicate set. Word of Paul's quality workmanship spread like wildfire and his client list soon grew to include Ken Klosterman, Ray Goulet, John Calvert, and David Copperfield. Today, Paul has a six-month backlog of jobs.

In addition to restoring props, Paul collaborated with noted vintage magic collector Joe Long to form Limited Edition Magic, a company dedicated to making smaller versions of vintage effects. As if he didn't al-

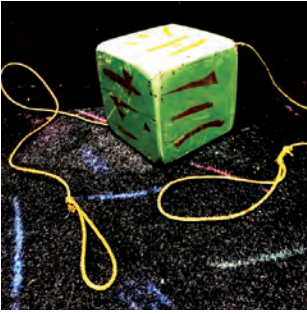
ready have his hands full, Paul created a school to teach restoration work. His students have included Lupe Neilsen, Jim Rawlins, David Sandy, and Lynn Johnson. Paul is a master of many materials, among them wood, metal, plastics, resins, and fabrics, but his days of spinning metal are now behind him due to the stress it puts on his hands.

Over the past several decades, Paul has restored more than one thousand antique magic props, including two flower production tables used by Harry Houdini. He had a fun but challenging time repairing their clockwork mechanisms. The tables, which now reside at the Copperfield Museum, were made from spun aluminum and weighed more than 100 pounds each.

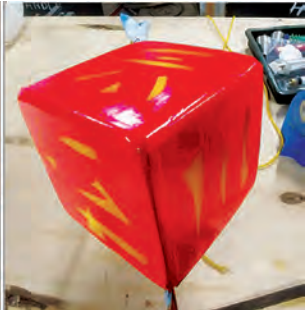


1930 orange tree.

One of the largest pieces Paul has restored is a roulette table formerly used by the Chicago Mob and later purchased by Ken Klosterman. The table was built with both mechanical and electrical devices that helped to separate unsuspecting gamblers from their money. When Paul began the restoration work, he needed to find a roulette wheel from the correct time period. Not only did he find a wheel, but he also found a bullet lodged in



Ascending Block (before).



Ascending Block (after).



Where do the ducks go? (before).



Where do the ducks go? (after).

the table, which he later framed and presented to Ken – who had been unaware of the hidden treasure.

When asked about the most challenging piece he has restored, Paul explained that he was hired by Marc DeSouza to repair a very old billiard ball effect consisting of a stand created by German craftsman Rudy Dersch. The more Paul inspected the prop, the more he realized it was a prototype and had never been in a working mode. Paul picked up where Mr. Dersch left off, and was able to get the prop to work as the inventor had envisioned.

Paul is impressed with many of the magic builders of old, but none more so than the work of Carl Willmann (1849–1934), who was a renowned German manufacturer of magic props and illusions. It is Mr. Willmann's precision that Paul truly admires. He hopes to instill his desire for quality work in those who attend his workshops on magic building and restoration.

So, if you have an old prop in need of some TLC, consider reaching out to Paul. Better yet, look into one of his workshops and learn from a master.



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Magic Down Under Profiles of Prominent Australian Magicians

By Kevin Casaretto

Paul Cosentino

Paul Cosentino, better known by his stage name Cosentino, was born to Italian parents on November 2, 1982, in Victoria, Australia.

As a young boy, he became hooked on magic after stumbling across a magic book in a library. He had learning difficulties that made it difficult to read the book, but his mother helped him by reading the book aloud while he studied the pictures. Magic ultimately helped him overcome his learning difficulties.

When he was thirteen, he and his mother were locked out of their house and Cosentino picked the lock to get back inside. This convinced him to practice picking locks, a skill that became central to his magic performances. Some children had action figures like Superman, but Cosentino's hero was Harry Houdini.

In 2011, Cosentino competed on *Australia's Got Talent*. He performed an illusion routine that impressed the judges and got him into the final round. During the final, Cosentino performed an underwater escape and picked nine locks in one minute and forty-five seconds. The judges awarded him second place. This was an outstanding result because he avoided the "winner's curse," a reference to the belief that



television talent shows' first-place winners rarely become famous after winning.

Paul has performed his own magic television specials on Australian television. He has also toured many parts of Asia and played himself in the 2017 Jackie Chan film *Bleeding Steel*.

Magic and

Memories

David Ginn



How Fantasio Created His Canes and Candles

I considered Fantasio a genius. He adapted the idea of the metal vanishing and appearing canes to space-age plastic, and that was a miracle in itself. But it didn't happen overnight. There was a lot of trial and error involved.

Now, thanks to Stan Allen and a thirty-one-year-old story from *MAGIC Magazine*, I want to share the true story of what happened more or less in Fantasio's own words. You will note that I have updated it just a little, from thirty years to sixty-five, plus a few other little picky editorial bits and pieces. The essence is still ninety-five percent Ricardo Roucau, the magician we all called Fantasio.



Cover of Magic magazine, 1995

Almost Sixty-Five Years Ago

By Fantasio

(Edited and Amended by David Ginn)

In 1960, I had a German-made Vanishing Cane that had broken in the middle. With one of the pieces I decided to make a Vanishing Candle. Up until this time, I had been using Jim Sherman's Atomic Candle, which was made from red waxed paper. It was necessary to have the steel cane painted white with a baked enamel, which was done by a friend of mine who restored refrigerators.

My success with the painted white candle gave me the idea to paint two Vanishing Canes, one red and one green, so that I could perform a Triple Color Changing Cane ending with a double floral bouquet.

Pecora, my friend in Argentina, had to make several cane bouquets for me because the feathers would eventually be ruined by the sharp edges of the cane plus the oil, which was needed to keep the cane working. Due to the aggravation of keeping the paint in good condition, by 1964 I sadly stopped doing this effect.

My wife Monica and I returned to New York in 1966 after a two-year engagement at the Desert Inn in Las Vegas, followed by six months with Ice Review at Chicago's Conrad Hilton. We rented an apartment at 255 West 75th Street, only half a block from Broadway.



Fantasio and Monica as Larry & Daisy.

One evening Monica was not feeling well and asked me to go out and get some groceries. While I was picking up a few cans of soda, I discovered rolls of spring plastic used to hold six-pack bottles in place on the display. I picked up one of the loose rolls and asked the manager if I could take it home. He said yes, and that became my “greatest magical moment.” Right away I knew this plastic would be perfect for my ideas with the Color Changing Cane and the Vanishing Candle.

The rolls that I discovered were 9 inches wide and 38 inches long. The coil had an inside diameter of 11/16 inch and the outer diameter was 1 and 1/8 inch. When I returned to the apartment, I cut a 2-and-1/4-inch strip off the roll (I still have the remaining piece) and made my first plastic candle.

“It works,” I told Monica, who wasn’t feeling any better because of my miraculous discovery. *[David Ginn comment: Thirty-one years after Fantasio wrote this, I do consider it a miraculous discovery.]*

I immediately started to search all the plastic suppliers in New York for a source of this material. I spent weeks going around



Fantasio with Liberace.



Fantasio, Monica, and Jackie at the Fantastic Revue in Acapulco, Mexico, 1976

and asking about this plastic, until finally I learned of a company that manufactured it. Their offices were in the old Pan Am building, so I went there immediately. I showed my sample piece to the sales manager and explained my interest in obtaining a larger sample – 80 inches long by 2 inches wide – in any color. He took my phone number and said he would call me when the sample arrived.

After three weeks of waiting for his call, I decided to phone him. His secretary told me he was out of town, so I left a message. I phoned repeatedly and each time she gave me a different excuse why I couldn’t speak with him: out of town, out to lunch, left the office early, sick at home, and so forth. When I returned to his office, I got the same kind of story from the receptionist.

After seven months of weekly excuses, I decided to go to the Pan Am building early in the morning and wait for this man to show up. There were hundreds of people arriving for work and waiting for the elevator. I was afraid that I would not remember what he looked like or would never find him in that multitude of people. But that didn’t happen.

Suddenly I saw him approaching one of the elevators. I got into the same car, but he did not notice me. When we arrived at his floor, I followed him out of the elevator, walking right behind him. He said good morning to the receptionist and I waved my hand – she thought I was with him. He entered into the main hall of the office, greeting people as he went along, with me waving and following close on his heels. He entered his office oblivious to the fact that I was behind him. He removed his hat and coat, hung them on the stand, and turned around to find me there. He was so surprised to see me that he burst out laughing. He could not believe how I got into his office.

Once more I explained to him how important this material was to me, and that if need be I would place a large order. Finally, I convinced him how serious I was – persistence paid off – and a week later I had my sample!

That first sample consisted of two rolls of dark blue plastic, from which I made two Vanishing Canes. For the knob (or cap), I used a chrome-plated plastic cap from a perfume bottle, which looked like a crown. I removed the inside thread with a small grinding wheel, opening the neck to 7/8-inch needed to fit the cane when it was extended. A brass tube was used for the ferrule. I still have one of my two prototypes.

Armed with my sample cane, I went to see Russel Delmar at New York Magic Centre on 8th Avenue, Al Flosso on 34th Street, and Louis Tannen on 42nd. They all liked my new cane, but when I told them of my idea to manufacture and sell the canes to magic shops, they each told me to save my time and money. They felt Russ Walsh had already saturated the market with his metal canes.

Undaunted, I immediately purchased enough black material to make 7,500 canes. That really convinced the plastic man that I was serious.

[David Ginn note: In September 2025, Stan Allen shared with me the following: "Ricardo told me that when he purchased the first very large shipment of plastic, he divided the lot into thirds and placed them into

three rented storage units around where they lived in NYC. His life savings, he said, was tied up in that plastic. If anything happened to one of the storage units, at least he wouldn't be totally wiped out." Sounds like a brilliant idea to me.]

Ron Morrison wrote my first set of instructions, and Mickey O'Malley illustrated them. They were typeset by my friend Manuel Uber, who worked at the *New York Times* as a Linotype mechanic. I placed the first advertisement in the September 1967 issue of *The Linking Ring* on page 10.

FANTASIO'S
VANISHING CANE TO SILK

NEW **6.50**

Many companies of industry have in recent years made a change-over of some steel products to a special, highly developed plastic. This unbreakable product has proven better in many ways for commercial purposes. An example is the use of this special spring material in Automobile and machine parts.

FANTASIO'S CANE IS:

- ★ Professional Quality
- ★ Not Dangerous in Handling
- ★ Will Not Rust or Oxidize
- ★ Does Not Require Oil
- ★ Fast, Silent Operation
- ★ Spiral Edges Invisible
- ★ Head Cap Easily Removed
- ★ Easier to Set Up
- ★ Smaller Hand Load
- ★ Longer Wearing
- ★ Fast Color
- ★ Does Not Cut
- ★ Non Breakable
- ★ Less Friction
- ★ Lighter Weight
- ★ Blacker Black
- ★ More Durable
- ★ Less Expensive

★ 18 TIMES BETTER !!!

Deluxe Metal Knob and Ferrule (Chrome) \$7.50

fantasio 255 West 75th Street
New York, N.Y. 10023

First Fantasio ad, The Linking Ring, September 1967, p. 10.

While my original plan had been to introduce the Color Changing Canes, the quantity I had to buy of the plastic limited me to only one color: black.

With the black material, however, I received a sample of red. This was just in time to prepare a color-changing set of canes for the S.A.M. convention in Boston, July 1967. Abbott's had a booth there, and Duke Stern

allowed me to demonstrate in the booth, taking orders. I took hundreds of names of people wanting to buy the effect.

By fall, the sales of black plastic Vanishing Canes were going well – so well that we were running out of space in our New York apartment. So in December 1967, Monica and I moved to Miami and bought a house with an extra room to use as a cane and candle factory.



Fantasio logo with products.

By February 1968, we were able to afford the red material. That allowed us to manufacture the black-to-red Color Changing Canes and the red Vanishing Candles. Meanwhile, the plastic man had sent me a sample of green, so the summer of 1968 I performed an act at the I.B.M. and SAM convention competitions with a Triple Color Changing Cane (black to red to green to silks) and a four-candle candelabra. I won first prize at both conventions and, furthermore, we sold over 600 canes and candles!

Since those humble beginnings, I became the owner of twenty-two injection molds to manufacture the parts for my canes and candles, which were being sold by magic dealers all over the world.

In 1995, during the twenty-eighth year of a very successful business with sales approaching half a million items, I could only think back to those pearls of wisdom given to me some thirty years back by one of the magic dealers:

“Save your time and money, Ricardo. The cane and candle market is saturated.”

[Additional editorial contribution by Ken Ward. © 1995 Stan Allen Inc., Reprinted by Permission.]

As we wrap up the story of Fantasio’s cane and candle origins, let me share two final stories.

Following the *Magic* magazine story of 1995, Fantasio and Monica continued to make their plastic products for at least fourteen more years. According to grown daughter Jackie Alcalde, by 2013 her parents had sold a reported 1.25 million cane and candle products, including the Vanishing Flute and Color Changing Lighter.



Fantasio with the Vanishing Flute.

However, during the time period after 2005, foreign magic makers outside the United States had begun manufacturing poor imitations of Fantasio’s products, and their retail prices were lower than his wholesale. Faced with this paradox, Fantasio decided to cease manufacture of all his products, but continued to sell the large amount of stock he had made up.

Sometime in 2012, Fantasio called me and offered to sell me whatever I needed for my lectures, “before I sell everything to Murphys,” the magic wholesale distributor. Honestly, I didn’t buy enough. For that reason, when I planned a final Europe lecture tour for

spring 2013, Fantasio had me get a large supply of red appearing and vanishing canes directly from Murphys.

The end of Fantasio's manufacturing business was bad news, but the good news is that he made enough plastic canes and candles that you can still find new ones on dealer shelves worldwide.

Monica passed away October 10, 2013, and Fantasio died on October 30, 2017, four years later. During those four years I spoke to him by phone several times a year, but I was caught off guard when he passed away. I am still sad when I think about him dying without me knowing it was coming.

One final story, which always warms my heart. At the 1968 I.B.M. Convention in Chattanooga, where Fantasio won top awards for the Color Changing Cane, a young twenty-two-year-old magician named David Ginn was set to perform a dove and illusion act at the Friday night show. Mark Merchant and Abb Dickson were there to help me, plus my assistants Diana and Jeanie, who appeared out of Thayer's Phantom Cargo Cage.

On that Friday, I bought the new black to red Color Changing Cane from Fantasio, practiced it a little (but not enough), and used it to open my dove act at the Tivoli Theatre that same night.

Due to our budding friendship, Fantasio invited me to dinner with about a dozen magicians after the Saturday night show. At the dinner, Fantasio spoke to me out loud in front of the group. He said:

"David, you were the second magician ever to perform my Color Changing Cane effect."

"Wow," I said, tired but happy to hear his words. "Who was the first?"

Fantasio grinned and quickly said, "Me!"

Everyone laughed, including me, and I've had that cherished memory now for fifty-eight years.



*Fantasio with silk fountains on
The Ed Sullivan Show.*

Thank you, Fantasio, for the friendship, the good advice, and the memories.

Submitting Ring Events

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

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

Conjurer's Foolosophy

JOE HERNANDEZ



I've learned that as a conjuring performer, I strive to ignite in others the same electric thrill that comes from encountering the mysterious and wondrous.

I've learned that in performing, the spectator gazes into emptiness, and then, in a heartbeat, magic erupts, and wonder fills the air.

I've learned that from the magician's fingertips, wonder sparks to life, appearing as if conjured from the very air itself.

I've learned that many believe conjuring is a puzzle to solve, but its true challenge lies in the delicious perplexity it creates.

I've learned that magic is the manipulation of physical objects to create nonphysical results.

I've learned that deception is an inherent aspect of conjuring.

I've learned that the experience of living in the present is an illusion. No sooner are you deceived into thinking you're in the present moment than there is no present moment. The present is always moving, and our awareness of it is an experience across time.

I've learned that the urge to perform casts a joyful glow over every corner of life.

I've learned to observe my actions and thoughts objectively.

I've learned that the second deal focuses on managing the known unknown.

I've learned that amateur magicians spend too much time learning new tricks. They spend very little time reflecting on how poorly they perform them.

I've learned that conjuring seeks to map the physical world onto the spectator's mental world in a deceptive manner while keeping reality intact and off the map.

I've learned that what is perceived as magic is not magic.

I've discovered that props awaken to magic only in a magician's hands. A deck of cards resting in its case holds nothing but silent promise.

I've learned that if you carry yourself like a magician, the audience will think of you as one.

Joe Hernandez is the author of *Conjurer's Wisdom Volumes 1 and 2*, *Phonetastic*, *Magic Babylon*, *Houdini: The Ultimate Trivia Compendium*, *Houdini: Reflections*, and the just-released *The Foolosophy of Conjuring*, from which excerpts are taken for this column. Books can be purchased from Amazon.com, magic dealers, or www.booksbyjoe.com.



Marketing MAGIC

KENT CUMMINS

Sharing the Love

"We all have magic inside us." — J.K. Rowling

Making the Most of Magic

Even if magic is just a hobby and you don't want or need to perform, you can use your love of magic in ways that entertain, educate, and inspire others. But for those who love performing ...

Most people have never met a magician. Most people have never seen a magic show live. Most people have never been to a magic shop. Most people have never sawed anyone in half, floated anyone in the air, or escaped from a straitjacket! Most people are in awe of the things we magicians do every day!

So, if you love magic (and the fact that you're reading *The Linking Ring* is a good clue!) you have a wonderful opportunity to captivate others with your knowledge and experience.

You have probably already experienced this. When people find out you are a magician, they are fascinated! "What is your favorite trick?" "What do you think about Cris Angel?" "Can you make my husband disappear?" "Show me a trick!"

The Author's Story

When I became a full-time professional magician in 1986 at the age of forty-three, my goal was to support my family by doing the things I love. And I love magic! Prior to 1986, I was what Gene Anderson calls a "Part-Time Pro." I watched magic shows whenever and wherever they appeared, live and on television; I visited magic shops in every city I found myself in, and I worked in two different magic shops; I subscribed to

magic magazines and wrote articles for magic magazines; I read many magic books, actively participated in magic clubs, invented and sold magic tricks, taught magic in a variety of venues, and performed whenever I got the chance – often (but not always) for money.

My wife, Margot, says that I have always been obsessed with magic, but she is wrong. I didn't become obsessed with magic until Christmas 1949, at the age of six, when my dad gave me my first A.C. Gilbert Mysto Magic set (the Exhibition set). But I have to admit that I have been obsessed with magic ever since. In addition to the Mysto Magic sets, I also got A.C. Gilbert Erector sets and an A.C. Gilbert Chemistry set. Our family enjoyed the A.C. Gilbert American Flyer electric train sets. In the 1940s and 1950s, everyone knew about A.C. Gilbert. And he also loved magic!

I love reading, so I read lots of books and magazines that featured stories about magic, and I did magic tricks as part of my book reports in school. I took theatre classes. I performed Anti Gravico for my physics teacher.



Kent with his first Mysto Magic Set, his entryway to magic.

I did magic shows at school for the March of Dimes.

I wasn't good at organized sports, so I taught myself how to juggle so I could include juggling in my magic shows. On family vacations, I convinced my parents to always stop at the magic shop in whatever town we visited. Later, when Margot and I traveled, I convinced my wife to always look for the magic shops in whatever town (or country) we visited.

I did not have a "Stage Mother" constantly urging me to participate in contests, but Mom and Dad did support the things that I showed an interest in. They encouraged me to join Boy Scouts, learn to swim, and try bowling and tennis and basketball. Dad sent me to baseball camp, where I learned I had no talent for sports.

Of course I became interested in girls, but I always looked for girlfriends who could be my beautiful assistant on stage. My first summer job was working for Louis Berkie at the Fun 'n Magic Shop in San Antonio, Texas.

As an undergraduate at Louisiana State University, I convinced my psychology professor to let me do a self-directed course on the Psychology of Deception. I convinced my theatre teacher to let me write, direct, and perform "Black Magic Revue," an original play about magic. I tried out to be the magician at Six Flags Over Texas, but I was not selected. I sold magic tricks at YMCA Camp Singing Waters.

I worked at the Checker Fun Shop and did promotional work for the Gordon Theatre, including a weekly Magic Fun Show for kids. I helped Margot, who was my girlfriend and not yet my wife at the time, create a magical display for Tiger Tantrums, the fraternity and sorority campus festival. I set up an Olde Tyme Medicine Show for Jambalaya Jamboree, another campus festival.

While on active duty in the United States Army, I put together magic floor shows in Germany, France, Korea, CONUS (Continental United States), and Vietnam during the Tet Offensive. I taught "Marketing Magic" at the Army Club Management Course. I made instructional videos using magic to



Kent and his assistant Susan Swartz featured on the front page of the Halloween 1963 Daily Reveille, Louisiana State University's college newspaper.



Kent's wife and former magic assistant, Margot Cummins.



A magical display that Kent created for Tiger Tantrums, a fraternity and sorority campus festival at Louisiana State University

teach budgeting and bartending.

When I left active duty and returned to Austin, Texas, I started "The SamWitch Magic Club" and created "Westgate Wizardry," a shopping center promotion that used magic for twenty years.

I'm not bragging, I'm just explaining what "obsessed with magic" can look like.



(l to r): Performing at a fire prevention class in Fort Lee, Virginia. • Performing for soldiers in Vietnam.



A magic-themed coupon for the Sam Witch Shop, Kent's former sandwich shop chain.

What Does a Retired Magician Do?

At the tender age of sixty-nine, Margot and I moved from Austin to Georgetown, Texas, to be closer to our two granddaughters. So, I was now “retired.” I had turned over the magic camp that I started at age fifty (www.magiccamp.com) to a group that loved the camp. I was no longer in charge of the World-Famous Austin Magic Auction (www.austinmagicauktion.com) that I started thirty-five years earlier.

But the Austin Public Library called me and said they wanted to feature a magician on the following year’s celebrity READ poster. Was I interested?

Are you kidding? I had done magic shows for every branch library in the Austin area. I had sawed every children’s librarian in half! My sandwich shop chain had sponsored their summer reading program. I opened the Children’s Tent at the Texas Book Festival every year. Of course I was interested! My younger granddaughter, Adele, had done a few magic tricks in her school talent show, calling herself, “The Amazing Adele.” I asked her if she would like to go to the photo shoot with me,

and the result was a wonderful poster showing the two of us with our magic wands inside the Main Austin Public Library.



The Fantastic Kent Cummins with granddaughter and magician The Amazing Adele, on the Austin Public Library’s READ poster.

For nearly ten years, “The Amazing Adele” and I performed shows for schools, libraries, and Fantastic Magic Camp. “Retirement” was lots of fun!

But “The Amazing Adele” grew up and moved to South Carolina. It was time for me to really retire. We bought a separate property,

half of a duplex, in which to preserve my magic collections. Nobody lives there, but the walls are covered with magic posters and every room is stuffed with magical paraphernalia from my seven decades as a magician. The master bedroom became a research library. The laundry room became a media lab. The two-car garage became a thirty-two-seat cabaret theatre. I call it “The Fantastic Magic Center” (www.fantasticmagiccenter.com).



The front door of the Fantastic Magic Center.

My goal in retirement is to use the things that I have learned and experienced in a lifetime as a magician to entertain, educate, and inspire others. I hope to inspire others to find the magic in their lives!

So, I write monthly columns for three magic magazines. If you enjoy *Marketing Magic*, you might also enjoy *Magic with a Message*, in the South African Magical Society digital magazine (www.sams.org.za) and *Tricks of the Trade* in JD Stewart's *Imagine* digital magazine (www.newmagicacademy.com/category/imagine-magazine).

Every two years, I contribute a research article for the *Yankee Magic Collector*. Every week, I publish a new episode of my podcast *Tales from the Fantastic Magic Center*. I participate in both of the local magic clubs. I am a permanent member of the I.B.M. Ring 60 Board of Directors as a “director emeritus” (basically “the old guy who knows stuff”). I write books about magic. (My latest book,

released in February 2026, is *I Want to Be Like Houdini!* (www.likehoudini.com) from Magic Words Press (www.magicwordspress.com).



(l to r): Holding court during a taping of his podcast Tales from the Fantastic Magic Center. • The cover of Kent Cummins's latest book, I Want to Be Like Houdini!, published in February 2026.

Ways to Share Your Love of Magic

- Volunteer to perform at your church, synagogue, mosque, or community center. Use “Magic with a Message” at Sunday Schools, the Jewish Community Center, and other youth organizations.
- Create a fundraising magic show for the schools in your area. They provide the theatre and sell the tickets; you provide the magic show.
- Write articles for magic publications (such as *The Linking Ring*). Invent and sell new tricks.
- Write articles about magic for publications in your area (but don't expose the secrets!).
- Appear as a guest on podcasts. You have amazing things to share with almost any audience.
- Appear as a guest on local television shows. Magic is visual, and the stations need your talent and expertise.
- Donate magic books and programs to your local library.
- Donate a magic show for your favorite charity. In fact, help them create an entire event with a magic theme.
- Attend magic conventions. Watch the shows. Listen to the lectures. Buy things from the dealers room. But most important, visit with other magicians and swap stories.
- Become active in your nearest magic club. Volunteer. Become an officer. Encourage others to participate.

- Teach magic for grown-ups at your community college.
- Teach magic for kids at after-school enrichment programs.
- Talk about the history of magic at civic clubs and other groups in your area.
- Perform magic at open mic events in your community.
- Can you make balloon sculptures? You can do this at so many places, for both children and adults.
- Are you a clown? Share the happiness and fun that only clowns can create.

You Can Do It!

Don't complain that there are no magic clubs in your area. Start one! The I.B.M. is ready to help you create a new Ring, and the Society of American Magicians can help you start a new Assembly.

Don't complain that your local magic club isn't very fun. Become an officer and help make it better!

Don't complain that there are almost no touring magicians performing in your area. Help local venues find them!

Don't complain that there are no other magicians in your area. Find people who are interested and become a magic mentor.

Don't complain that there are no good venues for you to perform. Find ways to perform magic in the places that already exist. I have performed at schools, colleges, libraries, churches, Jewish Community Centers, fairs, renaissance festivals, parades, carnivals, circuses, night clubs, civic clubs, conventions, trade shows, theaters, comedy clubs, amusement parks, swimming pools, shopping centers, restaurants, toy stores, limousines, beauty pageants, a topless club, Walmart grand openings, people's homes, parks, airplanes, in the water, on the street, a Carnival cruise ship, The Magic Castle, and the rooftop of a hotel still under construction. No doubt there are other places I've performed that I'm forgetting right now.

You can always find places to perform!

When Can You Do Magic?

There are myriad special occasions that lend themselves to the performance of magic. Halloween, of course. Christmas parties. Birthday parties, for adults as well as for kids. Weddings. Anniversaries. Bar and Bat Mitzvahs. School assemblies, either for education or entertainment. Library summer reading programs. Corporate events. Trade shows. Grand openings. Variety shows. Theatrical productions. Easter celebrations. Beauty pageants. Lock-ins.

You can also create your own special event. After all, you are a magician!

Share your love of magic with the people you care about.



A promotional poster for Kent's magic shows at the Westgate Mall in Austin, Texas, where he was known as the "Wizard of Westgate."

The Bottom Line

Share the love! Drop me a line at: kent@kentcummins.com.

Listen to "Tales from the Fantastic Magic Center" at www.fantasticmagiccenter.com. There is a new episode every Monday morning, 8:00 a.m. Central Standard Time.

And check out my new book, *I Want to be Like HOUDINI!*, in celebration of the centennial of Houdini's untimely death, at www.likehoudini.com.



Canadian magician Garnet Garven has published several One-Man Parades in *The Linking Ring*. Two of his Parades, published in November 2024 and February 2025, respectively, were mathemagic themed and both won a *Linking Ring* Award of Excellence. He shared with me his adapted version of another interesting mathemagic routine that appeared in *Best Sellers* by Tom Sellers, A Supreme Magic Publications, 1980, p. 146. This routine offers impromptu, self-working magic that can be easily taught to a novice group. We like this routine because it does not reveal any fundamental magic principles or key methods, allowing new learners to focus on performance.

EFFECT: A coffee mug, a pencil, a die, and a blank index card are presented. The die is placed under the coffee mug with a secret prediction number facing up. The numbers from 1 to 20 are written on the index card, which is then torn into five vertical strips. The face-down strips are mixed and one is selected. The other strips are laid aside. The numbers on the chosen strip are totaled. Then the numbers in the sum are added together. It is revealed that the number on the dice matches the number they came up with.

SET-UP: On an index card, write all numbers from 1 to 20 in the following manner.

- Write numbers 1 to 5 on the first row, from left to right.
- On the second row, write numbers 6 to 10, from right to left.
- Write 11 to 15, left to right, and finally 16 to 20 from right to left, see (Fig. 1).

The mathematics of the matrix results in each column of four numbers totalling 42. Tear the index card into five vertical strips, each with four numbers. Turn the torn strips face down and hand them to a spectator to mix. Pro-

ceed with the effect as shown in the effect.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION:

Without showing anyone the number, place the die face up with the number 6 under your coffee mug. Tell them, "This is my prediction." Regardless of which strip they pick, the sum of the numbers will be 42 because of the layout.

To finish, the performer asks their helper to add the two-digit number they arrived at. They will be adding 4 and 2, which equals 6. Now lift off the cup and reveal your number 6 on the die. Remember, once they pick a strip, place the others aside, as each strip will equal 42 and you don't want them to be aware of that. You might want to have some extra cards ripped that look the same but have the numbers aligned differently, so they add up to different numbers.

1	2	3	4	5
10	9	8	7	6
11	12	13	14	15
20	19	18	17	16

WRITE THE ABOVE NUMBERS IN FRONT OF
YOUR SPECTATORS ON INDEX CARD
NOTE — ALL FIVE COLUMNS ADD TO 42

TEAR THE INDEX CARD INTO VERTICAL STRIPS
AND PLACE FACE DOWN
SPECTATOR MIXES AND SELECTS ONE STRIP

Fig. 1

Thanks again to Garnet Garven. I look forward to more of his One-Man Parades.

Enjoy, and practice your magic.
bobdurante55@gmail.com



From Our UK Correspondent

BRIAN LEAD

I only spent one day at the Blackpool convention this year but managed to catch four worthwhile lectures. None, I'm pleased to say, involved a close-up card trick – or any tricks at all for that matter. We already have enough of those. These dealt with much more important matters.

Charlie Caper, a winner of *Sweden's Got Talent* and at FISM among other achievements, explored some important aspects of performance. He warned, for example, against saying "Thank you!" to solicit applause. The audience will give you applause when you deserve it, and resents being forced into it. So much for that cringe-inducing patter line which we still hear so often: "The last people I showed this to were so astonished that they also forgot to clap." Ending up in an applause position, of course, is another matter, and helps the audience to direct its appreciation.

Other *bon mots* included: "Comfort is the Enemy," "A smile is worth more than a laugh," and "Charm does not reside in perfection."

At the other end of the day, Rob Zabrecky had twenty-six bits of advice in the form of his *A,B,Z of Magic*. Under 'V' he also referred to the importance of vulnerability as opposed to perfection. Only the amateur never drops a ball. I'm always surprised, though, by the time management of lecturers. Almost universally, they begin at an over-leisurely pace, then end up rushing and cutting.

Both of these speakers spoke the common sense, which will already have been internalised by good performers and will probably never be absorbed by the poor ones.

Jack Rhodes, a recent runner-up on *Britain's Got Talent*, forensically deconstructed a routine from his one-man stage show showing just how much thought had been put into it, elevating a relatively simple trick (the prediction of

the time on a watch) to several minutes of solid entertainment. The intelligence shown in his appreciation of apparently minor details, underpinned with self-controlled sound effects, and his awareness of audience reaction, were all very impressive. Jack, who records and analyses all of his shows, also showed us how to create the perfect publicity photograph.



Jack Rhodes.

The fourth lecturer was the wonderful "Curator of Wonder" Matt Pritchard, who lovingly creates three-dimensional models of big illusions such as the vanishing of Blackpool Tower and a car driving through an apparently solid brick wall. Matt has a very large following, in the United Kingdom and beyond.



Matt Pritchard.

In between, I browsed the dealers and caught up with old friends, managing to grab a photo opportunity with our President Moira Fletcher on the British Ring stand. *The Key Ring* pictured here is our British equivalent of the *The Linking Ring* magazine.



Brian and President Moira.

We are used to reading about magical “dynasties” such as the Blackstones and Bambergs, but as readers will know from the brief biography of Moira in the January *Linking Ring* (with thanks to Don Greenberg), she is the middle member of an impressive magic dynasty in the UK. This links back to her fa-

ther, Dr. Duncan Fletcher, who was Ring President from 1975-76. Duncan and his wife Olive (who was very much part of the successful magical “package”) have been immortalised by having their names carved into the fabric of the Britannia Panopticon – reputedly the oldest surviving Music Hall in the world, founded in Trongate, Glasgow, in 1859. Others honoured in this way include Stan Laurel, who made his stage debut there, and the notorious “Electrical Wizard” Walford Bodie MD (or Merry Devil), who was born in Aberdeen in 1869 but died, by coincidence, when appearing in Blackpool in 1939.

When I was last in the city, I was shown around the building by Judith Bowers, who re-discovered it (to be very precise, on February 23, 1997) and set about its restoration. Among other things, visitors marvel at a collection of cigarette packets, sweet wrappers, tickets and the like, which lay undisturbed behind the seats for decades.

As an aside, the Britannia boasts a still-playing pianola made in 1904 in New York, and brought over here during the Prohibition when it was no longer needed in the bar-room.

The third magical member of the Fletcher triumvirate is daughter Mandy, who will be taking over from Mum as Ring 25’s youngest-ever president later this year. For the popular “Nostalgia” slot at the 2017 convention, video wizard Bob Hamilton created a three-way montage of Duncan, Moira, and Mandy all performing the same silent “Scottish” act, and



Britannia Music Hall.

blending beautifully across the generations, from one to the next.



Brian with Olive Fletcher.



President Elect Mandy Fletcher.

As an interesting link, when Duncan passed away in 1995, Olive generously passed on to me several of his books which she knew I would value, and I later came into possession of one of his metal convention badges, for the Brighton convention in 1980, via the welfare stand. Another typically thoughtful gift was a postcard depicting the aforementioned “Dr.” Walford Bodie. Picture postcards bearing photographs of the star performers of the day were very popular in the early years of the twentieth century, but few examples can be found of the

entertainers actually using their own publicity cards in personal correspondence. Bodie has written ‘Papa’ on the image side of the card, and a message on the reverse to his young son Albert, who was sadly to die at the age of twenty-five. His elder son, Samuel, went on to gain genuine medical qualifications as an anaesthetist.

Bodie must have recently received a greetings postcard from Albert, as he begins: “*Your p.c. to hand. Many many thanks for your good wishes.*” He goes on: “*You are a good little boy. Fondest and dearest love, Papa.*” He signs off with fourteen kisses and misquotes Shakespeare: “*Lead on, Macduff!*” (a very common error). The card is postmarked, with a penny red stamp, from Crook in County Durham, and addressed to Master Bodie at the Mansion House in Macduff.

Generally speaking, the name of Bodie has not stood the test of time, but it is interesting to reflect that he was such a household name in his day that he was the subject of an impersonation by Charlie Chaplin.



Personalised Bodie postcard.



Bodie and Chaplin, look-alikes.

Becoming the Un-Magician: Emptying

Part Two

By John A. Palumbo

There comes a moment in every magician's life when the question is no longer, "What trick should I learn next?" but, "What part of myself do I need to let go of?"

We spend so much of our early magic life adding.

More moves.

More props.

More clever lines.

More layers of persona, polish, and performance.

But somewhere between the boy or girl at the magic shop counter and the grown magician standing in a living room, a ring meeting, or a crowded conference room, something shifts.

We begin to realize that mastery is not built by accumulation. It is built by emptying.

The Weight We Carry Without Knowing It

Every magician carries invisible weight: the desire to be impressive, the fear of being exposed, the habit of filling space with noise, the belief that silence must be covered, the pressure to be clever, smooth, flawless.

Young magicians feel it first, trying to prove they belong. Adults who love magic but live busy lives feel it differently. Between careers, deadlines, and family responsibilities, magic becomes both a refuge and a quiet pressure to do it right. And seasoned veterans feel it in the bones of their experience. They have seen trends rise and vanish, and sometimes they wonder if the art has left them behind.

But the truth is simpler. The art has not left anyone.

It is waiting for us to empty what no longer serves.

The Art of Stepping Out of Your Own Way

The emptying begins with a difficult realization: most of what we think is necessary is not.

Noise is not necessary.

Explanations are not necessary.

Speed is not necessary.

Patter is not necessary.

Trying so hard is not necessary.

What *is* necessary is presence. And presence does not come from what you add, but instead from what you remove.

The Gift of Not Filling the Space

When I was a twelve-year-old inside Mehr's Novelty and Magic Shop in Birmingham, Alabama, watching Robert Chadwick perform small miracles behind the counter, the thing that struck me most was not his technique but his restraint.

He allowed silence to breathe.

He let the moment arrive instead of forcing it.

He did not rush to prove anything.

He did not cover every gap with sound.

He trusted the space.

At the time, I did not have the language for it. I only knew that standing there, watching in quiet, felt like being pulled into another world.

Years later, I would come to understand that what I was seeing was a magician who had begun to empty.

Magic for the Magicians Who Live Two Lives

Most magicians reading this are not full-time performers. You are doctors, bankers, teachers, mechanics, architects, retirees, students, engineers, entrepreneurs, parents – people who live full, demanding lives.

But when you step into a ring meeting, shuffle a deck at the kitchen table, or slip a coin into classic palm while waiting in line, a different part of you wakes up.

Magic becomes a second soul. A chamber where creativity still flickers. A private world where the clock slows down. A reminder that adulthood did not steal everything.

For you, “emptying” means something different.

Letting go of perfection long enough to rediscover play. Letting go of pressure long enough to remember why you loved magic in the first place. Letting go of comparison long enough to enjoy the art without measuring yourself against anyone else in the room.

The emptying restores joy.

When You Realize Noise Was Your Distraction

There is a moment, early or late, when every magician realizes something uncomfortable: “I have been adding all the wrong things.”

We add chatter to avoid silence.

We add movement to avoid scrutiny.

We add jokes to avoid vulnerability.

We add speed to avoid being seen.

The emptying exposes all of that and makes you ask questions you have avoided: What am I hiding behind? What am I afraid the audience will notice if I finally slow down?

That is the moment the Un-Magician quietly steps forward.

How Emptiness Becomes Influence

Emptiness is not absence, it’s permission for the moment to breathe, for the spectator to feel, for curiosity to awaken, for magic to land without being pushed.

A magician who empties becomes a magician who influences. Not by force, speed, or cleverness, but by the gravity of their presence.

The emptying is the birthplace of true persuasion.

The Lessons That Had No Names

Long before I wrote these words about the Un-Magician, I found myself walking a path I did not recognize at the time.

First came what I later called Becoming the Un-Speaker, the realization that powerful communication had less to do with what you said, and more to do with how much you were willing to leave unsaid.

Then came Becoming the Un-Salesperson, a philosophy rooted in the idea that influence becomes stronger when you stop trying to prove, persuade, or perform your way into acceptance.

Years later, that exploration grew into a book titled *Becoming the UnSalesperson*, written not as a manual, but as an excavation of the psychological clutter we must remove to connect with another human being honestly.

And here is the part that matters most for magicians: We are all salespeople.

Not sellers of products, but of moments. Of wonder. Of belief. Of the impossible made briefly possible.

Every time we borrow a ring, invite a thought, lift a card, or ask for a moment of attention, we are offering an invitation.

The emptying is what makes that invitation feel genuine.

From the Counter to the World

Years after those quiet Saturdays in Mehr’s shop, I found myself on stages across the world, speaking not just about magic, but about influence, persuasion, and the psychology of human nature.

People sometimes ask how a boy standing behind a magic counter in Birmingham ends up speaking to audiences across the globe.

The answer is not a straight line of success. It is a long series of emptying.

Letting go of the need to sound impressive.

Letting go of the urge to perform a speech.

Letting go of the fear that silence means failure.

Everything I needed to stand in front of thousands and move them without shouting, selling, or pushing, I learned by watching what happened when a magician trusted the moment enough to stop filling it.

The Un-Speaker.

The Un-Salesperson.

The Un-Magician.

Different doors, same room.

For the Pros Who Fear They Are Being Left Behind

There is a quiet ache among seasoned magicians, one they rarely admit. “Has magic evolved without me?”

The younger generation edits miracles for social media.

Methods are exposed instantly.

Audiences expect more and react less.

Attention spans shrink.

Technology dominates the stage.

But none of that diminishes the power of a magician who has emptied. If anything, it amplifies it.

Because the emptying gives the veteran magician something no trend, gimmick, or edited video can fake: presence earned over decades.

The Un-Magician reminds you that it is not too late, you are not behind, you are not forgotten. You simply need to shed the illusion that relevance comes from novelty.

Relevance comes from depth, and depth comes from emptying.

For the Young Magicians Just Beginning

If you are just starting, handling your first deck, your first coin, your first impossible moment, listen closely.

Do not rush.

Do not drown the silence.

Do not hide behind noise.

Do not mistake movement for meaning.

Magic is not a performance. It is a moment you prepare and then allow. Your emptying begins early if you let it.

The Emptying Leads to the Becoming

Once you release what you never needed, the chatter, the armor, the frantic movement, the need to impress, you become available for something deeper.

Your spectators will feel it before they see it. Your magic becomes quieter, your presence becomes stronger, your timing becomes instinct, your influence becomes effortless, and your moments become remembered instead of merely observed.

Emptying is not the end of anything. It is the beginning of everything.

In Part One, you unlearn.

In Part Two, you empty.

In Part Three, you become.

And becoming is not louder, more dramatic, or more complicated – it is more true.

The emptying is the tunnel every magician must walk through. The place where identity softens, ego fades, performance falls away, and presence takes its rightful place.

And when you emerge, you will not just be a better magician. You will be more whole, more connected, more felt, and more unmistakably you.

This is the gift of the emptying. It strips away everything except the truth, and the truth is where your magic has always lived.

About the Author

John A. Palumbo discovered magic at age twelve inside Mehr’s Novelty and Magic Shop in Birmingham, Alabama, where he informally apprenticed under magician Robert Chadwick. A life-long student of the art, he later carried those lessons into a global speaking career and as an author of fifteen books on influence and human behavior, including *Becoming the UnSalesperson*, which explores how connection grows stronger when performance falls away. Today, he continues to blend magic, psychology, and presence in his writing and speaking, reminding audiences that the most powerful illusions often begin in silence. Contact him at john@johnpalumbo.com.





Polishing the Rings

SKIP WAY

Tax Exempt Rings

For U.S. Rings, securing Internal Revenue Service (IRS) 501(c) nonprofit or tax-exempt status may protect clubs like ours from federal income taxes. More importantly, it may extend a legitimate tax deduction for dues, donations, and estate bequests, limit Ring officer and member liability short of illegal or civilly negligent actions and strengthen our community status as a credible service organization.

The federal IRS Code recognizes twenty-nine different types of nonprofit groups. Most Rings may qualify for either 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(7) status. You will have to decide which category best fits your club's mission. Consulting an accountant or attorney to determine the 501(c) status that is right for your Ring is highly recommended. Several states offer pro bono legal guidance for 501(c) nonprofits with budgets under \$1,000,000 through government sponsored nonprofit support centers. These support centers may offer guidance on IRS filings, bylaws, charitable solicitation licensing, and employment issues.

There are several important differences between the IRS 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(7) classifications. IRS 501(c)(7) recognizes recreational and hobby clubs supported by members through dues, fees, and contributions. Most magic hobby clubs fit this classification.

A 501(c)(7) nonprofit may receive no more than 35% of its gross receipts from sources outside its membership. No more than 15% of a club's gross receipts may come from income derived from a club-

owned facility or services available to the general public. Unfortunately, donors giving their magic collection or a cash sum to a 501(c)(7) club may not legally claim a charitable deduction. To qualify for this deduction, your Ring must register as either a 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(10) nonprofit organization.

A 501(c)(3) nonprofit applies the bulk of its receipts toward a public service, charitable, or educational mission. Supporters may deduct fees and donations paid to this type of club. Many public and private grants won't consider organizations not registered as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. A 501(c)(3) organization must maintain detailed administrative records, meet strict reporting deadlines, and accept public scrutiny of their records. A 501(c)(3) club's financial records are subject to public review, whereas a 501(c)(7) club may generally refuse common public scrutiny.

With a little restructuring, most Rings may qualify for 501(c)(3) status as a club operated for performing art educational purposes benefiting the public. The IRS defines "educational" beyond traditional classroom instruction to include any training that improves an individual's capabilities or teaches the public about subjects beneficial to the community.

To qualify as a 501(c)(3), a Ring must educate the public on magic as a performance or therapeutic art. They must offer artistic performances or forums that are educational or culturally significant, provide public educational programs, and develop new and

original works. A 501(c)(3) Ring may provide public discussion groups, lectures, or forums. These clubs may also operate a museum or offer instruction via correspondence, television, radio, or the internet.

Our clubs might appear to qualify as 501(c)(10) domestic fraternal societies operating under a lodge system. This classification requires a parent organization that charters self-governing local chapters sharing a common objective. However, the I.B.M. operates as a 501(c)(6) trade association designed to improve conditions for a specific industry rather than a fraternal lodge system.

How complicated is the registration process? As mentioned above, seek assistance with this potentially complex process from dedicated nonprofit law firms, nonprofit resource centers, legal aid societies, or a knowledgeable accountant.

Applying for nonprofit status requires incorporating with your state. Your Ring's incorporation documents must specifically state that your club has an exempt educational purpose and include a formal plan for disposition of club assets in the event of the Ring's dissolution. Be aware that many states require a separate application and approval for state nonprofit status. Check your secretary of state's website for details.

Next, the Ring must request an IRS employer identification number (EIN) to identify the club for tax purposes. Maintain a digital backup copy and file this important IRS document with your club's charter and bylaws.

With these documents in hand, the Ring may request tax-exempt status with *IRS Form 1023, Application for Recognition of Exemption*, or the simpler *Form 1023-EZ, Streamlined Application for Recognition of Exemption*. Your application must include the Ring's Articles of Incorporation, bylaws, and a fee paid to the Department of the Treasury. The fee as of this writing is \$600. The review process generally takes up to six months. Save a digital backup copy of the IRS approval determination letter and file this important document with the club's

charter and bylaws.

Remember that federal nonprofit status does not automatically exempt your club from state taxes. Upon federal approval, check your tax-exempt status at the state and local levels. While some states automatically accept IRS recognition, other state laws require additional processing.

Federal 501(c) status carries specific administrative requirements. Nonprofit Rings must maintain accurate and detailed financial and corporate records. Depending upon your non-profit status these records may include your member and donor lists. Nonprofit Rings must file annual corporate tax returns including *IRS Form 990* summarizing the Ring's mission, volunteer base, revenue, expenses, and net assets. Failing to file this return on time may result in stiff penalties. Missing three consecutive years will forfeit your tax-exempt status.

The benefits tend to outweigh the strict administrative requirements. When we factor in exemption from federal, state, and local taxes, donor tax deductions, access to grants and funding, a boost in community credibility, lower postal rates for bulk mailings, and reduced product and service costs, nonprofit status is worth considering.

I am most grateful to Timothy "Tim" Vient, Esq., I.B.M. Legal Advisor, for his invaluable assistance with this column. Thank you, Tim! This article was written for informational purposes; it should not be considered as legal or accounting advice. Before making any decision regarding your club's incorporation or tax-exempt status you should consult legal and accounting professionals that have expertise within these areas.

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.

Anatomy of the Australian Deal

By Thomas Henry

There's a word – not much used nowadays – which really should be in the vocabulary of all on the quest of original magic: *divagation*. It's a noun, meaning the act of wandering or straying from a course or subject. I've long held that divagation is part and parcel to serendipity.

Specifically, when brainstorming a new routine, allowing the mind to flit about unfettered is not an attention deficit disorder, but the opening up to possibilities. It may turn out the initial goal is never achieved, but the countless other avenues unveiled could pay rich dividends in future endeavors.

What follows is just such a story. While cooking up a mental effect requiring a very different approach to the well-known Australian Deal, I was drawn – sidetracked even – to the existing literature to see what had come before. What an eye-opener! Besides encountering a multitude of clever applications, for the first time the unifying principle came into sharp focus. Join me now for an account of that fruitful divagation.

An Old Chestnut

In case you've led a sheltered magical life, here's a sketch of the typical sequence. The participant holds a packet of cards face down, say less than twenty. She deals the top card *down* to the table, then transfers the next one *under* the packet in hand. These actions are repeated until the participant is left with a lone card, the remainder comprising the tabled talon.

John P. Hamilton (betraying a northern hemisphere bias) gets credit for humorously christening it the Australian Deal. Over the years the move has gone by a number of other aliases as well: the Down-Under Shuffle, the Elimination Shuffle, Deal and Duck, among others. Keep those in mind when searching for references online.

Sometimes a routine may call for the order of operations to be reversed, i.e., commencing with *under*, followed by *down*. Phil Goldstein (Max Maven) dubbed this the Anti-Australian Deal. For brevity's sake, let's instead refer to the original as *DU* and the inverted form as *UD*.

The literature of the Australian Deal and its variants is so vast it would be futile to try to cite all past references in a single article. Instead, I'll simply point out a handful of instances which are especially innovative, illustrative, or inspirational. See the bibliography for relevant publication details and page numbers. If you really do require a comprehensive listing, then head to the online *Conjuring Archive* website; it currently sports some 443 entries!

The Two Main Applications

Somewhat surprising is that the earliest use of the ruse may have been to uncannily sort a handful of mixed playing cards into order by value. This was Professor Hoffman's intent in his "The 'Alternate Card' Trick." I gather his Victorian audiences were either easily amused, or perhaps too polite to show their true feelings. It's pretty dull twaddle, so let's allow that kind of effect to fade into the wings.

Far more engaging is when the Australian Deal finds employment as a force. The oldest instance I've noticed is Bob Hummer's "The Great Discovery." This was a commercial item marketed by Kanter's Magic Shop in 1939.

If you need a visual aid to refresh your memory how it can become a force, give this a try. Hold eight cards face down, with the Ace of Spades on the bottom. Now carry out the DU procedure. The last pasteboard remaining is the Ace. Or if you begin with it on top, then UD likewise delivers the goods.

As far as the theatrics go, it's worth noting the participant's actions visually suggest that ancient ritual of plucking petals from a daisy to ascertain one's romantic prospects: "she loves me, she loves me not, etc." It conveys that the packet is being randomized in some fashion, while simultaneously whittling it down to a unique eventuality. Incidentally, Mitsunobu Matsuyama's "Petal Principle," though entirely different, outwardly appears much the same to the audience.

Determining the Force Position

Let's get serious about generalizing the Australian Deal. Suppose the packet must be of a certain size. Then the question becomes, where should the force card be positioned so it winds up as the last remaining? There are three equivalent approaches to answering this.

Martin Gardner published one such, which he credited to Mel Stover. Suppose the packet consists of twelve face-down cards, and we agree to think of the top as number one. Until further notice, assume UD dealing.

Begin by writing down the number twelve in binary notation. If you're rusty on how to do that, simply play a few minutes with a set of Magic Age Cards (found in every child's magic set) and you'll soon be up to scratch! Now rotate the entire pattern to the left one notch. That is, slide the bits over, with the leftmost ultimately looping around to the rightmost position (Fig. 1). Finally, convert that back to decimal and you'll know where the force card must be lodged. In this case, it's ninth from the top.

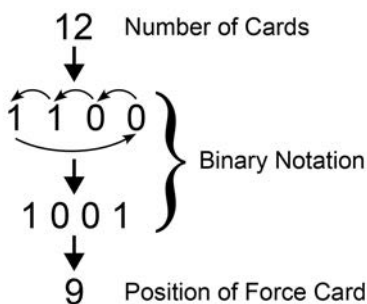


Fig. 1

As an interesting corollary, note that since the rotated binary number always sports a one in the unit's place, it will be odd. That may or may not be important to you during the setup phase prior to the Australian Deal.

Some Alternatives

There's a second way to compute the position, and without recourse to binary notation. It goes like this. As usual, start with the number of cards in the packet; call that n . Now from that subtract the greatest power of two which is strictly less than n . (Powers of two go: 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, etc.) Double that, and finally increase by one to determine the required location.

Let's try it out to confirm the results of the previous example (Fig. 2). The number of cards is twelve. The greatest power of two less than twelve is eight, and so the difference is four. That doubled yields eight, which when incremented gives nine.

Number of cards	12
Greatest power of two less than this	8
Difference	4
Doubled	8
Incremented by one	9

Fig. 2

A third procedure for pinpointing the placement follows at once. It's particularly handy for more extensive explorations with a scientific calculator or spreadsheet program (Fig. 3). If you've forgotten your high school algebra, don't let the mathematical symbolism put you off. The expression $\log_2 n$ means to find the logarithm base-two of the packet size. The double-brackets surrounding that signify the greatest integer function which chops off any messy fractional remainder.

$$\text{position} = 2(n - 2^{\lfloor \log_2 n \rfloor}) + 1$$

Fig. 3

proposed this as a challenge problem in the *American Mathematical Monthly*, back in 1950. That's the official organ of the Mathematical Association of America.

If resorting to spreadsheet software, then the formula would be written as:

$$=2*(A1-2^{INT(LOG(A1,2))})+1$$

Your computer will use the variable A1 to signify the upper left cell in lieu of *n*.

Any one of these three recipes will determine the sweet spot within an arbitrary packet, so just choose whichever best suits your needs.

Dealing Then Ducking

Thus far, UD dealing has been assumed. But in many situations, DU makes more thematic sense, or perhaps eases the get-ready phase when arranging cards extemporaneously. No problem; a simple modification to the initial conditions paves the way.

For example, with the twelve cards we've been experimenting with, dealing the top one down at the beginning in effect leaves an eleven-card packet, which is then finalized as if by UD. A quick check shows that given eleven cards, the seventh is in the hot seat. Add one to account for the spent card and it becomes eighth within a packet of twelve.

After a smidgen of algebraic manipulation, this too can be expressed as a formula (Fig. 4). By the way, thanks to that leading factor of two, we've also proved that DU always dictates an even position.

$$\text{position} = 2(n - 2^{\lceil \log_2(n-1) \rceil})$$

Fig. 4

With these formulas, it's a breeze to whip up a spreadsheet delineating the required positions for packets of any size, under either UD or DU dealing (Fig. 5). I stopped at twenty cards, since anything greater would no doubt put the onlookers asleep, not to mention induce carpal tunnel syndrome in

the assistant tormented by such dealing!

Size	UD	DU
2	1	2
3	3	2
4	1	4
5	3	2
6	5	4
7	7	6
8	1	8
9	3	2
10	5	4
11	7	6
12	9	8
13	11	10
14	13	12
15	15	14
16	1	16
17	3	2
18	5	4
19	7	6
20	9	8

Fig. 5

Pleasant Force Positions

It will often be the case you'd like to start with the force card either on top or the bottom of the packet. Thinking backwards now, how many cards are required to accommodate that?

If you ponder **Figure 5** for just a moment, the answer is obvious: it must be a power of two. For example, with four cards, UD forces the top, while DU forces the bottom.

This is exceedingly providential, for it's always trivial to maintain a desired card on top or the bottom of a packet while ostensibly scrambling the order. Elementary runs, retentions, or other overhead shuffle techniques make that a snap, even for non-cardicians like me. Another angle would be to engage Paul Curry's audacious Swindle Switch to impart the illusion of haphazard mixing.

Invariants

In his ingenious double-whammy routine, “Complacency,” Phil Goldstein discovered something striking about seven-card packets: no matter how many times a DU deal is carried out, the second and fifth cards maintain their positions. Let’s call these *invariants*.

That got me wondering if invariants exist for packets of other sizes. Yes indeed; four, nine, and ten also cooperate (Fig. 6). So, for example, with a ten-card packet, no matter how many times you or the participant executes a DU deal, the seventh card remains locked in place.

Size	Invariants	Restoration
4	2 and 3	2
5	none	5
6	none	6
7	2 and 5	5
8	none	4
9	4	6
10	7	6

Fig. 6

Daydreaming further, consider a somewhat related problem. To wit, how many consecutive DU deals will restore the original order of the cards? The third column in the figure just cited reveals all. For instance, with an octet, carrying out the procedure four times brings each and every card home to roost.

The Three Scenarios

Well, that was definitely a slog through some rather unglamorous mathematics. But with the prerequisites behind us, we can now turn to the show-biz side of things. Let’s see how various luminaries from our craft have harnessed the Australian Deal for entertainment purposes. As we explore these instances together, keep your eyes peeled for the three major settings in which the maneuver proves useful:

1. A previously unknown card in the force location is glimpsed on the fly, or

2. a previously known card is already in the force location, or
3. a desired card is surreptitiously guided to the force location.

An ideal example of the first scenario can be found in Dr. Wm. T. Palchinas’s early but well-conceived “Card Determined,” published in *The Jinx*. The participant gets to decide how many cards will be used, then unwittingly supplies the magician with some key info. Everything is very natural, and as a demonstration of muscle-reading takes on fresh luster.

If you need proof the Australian Deal can be far from one-dimensional, look no further than William Simon’s “The Four Queens.” With a very different sort of plot, his approach to the second scenario is sure to guarantee a slap to your forehead.

For an instance of the third scenario, check out Sam Schwartz’s “Down & Under (Done Over).” Amazingly, he manages to corral the participant’s selection to the correct spot without ever knowing its identity. His write-up is so short and sweet (seven brief paragraphs), it’s easy to miss the ingenuity of the preset “stack of eight” business.

You’ll find further examples of the three scenarios in the reading list, below. Of particular merit are the gems from John Scarne, an undisputed master of not only devising but also clearly explaining motivations, direction, and misdirection.

Turn to *The Linking Ring*

If playing cards aren’t your bag, don’t fret; this artifice is also well suited to photographs, postcards, menus, and even custom clipart props designed on your home computer. Here are a few praiseworthy contributions from the abundant trove you’ll find in *The Linking Ring*.

Phil Goldstein offered up seven presentations within the single article, “Australian Packets.” Particularly catchy is how he parlayed a placard portraying an ambiguous image which can be interpreted in several different ways.

He returned with three new applications

in his One-Man Parade of 1982. You'll love how he harnesses an envelope to secretly augment the packet previously shuffled by the participant. This deceit was later recruited for his bizzarist routine "Wagers of Sin," eventually finding its way – with credit – to Joshua Jay's *Magic: The Complete Course*.

If a parapsychological testing theme tickles your fancy, then check out my "Zener Destiny." This hinges upon a sly cull for the get-ready which flies by audiences unnoticed when displaying a mixed pack of Zener (ESP) cards.

Peter Marucci came up with a real storytelling zinger in his "Salem Witch Trials." The cards bear the names and relevant dates for the unfortunate women who suffered through that wicked era. Don't miss how he manages a hold-out card (decorated with the image of a hideous witch) unknown to the audience until the denouement.

Perfect for the kiddywinks, as well as adults, is Alan Gardiner's "The Cat with Nine Lives." In this case, the fun involves cards adorned with images of fierce dogs and a lone goofy cat.

I returned to the fray with "ESPhonics," a comedy routine using word cards centered around spelling peculiarities in the English language. The climax is a delayed response slow-burn, one of my favorite theatrical ploys.

Digging Deeper

Despite its guileless appearance, the mathematical underpinnings of the Australian Deal run deep. Here are several ex-

ceedingly rich veins to prospect.

First, the late (and so innovative) Howard Adams described a whopping thirteen different routines exploiting the method in his One-Man Parade of 1999. Another must-read is Daniel Rowan's "Triskaidekaphobia" appearing in his One-Man Parade. This is nothing short of a detailed monograph on the special numbers lurking beneath the surface.

Persi Diaconis and Ron Graham's, *Magical Mathematics* is an engrossing source exploring the Australian Deal and other shuffles. Though both eminent mathematicians, they've penned a gorgeous book accessible to card magicians of all stripes.

Another mathematician, Ehrhard Behrends, waxes even more theoretical in his wide-ranging *The Math Behind the Magic*, available in either German or English.

Finally, here's one I suspect has flown under the radar of most conjurers: *Mathemagics: A Magical Journey Through Advanced Mathematics*, by Ricardo V. Teixeira and Jang-Woo Park. This thick book is just the ticket for those who crave an in-depth understanding of the nuts and bolts. Especially valuable is the deep analysis of how the deal is used in Woody Aragon's hilarious "Love Ritual," as performed by Penn and Teller.

And with that we're out of space, but certainly not avenues for further study. In the meanwhile, I hope this survey has enticed you to take a second look at the Australian Deal and how it could prove useful in your own creations.

Send comments and appreciations to:

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Jim Rainho

One-Man Parade

Written by Jim Rainho • Edited by Lauren Jurgensen • Illustrated by Tony Dunn



BIO: Jim Rainho is a native of Portugal who came to the United States when he was nine, settling in Cambridge, Massachusetts, before moving to Medford. His professional magic career began in 1947 on the “Bean Supper Circuit,” where he entertained clubs, churches, and associations and began assisting magician Ed Arno. By 1949, he was working at nightclubs and corporate events.

Throughout his nearly seven-decade career, Jim performed more than twenty thousand shows across the United States and abroad, including a twenty-three-year run as a magic performer for a corporation’s weekly training seminars. He has created more than one hundred original magic effects, as well as published articles in *M-U-M*, *The Linking Ring*, *Genii*, *Magick*, the *Ireland Year Books*, *Magic Manuscript*, and *PEA’s Invocation*. Jim is a member of the I.B.M., the Society of American Magicians, the Haunt Hunters, and the Associação Portuguesa de Ilusionismo, and has received several awards throughout his career.

Jim wrote and recorded original songs with his own country and western band, the Rhythm Ramblers, in the 1940s. After serving in the United States Army, he became an electronics technician and sound recording engineer. He opened a TV/radio service shop and recording studio in Cambridge while continuing to pursue his magic career.

Jim gave his final performance – his 20,017th show – on February 19, 2014, at the Nahant Public Library, where he’d performed one of his very first shows back in 1948.

Deck Switch

There have been many deck switches in magic literature. Some were supposed to be good, but the majority were contrived and ridiculous. For example, placing a deck in an oversized box after doing some tricks, then saying as an afterthought: “Oh, I almost forgot. Let me show this amazing trick.”

He removes the cards from the box, obviously accomplishing a deck switch. Or he holds a deck in his hand, then goes into his “case” to retrieve some item, switching the decks.

Here is one I created for myself back in the 1960s.

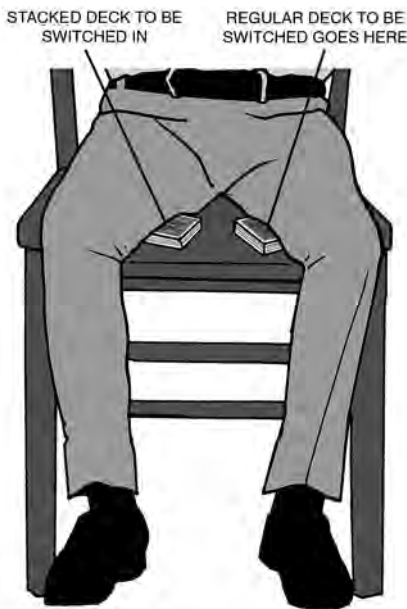
WORKING AND PRESENTATION:

You must be seated at a table. Place the stacked deck under your right thigh so that one end protrudes out. Sit back in the chair so the knee bend of your legs is against the edge of the seat.

After doing some of your favorite card tricks, position your upper torso back and, holding the cards away from the table, shuffle the cards overhand – doing it rather sloppily so that you allow a card to openly drop from the deck and fall to the floor.

Noticing it, look down at the floor. Holding the deck in your left hand, bend down to retrieve the dropped card. As you bend, move your left hand to your crotch and, lifting up your left thigh slightly, slip the cards underneath. Instantly move your left hand forward and pick up the cards from under your right thigh. Keep your body bent down as you pick up the dropped card.

As you straighten up, slip the picked-up card into the cards under your left leg. Simultaneously push off the top card of the stacked deck with your left thumb. Take that card with your right hand as the picked-up card and place it on top of the deck as your hands come into view. Proceed to do the intended trick. At conclusion, place the cards into the box and put them away. Retrieve the other deck at an opportune time.



If perchance you are using a borrowed deck, you have to do another switch before returning the cards to the owner. Holding the cards in your right hand, casually lower your hands to your lap as you straighten out your body. Slip the cards under your right leg, and immediately take the cards from under your left leg. Bring your hands up casually and give the cards a shuffle before returning them.

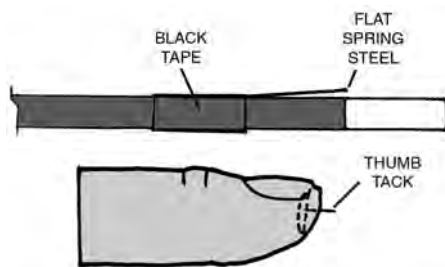
Practice the entire sequence of moves so they appear natural. I used this switch for more than fifty years without ever being questioned on it. (Well, I did get questioned by “Mr. Fingers,” aka Irv Weiner: “Obviously you used a stacked deck, but I didn’t catch the switch. I was watching you. How did you do it?”)

Hanky in Balloon

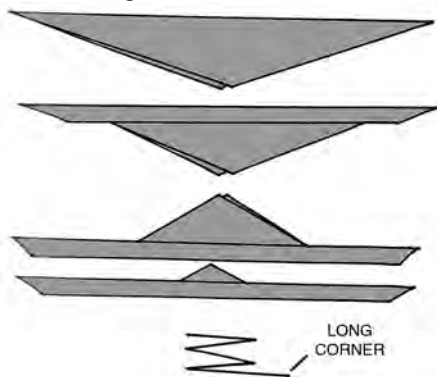
This is my version of a time-tested effect, without the use of loading cumbersome stands or props. The hanky is not actually reproduced in the balloon but appears to be in a comical situation.

You will need two duplicate 12-inch silk hankies, a vanishing device (such as a small change bag), a specially prepared

wand (see below), and “mismade papers” (instructions for creating these are provided later in this column). You will also need a special thumb tip (see below) and some 12-inch round balloons.



Accordion pleat a 12 inch silk.



Roll pleated hanky around the wand tightly holding it in place by poking the steel spring into the long corner.



WORKING AND PRESENTATION:

Have the set-up wand and the thumb tip in a place where you can easily pick them up. Have the other props handy, too.

Invite a boy and a girl to assist you. After introducing them, hand the duplicate hanky to the girl to hold, and pick up three balloons of different colors (you can miscall colors, etc.). Then have the boy select one of the balloons.

Stretch out the balloon before inflating it and accidentally release one end, letting the balloon hit your fingers. “Ouch! Don’t laugh, that hurts.” Repeat if you wish before finally inflating the balloon. Hold the end tightly and

hand it to the boy, telling him to hold it above his head. As he is about to take it, release it so that it goes flying off. “What happened?” Retrieve the balloon or let a spectator get it if it goes flying into the audience. “Was I too fast or were you too slow?”

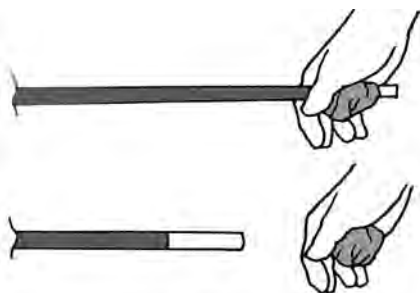
Whatever the answer, say: “No, you weren’t slow and I wasn’t fast. I forgot to do something, didn’t I?” They will let you know that you didn’t tie the balloon. “Let me do it again. If I forget to tie it, please remind me.” At this point, you can stretch it and release one end again. “I did it again.”

Inflate the balloon. They will remind you to tie it. Tie the end, but tie it around your finger. Hand it to the boy, using your free hand to bring up his hand. Grip his hand with the hand holding the balloon and try to pull it away. “Can I have my finger back?”

Release his hand and pull your hand away. Of course the balloon comes along with it. Shake the hand to get some good laughs. Pull your finger from the balloon and hand it to the boy again.

You will then place the hanky that the girl is holding into the vanishing prop you will use. I use a small change bag. Ask the girl to hold the bag over her head. “We’re going to make that hanky travel from the bag and into the balloon right here. I need a magic wand for (Tommy, or whatever the boy’s name is).”

With your right hand, pick up the loaded wand by the end with the hanky wrapped around it, concealing the load in the hand. At the same time, insert your left thumb into the thumb tip with the tack. “You take the wand and I’ll take the balloon.”



As soon as the boy takes the wand – pulling it off the silk hanky, which will remain concealed in your hand – you imme-

diately take the balloon's neck between your right first and second fingers. As you take it, swivel the body so the balloon hides the right hand. Extend the two other fingers that have been holding the silk so that the hanky is held up against the side of the balloon.



“Okay, the hanky is going to travel from there to here at the count of three, and everybody is going to yell out the magic word ABRACADABRA.” You then address the boy: “And you – just tap the balloon with the wand. At the count of three, everyone yell ABRACADABRA!”

Hold the balloon between both hands, with the left thumb ready to push the tack into the balloon.

NOTE: If there are adults in the audience, this next bit plays very well. As you say the above line, look only at the children.

“Are you ready? One, two, three.”

They yell the magic word but nothing happens. Now, with a straight face, look and point at the adults and say: “I said *everybody*. You didn’t say it! Okay, we’re going to do it again. I’m going to keep my eye on the big ‘kids’ back there.”

To the boy with the wand, say: “You just tap it hard.”

On the count of three, as the boy taps the balloon, push your left thumb so the tack breaks the balloon. Let the hanky fall on the floor as if it came from the burst balloon.

“I said tap it hard, but not that hard.”

Pick up the silk, have the girl show the prop empty, retrieve the props, and dismiss the two with a round of applause.

Duplo Dimension

For years, this effect was the opener for my ESP show.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION:

You walk out holding a transparent plastic bag with two decks of cards, a red deck and a blue deck. After your introductory talk, you call attention to the bag you are holding, telling them what is in the bag.

“A little while ago, I took a red card from the red deck and inserted it into the blue deck in the blue box, then I took a blue card from the blue box and placed it into the red deck in the red box. Now I want to try a couple of experiments.”

Pointing to a man in the audience: “Sir, you can sit right where you are. I am assuming you are familiar with a deck of cards. I want you to relax your mind. Tell it to behave and cooperate with me. I sense that sometimes it gets a little mischievous. Good! Now, I want you to think of any card in a deck of cards. Any suit, any numeric value. Your absolute free choice.”

After the spectator names a card, you remove a deck from the bag, remove the cards from the box, and openly spread the cards face up between the hands until you reach the named card. You remove it and without showing the back, place it down on a table in full sight. You turn the deck face down and spread the cards to show that all the cards are blue backed. You then take the card from the table and show that it has a red back.

“The second experiment is with this other deck,” you state as you remove the second deck from the bag. “I would like to use a lady for this. Ma’am, will you please honor me with your presence right here? Thank you.”

Place the lady beside you, facing the audience. Remove the cards from the box.

“I’m going to try a little mind control, if you don’t mind.”

Pause, smile.

“You do believe in mind control, yes?”

If she responds in the affirmative, look at the audience: *“See, it works!”*

If she responds in the negative: *“Aha, a skeptic. Maybe I can change your mind, if you don’t mind.”* Give the audience a little wink, with a slight nod to the lady.

“Remember what I said at the start,

which is that I took a card from both decks and transferred them to the opposite decks. So, this deck has one card with a different-colored back. I know what that card is. I am going to try to penetrate your mind and influence you to tell us what that card is. I am going to spread the cards face up, and when you get some slight sensation I want you to say stop. Are you ready?"

Slowly spread the cards from the left hand to the right, with a few faces always visible. When she says stop, hold the cards with the faces visible at the spot.

"You stopped me here. There are a few cards showing. Which one is the card with the different back?"

Whatever card the lady calls, you remove it and hand it to her.

"Don't show the back yet," you caution her. "First let me show you the backs of all these cards."

Spread out the cards, face-down, to show the backs, then say to the lady: "Show them!"

The secret lies in the construction of the decks. If the first spectator calls out an even card, you remove the even deck from the bag. If he calls out an odd card, you take out the odd deck. The second experiment works out automatically with the second deck.

CONSTRUCTING THE DECKS:

Take two decks of cards, one with red backs and another with blue backs. Separate the odd-numbered cards from the even-numbered cards of both decks.

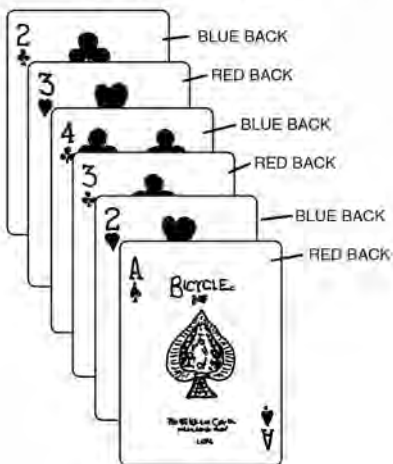
Then pair an odd red-back card to an even blue-back card, with the even card (blue back) on the back, and rough the back of the red-back card and the face of the blue-back card. After the roughing fluid dries, pair the two cards together. Repeat with the entire deck.

Next, pair an even blue-back card to an odd red-back card, with the odd card (red back) on the back, and rough the back of the blue-back card and the face of the red-back card. After the roughing fluid dries, pair the two cards together. Repeat with the entire deck.

When completed, you should have a deck of blue-back cards when the deck is spread face down, which is the blue deck. You should also have a deck of red-back cards, which is the red deck.

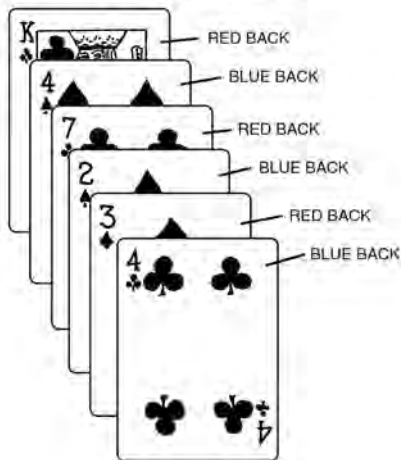
BLUE DECK (EVEN)

CARDS ARE PAIRED: ODD CARD (RED BACK) IN FRONT OF EVEN CARD (BLUE BACK) AND ROUGHED TOGETHER.



RED DECK (ODD)

CARDS ARE PAIRED: EVEN CARD (BLUE BACK) IN FRONT OF ODD CARD (RED BACK) AND ROUGHED TOGETHER.



Little Finger Break Force Force with Spectator Cutting Cards

The little finger break used in magic has been around for ages. I have used it since I

started doing magic. Its normal use is as a control and to force a card with me cutting the deck.

One day, for some reason, I let a spectator do the cut. It was a magician friend and we were having a magic gathering. He seemed to be impressed because he cut the deck, and knew I was using a force, but had no idea I was holding a 'break.' I have used that method for forcing cards ever since – even forcing two cards with the cut: the card on top of the deck, and the card at the bottom.

I'll explain to the uninitiated how the little finger break works.

The card to be forced is on top of the deck. Riffle the left front corner with the left thumb (**Fig. 1**) to below center, and while holding the top cards with the right hand, remove the bottom cards with the left hand (**Fig. 2**).



Fig. 1

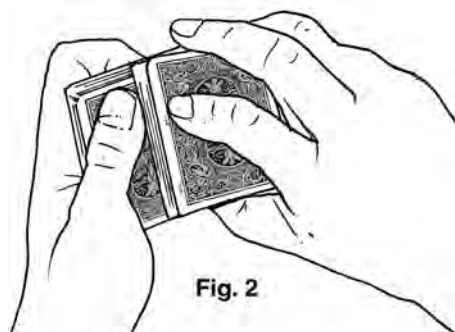


Fig. 2

As you bring up the cards, extend your left fingers to grip the right-hand cards. As the left-hand cards swing into position, extend your left little finger up and around the right edge of what is now the bottom stack (**Fig. 3**). Lower the left-hand cards over the bottom stack and little finger. The

right hand now grips the top stack. Square up the deck (**Figs. 4-5**).

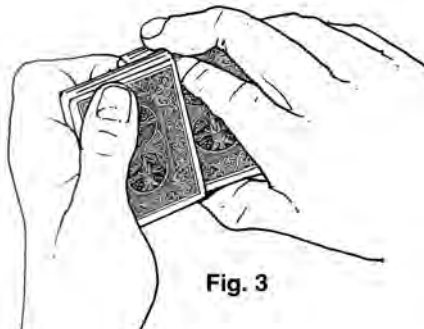


Fig. 3

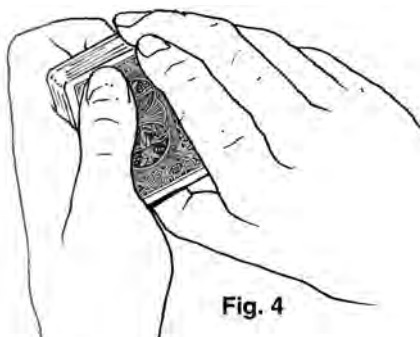


Fig. 4

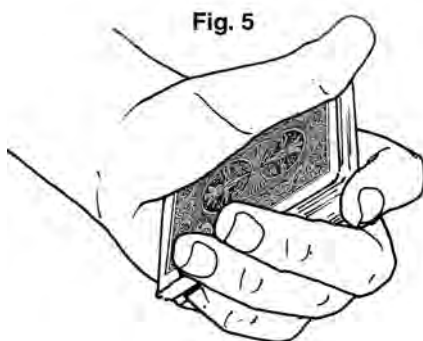


Fig. 5

You are now ready for the spectator's cut. Hold the left hand slightly tilted to the right so that inserted finger is not obvious. Hold the right hand close to cards until cut is made (**Figs. 6-7**).

To ensure proper clearance for top stack to enter between bottom stack and left fingers press left thumb on left top corners of top stack to tilt rear ends of cards from fingers (**Figs. 8-9**).

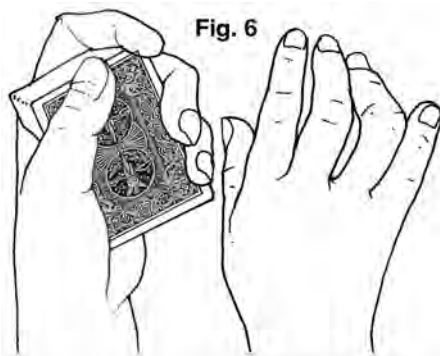


Fig. 7

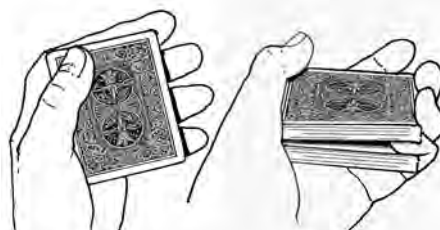
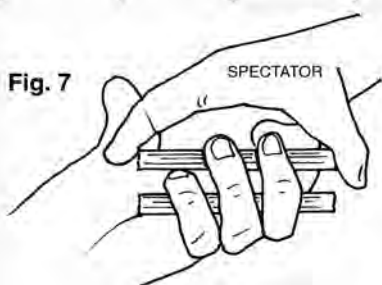


Fig. 8

Fig. 9

Until I did a lecture at SAM Assembly 9, I never paid much attention to spectators making a deck cut at a finger break with cards in the performer's hands. Two men well versed in card work told me that they had not seen or heard of the cards being cut by a spectator for a force. So, I'm putting it out.

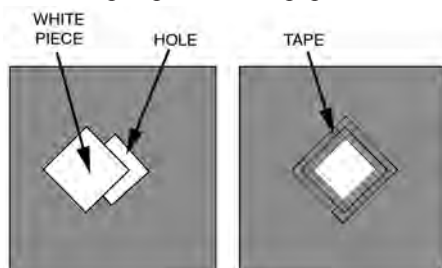
Mismade Papers (Sun and Moon Effect)

One of the very first tricks I saw performed by a magician was "Sun and Moon." It was also one of the first tricks I "figured out" the secret to. I couldn't afford to use handkerchiefs – especially colored ones, which were very expensive – so I used colored tissue paper.

The magician I originally saw perform the effect did his exchanges of the "hankies" from steals behind a chair (chair servant), but that method did not suit me. I played around with various ways of stealing the papers, something I then called "exchanges" but later learned the proper magic terminology is "switching." The method I like best, and still use at almost every children's show, involves "attaching" the papers to be switched to the wand(s) I use in the routine.

REQUIREMENTS: You will need square, 8-inch pieces of tissue paper: three red and three white, plus an extra, smaller piece of each color for the insert in a set of papers.

On one of the red papers, dead center, cut out a diamond hole measuring about 2 inches on the four planes. On the extra piece that is small and white, cut out a similar diamond-shaped piece – but just a little larger than the diamond-shaped hole on the large piece, so the edges of the cut-out piece overlap the edges of the hole when placed over it. Cement the four edges to the large piece or use strips of narrow non-glare Scotch tape to attach the piece. Apply the cement or tape with motions that go away from one corner of the diamond, which helps avoid wrinkles in the finished product. Repeat the same process with a white 8-inch square and a cut-out diamond-shaped piece of red paper.



Two nine inch long, black wands with white tips prepared thusly:

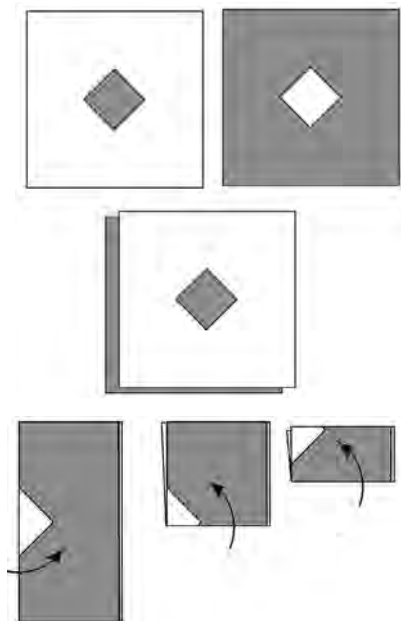
Attach a three inch long, one eighth inch wide strip of spring steel to each wand by taping one end of the steel strip to the back portin of the wand with black rubber electric tape so that the other end of the strip is

about one inch from the tip of the wand.

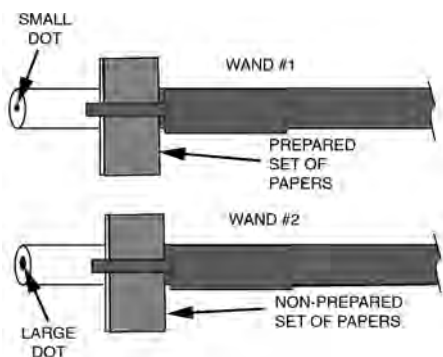


PREPARING THE TWO WANDS:

Fold both papers together with the red paper on the outside. Fold three times into a small bundle.



Place the folded papers under the metal strip on one of the wands. Mark the top (tip where clip is) of this wand with a small black dot. This will be your number one wand – the first one to be picked up.



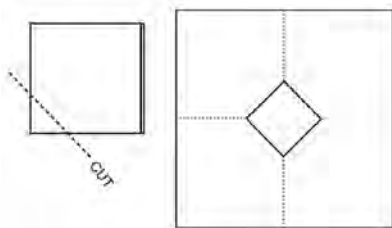
Take a duplicate (non-prepared) set of papers – red and white – and fold them together as described, then insert them under the clip of the second wand. Mark the clip end with a large black dot. This is your number two wand.

SET-UP: Place wands in known order somewhere out of sight where they can be easily picked up. The third set of papers is on the table.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION:

Invite a young child to help you do the trick. I always use this as my first audience participation trick, using the birthday child if I'm performing at a birthday party.

Introduce the red and white papers by saying they're blue and green. You will immediately get a reaction. "Boy, I can't fool you, can I? You're right – red and white. Okay Susan, you take the white one and I'll take the red one." (You say this as you hand her the red paper.) Again, you'll get a reaction. "You are really paying attention. I'd better not try to fool you. Susan, you have the red one. I am going to fold the white one into quarters." (Fold paper into quarters.) "And I'm going to cut off this corner with these scissors."



You can use the time-worn "skissors" (scissors) gag here. I shouldn't really call it a time-worn gag because it still works and still gets a great reaction. It's always new to someone who hasn't heard it before. I use it because it works for me.

Cut off the folded corner of the paper and open it out. It will have a diamond-shaped hole. Cut about 1.5 inches into the paper to get the proper-size diamond hole. Hand the paper to the assistant and take the red paper from her. Repeat the folding and cutting of the red paper.

Take the white paper from her and place the two papers together. Fold them in half with the red paper on the outside (to match the loaded duplicates). As you fold, say: “Let’s fold up the papers together, and I’m going to place the two little pieces that I cut off right on top of them and fold them up again.” Place the cut-off pieces on the papers and fold up into a packet to resemble the loaded packets on the wands.

Hold the packet out in the left hand and tell the assistant: “Now Susan, do you know what you are going to do? You are going to restore these papers. You are going to put them back together. You do know how, yes? ... You don’t? Well, don’t worry. I came prepared. I have a magic wand right here that you can use to put the papers right back together.”

As you speak, reach into the table (or wherever the set-up wands are located) and bring out the number one wand. The wand is held so that your hand covers the loaded paper packet.

Hold the wand toward your assistant so that it can be taken by the forward end. The wand is pulled from the hand, leaving the paper packet concealed in the hand. Immediately, the left hand comes toward the right hand, and the right hand takes the packet from the left hand. In the process, the left-hand papers push up the right-hand concealed packet into view, and the packet that was in the left hand is held hidden in the right hand. The packet is immediately handed to the assistant. These actions are done with both hands in motion.

“Tap the papers with the wand and say the magic word – ABRACADABRA!”

Take the wand from the assistant with your left hand and place it in your right hand over the palmed packet. “Open out the papers and show them to everybody.” Drop or place the wand where the other wand (number two) is located. Meantime, the assistant has been unfolding the papers. As soon as the mismade centers come into view, look down closer, take one of the papers, and lift it slowly.

“Susan, what happened? You put the red

on the white and the white on the – wait a minute! I know what happened. It’s not Susan’s fault. My mistake. I forgot to explain something to Susan. You know what happened? She used the back end of the wand. You see, when you use the back end of the wand, things work backward. I’m sorry, Susan – let’s do it again.”

Fold the papers into a packet. “Okay Susan, turn the wand around the other way. The wand, Susan – where’s the wand?”

Look around and behind your assistant. Finally, realize that you took it away. In most cases the kids will let you know that you took it. Hold the packet in the left hand and reach down to get the wand. Pick up the number two wand and hand it to the assistant. The packet switch is accomplished as before. As soon as the transfer is made from left hand to right, the left hand assists in turning the wand around in the spectator’s hands.

“Turn the wand around, Susan. See that mark right there?” (Point to the mark on the end of the tip.) “This is the end that does the magic. Let’s try it. Wave it over the papers and say ABRACADABRA.”

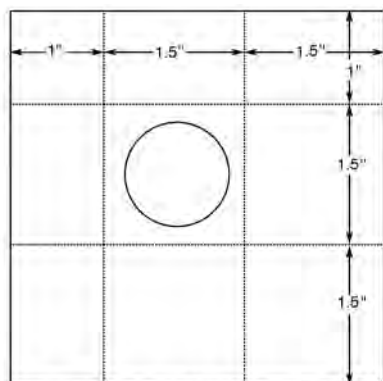
Take the wand from the assistant and place it away as the papers are opened.

Note: If you use the plan to use a magic wand later in the show, make sure you mark one end on each wand – because you’ll hear about it from the kids.

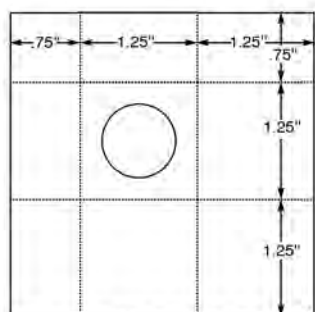
One-Hand Coin Fold

SET-UP: Use “filing card” stock. Cut off 2 inches from the long side of a 6-inch by 4-inch unruled card, making it a 4-inch by 4-inch card. You can also use high-quality typing paper.

Cut a piece of paper to the size needed and mark where folds should be made (see illustrations). Note that the top and left sides have narrow portions. Hold the paper with the narrow portions pointing upward and left. First, fold the bottom fold to the front. Then fold the top portion to the front. Next, fold the right side to the front. Last, the right side to the front. Crease down all folds.

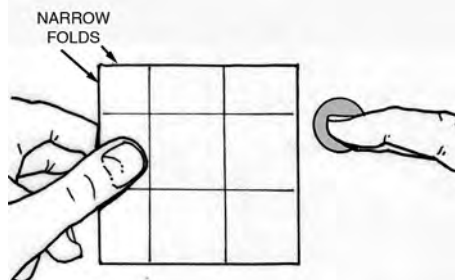


4" x 4" FOR HALF DOLLAR SIZE COIN

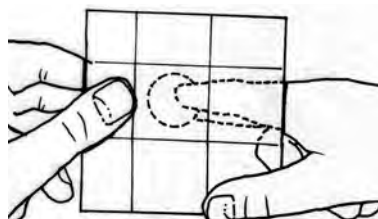


3.25" x 3.25" FOR QUARTER SIZE COIN

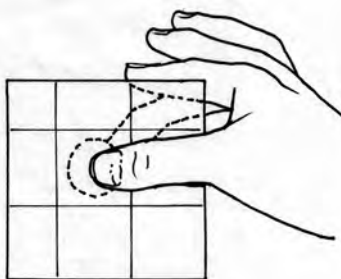
WORKING AND PRESENTATION:



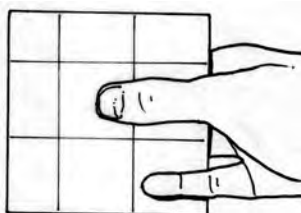
Hold paper with the narrow folds at top and left sides. Hold coin in right hand between first and second fingers.



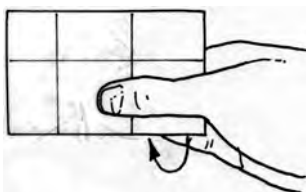
Place coin against front side of card.



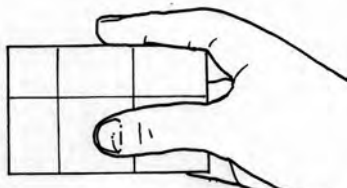
Press second finger against coin and card and transfer first finger to front, holding it against paper with thumb on back. Open up right fingers.



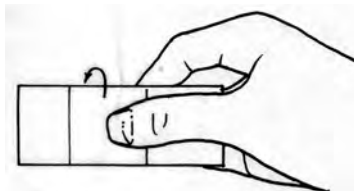
Bring little finger down and under the bottom edge of the card.



Fold the bottom edge forward and up over coin.



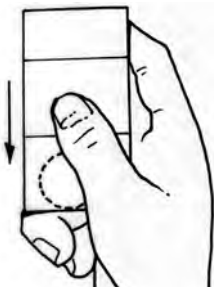
Hold in place with second and third fingers.



Move first. finger upwards, over top edge, and fold edge forward and down.



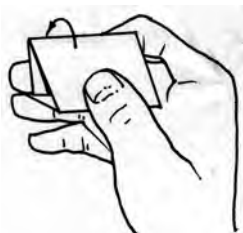
Curl third finger inward and press back of finger against card's right folded edge.



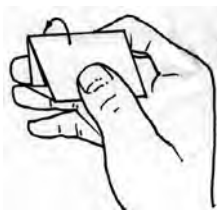
Extend third finger to swivel the card to an upright position.



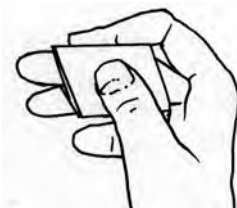
Release pressure on the coin so that it will slide to the bottom of the fold, where it will rest on top of third finger.



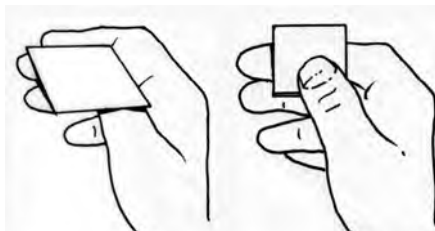
Bring the thumb upward, pressing against middle section of card to make it fold forward. Bottom of card and coin edge are between second and third fingers. As you press center of card, allow it to move downward so bottom section is horizontal. Move first finger upward and press top edge of card forward, folding it downward.



OTE: Bottom edge of card and coin are supposed on the third finger. Push top section of card to go between the bottom and middle sections.



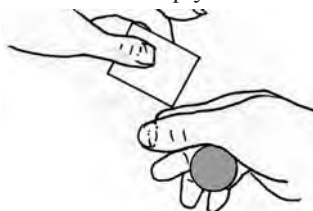
Press thumb downward closing the packet. NOTE: that coin edge is hidden from audience by the third finger.



Place the thumb under the packet and push it upward to vertical position.

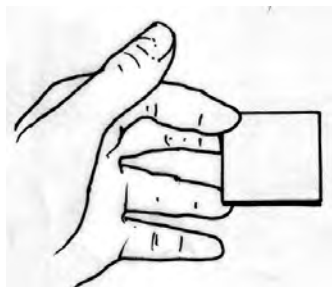


Hold packet between thumb and first finger, with thumb over the coin edge. Open rest of fingers and turn hand to show it otherwise empty.



Allow coin to fall into hand, as you remove folded card with other hand.

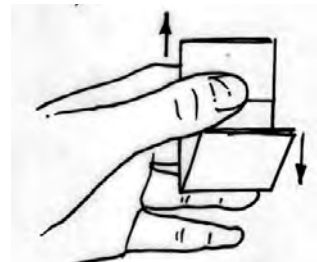
Opening the Fold with Left Hand (One-Hand Operation)



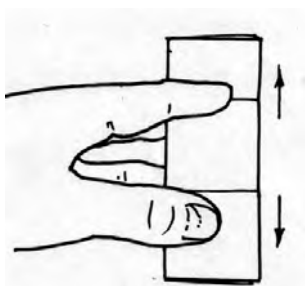
Take folded paper, clipped between first and second fingers of left hand.



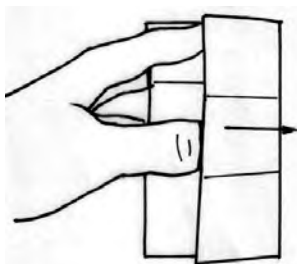
Move left thumb under packet between folds at bottom.



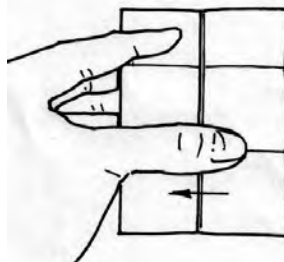
Move thumb upward, opening the top portion, (this will also release the bottom portion).



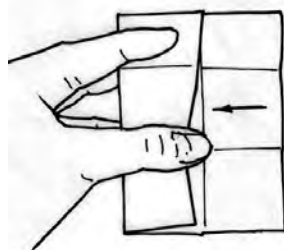
Move first finger to top to clip paper in position. Move thumb downward, opening bottom section.



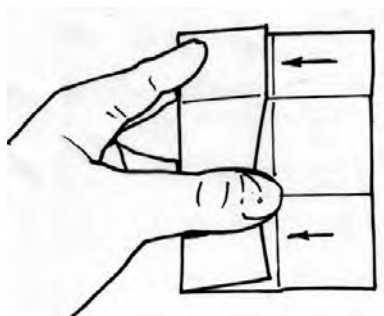
Push thumb forward, slipping tip under the right side fold.



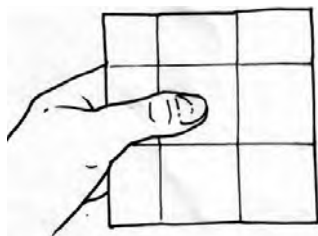
Push thumb forward, opening the right side fully.



Pull thumb backward, engaging the edge of the left fold with ball of thumb, applying pressure, pulling the edge of the right fold to the left.



First finger pulls back to allow fold to open.



The left fold will flip over the first finger. Hold paper between thumb and first finger. Show paper. Take it with right hand and drop it on table, or hand it to a spectator.

Out of Sight, Out of Mind

EFFECT: The magician removes a deck of cards from its box and starts shuffling it, saying:

"We've all had someone in our life who made a profound impression on us. I'm sure that you have been affected by someone you still look up to. A mentor, an advisor, someone you respect or idolize – a role model."

The magician stops shuffling, cuts the cards, and places them in front of a spectator, who is told to cut the deck and complete the cut.

"I'm going to turn my head," the magician continues. "I want you to take four cards from the top of the deck and place them face down in a row in front of you. Now, concentrate on one of the cards without looking at it. You have selected one? Good! Now lift it up and look at it. You may show it to other spectators. Then return it, face down, to its original position. Then move the cards around, mixing them up, so you lose track of the card you looked at, then gather them into a pile. Okay? I'm going to turn back around."

The magician picks up the pile of four cards and places it in his breast pocket.

"Out of sight, out of mind. I want you to remember the card but stop thinking about it. I want you to think of something else. I want you to think of the person in your life you most admire. The person, dead or alive, who has influenced you, who has left an indelible impact on your life. Visualize that person standing before you. It raises its right arm. There is something in the hand. Look at it. It is the image of

the card you just looked at."

The magician removes a card from his breast pocket and places it on the table, hesitates momentarily, then moves the card to the right. He removes another card from his pocket, tables it, then moves it to the left. He removes a third card to the table and leaves it there. He brings out a fourth card and tables it.

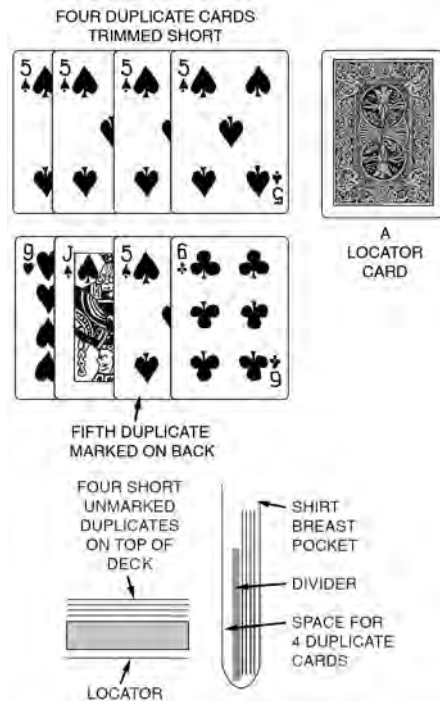
The magician, with a finger on the card, moves it slowly forward, then changes his mind and moves it to the right. He pushes the centered card forward toward the spectator. (The card with the secret mark.)

"What was the card you looked at?" the magician asks. "Turn that card over."

It is the card the spectator selected.

The magician turns over the other three cards to show them different.

SET-UP: You will need five duplicate cards, three different cards, and one locator card that will "break" above the intended cards. Mark one of the five duplicates with an insignificant mark on the back.



Have a card slightly larger than a playing card (or a small notebook) in your shirt breast

pocket. Place the three different cards and the fifth (back-marked) duplicate card in front of the divider, with the fifth duplicate second from the front. The card faces the back.

CONTROL SHUFFLE: You must control the four cards on top of the deck and the bottom card while shuffling. Hold the deck in the right hand (**Fig. 1**). With the left hand, take about half of the deck and lift it upward to shuffle it into the bottom half (**Fig. 2**). Insert the “shuffle” bottom edges of the left portion into the right-hand portion, but retain the four top cards in their positions (see arrow A above). Start shuffling beyond the four-card set-up. With the left third fingertip, pull the front edge of the bottom card of the inserted portion so that it will remain in its original position



Fig. 1

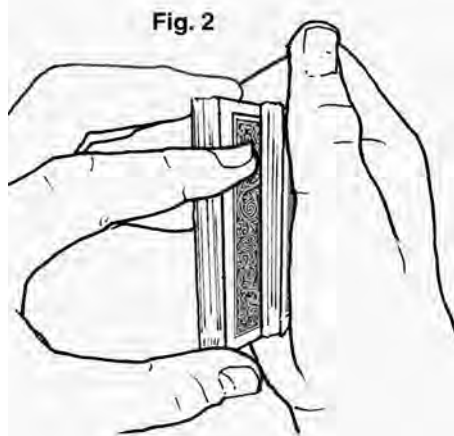


Fig. 2

You can shuffle again if you wish, following the moves described above. Cut the card to place the locator card on top of the four duplicates. Place on table for spectator to cut.

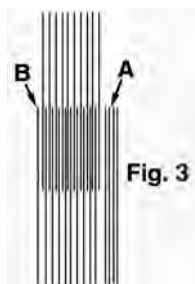


Fig. 3

Psychic Heat

As far as I can tell, I am the first mentalist to use the “psychic heat” ploy. It becomes real, amazing, and unbelievable to the spectator, who suddenly feels a sense of heat supposedly generated by my hands.

The secret? Hand warmers. I use one fueled by lighter fluid. Now, there are disposable ones on the market that use a chemical reaction, but I have not tried those so I don’t know how much heat they generate or how long they last.

Hand warmers were a lifesaver for me when I was in Korea on military service. I had had a couple when I was still riding my trusty 1939 Harley, which I gave up when I went into the service – never to ride a bike again. Oh well! I bought two heaters when I went to Japan on R&R, just prior to the winter of 1952–53. Like I said, they were lifesavers.

I came up with the idea to use heat in 1985, when I was searching for new ideas to use in my ESP show. I use two Zippo units, one in my jacket pocket on the left side, the other in front of my stomach. These two locations, for me, were positions where I usually rest my hands. It was natural for me. Some may prefer to use other locations.

The pocket one just sits in the pocket, held upright by a strip of cloth sewn inside the pocket. The one in front of my stomach is insulated by a small, folded face cloth on the inside, held in place by an elastic Ace bandage – with just two layers of bandage material over the heating unit. You want

the heat to penetrate to the outside. The face cloth insulator is necessary to prevent heat from reaching your body, as the units can get pretty hot.

I fill the units with lighter fluid at the beginning of my set-up, then light them about fifteen minutes before the scheduled show time. I place the body one in its location, then the other, just dropping it into the pocket before going on. The Ace bandage is already in place around the body. Usually I do that at home, or when I dress for the show at the location. I slip it under two layers of bandage, with one layer partly below the unit to keep it from slipping downward.

I use the heat in a few of my mental effects. The two included here are the Spoon Break in the Metal Bending and in "The Lady's Ring."

As you gesture and speak, a hand goes to a heater location and remains there, on and off, until you are ready to apply the heat – even if still talking.

Rubber Bands Penetration – One Hand

Show two rubber bands. Slip one around the tips of the thumb and first finger of the left hand, and the second one around the second and third fingers (Fig. 1).

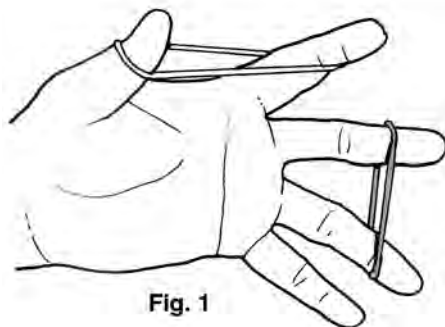


Fig. 1

Remove the portion of the second band from around the third finger and stretch it around the back of the first band, then rein-

Fig. 2

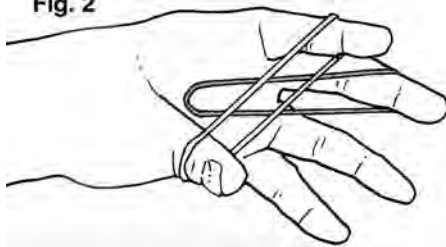


Fig. 3

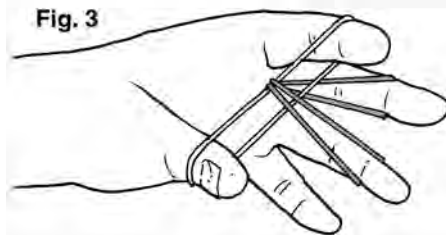
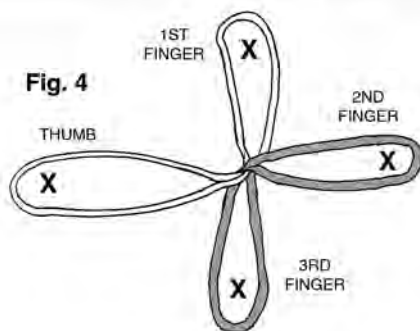
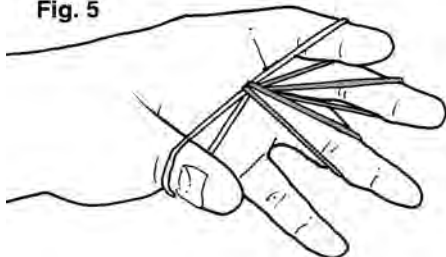


Fig. 4



Open fingers wide to show bands entwined. With the right fingers, grip the bands where they crisscross and pull on them. **NOTE:** Grip with the right thumb between your left thumb and first finger, and the right first finger inserted in the loop on your left second finger (Figs. 5-6)

Fig. 5



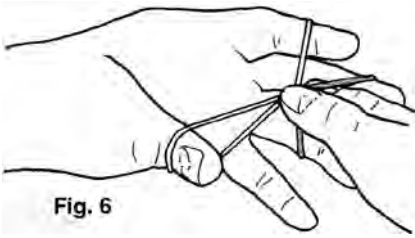


Fig. 6

As you pull, pivot the left palm upward and allow the loop to slip off the third finger, then instantly insert the third finger into the loop on the second finger. The

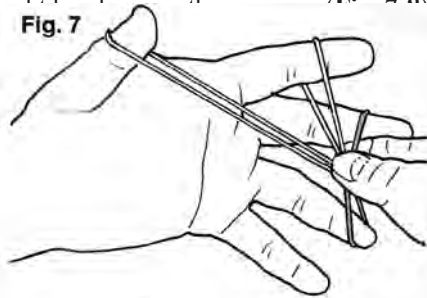


Fig. 7

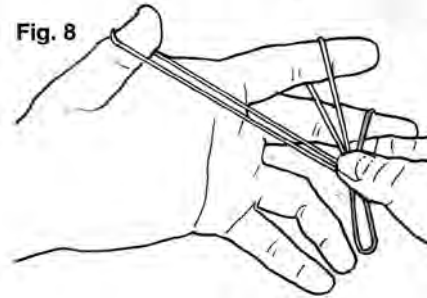


Fig. 8

Pull on the bands, in and out, to the count of three. On the third count, allow the bands to snap back, separated from

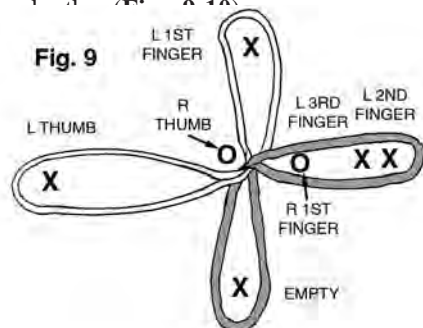


Fig. 9

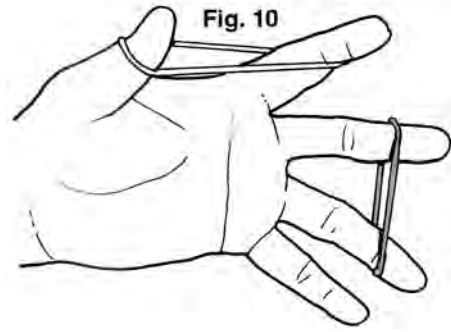


Fig. 10

The above moves are done as you tug on the centers of the bands and the left palm twists upward and downward.

The Auctioneer

EFFECT: Borrow a large-denomination bill and have a spectator autograph it. To ascertain that the bill is genuine, show it to several spectators, each time emphasizing the value. Fold it up and hold it high in the air in plain sight.

"Sir," you address the spectator; "you just autographed this bill. I have been told that an autographed bill is worth more than an unautographed one, especially if it's signed by a famous person. Sir, are you famous in any way? No? Well, let's try an experiment anyway. I always wanted to be an auctioneer. Let's see how much this autographed bill will bring at auction."

You take out a gavel and bang it on the table several times.

"Ladies and gentlemen, right here I have an autographed bill. What am I bid for this one-of-a-kind item?"

You then proceed in auctioneer fashion: "I need a five-dollar bid to start – just a five-dollar bid. I have a five-dollar bid right there. Now I need a ten – a ten-dollar bid for this autographed bill. I have a ten. I need a twenty. I have a twenty. I need a thirty-dollar bid – do I hear a thirty? I have a thirty-dollar bid. I have thirty-five right there. Any more bids? No more bids. Going once, going twice – SOLD for thirty-five dollars."

This, of course, causes a comic situation.

Get the amount up to around thirty to forty dollars. Close the bidding, hand the gavel to the spectator, and bring up the individual who placed the last bid. Let's say the last bid was thirty-five dollars.

"Okay sir, let's have your thirty-five bucks. And here is your autographed bill."

When he opens the bill, he finds it to be only a one dollar bill signed by you. He will obviously react to the situation.

"What's the matter, sir? I know that it's a one dollar bill. It is autographed by me."

He will complain, and you respond:

"Sir, I never made mention of the value of the bill as I auctioned it. All I said was that I had an autographed bill. Don't complain! You're only out thirty-four dollars – this guy here is out sixty-five bucks. Sir, I can understand you being upset and I don't want upset spectators. Sir, if you are not satisfied, here is your thirty-five bucks back. Give me my autographed bill back."

Hand the dollar bill to the original spectator.

"Here, sir, here is your bill. Oh, this is not your bill. You're right – this is my bill."

Place the bill in your pocket and thank him for assisting you. Of course, he is not going to leave without his (one hundred) dollar bill.

"Thank you for helping," you say.

Just look at him silently, then turn to the audience.

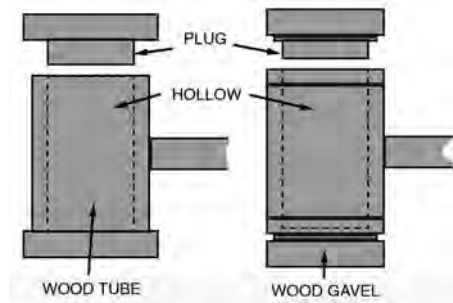
"This guy doesn't look too happy, either. I suppose you want your (one hundred) dollar bill back? Do you know where it is? Sir, you have been holding your signed bill all along. May I have the gavel? You see, this gavel comes apart. It is hollow inside."

Open the gavel head and have the spectator remove what is inside – it will be his signed bill.

SET-UP: You will have to construct a special hollow gavel. You can use a hollow wooden tube and attach a handle and cap to the bottom with a wooden disc. The top is capped with a similar wooden disc that is attached to a smaller disc that will wedge inside the tube to hold it in place. Another alternative

is to find a gavel you can hollow out.

Cut off one end, about a quarter inch from the end, then hollow out the body while leaving the bottom intact. Fashion a round dowel about a half inch in length so it wedges tight in the hollowed-out gavel. Attach this piece so it's centered on the bottom of the cut-off end. The cut-off top is then attached to the gavel.



The gavel with the top removed is in your table shelf or case. The signed bill is folded in quarters and shown to various spectators. In the handling, it is exchanged for the signed one dollar bill you palmed. The switched bill is held high in the air to be plainly seen as you get the gavel. The hand with the borrowed bill goes into the table or case for the gavel, and the folded bill is loaded and the cap snapped on. The gavel is brought out and used as explained in the "effect" section.

When you want to expose the bill inside, pretend to unscrew the cap and hand a pair of tweezers to the spectator to extract his bill from the gavel.

For maximum effect, the entire routine must be conducted in a steady, flowing pace.

Where, Where, What???

This is my adaptation of an old mental effect.

EFFECT: A playing card is divined, along with a revelation of the locations of two other items.

REQUIREMENTS: You will need a coin, a key, a deck of cards, and a small

napkin or handkerchief.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION:

Explain that you are going to attempt a mental experiment of ESP phenomena. You bring out a deck of cards, show it to be a regular deck, and proceed to have the deck cut by a spectator. The cut-to card is placed, without being looked at, face down on the table. You then introduce a coin and a key. You turn away from the table and have a spectator arrange the three items in a row, left to right, in front of him – in any order of his choice. You then proceed to give instructions for movement of the items, which the spectator is to follow.

The moves are as follows, which you can read from a cue card:

CUE CARD:

1 – If the key is on the right side next to the coin, exchange them with each other. If this move does not apply, move to Step 2.

2 – Exchange the key with item on its left. If there is no item on the left, leave the

key in its place.

3 – Exchange the coin with item on its right. If there is no item on the right, leave coin in its place.

4 – Exchange card with coin.

5 – Put item on left in your left pocket.

6 – Put the smaller of the other two items in your right pocket.

7 – Cover the last item with the napkin.

8 – Turn to face table. “Concentrate on each item and its location.”

With some byplay, you announce: “The key is in your left pocket ... the coin is in your right pocket ... now put the card back into the deck.” Slowly pull the napkin off the card and have it turned over.

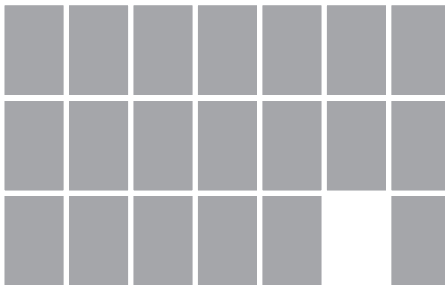
Use your favorite force of card, making sure it is a convincing method – or use a marked deck and have any card selected.

Send comments and appreciations to:

James Rainho

magicjim@rainho.com

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*.



This month's selection comes from Ryan Pilling. Ryan isn't just a member of the I.B.M., but an active contributor and lecturer for the I.B.M. Virtual Lecture Series and a host for Ring 2100. What is notable about Ryan's contribution to Card Corner this month is his improvement of Simon Aronson's "Head Over Heels" move and his adaptation of the "Larreverse" to a tabled spread, which is titled "Timed Tabled Turnover." You should definitely check out Ryan's website at: www.magictipsandtricks.com, where you can subscribe to his newsletter and get a load of great information for free.

There is a video of Ryan performing the effect at www.mallofmagic.com/cardcorner, just scroll down. You can also access video tutorials of moves tagged with "*" at www.mallofmagic.com/themoves. The password to access the videos is marlo7d.

Double Reverse

By Ryan Pilling

EFFECT: A card is selected and returned to the deck. Now a second selection is made and also returned to the deck. The deck is spread and it is found that the first selection is now face up in the center of the deck. It is turned face down in position. Then, with no false moves, the deck is respread and now the second selection is found face up in the center.

OVERVIEW: The first reversal is achieved by using a modified version of Simon Aronson's "Head Over Heels*" move from *Try the Impossible*, page 95. Simon's move is in-the-hands whereas Ryan's version uses a tabled spread. Ryan also avoids having to pull a card back under the spread (Hofzinsler Cull) which is part of Simon's in-the-hands method.

The second reversal will be achieved

using Ryan's "Timed Tabled Turnover*," which is reminiscent of the "Larreverse," only done from a tabled spread rather than in the hands. The Jennings move can be found in *Ultimate Secrets of Card Magic* on page 47, and in "Double Think" from Mike Maxwell's *The Classic Magic of Larry Jennings*.

SET-UP: None.

PROCEDURE: Shuffle the deck or have a spectator shuffle. Now spread the cards face down between your hands and have a spectator touch a card, preferably near the center. Break the spread, keeping the selection as the top card of the left hand's group as you table the right hand's group face up and spread from left to right (**Figure 1**). Say, "You could have selected any of these (referring to the

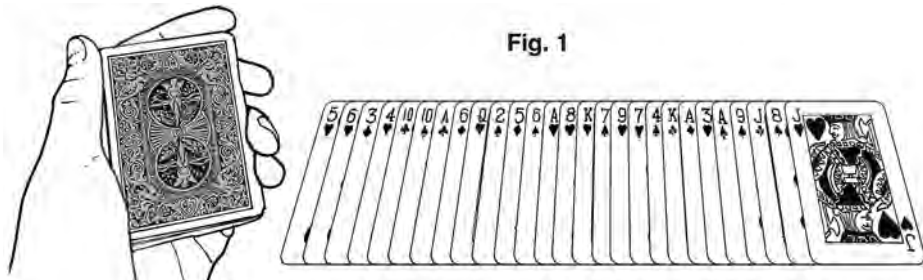
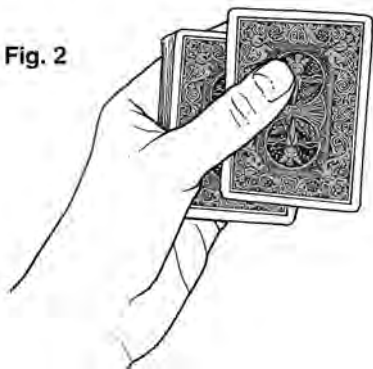


Fig. 1

cards in the spread). But you chose this one.” Suiting action to words, push the selection (top card of the left hand’s group) to the right and up a bit, exposing its face to the spectator, **Figure 2**.

Fig. 2



You will now use Ryan’s variation of Simon Aronson’s **“Head Over Heels”** move to secretly reverse the selection as follows: Scoop up the face-up spread from right to left using the right hand. Once the cards have squared somewhat, tap the left long edge of the packet on the table (**Fig. 3**). Now exert just a bit of pressure between the right thumb and fingers as you move the right hand up slightly. This will pull up the top and bottom cards of the packet a bit, as in **Figure 4**.

Lower the left hand’s packet as you bring the right hand’s packet next to it. Use the left thumb to keep the selection sidejogged and slightly upjogged (**Fig. 2**). The bottom card of the right hand’s group is jogged a bit to the right under the other face-up cards. This is going to allow you to insert the selection above this card as in a **Hofzinser Cull***. See **Figure 5** for a view from the bottom. When you feel the selection begin to slide in above the jogged card, push the right hand’s group square with the deck as you pick up a left fourth finger break under the bottom card of the spread, i.e., the card now directly under the selection. Finally, push the selection flush with the deck as you then reach into the break and flip over the entire block above the break. The selection is now face up, second from top. (**NOTE:** You could also do what Ryan does on the video and push the upper block forward, finally turning it face down end for end.)

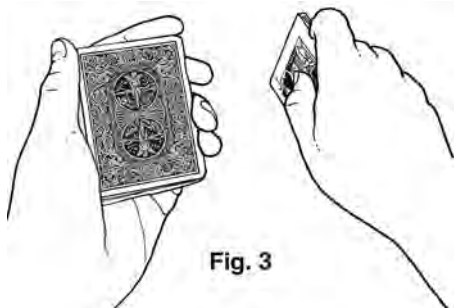


Fig. 3

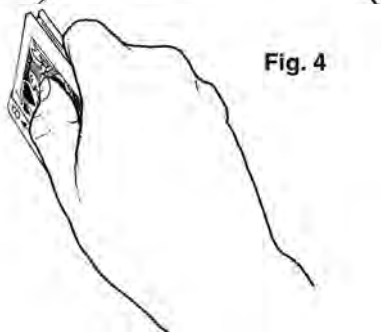


Fig. 4

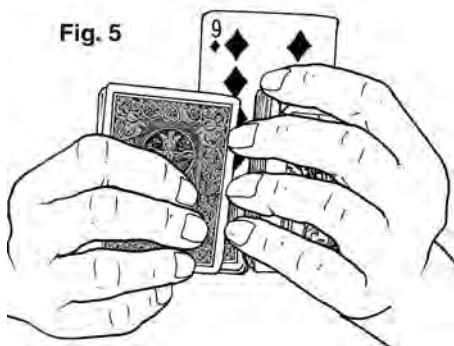
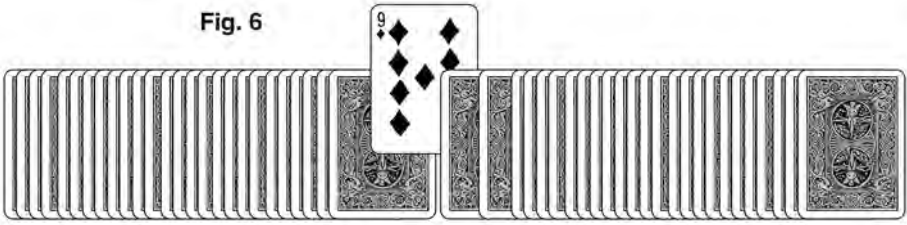


Fig. 5

I handle the second selection differently than Ryan. I spread for a second selection near center while being careful not to flash the face-up selection second from top. This time the spectator removes the card from the spread as I square up and obtain a **TILT*** break under the top card. I take the selection from the spectator and insert it into the **TILT*** break finally allowing the break to collapse. I then take the bottom half of the deck in overhand shuffle position in my right hand and shuffle the cards onto the upper half. This positions the two selections in the center of the deck with Selection 1 face up and Selection 2 face down directly above it.

Ryan pushes off a double into the right

Fig. 6



hand. This is followed by taking the next two or three cards on top and spreading a bit to the left. The goal is to maneuver the face-up selection into Hofzinser spread condition from which it can ride under the spread as the second spectator points at a card near the center. Now you can square up as the face-up card moves under the second selection. Look at the performance video at time marker 00:25 to see Ryan handling the second selection in that manner.

STATUS CHECK: Either way the two selections are at the center of the deck with Selection 1 face up and Selection 2 face down directly above it.

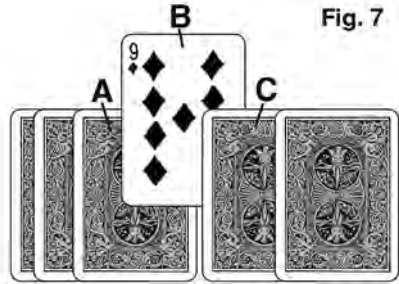
Make your magical gesture, e.g., snap your fingers over the deck. Now spread the cards face down on the table showing that the first selection is face up in the center. You will now set up for Ryan's "**Timed Tabled Turnover***" as follows:

TIMED TABLED TURNOVER*: Adjust the face-up selection and the card above it (second selection) as shown in **Figure 6**. Note the separation among the important cards. The face-up selection is outjogged. The outer left corner of the card above it (the second selection) is positioned close to its center. Also, the back of that card is largely exposed in the spread. I'd recommend that you watch Ryan explain this move at www.mallofmagic.com/themoves under the title "Timed Tabled Turnover." He makes it very clear what the action is.

Figure 7 is a close-up view of the important cards as you get ready to execute the move. Your right first and second fingertips will land at positions A and B respectively. Your right thumb will land at position C. Now, in one fluid action, the two fingertips begin to pull upward slightly at the outer left

corner of the face-up card. The thumb pushes the outer left corner of the face-down card directly into the space between the right two fingers as the two corners meet. The right hand continues to turn the now-aligned card(s) over onto the place the face-up card once occupied in the spread. To finish, the right hand picks up the spread on the right side and adds it on top of all, burying the face-to-face pair near center.

Fig. 7



You should experiment with this move using just the two main cards. The position of the right thumb is a variable you can play with until you are able to get the cards to align as you turn over the double. With a bit of practice, you'll find the "sweet spot." If you feel unsure of this move you can always use a **Larreverse*** in the hands as an alternative.

The spread apparently consists of all face-down cards. But actually, the second selection is face up. To end, square up the deck and make your magical gesture "causing" the second selection to reverse itself. Spread the cards face down to show that the magic has occurred again. The second selection has been magically reversed. Mission accomplished.

FINAL THOUGHTS: Be sure that you watch the performance video as well as the

two items in the “Moves” section at www.mallofmagic.com. Seeing what’s supposed to happen will go a long way to gaining an understanding of the inner workings of the trick and the moves.

There’s a trick from Simon Aronson that’s a great follow-up to this routine. It’s Simon’s “Triumph for Two” from Jon Racherbaumer’s book *Arch Triumphs*. The book is difficult to find, but there’s a PDF at www.library.com for \$15 that contains the Aronson trick. In the Aronson effect, there are two selections that are “lost” in the deck, which is then shuffled face

up into face down, à la Triumph. The deck is spread face down and the first selection is seen to be the only face-up card in an otherwise face-down deck. The card is placed face down in front of Spectator 1. The deck is respread face up and there’s a single face-down card at center. The magician asks Spectator 2 what her card was. She says that it’s the one given to Spectator 1. With a snap of his magic fingers, the magician makes the two cards switch places to fix things.

Mike Powers

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Did You Know? – from page 39

Ellison’s legacy endures through his generous donation of nearly 1,500 rare books, scrapbooks, letters, memorabilia, photos, and his famous magicians’ wands and illusion models to the library. On my visit, I encountered several magicians reflecting on these treasures. Meir Yedid remarked, “This is very cool. There are things I had never seen before, like that one-of-a-kind Houdini poster, which is amazing.”

As I continued through the gallery, Eric Decamps shared his thoughts on the event: “It’s an amazing event. I just walked through the gallery, and it’s overwhelming how beautiful the collections are.” Joe Devlin added, “It’s fantastic – the golden era of magic. There are world-class posters from the Saram Ellison collection that have never been seen before. They’ve been restored, so I’m excited to get in there. Also, the Saram Ellison wands were loaned from the Society of American Magicians parent assembly, of which I am a proud member.”

Ben Barnes, Entertainment Director at the Chicago Magic Lounge, said, “I think this event is amazing. I have seen things here that are only seen here, beautifully laid out in such a prestigious venue. This is going to be great for magic.”

Charles Green also reflected on the broader significance of the exhibit, highlighting how present-day magicians are now a part of this living history. He said, “I love it. Here’s the deal. There’s so much magic history here. And just as we, the magicians, are looking at this now and we’re looking at Saram Ellison or looking at Dunninger or Houdini, this is our moment to be the Houdini, to be the Saram Ellison, to be those other magicians, because in a 100 years, they’re going to look at this video, they can read these articles and look at these photographs that go, hey, that’s Joe Hernandez. Hey, that’s Ben Barnes. Hey, that’s Joey Cranford. And while those guys are great, this is our time, and we really need to just enjoy it. The New York Public Library has done a great job of giving this gift to all of magic.”

If you’re in New York City before July 11, see this extraordinary exhibition and experience a unique chapter of magic history up close.

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



Wow – am I glad to know spring 2026 is here! The winter in my neck of the woods has been brutal. But now I hear robins singing, smell grass being mowed, and see baseball being played. I can crawl out from under my electric blanket!

Quick note, I recently recorded a nice session with the inimitable Scott Wells and his award-winning *Magic Word* podcast. We chatted about tons of things I know will be of interest to you if you enjoy this column. Frankly, if you have *any* interest in magic, you *must* listen to Scott’s podcast! Look for the episode sometime this month.

By the time you read this, my new comedy mentalism book *Know Brainer* will be on its merry way to those fine human beings at H&R Magic Books. Expect it to be available for publish sometime around May, and expect it to be *fantastic*!

Okay, with that self-serving commentary out of the way, it’s time to bunny-hop to this month’s basket-o’-Auto-Magic. Let’s do something a little different this month. I’ve had this effect sitting in my notebook since December 2022, with scraps of the effect’s main ideas going back much further in my jottings. I have the basic effect and method mostly where I want them to be, though I sense it needs more refinement before I would call it “finished.” I’ve tested it quite a bit and it always receives great reactions. Still, my gut tells me it needs one final kick at the end. Maybe my “Three-Act Structure” mindset is pressing too hard against the foundation of the trick, or maybe *I* am pressing too hard and the trick is good as it is.

So, without pretense of seeming too Schubert-y, unfinished or not, I present to you an effect that audiences view as an impossibility. Let me know what you think and what *you* are able to do with these fine bones!

“Obedience”

EFFECT: A shuffled and cut deck of playing cards suddenly shows a remarkable sense of order out of chaos.

I know that doesn’t tell you much, but you’ll see exactly what I mean as we move through the presentation and method. Grab a deck with two jokers and let’s go!

Chaos-to-order effects have been explored by many magicians over the years. Hoffman’s *Modern Magic* gave us one in 1876, but I am sure similar ideas bounced around before the book’s publication. The principles used here were inspired by ideas from Nick Trost and others.

A full-deck set-up is necessary, but quick to apply. Still, you may wish to write down the order on the back of a business card and slip it in your wallet (or under the card box’s covering cellophane) for reference:

6H-5S-4D-3S-2S-AC-KS-QS-JS-10S-9S-
JOKER-7D-7H-7S-7C
10H-JH-**JC-6S-5D-4C**-9C-4H-**6C**-
JOKER-KC-2H-10C-3D-**2C**
QC-5H-KH-9H-QH-8C-8D-8H-8S-3H-
9D-10D-JD-QD-KD
AD-AH-2D-3C-4S-5C-6D

Before you sharpen your pitchforks and ignite your torches, be aware that the suits are unimportant (except for that Royal Flush in spades run in the first row). Since the three card groups marked in bold will never be seen, they can easily be mixed and matched. Regardless, this is how I set up my deck (at least for now!).

WORKING AND PRESENTATION:

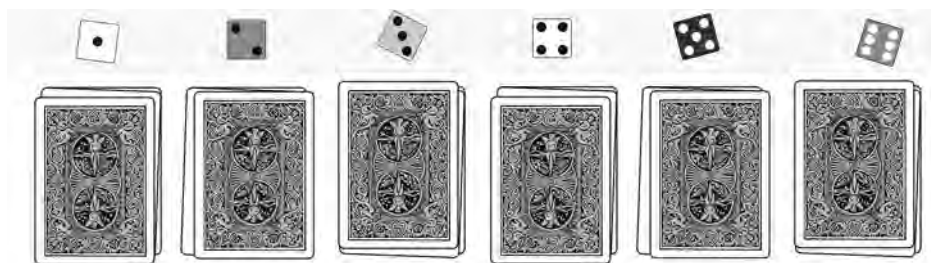
You begin showing the cards to be mixed. A quick face-up left-to-right spread in your hands or “rough” ribbon spread on a table will suffice. No one will suspect the order of the set-up. If you can execute a false shuffle that would be fine, but not necessary, because next you will hand the face-down deck to your volunteer. You ask her to cut off a little less than half the cards and place that cut-off pile on the table to her left. Then direct her to cut the remainder of the cards in half and place that cut-off portion directly in front of her. The left-over packet is placed to her right. Chat a bit about the statistical probability of a shuffled and freely cut deck of playing cards, being in an order that has never been realized before (and all that cool 52-factorial stuff – look it up!). Then have her pick up the pile on her left, drop it on the center pile, then pick up the entire center pile and drop it onto the pile on her right. Your assistant has just completed the *Guided Jay Ose Triple Cut*, which I heartily endorse because it is *so deceiving* (but *please* use it sparingly).

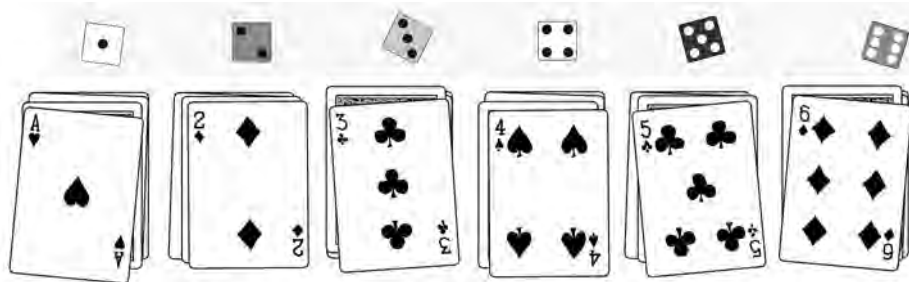
You request your helper to pick up the deck and to deal the cards out as if dealing six hands in a card game, left to right. In the end, she will have six face-down piles in front of her, each with nine cards. This initial deal-out can be stultifying; have a joke or two (or a silly compliment) at the ready to smooth the process. As this is being done, you bring out six dice. They vary in color. Another spectator may examine the dice, as they are perfectly normal. The dice are only used for a small portion of the trick, but I have found their presence on the table for the whole of the routine to add a mystifying mien. Your audience will think the dice add a level of randomness to the proceedings, which I find so interesting! Let ‘em believe this.

After the six piles are dealt, the dice-inspecting spectator arranges the dice (of any color) in front of each pile so they’re in 1-6 or 6-1 order. You now stress to all that deck of cards, having been “thoroughly shuffled, thoroughly cut, fairly dealt, and totally handled throughout by [Spectator A], were never in your control. But laying out the dice in an organized manner, decided upon by [Spectator B], has already started what I refer to as an *anti-chaos progression*.”

Now, the amazing fun commences.

Turn over the top card of each pile. The value of the card, despite all the “shuffling, cutting, and mixing,” incredibly matches the number showing on the dice! *NOTE: an ace will be on the spectator’s*





left, and the six will be on top of the rightmost pile. If the dice have been set in 1-6 order (from the audience's left to right), all's cool. If the dice are set in the opposite manner (i.e., 6-1) you will begin by merely turning each pile face up. The appropriate number will now show.

Next, ask either spectator to turn each die completely over. You comment that they are now "re-introducing chaos to order, but ...". You quickly turn each pile over while simultaneously pulling off the first noted top card. Place the cards you've extracted aside as you now show the top cards to be in a 6-1 matching order! (If you started in the opposite order and this turning over produces face-down piles, just turn over the top cards.)

You now say, "In Gin Rummy, it's good to have runs of cards. It's even better to have the runs in the same suit. And in poker, what could be better than that ultimate same-suit run, the Royal Flush!" As you say this, remove the top cards and show (or turn over) the next set of six, the Nine through Ace of Spades (or Diamonds).

Remove the top cards showing as you turn the piles over again. Turn over the top cards (or just reveal them during the turn-over process) to reveal another Royal Flush in diamonds (or spades)!

Take a deep breath as if recovering from the previously stunning and unexpected moments. Trust me, your audience will be flabbergasted and this little "intermission" will be welcome! Remove the top cards from the middle piles (i.e., piles 2, 3, 4, and 5). If necessary, turn each of the middle piles face down. Place the cards removed on the respective end piles (#1 and #6). Then casually remove piles 1 and 6 from the table (place them with the all the other discards).

Say, "From all that chaos, we have somehow seen the aces through sixes, the sixes through aces, the nines through kings, and the kings through nines, and all those Royal Flushes self-organize – *somehow!* I'm not asking for much, but I'd love to see the eights and sevens – two cards we have not seen at all – self-organize!" Make a magical hand-wave and finger-snap over the face-down four piles, then slowly turn over the top cards to reveal the four eights.

Scoop up the dice and slide them near the discards. Leave the eights showing as you pointedly flip each pile over one final time and reveal the four sevens.

Let the image sink in for a second, then gather the four tabled piles, drop them in the "discard area," and take your bow!

Ring me at mbreggarmagic@gmail.com.

BAMBOOZLERS

Diamond Jim Tyler

NIM

BET: Two players take turns removing (up to three) matches from a pile. The one who takes the last match wins!

This game was so-named by Charles Bouton in 1901. However, the game dates back to ancient times. The archaic word, “nim,” means to steal or take-away.

SECRET: If you play by the standard rules of taking up to three matches per turn, then the pile that you start with needs to be a multiple of four. The game could be played with any multiple of four but the number twenty allows for a quick game. This works out great because a standard matchbook contains twenty matches. Of course you could play the game with other items such as toothpicks, coins, nuts, etc.



Always allow your opponent to go first. If they take one match, then you take three. If they take two matches, you'll take two. If they take three matches, then you'll take one. Your combined take each time should total four. It is best not to let your opponent know that you are counting the matches. You don't want them to think that there is a mathematical solution. It's best to keep them thinking that you are simply skilled or lucky. Typically, this game is played for money. When you find someone gullible enough to play, usually you can beat them a few times before they become wise to the method.

If someone catches on, or you end up teaching them the method to win, then you can still beat them when going first. You'll have to be a little sneaky and cheat but you can zing 'em again! After they've learned the secret, and you have gone first, continue playing the game. They'll be concentrating on taking a multiple of four and will not see what happens next. About half way through the game, slyly put a match back into the pile as you take some away. This will throw off the math by one and allow you to win again!

My mother used to tell me to never play with matches. I don't think she realized how many free drinks I'd win, how much money I'd make, or how much fun I've had ignoring her advice.



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

Broken Wand

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



JERRY FOSTER HARRELL

Jerry Foster Harrell, 78, of Norfolk, Virginia, died February 16, 2026. Jerry was born in Morristown, Tennessee and graduated from Dobyns-Bennett High School in Kingsport, Tennessee. After serving in Vietnam as a Chinese language interpreter for Air Force Intelligence and earning a Purple Heart, Jerry returned to Tennessee to begin a career in broadcasting. He worked as a radio disc jockey and in television at WKPT in Kingsport. He built a distinguished career as a producer, director, and writer. Meanwhile, he pursued his lifelong love of performance on stage and television. The family later moved to Richmond, Virginia, where Jerry, already an accomplished magician and ventriloquist, portrayed Ronald McDonald and later Bozo the Clown on WTVR-TV. In 1975, Jerry moved to Hampton Roads to accept a senior producer position at WAVY-TV. There, he created what would become his most beloved and enduring on-screen persona, Doctor Madblood. Originally conceived as a one-time Halloween special, the character became a regional television icon who entertained audiences for five decades. Jerry celebrated his fiftieth anniversary show last year, after nearly eighteen years on WHRO-TV. Throughout his career, he was widely recognized for his many television personas, including Rusty the Rent-to-Own Man, and J.J. the Wizard on Fox-33 Kids Club. He earned dozens of awards for producing hundreds of documentaries, television programs, commercials, and video presentations for organizations including the March of Dimes, the SPCA, and the United States Navy. He retired from Old Dominion



University after more than twenty years in the position of Video Production Manager. He is survived by his sons Brian (Sarah) and Daniel (Kathy), his brother Brett (Sheila Margaret), his former wife and best friend Kristen, a grandson, and extended family and friends.

HARRY "MONTI" MONTEITH

Harry L. Monteith, 90, of St. Louis, Missouri, died January 26, 2026. He held I.B.M. number 13512 and had been a continuous member since 1997. He belonged to the Order of Merlin (twenty-five years of continuous membership) and Ring 1 (St. Louis, Missouri). Known as "Harry Monti," he was a lifelong resident of St. Louis. Harry graduated from Soldan-Blewett High School in 1954, where his exceptional gymnastic skills helped lead his team to both the City Championship and the Ozark Athletic Union Championship. He went on to study engineering and mechanical drawing at Washington University. His professional career included seventeen years as marketing manager at Alco Controls Corporation and another seventeen years as international manager at C.V. Mosby. Harry had multifaceted talents. He began speed skating in Junior Boys competitions in 1949, winning his first team championship in 1950 and dominating Senior Men City and State titles from 1954 to 1960, including a triumphant Silver Skates victory in 1960. Harry served in the United States Air National Guard Reserves from 1953 to 1962 and was activated into the US Air Force during the Berlin Crisis (1961–1962). A lifelong circus enthusiast, he befriended renowned



trapeze artists and often performed with them during their St. Louis visits. Remarkably, he flew on a trapeze for the last time when he was seventy, at a Cirque du Soleil training school in Hollywood, California. His greatest passion, however, was magic. Sparked at a young age by a comic book trick – floating a needle on water – Harry became an internationally celebrated magician and escape artist. He made his debut at the Hollywood Magic Castle in 1963 and held the extraordinary record of performing there continuously for fifty-three years across all its showrooms, earning a cherished spot on the Wall of Fame with his caricature. A master of close-up magic, Harry performed and lectured internationally, including in Europe and China. In 1999, the Magic Circle of London honored him as a Member of the Inner Magic Circle with Gold Star, one of the most prestigious accolades in magic, limited to just 300 elite performers globally. He was a regular at the exclusive 4F (Fechter's Finger Flicking Frolic) convention and received its PhD in Magic honor in 2008. In the 1970s, Harry co-founded Rings-N-Things, producing high-quality metal magic props. His items from the original era, such as the Monti Cups, Himber Wallets, and Close-Up Case remain highly collectible among magicians today. A dedicated member of the magic community, Harry joined the International Brotherhood of Magicians in 1952 and the Society of American Magicians (SAM) in 1957. He served as president of both local assemblies and the longtime chaplain of the St. Louis SAM. He received the Gold Medal from SAM Assembly No. 8 in 1997 and the St. Louis Magic Heritage Award in 1998. In 1999, he was elected the National President of SAM. Together with his wife Trudy, Harry co-founded Magic for Special Education, empowering teachers to share magic with students with special needs, and helped establish the first SAM Assembly composed entirely of magicians with special needs. The couple also created the Harry and Trudy College Scholarship Fund, which has awarded a dozen scholarships to promising young magicians. Harry was ordained as a deacon there on January 26, 1997. They were longtime

members of Bonhomme Presbyterian Church in Chesterfield, Missouri. Harry is survived by wife Trudy along with nieces and nephews.

JAMES "JIM" ROBERT PURCELL

James "Jim" Robert Purcell, known on-stage as Jimi Hendrix, died January 10, 2023. His journey in magic began in Washington, D.C., where he honed the sleight-of-hand skills that would become his lifelong passion. He eventually became a fixture of the East Coast magic scene, known for his "hysterical" wit and his ability to command a room – or a single table – with his attentive and mesmerizing close-up performances. Jim regularly performed at the Chattanooga Aquarium in Tennessee and the Dilworth Brewery in Charlotte, North Carolina. He is survived by his wife Belinda Burgess-Purcell, his children James and Kelly, five grandchildren, and four siblings.



DAVID WRIGHT

David Anthony Wright, 75, of Victoria, Australia, died February 13, 2026. He held I.B.M. number 35761 and had been a member since 1980. He belonged to the Order of Merlin Shield (thirty-five years of continuous membership) and Ring 84 (Melbourne, Australia). British born, David emigrated to Australia with his family in 1980. His main interest was sleight of hand with cards, especially the Faro Shuffle. David could execute eight perfect Faro Shuffles, returning the cards back to their original order. His written contributions appeared in magazines such as *Pabular*, *The Talon*, *Son of Bat Jr*, *The Blueprint*, and *The Linking Ring*. He also collected trick decks and gimmicks and lectured on them. David is survived by his sister Patti.



Ring Reports

THE INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF MAGICIANS



Ring Reports **must** be received by the 15th of each month to appear in the second following issue (for example, your January report will be published in March or April). Please e-mail reports to ringreports@magician.org with "Ring Reports" in the subject heading. You will receive confirmation of receipt. Please limit the length of your report to 650 words or less. Reports of excessive length may be edited to meet space requirements. Please notify the Reports Editor, Lauren Jurgensen, at ringreports@magician.org, if changes need to be made to your report's headings (e.g., changes to addresses, meeting times, or officers' names). We regret that we are unable to publish photographs in the Ring Reports section of the magazine.

RING 1, ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI – Spirit of St. Louis

Meets 1st Wed. of month, Parkway United Church of Christ 2841

N. Ballas Road, St. Louis, MO 63131 / Web Site: www.IBMRingOne.com

SANDY WEIS., Treasurer and Scribe / E-mail: ibmringone@gmail.com

1755 Elkins Drive, St. Louis, MO 63136

On January 29th, Alain Nu presented an extraordinary lecture for members of I.B.M. Ring 1 and SAM Assembly 8, sponsored by the Midwest Magic Jubilee Fund. Known internationally as "The Man Who Knows," Alain is a celebrated mentalist, illusionist, magician, television personality, author, and speaker whose performances have reached audiences around the world. Attendees were captivated by his signature metal-bending demonstrations. Alain explained that he offers an online course in spoon bending and confidently guarantees that every participant will succeed by the end. He shared a touching story of an elderly gentleman who, through simple finger-strengthening exercises, eventually learned to bend spoons himself. One of the evening's standouts moments was Alain's book test – fully examinable and deeply deceptive. He generously explained how anyone could create a similar book using his method, and another process whereby they could use a borrowed book. Members thoroughly enjoyed the lecture, and Alain offered a selection of his products at special reduced pricing for those in attendance.

Ring 1 member Chad Jacobs (Chef Bananas) attended Kapital Kidvention in Arlington, Virginia, where he presented two lectures for magicians and children's entertainers from around the world: Cooking Up 5-Star Reviews and Consent, Choice, and Respect in Children's Magic. His sessions explored practical business strategies, professional ethics, and respectful audience participation, with a focus on strong magic and child-centered performance. Chad also spent time reconnecting with colleagues

and engaging with performers from across the global magic community. Kapital Kidvention continues to be an important gathering for education, collaboration, and the advancement of children's magic.

Gary S. Chan noticed how something as simple as table placement can dramatically influence audience engagement. For efficiency, banquet-style shows typically seat spectators all the way around round tables, leaving half of the attendees turning their chairs and the other half looking at the back of other attendees' heads. The event organizer of his recent show in Newport Beach handled it differently: they used round tables, but with seating only on the side facing the performer. The result was a clear line of sight for every guest, stronger engagement, and far less opportunity for distraction. It's a small adjustment, but one that can make a big difference in the energy and focus of a room.

Harry L. Monteith, known worldwide as Harry Monti, recently passed away on January 26, 2026. His service was held on February 6th at Bonhomme Presbyterian Church in Chesterfield, MO. He was a very well-liked individual that never made a negative comment about anyone. He was extremely talented and always willing to share his expertise. Harry is the only magician who has performed continuously at the Magic Castle, since it first opened, for 53 years. He was a member of both Ring 1 and also SAM Assembly 8. His obituary can be read online at the Schrader Funeral Home and Crematory. Our prayers are extended to his relatives, especially his wife Trudy who was married to him for 54 years. The magic community has lost one of its most talented and respected magicians.

In December 2025, our Ring President, Steve Queen, was selected to perform for a talent

show at Rizz Show Game Night. The Rizzouto Show is the number one radio show (105.7 FM The Point) in the St. Louis Area. This was their annual live end-of-year event, where they decided to offer a talent show. The show was held at The Pageant, which is a well-known live music and special events venue. Being a fan of the show, Steve submitted an audition for the talent show and he was selected, getting to perform for a few hundred in attendance. Steve performed a version of "Professor's Nightmare" and "Of Dice and Men" with the show's host, which kept the audience laughing and thoroughly entertained.

The Ring always welcomes visitors to attend its meetings and activities. Check out the website for details. *Sandy Weis*

RING 2, YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO – Filips-Tutter-Doeright Ring

Meets 7:30 pm 2nd Fri., Valley Christian Church, 7155 Glenwood Ave.,
Youngstown, OH
PETER LUCKE, Secretary
E-mail: IBMRing2Youngstown@me.com

Our February meeting was opened by our treasurer, Gary Morton. He commented on various upcoming club events and plans. The following members and friends were present at our meeting: Susan and Donna Campbell, Fritz Coombs, Martin and Steven Devore, Jim Klayder, Liam Lewis, Peter Lucke, Mark Miller, and Gary Morton. The theme of the evening was "Paper Money Magic."

Gary Morton opened the evening's magic with D'Lite Bag. Gary invited Donna and Susan Campbell to assist him. He accompanied his effect with some music. Gary began by placing a translucent shopping bag on the table. Out of the bag, he withdrew a small white silk. After replacing the silk in the bag, Gary reached behind Susan's head and retrieved a small red D'Lite, which he dropped into the bag. Three lights lit up at the bottom of the bag. Gary then appeared to pluck lights from various other locations, and upon dropping them into the bag, more lights appeared in the bag. A short hand movement above the bag extinguished all the lights. Then from the bag, Gary removed the white silk. When he held it up, there was now a series of pink dots on it in the shape of a heart.

Fritz Coombs continued with Cut and Restored Rope, Boy Scout style. Fritz began by showing us a rope about a yard long. Holding the rope with his left hand, he brought up the middle of the rope with his right hand so as to form a small loop held in his left hand. Then Fritz used some scissors to cut the loop. He then

showed us he had two pieces of about equal length. Fritz next tied the two lengths of rope together and wrapped the rope around his hand. For the magical part, he waved a coin over the rope. When he unwrapped the rope from his hand, it was a fully restored single rope. Fritz then repeated the effect in a slightly different way.

Jim Klayder's effect was Extreme Burn by Richard Sanders. For this effect, he showed us five one-dollar bills. He stacked them in his hand and then folded them up into a packet. Upon unfolding the packet, five twenty-dollar bills were revealed.

Susan Campbell amazed us with Color Switching Decks. She began by showing us two boxes of cards, one red and one blue. Susan removed the cards from the boxes. She then overhand shuffled each deck face up so we could see all the cards. Each deck was now face up on the table. Susan then exchanged the top card of each deck. Finally, she turned each deck over and spread them out to reveal that the card backs were exchanged. Formerly red-backed cards were now blue-backed, and vice versa.

Mark Miller next performed Coin Squeeze. He placed four quarters on the table and asked Steven to assist him. Mark showed us two hollow brass cylinders. He placed a brass disk on top of one cylinder and then the second cylinder on top of that. He asked Steven if he could push his thumb through the cylinders and touch the table; he couldn't. Mark turned the cylinders over and again asked if Steven could push his thumb through; he still couldn't. Mark then placed four quarters into the cylinder, snapped his fingers, and lifted the cylinder to reveal one quarter now on the table. Mark repeated this until three coins were now on the table. For the fourth coin, Mark picked it up and made it vanish between his hands. He then picked up the cylinders to reveal the fourth coin.

Peter Lucke closed members' magic with Tabman's Keyed Up. He showed us a wooden wallet. The wallet had a slot into which a banknote could be inserted. There were holes in the wallet so the banknote could be viewed. At the entry slot was a hole for a padlock. Peter inserted a \$2 bill into the wallet and then put a padlock on it. He had a small black bag containing seven keys. He distributed the keys to seven members of the audience. He had each person try their key; but none could open the lock. Peter asked Liam to try his key again; it opened the lock, and he retrieved the \$2 bill. Peter let him keep the bill.

Our guest, Martin Devore, closed the evening's magic with a rubber band effect. He showed us two rubber bands stretched between his fingers. He asked Gary to pinch together the center two portions of the bands. The two bands then became linked together.

For the remainder of the evening, Jim Klayder taught us a simple magic trick with a dollar bill, rubber band, and two paper clips. The bill was folded lengthwise and then into a Z-shape. The rubber band was slipped onto the bill into the center. Finally, the two paper clips were attached at each end of the bill. When the ends of the bill were pulled, the paper clips became hooked on the rubber band.

Peter Lucke

RING 6, PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA – Delaware Valley Conjurers Club

Meets 2nd Monday, each month, 7:30 p.m., Wallingford Community Arts Center, 414 Plush Mill Rd., Wallingford, PA 19086

DAVE KELLY, Acting Recording Secretary

Web site: www.ibtoring6.com

January: To ensure that always iffy January weather would not interfere with our meetings, President Jim "Laz" Capobianco arranged to have a virtual meeting via Zoom. It was a sound decision, as mentalist Jeff Newman rewarded us with an engaging three hours of mental magic and performance tips.

Canadian native Jeff began with his outlook on performing mentalism: "Magic is about putting on a show, and connecting with an audience." He shared a 9 minute tape of the routine that he starts his shows with: "Guess Who." He explained that it gives him the opportunity to size up the audience, and potential audience volunteers throughout the show. He introduces himself, and immediately goes into the audience to select his helpers. "The best props are other people on stage," and he greets them with the approach of "Let's see how We did," when time for the final reveal happens.

Some of his mental magic involves "peaks" at key times, but he also did his "Dual Reality" that uses a Svengali principal to produce an impossible coincidence with two audience members. His final effect, "The Skeptic," uses a simple method using prepared envelopes.

Jeff had discount Lecture Notes available on his website. Thanks to Zoom, he gave us a lot more knowledge about both mentalism and stage presence, and none of us had to drive home at the end of the meeting!

February: What a great night of magic shared with us by famous French magician Alexandra Duvivier. Meeting via Zoom allowed us to have our regular gathering despite lots of

snow and ice on the ground in the Philadelphia area. Also, she didn't have to fly to the USA!

Alexandria included many of her approaches to leading the audience to enjoy every part of the magic. She explained that in the best magic, the audience is led to wonder where is the trick going. This gets them on the performer's side. Alexandria's first effect was her "Candy Trick." She took some of her favored childhood candies (marshmallows, gummy candy, Bazooka bubble gum, and licorice) out of a plain paper bag, and then took out a cup and can of Coca Cola. She opened the can, poured some soda into the cup and drank it. Then she took all of the candies, placed them into the bag, and shook the bag. She reached into the bag, and all of the candies were threaded onto the licorice strips. She then tore the bag apart. Alexandria then taught the workings and thinking behind this amazing effect. She also said that even though we've seen our own tricks many times, for most in the audience, it is their first experience with the magic.

A performance of "Aladdin," a packet card effect was very visual and easy to learn. A balloon effect was next, where she showed a clear bag of balloons, and mixed them up even more. She turned away from the bag, and had audience members call out colors that she was able to pull out of the bag. She tipped the method, and this is surely a great effect for our balloon magicians to use at the beginning of a balloon routine.

Another commercial effect, "Impromptu Wild Card," was simple to do for those who are familiar with the Elmsley Count. "Amelie" was a beautiful effect using a sound track playing, cutting tissue paper into butterfly shapes, then using a large LP record to make the butterflies fly, with a Snow Storm in China-type finale with butterflies filling the stage. Also, she showed how to make a very visual LP album cover that could instantly change into a different cover. Music creates a mood, and Alexandria urged us to consider using magic to enhance many effects.

A great night for the 20 Ring members who participated.

Dave Kelly

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

Ring 9's January 19, 2026 meeting was a TIP ("To Improve Performance") LECTURE: "Magic on the Fly" by Anthony Vinson. Anthony reinterpreted TIP as "To Inspire

Performers,” and “Magic on the Fly” refers to performing in everyday, ordinary settings for random people (typically strangers), embracing the idea that “the world is my stage.” He emphasized that making a meaningful impact in this environment requires a high level of emotional intelligence, including humor, openness, agreeableness, calm confidence, and empathy (the ability to quickly assess a potential spectator’s emotional state). Anthony encouraged all the members to perform for strangers with the intention of lifting their spirits and improving their day.

BUSINESS MEETING: President Clark Kjorlaug welcomed 25 attendees, including five on the Zoom stream, and three guests.

Clark, in his first duty as President for the year, presided over the Officer Installation Ceremony for the 2026 Board Members who were present: Vice President Zach Ivins, Secretary-Treasurer Bill Packard, and Board Member at Large Debbie Leifer. The Board members that were not present are Past President Steve Langston and Board Members at Large Ken Scott and Eric Schuster.

Lynn Fox, Walter Fields, and Debbie Leifer all had praising remarks regarding Justin Willman’s recent appearance in Atlanta. Upcoming conventions mentioned include Magifest in OH (January 22-24), Blackpool in UK (February 19-22), SAM in Appleton WI (July 1-4), I.B.M. in St. Louis (July 22-25), and MAGIC Live in Las Vegas (August 2-5). Zach Ivins will be performing at Secret Isle on February 20. The Circle of Honor outing originally scheduled for January 12 at the Atlanta Illusion Museum has been temporarily rescheduled to March 2.

The Georgia Magic Book Club is currently studying *Approaching Magic* by David Regal, with the first Zoom discussion to be scheduled in February.

Walter Fields, Patrick Buchen, and Lynn Fox reported that Project Magic is going well. They may be adding another hospital.

Steve Goldstein reported that the first Magic Meetup of the year had the biggest turnout thus far (about 20 attendees). The next session will be in March, date TBD.

Two of the attendees acknowledged that they have birthdays in February.

The annual Atlanta Magic Holiday Banquet is scheduled for January 24, featuring Jason Michaels. Potential attendees were urged to RSVP within the next 24 hours to allow an accurate count for the entrée order. There is some

concern regarding the weather, so watch for updates in case the gathering needs to be rescheduled. (UPDATE: was rescheduled for February 21)

Check out the new magician.org website, mostly designed by Eric Schuster.

Lecture Chair Debbie Leifer announced an upcoming lecture by Javi Benitez on February 12. (“The best sleight of hand we’ve ever seen,” according to Penn & Teller.) (UPDATE: Rescheduled for February 15)

Secretary-Treasurer Bill Packard presented New Member certificates to Lisa Varon and Justin So (both are Youths).

THEME PERFORMERS (“Off the Cuff” – Perform a piece of impromptu magic), MC’d by Vice President Zach Ivins.

Jason Kresner used a Pick-Any-Two, Eliminate One procedure to predict the remaining off-the-cafeteria-table item.

Patrick Buchen performed Torn & Restored Napkin with a sucker finish.

Ravi Navare showed a Cat’s Cradle type design with two different colored rubber bands that switched places in the design when turned around.

Justin So performed an interesting ACAAN variation, with a card selected from a red deck matching the card at the stated number in a blue deck.

After three cards were selected and lost in the deck, Mike Varon displayed the top three cards in a fan as indifferent cards, then caused two selections to appear there, with the third card magically appearing on a second look. (The effect is called “Lee’s Cartes Diaconis,” which is from the book *Mumblecore* by Lee Benzaquin.)

Anthony Vinson performed a prop-less effect, inviting everyone to pick up, spell, and manipulate three imaginary colored balls in various ways, finishing with identifying the color of a ball in a particular location (for everyone who followed the directions properly).

David Fluker vanished a ring held in one hand and caused it to transport to a finger of the other hand.

Claiming that he knew Mike Varon better than Mike’s daughter Lisa did, Ross “the Hat” Democko asked Mike to write down on separate pieces of paper a color (purple), an animal (dinosaur), and a number, revealed each, then produced from a gift bag a posh purple dinosaur with a matching number on its tag.

Lynn Fox gave a background story of his experiences performing “off the cuff” magic,

then animated a folded-lengthwise napkin and made it shorter.

Zach Ivins caused a selected and returned card to reverse itself in the deck, then replaced it in the same direction and caused the rest of the deck to reverse itself around the card.

GENERAL MAGIC PERFORMERS

Ravi Navare placed a deck of cards into a wooden box, then caused a selected card to rise out of the card box when he opened the lid.

Christophe Fouquet performed a Slow Motion Draw using six black Sharpie markers, as a spectator selected one marker from Christophe's hand and one from his own until three pairs were formed, and when the caps were removed, each pair was revealed to be perfectly matching colors.

Jim "Catweazle" Mangham presented Peter Duffie's version of "Out of This World," as published in Best of All Worlds by Kaufman & Greenberg, in which a spectator shuffled the deck, dealt cards in pairs (turning one face up), then assembled the pairs by color, after which Jim spread the deck to reveal that all face-up cards were the same color as were all the reversed cards.

Clark gave away three prizes to the lucky winners from the Wheel of Names. Since the Theme Magic contest was a tie, Patrick Buchen and Ross DeMocko each received a Coveted Royal Blue Pin. The theme for next month (February) is "Go Sports!" – Perform a piece of magic inspired by sports or athletics. *Bill Packard*

RING 12, BUFFALO, NEW YORK – Gene Gordon – Karl Norman Ring

Meets 1st Mon. each month at the Screening Room Cinema & Café, 3131 Sheridan Dr., Amherst, NY. Web site/E-mail: Ring 12.org

TODD NELSON, Secretary,
(716) 480-4757 \ 24 Majestic Circle, Amherst, NY 14226

Our meeting began with a teaching table. Mike Joseph taught several ace productions, all very impressive and learnable. He also showed us the slip force and many uses for a crimp card. It was more knowledge for the repertoire in my brain.

Now for our meeting. Not lecture, but meetings in small groups to discuss what we wanted. We wound up discussing magic. We could have discussed other things, for example, Catherine O'Hara had just passed away. I, being an improv artist from Canada, had this on my mind, but this was a magic club. Pat Boorman brought a Card-toon deck. Everyone was there to help her figure out how to perform it best. Then, others at the table showed some presentations they were working on by combining several effects. I need

to practice more and add even more magic knowledge to my brain/repertoire. It was a fun evening and it will most likely, I hope, be done again. *Shlomo Birkan*

RING 13, PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA – Tampa-Greenberg Ring

Meets 1st Thu., 7:30pm, Dee Jay's BBQ Ribs and Grille, 1155 Washington Pike, Bridgeville, PA

MARK ZAJICEK, Secretary / E-mail: ibmring13@gmail.com

Web site: www.ibmring13.org

In February, our new Ring President Joshua Messado presided over his first monthly meeting. We discussed plans for our upcoming annual banquet and magic show to be held at The Fez on April 12, coordinated by committee members Mark Zajicek, Lucy Hall, Chris Handa, Ralph Kelly, and Roger Sacco, with tentative performers Steven Gailey, Joshua Messado, and others to be announced. Joshua announced the recent release of his Ringistry video project, which has received favorable reviews. Lucy Hall emceed our performers with a suggested theme of "magic from a magazine."

Christopher Welch presented his second performance for Ring membership, asking Sharon to select a card that turned out to be the only normal card in a deck of all blank faces. Chris then made Sharon's card change into a blank faced card while he made the rest of the deck change into cards with regular printed faces.

Tim Palucka presented his third performance for Ring membership, telling a story of Sherlock Holmes and Scotland Yard investigating a series of murders. Tim asked Lashaya to select one card to be the murderer and then return it to the deck. Tim shuffled the deck and turned two cards face up on the top and bottom to represent Holmes and Watson. Tim caused the face-up cards to trap the selected murderer card between them.

Tracey Hinsch presented her second performance for Ring membership, asking Roger to shuffle some cards, pick a number between one and twelve, then deal that number of cards from the top to the bottom of the deck. Tracey dealt twelve cards face down on the table. Tracey successfully identified the number that Roger chose, and she showed that the card at that position matched a prediction card – and it was also the only indifferent card among all the other cards that were the same.

Chris Handa placed an old skeleton key on the open palm of Anna's hand, and the key rolled over by itself (Chris Handa's "The Keys to the Castle," published in the September 2000 issue of M-U-M). Next Chris empowered Anna to make the key balance on his one fingertip (Dr.

Jaks’ “The Key,” published in *The Phoenix*, No. 246).

Tony Brahler showed a deck of cards with a hole drilled through the center of the deck, and he riffled through the deck until Tracey said “stop.” Tony placed a padlock through the hole, and he handed the locked deck to Tracey to find her card – but the card had vanished. Tracey found her selected card on a table across the room (Vincenzo Di Fatta’s “The Houdini Deck”).

Don Greenberg borrowed a deck of cards and asked Alex to shuffle and deal about half the cards onto the table, look at one card, and then shuffle again. Don took back the deck, and he fanned the faces toward Alex to watch her reaction. Don successfully identified Alex’s chosen card (published in *Genii*).

Joshua Messado asked Tracy, Lashaya, and Tim to each take a packet of cards and deal their cards on the table as they spelled the name of someone who loves them. Joshua demonstrated with his own packet as he instructed all of his assistants to deal additional cards on the table to spell “loves” and then “me.” All four people turned over their cards to reveal one of the four aces (Joshua Messado’s “Everyone Loves Me,” published in the September 2023 issue of *Genii*).

Steven Gailey and Lashaya Fields performed a duo routine as Steven collected three objects from the audience while Lashaya left the room. Anna (assisted by Herman the Dog) chose one object, and when Lashaya returned, Lashaya (almost) named the selected object (to be republished in an upcoming issue of their clown magazine). Steven then introduced Herman the Dog, who did his “sit” trick.

Jeff Vanderhoff recited a poem as he performed a version of the classic “Professor’s Nightmare” rope trick, as he made three different lengths of rope turn into the same size and then back again (Russell Turner’s “The Noodle Factory,” published in the December 2010 issue of *The Linking Ring*). Jeff closed by doing a different version of the rope trick, assisted by Anna, using two sets of three different sized ropes and a clear food storage bag. Jeff caused one set of ropes to change places with the other set of ropes in the bag (David Kaye/Silly Billy’s variation, as published in *MAGIC Magazine*). *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

January: Bill Irwin, 2026 President, opened the January meeting, welcoming guests Chris Hoffeins, Jerry Alexander, Ayden Kohnhorst,

and Robert John. With a new slate of officers, he distributed “Certificates of Appreciation” to the past board members, introduced the incoming board, and then invited up past president Gavin Griggs to whom he presented the traditional “Bob Hale” magic wand as well as a new service wand, produced by OrchardWorks Magic Wands in Connecticut.

Program Chair Will Baffle announced upcoming lectures: Alain Nu on February 13, Gary Plants in March, and Ken Scott, possibly in April.

Mike Smith announced his “Card College” project in February for the independent living center where he lives. He solicited self-working card tricks with a borrowed deck and was overwhelmed by the number of great suggestions – it should be a rewarding event for his fellow independent living colleagues – it’s never too late to fall in love with magic, even for those in retirement centers!

And then the feast began! Ash Adams – our past historian – shared images from his magic history collection on “magicians-in-turbans.” Bottom line: Texas and other Southwest magicians both entertained as well as scammed the American public from the 1920s through the 60s, wrapping their heads in turbans and adopting “nom de scènes” as esoteric and exotic “Oriental” mind-readers, drawing hundreds to their performances, some earning small fortunes while popularizing psychic readings and fortune-telling.

Their checkered careers took an upscale financial turn when these “turbaneros” began pitching their craft by radio, inviting their listeners to send request messages (along with a dollar for something like a flyer or informational pamphlet). Banned, however, by Texas law from fortune-telling over the radio, they resorted to various dodges that kept the contributions flowing in. Among the “luminaries” were Maurice Kitchen (a.k.a. “Rajah Raboid”), Francis B. Sterling (a.k.a. the “Great Mahendra”), Julius and Eva Zancig, “Dr. Alzada” (a.k.a. ?), and perhaps the greatest of all the charlatans, Wilbert Willis Holley (a.k.a. “Mel Roy”), who at one point was receiving as many as 17,000 mail-in requests a day! In their run, a number of them perfected techniques still employed by mentalists today. The Zancigs for example, perfected a coded communication system in their husband-and-wife act which was never detected by even their closest observers.

Always looking for outlets that would free them from the imposition of various legal

restraints, some found a sensational outlet in Dr. John R. Brinkley's international radio station with its 250,000-watt transmitter that he had erected just over the US/Mexico border in Villa Acuna – station XERF, the largest of the “border-blasters” stations, only blocks away on the Mexican side of the Rio Grande River opposite Del Rio, Texas. Anyone could buy airtime for their acts and be broadcast across most of the United States as if they were a national radio program!

If Ash's lecture were not enough, the evening topped out with a wonderful lecture/demonstration by Andrew deRuiter, a bizzarrist magician and a mentalist, along with his partner Susan Williams, creators of the acclaimed bizzarrist convention, “Magistrorum,” now in its fifth season. Andrew has created a new move and handling that has revolutionized rope magic, making possible now uncanny new effects and more elegant many of the classics of rope work.

He began his demonstrations with Matthew Martin, George Ferrin, and Bill Irwin with whom he demonstrated a “hands off rope through neck penetration” with two ropes and proceeded from there with never-before-seen moves. His hour-long lecture left our membership intrigued, astonished, and constantly applauding what seemed to be nothing short of “real” magic. Truly, “the prophet” was embraced in his North Texas homestead. Andrew is available for lecturing in both local and regional venues.

The evening finished with “hanger-ons” crowded around both Ash's displays and Andrew's generous sharing of “the moves.” It was a fabulous start to a new year of fellowship and magic.

February: Bill Irwin, 2026 President, opened the meeting, welcoming guests Elena Ponsler and Ayden Kohnhorst. Passing the gavel to Program Vice President, Will Baffle announced upcoming lectures by Alain Nu and Gary Plantt this spring with an additional area lecture featuring Nathan Kranzo.

It was then on to the guest lecturer for the evening, SAM columnist and author, magician, and storyteller Norman Beck. His lecture was the inauguration of his new lecture, “An Evening with Norman Beck.” The key to much of the fun associated with a Norman Beck lecture is his self-deprecating style, delivered in his Southern accent with an Oklahoma drawl delivered in a Texas twang. Lines that set the tone for the evening included the following: “What are three things you'll never hear from a Texan?”

Answer: 1) Pro-wrestling's fake,” 2) “No loaded guns in our house,” 3) “checkmate,” and 4) “Alex, give me ‘Shakespeare’ for a dollar!”

A familiar performer in the Magic Castle close-up room, as well as a columnist on magic, magicians, and performing for almost 30 years, he's that but much, much more. Norman tells stories – “biggin's,” even if they're not “whoppers.” [No “Texas brag”! Just “Texas fact!”] His topic for the evening was the practice of magic throughout his career as the “gambler cop” for SCA Promotions in Dallas. A risk management corporation, SCA specializes in “promotions and sweepstakes marketing, event and sports promotions,” and more.

Aside from his services to SCA, a job that has taken him around the world “as a sleuth for cheats,” Norman shared anecdotes of his magic-in-life, both on and off stage – a recollection of regaling moments in both winning and losing bets, each eliciting a “lesson in life.” Nevertheless, magic was never far under the surface. He shared an opening card routine – a whimsical, comedy piece with President Bill Irwin, a coin-prediction effect with Michael Stein, and a signed card revelation with Matthew Martin.

To meet Norman on the street, you might mistake him for anything other than the “magic man” for which he is celebrated. Always self-dismissive (keep in mind, he's a member of the “FFFF” and a regular magical entertainer for Warren Buffet's shareholders group), Norman confesses in a correspondence that “my props are a pair of dice, two sponge balls, a deck of cards, and a thumb tip, wit, grit, and bullshit” – a fitting frame for his entire presentation! What fun!

Following a break, the evening continued with “works in progress,” the theme for the meeting's program. Randi Rain set a high bar for the evening with a clever “cups and balls routine,” framed in hilarious contrasting responses from two selected club members who delivered both positive and negative scripting drawn from a set of envelopes.

Next up, Ron Wilson shared highlights of a recent visit to “Monday Night Magic” in New York City. In that context he vanished the “statue of liberty” and returned it from its drawer box with the ample assistance of guest magi Elena Ponsler – move over David Copperfield (but just a little).

From behind his illusion stage show curtains, Will Baffle introduced a classic “Zig Zag Woman” cabinet. The room broke up in great

fun when Will introduced Pam Hudgins as his assistant. A “senior citizen” of the club, Pam “wheeled in” with a medical walker wearing a bathrobe, his “mother” performing the “stand in” role for the detained assistant. The repartee between the exasperated, impatient “mom” and the frustrated illusionist brought the house down!

Visitor Ayden Kornhorst closed the “works in progress” with an outstanding mentalism routine for stage featuring selected club members in the audience. On that bright spot, the club adjourned to a late-night spread at the local “Hooters.”

Geoff Grimes

RING 16, MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE – Society of Memphis Magicians

Meets 1st Tue., 7:00pm, Germantown Presbyterian Church
DR. JON STANFORD, Secretary
Web sites: www.ring16.org

Memphis has been hit with a major ice storm. Schools have been closed for 2 weeks as did many businesses including banks and postal service. This did not stop Ring 16 from having our meeting. We had 14 members brave the weather to make it to the meeting. I was unable to attend in person due to being iced in but was able to attend on YouTube. I was also greatly aided by Grayson Smith who attended in person and took notes for me.

Our Front Table tonight was presented by Ron Gilman. Ron is a Senior United States Judge for the U.S. Court of Appeals. It has been a long time since we had Ron attend our meetings and all were glad to see him. Even though we haven’t enjoyed his magical presence he performs weekly magic at his staff meetings. His front table teaching session consisted of a 4 Sponge Ball Routine followed by 3 Rope Tricks: A Self-Untying Bow Knot, A Disappearing Overhang Knot, and Tying 2 Speed Knots. Sometimes rope tricks are hard to teach but Ron was very patient with everyone.

Our Business Portion of the meeting came next. Much of it was concerning our Big Magic Stage Show benefiting the Church Health Center taking place on Feb. 21st. We have many magicians performing around the Mid-South this month including Michael Clayton, Joe M. Turner, Doug Green, Jeffrey Day, and Grayson Smith all doing their individual magic performances. Even the ice can’t slow down the magicians of Ring 16.

Now on with the Magic Performance Portion of our meeting. Our 1st performer was Ron Gilman who performed the Side Walk Shuffle. He said that 40 years ago that he was the Ring 16 President. We hope that Ron will be back for

regular Ring 16 Meetings. Our 2nd performer was Doug Green. Tonight he performed a Mentalism Routine utilizing a Signed Babe Ruth Playing Card. He had 6 assistants wearing different colored baseball hats holding different playing cards. Another spectator swapped cards giving one spectator the Babe Ruth Card. They swapped hats twice. Doug was able to eliminate everyone except the one holding the Babe Ruth Card.

Dr. Jon Stanford

RING 19, MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA – Carl Jones Ring

Meets 2nd Mon. each month, 7:00 p.m., via Zoom and in person 2nd Sat. (location GameZenter, Roseville, MN)

ANDREW SELBITSCHKA, President / Web site: www.IBMRing19.com

Magic Zoom meetings bring together magicians from all around the country (or in our case, Minnesota and Wisconsin, with an occasional straggler from New Jersey or England). Our group may be small but is very loyal and magic-rabid.

We can always count on Rick Hinrichs to start off our meetings with a trick or two. Tonight, he shared several small packet tricks on which he has been working. The tricks used methods to add on cards and Tyler introduced a discussion of the Overhand Shuffle as one method to achieve the desired results. We also discussed the many ways that cards may be revealed during the denouement, including use of the Braue Reversal.

A member of our Ring recently passed away. Brent Coggins, known professionally as “SinGee the Magician” passed in October 2025 and his Broken Wand info was published in the January 2026 issue of TLR.

Will Earley is working on putting together a routine using Balls and Cone. We discussed several aspects of the trick including ball size. We also suggested several visiting existing routines and how to take the best bits from each to make one cohesive routine that fits Will’s style.

Dan Koopmans provided a report on The Practice Playbook by Eric Yuhasz. The book provides thoughts and personal essays from various magicians. This is a magic guide to practicing smarter. Dan liked the key takeaways from each of the magicians. The book contains no tricks, just practical ideas and advice on building habits, discipline and confidence. He got a lot of info from the book that he felt he would be able to apply to his own magic. Dan highly recommended this as an addition to our magic libraries. This book report then allowed us to segue in to a discussion of practicing magic with intention and what that means to each of us.

Harry Entwistle shared one of his favorite tricks, *The Baby Book* by John Morton. Jim MacMiller, who makes weekly trips to NYC, talked about doing impromptu magic in his office or in elevators. This is helping him improve his magic skills by performing for strangers and co-workers. Harry and Jody LeBlanc shared their thoughts on a recent magic performance, by Brett Daniels, that they attended in Duluth. Their overall thoughts were positive and they were very impressed with his dove work. Jennifer Graham shared an impromptu trick using \$2 bills.

The in-person meeting was well attended, given that it was Valentine's Day. Magicians as a rule are not a romantic bunch, so go figure! Tyler Erickson opened the meeting with a revisiting of the Code of Conduct for meetings and events. Although we are a pretty sedate and friendly group, it never hurts to have a refresher of how to make our magic better and more enjoyable for all groups and audience members. Being respectful, engaging and accepting allows for a better magic experience.

Rick Hinrichs, channelling Houdini, shared a rope tie trick, assisted by Michael Barnard and "Fast" Eddie Olson. He wanted feedback on his performance. Tyler then suggested, in the spirit of fostering magic, we would like to have 100% participation at all meetings. For those who have nothing prepared to show, we can teach a trick on a subject that is of interest to anyone.

Jody LeBlanc presented a Buddha Box coin trick and was provided with suggestions and feedback. Paul Laidig, The Vintage Magician, used volunteer Rick Hinrichs to present A Chip On Your Shoulder. Jean-Robert Lemarchand, assisted by Michael Barnard, shared a card trick using the Ghost Deck. Jean-Robert shared some subtleties that made that trick much more baffling. We talked about the pros and cons of various special decks including the Ghost Deck and the Rainbow Miracle Deck.

Tyler provided a mini-lecture on patter with tricks/effects. We've all heard the adage 'less is more'. When it comes to magic and dialogue, Tyler reminded us to "never talk through your magic moment". We need to "leave people alone in their moments". Be restrictive in providing too many directions, especially in routines heavy in procedure. The key is efficiency in motion.

AnnMarie Thomas wowed us with a card trick that she created. Using a special deck that she designed, AnnMarie, in her former life as a professor, has worked on various science and

math projects. She used the deck to keep with the theme of "Play". The deck uses photos and mathematical equations and the result is a deck that creates a trick that is truly a miracle.

"Fast" Eddie Olson shared the work on the card trick that he presented at the January Meeting. The trick, which is obscure, involves several spectators and is extremely deceptive and entertaining. Thanks Eddie! Rick Hinrichs, with Tyler Erickson, performed David Parr's "Proof Positive". This led to a discussion of the PATEO force and equivocation.

Jean-Robert Lemarchand has been honing his magic story/card trick that deals with a French spy, Marie DuFre, the Psychic of Lyon. He shared the trick last month and has been streamlining the patter and fine-tuning the routine. We provided feedback and offered suggestions from an audience perspective.

A new development to our in-person meetings is to offer sessioning to all comers from 4pm to 9pm at GameZenter following the meeting. We have the room for the entire business day and have decided to expand our magic day for professionals and lurkers who may not attend our regular meetings.

As always, we welcome all who would be interested in joining us. Details are available in Ring info at the top of the report.

Jennifer Graham

RING 20, HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA – Eddie Clever Keystone Ring

Meets 2nd Thur., at 6:00pm (order off the menu), meeting 7:00pm at John's Diner 146 Sheraton Dr., New Cumberland, PA 17070
MARK KROTULSKI, Secretary
E-mail: eddieclever20@gmail.com

This month's meeting was held at Boomerang's Bar and Grill. In attendance were Stephen Smith, Michael Reist, Jack Ritter, Maria Tellez, Tait Harbaugh, Erick Hershey, Mark Zagursky, Maryann and Michael Gelehrter, Dave and Beth McDade, Victor Orriola, John Fortino, and Dan Scully.

President Smith opened the meeting at 6:30 and welcomed members and guests. The Secretary's reports for November and December were accepted. In addition, the Treasurer's report was accepted.

Under old business the group talked about the Christmas party we held at Marzoni's. The President said we will not go there again due to the extremely slow service. Under new business the President handed out the program schedule for the coming year. He also said we will do our best to sponsor at least one lecture this year, possibly in partnership with Wayne at Mingus Magic.

Under Good of the Order: The current medical challenges facing Magician Eric Jones was discussed. We also mentioned some of the medical challenges Amy Parsons has faced. We also discussed challenges currently facing Ethan. Erick Hershey talked about his upcoming lecture at Mingsu Magic (new date of February 7th). Tait shared loads of information about the upcoming March Magic Swap Meet. Michael Reist shared that he is lecturing at Kapital Kidvention on the Church Market. Michael Gelehrter mentioned he submitted an article to *The Linking Ring* for publication. The meeting adjourned at 7:10 PM.

On to the Magic: Michael Reist performed Mark Elsdon's Diary Effect. John Fortino performed Curious George and the Mischievous Mitch. Maria did a version of Knots Off. President Smith performed a wonderful effect he said was based on an effect known as Clock Amazing. Michael G did another amazing card trick he called Suit Selection.

Michael L. Reist

RING 21, HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA – Caryl Fleming

Meets 1st Thu. at Holy Virgin Mary Orthodox Cathedral auditorium, 650 Michelorena St., Los Angeles, CA 90026 / Web site: www.IBMRing21.org
MANNY D'MAGO, Secretary
P.O. Box 340841, Arleta, CA 91334 / (424)653-7614
E-mail: mannydmago@gmail.com

January's meeting was chock full of unbelievable announcements, lots of cool magic performances from our members and great raffle prizes. What do you expect from Hollywood's finest magic club, Ring 21 except the best?

Our President Bob Weiss, announced that our new performance nights will consist of a contest between our members, where they'll be going head to head with new themes! Children's magic performance night, Bizarre Magic and Close-up Magic. Members will compete for an award to be presented at our annual banquet for 2026. It's definitely going to be an astonishing few evenings done in the style that only a Hollywood magic club can provide, truly worthy of the red carpet. Lots of originality so don't be shy and come on by!

In keeping the tradition of star studded evenings, legendary student of the great Slydini and Penn & Teller Fooler Tony Clark has been confirmed to give a lecture at our club meeting this February. You won't want to miss it!

Our January meeting started off with a bang, with performances from our members showing off their favorite magic from 2025. Our first performers for the night was Nicholas Garcia, showing off his skills with rope magic, tying knots, splitting ropes and vanishing knots and

then making the rope whole! Wow!

Next up was our President, Bob Weiss and he performed very interesting trick involving pet adoption with a wide selection of animals on a poster board thought bubble. A volunteer and new member to ring 21, AJ Bernah picked a random number to count the animals, winding up with a random selection which was a snake. Turns out the choice was correct because Bob revealed a snake was what he was going to pick and pulled a snake out of the poster board. Sure beats the the ol' rabbit from a hat!

Next up was Mark Anthony Petrucelli, performing a classy, stylized silk to tie routine, vanishing his black bow tie and replacing it with the produced from silk red bow tie. As the routine continued, red lights began to flash from his thumbs, disappearing and reappearing in various locations, ending with a fist full of confetti from nowhere for the finale!

Wendy Sobel was up next, performing a baffling walk through brick wall effect that was nothing short of incredibly fascinating, revealing a sun and moon on the other side of the brick wall! David Copperfield himself would be proud and fooled!

Gerry Schillers performance was something worthy of a romance novel; performing a new and updated version of the anniversary waltz with a reveal of the king and queen of hearts actually holding hands on the actual card, totally out of a Nicholas Sparks novel!

Next up was yours truly, Manny D'Mago. I performed an original routine ala chop cup style, with the balls, using instead dice and good ol' technical sleight of hand to create an elegant and classy effect, disappearing and reappearing from impossible locations. For the finale, the cup was smoking hot, revealing from the smoke a giant die from under the cup to close out the performance. Luxury magic at its best!

Our new member AJ Bernah, performed a card effect with a volunteer selecting a card and having the volunteer lose it in the deck somewhere. He appeared to have fumbled the trick, however, he was covered...by the magicians insurance! He pulled out brochure lining out the details of coverage, revealing the correct selection from the volunteer being the king of hearts. Crazy cool!

The always amazing Reed Eckman showed us a trick with newspaper clippings, all news from politics to entertainment, and then starts cutting them up into pieces. He chose me, Manny D'Mago, as a volunteer, asking me to stop where he wanted me to have him cut a

piece of the clippings at a random word that was printed on there. Turns out, he revealed the word I chose and where it was located like a boss! My jaw dropped!

Lex Schwartz was up next, amazing the club with a card effect using two of our members as volunteers. 16 random cards were selected, then fanned out to have the other volunteer select a random card from the 16 cards. Then the 16 cards were split into two piles, including the selected card. This is the tricky part...not knowing where the selected card was since it was lost in the shuffle, the volunteers picked a pile at random, and after a single cut, the selected card was revealed at the top.

Ellen Stien stepped up to the stage with a card effect involving a story about her friends and her getting lost going out to the movies on the weekends. A new member, Brendy Mora, was volunteered to assist her in finding her friends, which were all the queens in the deck, lost in a shuffle, having them find their way back up to the top of the deck, reuniting with one other. No more wondering around ladies!

Next up, Allen Litteneker. He performed a unique illusion using Japanese art and a blank deck of cards. Brendy Mora was volunteered again, having selected a random card suit and another volunteer selecting a random number. Using the blank deck of cards, Allen began to reveal a "shiraku" painting revealing the randomly selected card, making for a truly spectacular illusion!

David Martinez closed out our performances with another unique piece of magic, and once again, Brendy was selected as a volunteer. David instructed Brendy to a designated website and David pulls out of his phone, a very teeny-tiny laptop computer while, mysteriously, a sharpie then begins to jump from his shirt pocket, which Brendy then uses to sign her name to a selected card. After David loses her card back into the deck, he then has her "type" on to the mini laptop her card and after some "tech issues" and "user error," David reveals the mini laptop was the selected, signed card. Geek squad would be out of business with that one! All in all, it was a phenomenal experience, and as usual. A wonderful, magical evening. Stay tuned for next month's meeting, where I'll be reviewing my personal friend, mentor and legendary magician/Fooler, Tony Clarks' amazing lecture. Definitely going to be one for the history books, as the man has come out of retirement from lecturing as a special request from me, personally! Truly a treat you don't want to miss!

Manny D'Mago

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

The January 2026 meeting of Ring 22 (The Detroit Magic Club) was the first under the new board: Robert Purcell (formerly Treasurer) as President, Andy Makar as VP, and Ferran Charles as Treasurer. For his efforts in restoring Ring 22 to the vibrant state it is now in, Johnny New York - stepping down from the role of President after seven years - was honored with a commemorative gavel sounding block, which will be used at the start of each meeting.

Dreygon started us off with a creative 15 minute show involving audience participation. Andy Makar presented and taught a rope routine which combined a few moves from Aldo Colombini's Tight Rope, a little Fiber Optics, and The Rope Magic of Tabaray. Michael Mode taught everyone his Napkin Rose (and gave everyone one of his red and green napkins to follow along).

Our final event has us break up into 5 groups, each at a table set to simulate an event at which you may be invited as a guest (wedding, banquet, etc.). Complete with a place setting, bottle, corks, sugar packets, etc., each group got creative with what they could do to impress and entertain their fellow guests at the table. After about 15 minutes, we all reconvened, and each group showed us all what they came up with. Such variety and creativity!

The "open stage" portion of the evening gave us performances from Dave Powers, Eric Bedard trying a mentalist version of an existing routine of his, and a singing version of cups and balls from Alexander Heath (yes, he sang with music while doing the routine). *Robert Purcell*

RING 23, CLEVELAND, OHIO – Blackstone Ring/ Cleveland Magician's Club

Meets 1st Wed., (occasional changes); 7:00 p.m. at Pleasant Hills United Methodist Church 13200 Bagley Rd., Cleveland, OH 44130 / www.ring23.org
DAVID NEUMAN, President / E-mail: neumand77@gmail.com

On Wed. February 4, our evening opened with announcements. Javier Benitez will lecture this month on the 25th. Vice President Brian Gerber announced magic shows at the venue Whiz Bang. Our Annual Awards Banquet will be on April 25th. Many members attended the Columbus, Ohio "MagiFest" and gave kudos to Joshua Jay and Andi Gladwin for a job well done. Everyone had their favorite highlights. Several members left early to avoid dangerous

travel due to inclement weather. A livestream link provided helped offset the loss of missing lectures and shows. Everyone enjoyed the Alain Nu lecture last week. A brief Treasurer's report was accepted. Other upcoming conventions were announced.

The magic portion of the night began with a member spotlight by Bob Cervas presented by Jim Hathy (Sgt. At Arms/Membership Chair). Bob performed four unusual effects and explained them. 1. Marconick's "Silken Bombshell" was a sudden multi-silk scarf vanish from a basket that was quite astounding (See Rice's Silk Magic Vol. 3); 2. Anverdi's "Silk and Rings" was an amazing penetration and transposition effect aided with the use of cotton black thread without the use of a reel; 3. Jack Miller's "Egg Bag" routine used a paper bag and bilateral sleeve pulls; and 4. a bonus, Bob showed "Card to Dollar Bill." Bob consistently performs wonderful magic and his vast knowledge base in magic is highly regarded.

The President's Podium highlighted a TCC Magic sale where he procured excellent well-made props/effects including Aluminum Alloy Cups & Balls. RE Phillips "Ring in Wallet" and "Techno Deck" by Craig Petty were also mentioned.

The remainder of the session was conducted by Sergio Castro (Program Chairman) with a focus on Mentalism along with a "Teaching Corner." The mentalism started out with a lobotomy demonstration by Dr. Averbook....just kidding. This session actually began with Stephen Gallant performing "Mentalist's Dream" card prediction from "Self-Working Mental Magic" by Karl Fulves followed by Steve Atkins demonstrating and discussing work with pendulums that was really elucidating. Dr. Bruce Averbook then performed and explained Lee Earl's "No Brainer Bags" that is an awesome mechanism to perform pseudo psychometry with readings.

Mike Okum astounded everyone with his "Heisting Histed Heisted 2.0" five mentally selected card divination routine created by Mike Powers from the book "Power Play." Brian Gerber performed Woody Aragon's "Mnemonic-Fry" where the magician names five cards in the spectator's hand after they shuffle the deck, mentally select the cards to hold at a random number. Mike Draganic performed a great book test using a historical book on Houdini. The final revelation was of a famous Houdini and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle photo in Atlantic City. As this will be 100 years since Harry Houdini

passed away, Dr. Averbook used this revelation as an opportunity to tell the story of Lady Doyle's automatic writing private séance for Houdini in June 1922. Dr. Averbook discovered the original automatic writing in David Copperfield's International Museum & Library of the Conjuring Arts while conducting research there. It was tucked away in some of the John Mulholland files. Dr. Averbook owns Houdini's notarized affidavit about this. Jim Hathy did a rendition of "Which Hand" not only discerning what hand a coin was hidden but also if it was heads up or down.

Performing "Which Hand" was the focus of our "Teaching Corner." Sergio Castro taught some fantastic techniques in order to accomplish this utilizing the dominant hand, the two-time hand switch, "pinkie" tells, and the "Tequila Hustle" by always accepting the truth. Lastly, Dave Neuman presented an effect with the "Mene Tekel Deck" (invented by Burling "Volta" Hull) allowing the performer to reveal three selected cards where one appears in the pocket, one moves to the bottom of the deck, and one reverses itself. He explained the subtle workings of this deck and discussed why it is special. Everyone left happy and content with wonderful material they can contemplate for quite some time.

RING 26, NEW YORK, NEW YORK – Harry Roz-On Ring

Meets Last Fri. each month at 7:00pm at The Mountain House Gallery,
702 9th Avenue (corner of West 48 Street) New York, NY 10019
CARRINGTON "ACE" GREENFADER, President
E-mail: carrington.greenfader@gmail.com / Website: www.80-20.org/meeting

Our first Mike Bornstein/Rene Clement Lab for 2026 was hosted by Robert Wallner and themed Gimmicks. Everyone was happy to get together after the holidays and there was plenty of news to catch up with. We first welcomed back Tom Klem who had been out ill for a time. Robert presented an effect utilizing a paper bag and three colored chips. Two people reach into bag and pull out a chip without showing it to Robert or the audience. Robert was able to tell which one was in each person's hand and which one was left in bag for him. Robert also demonstrated the "Flap Card", gimmicked envelope and a key tag prediction. Robert provided everyone with lecture notes. Past president, Frank Reyes brought a cigarette dropper made by P&L and explained it's working. He told everyone that John Calvert used to use two of them in his act. Frank also performed a coin routine using a coin sold by Tango and a Quiver purse. Eric Qiu performed a pitchman-like routine using a

miniature Svengali deck that James O'Brien won at this evening's raffle. Eric also performed "Grandma's Necklace". Adrien Pierard entertained and baffled with an ambitious card routine that employed the use of a double backed card. He followed it up with a chop cup routine. Jack Diamond with a pretty coin routine using David Roth's Two Palm change and a Fred Kapps routine. Jack also performed a beautiful wallet routine. Many thanks to our performers and audience members.

Mentalism Night was the theme for our frigid January After-Meeting show produced by Tommy, The Man Who Knows Too Much, Burnett. With temperatures in the teens, members and guests gathered for a memorable evening. Besides producing and MCing the evening, Tommy also performed in between acts. But before the show began, a Broken Wand Ceremony was performed by 1st Vice President Robert Wallner and 2nd Vice President Tommy Burnett in memory of Past president James Stranges and member Joel Kahn. After sharing some memories the evenings entertainment began. With the help of a spectator, past president, Frank Reyes, performed a card effect utilizing an imaginary date book, a miniature wooden card box and a prediction. Next First V.P., Robert Wallner asked a spectator to think of a three digit number. He then asked her the significance of that number. Robert then revealed that that same number was actually his room number and to prove it he went into his pocket, pulled out a set of keys and attached was a room tag with the thought of number written on it. Zachary Adelmann performed a spirit touch effect using a spectator and a stuffed animal figure. Guy Crowl invited another spectator to assist him with an effect using a die. While Guy had his back turned, the spectator rolled a die as many times as she wished. She then stopped at a number and covered the results with her hands. Guy was able to reveal to her and the audience the selected number. He successfully demonstrated this ability several times. JVic, The Relationship Magician, displayed a plain easel with three frames. JVic made three predictions. He then had three members of the audience each name a card and placed them on the easel. When he flipped the back of the easel, his predictions matched those of the audiences' selections. We even had a surprise performance by Ring 26 friend, Doc Sasco. Thanks to all who attended and participated on this frigid evening. Follow us on our facebook page I.B.M. ring 26. *Frank Reyes*

RING 27, NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA – Earle J. Christenberry, Jr., Ring

Meets 1st Thu. each month, 7:00pm, Knuckleheads Sports Bar & Grill, 3535 Severn Ave. Ste. 10, Metairie, LA 70002. Optional meal anytime after 6:00pm – brief business meeting around 7:00 - 7:15 – followed by magic. KEVIN CARNEY, Vice Presiden / E-mail: kmcarney@charter.net 101 Rue De LaPaix, Slidell, LA 70458 / (985) 643-3611

February 05th, 2026 – Lenny "Tricky Trainwreck" and Darlene Bertrand, Allen Boudreaux, Craig Boudreaux, Kevin and Barbara Carney, Barry Fernelius, Jim Hussey, and Sarah Noel attended.

During our general jovial jocularity we acknowledged the continuing regular magic performance work of our compeer coterie including Joe Harrison, Dr. Joe Dalgo, Michael Dardant, Winston Helling; Barry Fernelius; Craig Boudreaux; Doug Conn, and others.

Barry Fernelius delighted all with a three phase Jack sandwich routine incorporating elements of Roy Walton's "Smiling Mule" and Bill Goldman's "Monkey in the Middle". Jim Hussey followed Fernelius by demonstrating to Darlene how cards and Rosetta Shuffles might invoke aspects of belief or conviction. Hussey credits Ed Marlo, Jon Racherbaumer, Paul Harris, Lennart Green, Sean Devine, and of course Roy Walton for inspiring this (still in development) Oil and Water artifice.

Allen Boudreaux showed us some new collector card decks and other goodies he acquired. Kevin Carney continued his Lock & Keys Series for Darlene with David De-Val's "The Seventh Key (Seven Keys Supreme)". This take on Annemann's "Keys of Baldpate" incorporates intriguing props, patter and presentation. Carney delivered and received a deserved round of applause. Naturally everyone wanted to examine the props ;) After the applause faded and everyone returned to their seats and beverages Carney had Darlene select a card from a shuffled deck, bury it in the pack and put the deck behind her back. He instructed her to turn the top card over, place it somewhere in the deck and return everything to the table. When the cards were spread, hey now!, the face up card was next to Darlene's selected card! We must all bow and give thanks to the hands-off magician.

Craig Boudreaux handed Lenny & Kevin five different colored rods and a mysterious tube for inspection. While Craig was turned away one of the colored rods was sealed inside the tube and the rest were hidden. Using some mental magic wizardry, Craig, with panache discerned the rod's color. Once again the props were scrutinized leaving perplexed smiles. The method for

these “Colour Divination Rods” is genius and imperceptible to the audience allowing the magician to have fun with presentation.

Craig broke out a custom Alice in Wonderland deck of cards to demonstratively recount how he cured Alice of measles while traveling through Wonderland in yet another fun version of “Measles” by Jay Sankey’s. Then Boudreaux concluded his set with his Mardi Gras Chop Cup routine “Cup & Ducks”. It delivered fun, laughs and received appropriate applause. This trick should also get extra attention and applause from Jeep owners!

Lenny “Tricky TrainWreck” Bertrand had a card randomly selected and locked inside a beautiful, yet small, treasure chest. Using another deck, TrainWreck had Barbara name any card. This card was removed and placed face up at a new random location inside the deck. The card value totals from Barbara’s card and the card next to it were used to create a new number that ultimately led to a card that matched the one in the treasure chest. I think the outcome was much better than it sounds on paper. Bertrand had Sarah Noel shuffle a deck before he selected a card who’s identity he would (attempt) to mentally transmit to her. Since Sarah said no clear notice of the card Lenny made excuses like, “I’m still new at this, etc.” He then instructed her to do some simple card work that resulted in her quickly finding two cards to match the value and suit of the original selected card (an adaptation of Daryl’s “Untouched”). TrainWreck then presented for Darlene a special original origami “Happy 46th Anniversary” card effect that revealed the dates of their first date and wedding.

Inspired by Train’s rendering and explanation of his version of Daryl’s “Untouched”, Sarah Noel gave us her first official performance. Sarah was clear, concise and entertaining. Yea!

Before we wrapped up for the evening Craig Boudreaux displayed to Sarah (and us) some Emoji cards. These were fun and versatile.

Leonard Bertrand

RING 29, LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS – Little Rock Magic Ring

Meets 1st Thur., 6:45 pm., First Community Bank, 17820 Central Parkway, Little Rock, AR. / Web site: www.LittleRockMagic.org

MARK MULKERIN, Secretary

Little Rock Magic Ring 29 met Saturday, February 7, 2026 at the Stage Coach Clubhouse. President Marty Haughn presided.

The meeting began shortly after 1pm with Marty explaining the use and etiquette of challenge coins as he awarded Ring 29 challenge

coins to members who were paid up and present. Dan Hecke, who had designed the Ring 29 logo used on the coin, was first to receive a coin. Marty continued on to other business including the need for two more performers for the annual show and the plans to restart a Junior Ring. He went on to discuss inviting reporters from local papers to do a profile on the Ring as one hadn’t been done in some time and it would help with visibility and awareness. Marty then offered a more detailed account of the history and use of challenge coins before wrapping up with a reminder of Nathan Kranzo’s upcoming lecture on February 25.

Performances began with Jim Stripling presenting then eliciting feedback on a number-based mentalism trick that he is developing. Shawn Miller was first to perform with a card chosen and signed by Joseph Santany transported into Shawn’s mint case. Melvin Brown offered a series of tricks with a predicted drink, the comedic reveal of a chosen card, and a riff on cut and restored ropes. David Duggie then used his special origami skills to magically link a torn red card with a torn blue card. Dan magically revealed the color of a disk chosen from a collection of six disks. Sid Salmans mused on the annoyances of travel while demonstrating transporter technology using a silk to appear elsewhere. Derrick Rose made a coin appear and then disappear with the aid of a lighter.

Mark Mulkerin performed next having a card chosen from a blue deck which is revealed to be red backed before having the deck all transform to red backed. Bob Bullock then presented a series of impressive effects using a rope, knots, and a ring. Joseph offered a series of tricks with his take on Professor’s Nightmare, Out of this World, and a ring hopping on a rubber band. Marty concluded the performances with chosen number cards adding up to his prediction with a magic kicker revealed when the cards are turned over.

Last up, the always generous Jim Henson demonstrated and gave away many tricks and magic resources from karate coins to split flowers. The meeting concluded at about 3:15pm.

Mark Mulkerin

RING 32, ALLENTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA – Allentown Society of Magicians, Inc.

Meets 2nd Mon. of the month, at 7:00 p.m., at Hops Restaurant, 1945 W. Columbia Ave., Allentown, PA.

Web site: www.ring32.rhhomepage.com.

JOE KEPPEL, President

Our February meeting was well attended, as we all were tired of shoveling snow and the

freezing temperatures. Our business meeting was brief but lively, as we got an update on George Reiger's adventures in Las Vegas. Among other events and shows, George got to sit with and converse with David Copperfield and Neil Patrick Harris.

But mostly, the meeting was a night of presenting great magic. And, as usual, it didn't disappoint. Tom Yurasits started things off with an appropriate February trick that was Valentine's Day related. Five big red hearts full of different numbers that he accurately predicted which number you were thinking of. Very puzzling. A trick that came out of the book, "Valentines Magic Book," by James Baker. George Reiger did a version of linking rings, only using dental floss. Joe Keppel, our card expert, did a complicated routine with eight cards. Four red backed aces and four blue backed aces. Using several different versions of elmsley count and other manipulations, this trick seemed impossible.

Don Severn did a clever routine with patter of 3D printers, and then changed a two dimensional die into a real 3D die. Very clever. Yours truly, Al Grout, did a selected card penetrating through a cloth handkerchief. Jeff Stortz did a clever card trick that was quite puzzling. We'll miss Jeff next meeting, as he is getting foot surgery. Get well soon. Bruce Ward finished things off with a complicated card trick that involved the entire deck. Lots of laughs and great magic throughout.

Our March meeting will have the theme of presenting your rarest, most valuable, or most unusual trick. I can't wait. *Al Grout*

RING 43, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS – Harlan Tarbell Ring

3rd Fri. except July and August, 7:00 p.m., at Magic, Inc. 1838 W. Lawrence, Ave., Chicago, IL
MIKE KAMLET, President / E-mail: kamlet@ameritech.net
175 E. Delaware #8502, Chicago, IL 60611 / (312) 266-2129
Web site: www.ring43.org

The January meeting was our annual Holiday Party held at Mr Beef and Pizza and for those willing to brave to weather great magic and great food were served.

First up was Fernando Garcia who did a nice mentalism trick with Alec Schraegle as his volunteer. He handed 8 postcards with weird pictures on them and Alec chose one. The cards were then clipped to a rope on command all but one card fell off the rope clips.

Next came Terence Hunter who came to play with a whole bunch of tricks and magical effects. He did a complete show including a colorful sock trick and causing a borrowed deck of cards to penetrate into a balloon. He then got Anna to

volunteer for yet another nice card trick.

President Mike Kamlet tore up a newspaper and after each tear Asher Schulman decided which piece to throw away and which to keep. When Asher was left with just one piece Mike told him the word that was printed on that piece. A great mentalism trick!

Next up we took a break to have our Raffle. Six lucky members each got a great prize.

After the break, Mr Furio took the stage to perform a rope routine with a red rope. It started as a well known "Professor's Nightmare" routine but then took off in different directions to turn a classic routine into something more elaborate and innovative!

Finally, John Hutsebaut, our MC for the show, Introduced The Box of Mystery, a series of nested boxes That when closed and then reopened Produced a colored ball. As a one of the balls turned into yet another box which then produced a gold coin. John then performed His original ring and rope routine.

A great time was had by all and even those who didn't win the raffle prizes got to take home a box of delicious pizza. *John Hutsebaut*

RING 46, OKLAHOMA CITY – Seymour Davis Ring

Meets 1st Mon. of month, New Beginning Fellowship Church, 15601 S. Pennsylvania, OKC
LEE WOODSIDE, Secretary
E-mail: WoodsideLee@hotmail.com
Ring Web site: www.okcmagic.org

Michael King began our February meeting by showing a giant printout of our original Ring 46 I.B.M. Charter from back in 1946. Our Ring's namesake, Seymour Davis was one of the charter members. Michael stated that this year marks the 80th Anniversary of the founding of Ring 46.

President Cassidy Smith showed a red rose and caused it to vanish in a flash of fire. He then caused it to reappear and multiply into a small bouquet of roses. Cassidy then led a discussion of the use of roses in magic and demonstrated some magical moves with roses.

Cassidy announced that Jonathan Meyer has generously offered the use of his magic show venue for an 80th Anniversary Celebration. Lee Woodside moved that we have the celebration in lieu of our April meeting and that the Ring provide snacks and soft drinks for the attendees. He also recommended that we invite Seymour's daughters and their families to the festivities. The motion carried.

Lee Woodside showed a copy of lecture notes from a lecture that Seymour Davis gave back in 1970. Lee said that he had received permission from Seymour's daughter, Dayna Davis Savage

to share them with members of the Ring. Lee said that he would email a pdf file of the notes to anyone who wanted a copy.

Jim Green said that when anyone asked if he had tricks up his sleeve, he would remove a Trix candy bar from his sleeve. Jim then showed an orange with a cord passing through it. He was able to cause the orange to stop at any point on the cord. Afterward, he removed the cord and passed the orange out for examination.

David Teeman showed ten bead necklaces of different colors. After a procedure where he and Grant Vinson eliminated all but one of the necklaces, Dave showed that he was wearing a matching necklace.

Derrick Beeson caused a finger ring to appear on his finger. He then moved the ring from one finger to another magically. Finally, the ring vanished in a flash of fire.

Bruce Rodesney lifted a cylinder off the table to show that a sugar bowl was underneath, filled with sugar. He replaced the cylinder, said a magic word, and the sugar had turned into candy.

Michael King kept everyone spellbound by visually turning one type of candy into another.

Lee Woodside waved his magic wand and recited a spell that he claimed would temporarily change everyone in the audience into a seven year-old. Lee asked if anyone liked lollipops and got a resounding "yes." He reached into a small sack several times and each time he would bring out a different flavor lollipop and replace it in the sack. Finally, he pulled out a lemon lollipop, which he said was his favorite, and placed it in his pocket. He offered to share the lollipops and handed the sack to an audience member. Alas, the spell was broken and the sack was empty.

Cassandra Crowe placed a finger ring on her finger. Using magic, she was able to pull the ring through her finger. She allowed the ring to be examined.

Cassidy Smith placed slips of papers containing the names of the performers into his hat. Two names were drawn and David Teeman became the proud new owner of a package of hat tears. Derrick Beeson won a package of napkins for making paper roses. *Lee Woodside*

RING 48, PEORIA, ILLINOIS – Harold Martin Ring

Meets 2nd Wed. 7:00 pm, Peoria Pizza Works. 3921 N. Prospect Rd., Peoria Heights, IL. Website: peoriamagicians.com
MICHAEL BAKER, Secretary / E-mail: themagiccompany@aol.com

In the absence of our President, Yort, Vice President, Stefan Evans called the January meeting to order. Seven people were in atten-

dance, including guest/former member, Ed Dentino. Introductions were made around the table. Ed brought his collection of magic books and some tricks and explained how he acquired some of them. He donated the collection to the club. Thank you, Ed!

The next PMA get together will be in 2027. The club is targeting the months of May or June. Mention was made of the Get-Together in Springfield this year.

We learned that the current meeting location will no longer be available in a few months. We will once again be looking for a new location for our monthly meetings.

Phil Raso mentioned this year is the 100th anniversary of Houdini's death and suggested the club do something themed around it. Stefan shared information from Jerry Tupper's e-mail for a possible venue for the club to put on a show.

Jay Zentko announced he was accepting 2026 dues, and several members paid on the spot.

For the magic portion, Avalon showed several new tricks that he is 3D printing. All will be available at his magic shop.

Michael Baker performed a trick he created called Morphological. Four alike cards, change to 4 other alike cards.

Stefan Evans and Michael Baker

RING 49, HAMILTON, ONTARIO, CANADA – The Doug Henning Magic Wand Club

Meets 2nd Tue., 7:00p.m. (except July and August), Ryerson United Church, 265 Wilson St. E, Lancaster, ON

DOUG HUNT, President, / E-mail: stiltrecord@yahoo.ca (519) 750-4703
Web site: ring49magic.com

This month (Feb 2026) I.B.M. Ring 49 featured a lecture from Shelley Summers AKA Dotsy the Clown. Shelley's business, which obviously includes being a clown, extends far beyond her personal appearances into hiring other performers, party supplies and rentals, and selling supplies for performers.

As usual the meeting opened with President Doug "the Great" Hunt welcoming guests and new members and making the usual housekeeping announcements. He then introduced Peter Wiltshire, one of our most active members, who demonstrated a new effect he had made. The effect was sort of a rising card effect, except the card never rose!! (I never said he was a good trick developer.) Then he pulled away a wand that the deck was resting on and all the cards EXCEPT the chosen card dropped into the box. (On second thought – he is pretty good.) Great fun – and a great effect.

Our teaching table was hosted by one of our

newer members, Ted Chisholm. Ted performed an old effect called Micawber which was published in the October 1952 issue of *The Linking Ring*. First, this was a very good effect; someone simply selected a random card, and then a deck was taken out which had one reversed card in it. That card indicated where the selected card would be. Ted moved to the appropriate face down card, turned it over, et Voila – success! But in my mind, Ted’s selection of an older effect speaks to a second point – too often we are obsessed with the ‘latest and greatest’, always looking for something ‘new’. There is nothing wrong with older ideas and methods. Often the patter needs sprucing up, but the effects can still be very strong. (Now how do I get off this soapbox?)

But Shelley was the highlight of the evening. Her personal story was riveting – started making money on the side in high school clowning, supplemented her income in university (what you American’s call college) and by the time she graduated she had a full-blown business going. Years later Covid hit and like most performers her business suffered but she found a new product (lawn signs) she could pivot into, and she rolled with life’s proverbial punches. Maintaining the flexibility to ‘pivot’ was a keynote of her talk.

Shelley spoke about her retail offerings, her staffing of talent to become a known supplier of clowns and other performers (including Santa’s), equipment supply, lawn sign business and her ‘power of three’ philosophy, that is the third time you get a request for something – start providing it! Shelley spoke of the importance of keeping up to date with interest of your audience. So, if you’re a children’s performer, that means things like K-pop demon hunters and Minecraft. That’s hard for us older people, but you have to meet your audience where they are at.

Shelley wound up with probably her strongest points, all relating to the importance of using social media and how marketing our services has changed (what, no yellow pages??). This was a killer night – we learned so much from this star speaker. Highly recommended.

Rene Chouinard

RING 55, PHOENIX, ARIZONA – Bert Easley / Danny Dew Ring

Meets 1st Tue., 7:00 pm, at Denny’s, 3315 Scottsdale Rd., Scottsdale, AZ / Web site: www.ring55.org
TANK HANNA, President (480) 343-0034
E-mail: president@PhoenixMagicClub.com

Our first meeting of the year focused on money magic in all its forms – coins, bills, psy-

chology, and a few unexpected twists. The evening delivered a strong mix of visual magic, storytelling, and clever thinking, with a lot of variety packed into a short program.

Gary Lazok kicked things off with a lively combination of coin magic and bill transformations. His classic Magic Dust/four-coin routine played well, followed by a surprise change of \$2 bills into \$20s. Wisely – and refreshingly – he resisted the urge to change them back, because... why would you?

Bill Halmi blended personal storytelling with practical magic, sharing a tale from a European trip where he lost his wallet. Fortunately, Thompson Change and Instant Paper to Money came to the rescue, funding what turned out to be a great vacation.

Anvesh Yalamanchili presented a four-ace routine framed around a story of someone who claimed to do impossible things with a deck of cards – and then proved it. Simple, confident, and effective.

Doug Northway delivered a fun mentalism piece involving a stack of bills passed through the audience. Three spectators freely selected bills, each with unique serial numbers, and Doug successfully read all three minds.

Jeff Peterson made a quick but memorable appearance, producing a \$100 bill using the Wormhole Deck. Sadly, he declined to use it to pay for everyone’s dinner.

John O’Hare demonstrated Weird Gravity Coins, a visual and curious piece that added a nice change of texture to the evening, and reminded the secretary what an awesome move Han Ping Chien is.

Tank Hanna, our club president, thought the theme was Monkey Magic. Fortunately, the stuffed monkey he brought turned out to have impressive mind-reading abilities, saving the day and the theme.

James Knight performed Color Psychology, a long-anticipated routine where multiple audience members were subtly influenced – or possibly predicted. Either way, it landed with both amazement and fun.

Raoul Limeres presented an effect he learned from a YouTube video that was in another language, but the closed captions stopped before the entire effect was explained, so his ending was Lost in Translation...

Brad Zinn followed with an inside-out bill (visual surprise!), and then a coin exchange, combining transformations with solid handling, amazing his two volunteers and the audience.

Roger Lefebvre showcased two effects:

Eagles from Nowhere and Copper Copper Silver, packing a lot of magic into a short performance. It was nice to see more coin magic in this meeting!

David Xu closed the night with one of the most creative moments of the meeting: a mentalism routine performed using a dove pan. Yes – a dove pan. Challenged to make the prop do something unexpected, David absolutely delivered.

A strong start to the year with a well-balanced mix of magic and mentalism, plenty of creativity, and no shortage of laughs. If this meeting is any indication, 2026 is off to a very good start.

The theme of our second January meeting was Mental Magic, but first we held a Broken Wand Ceremony for Jimmy Von Pickrell, a long-time member who passed away in early January. Thanks to Josh Colón for performing the ceremony.

After a short break we continued the meeting with Bill Halmi's Symbols of Power, a custom presentation of Chad Long's Priority – with a modern take on classic slate moves. The performance concluded with the chosen symbol of power appearing magically written inside two sealed pieces of cardboard.

Bruce Kundin performed a drawing telepathy effect. Three audience members each received a small whiteboard and a card with a random word from a shuffled deck. After returning the cards to the deck, each drew a picture representing their chosen word, and Bruce used his mind-reading skills to duplicate each drawing.

Jeff Peterson performed Cocktail Cards, using a deck featuring various cocktail recipes. With the assistance of a helper a cocktail was selected, and Jeff successfully read her mind to reveal the chosen recipe, surprising the audience with his mental magic skills.

David Boehm performed The Tarot Book of Days. Showing 31 days worth of different 3-card tarot spreads, a helper picked a date and a reading was given using those cards. Afterwards an envelope was opened showing the 3 cards chosen by chance were predicted.

David Goldberg performed Prediction, an effect learned from YouTube, where with the help of two assistants, a shuffled deck and rolled dice were used. Despite some heckling from the audience, the card at the position indicated by the dice matched a prior prediction.

Anvesh Yalamanchili performed a card effect in which a thought-of card traveled into someone's backpack across the room. Anvesh got together with some others after the meeting to

brainstorm ideas for making the effect even stronger.

James Knight performed his effect Booked, a version of the classic Pegasus Page routine. James is a full-time professional and it shows, even with his "magic club" performances.

Frank Pastula showed Max Maven's B'wave, demonstrating the effect and then explaining a way to force the numbers 6 and 7. Use that in front of children at your own risk.

Gary Lazok performed a card effect with a helper cutting a deck into five piles, selecting a card and returning it to one of the piles. The piles were gathered in a random order but despite the mixing, Gary successfully found the chosen card.

Brett Colboch showcased some impressive coin manipulation followed by a vanishing Oreo effect. (The secretary mentioned that he's made a lot of Oreos disappear over the years, but the method was very different.)

Zhe Xu performed Guess the Movie. He used a deck of cards featuring movie posters, one chosen and returned to the deck, then shuffled. By reading his helper's mind, Zhe correctly identified the chosen movie.

Our meeting room is threatening to become too small for our growing club. But what a nice problem to have!

Jay Jennings

RING 56, EVANSVILLE, INDIANA – The Mystic IKI Ring

Meets 2nd. Mon. of month at home of Norris Priest, Henderson, KY

MIKE EAKINS, Secretary

E-mail: TheMikeEakins@gmail.com

Website: www.ring56.com

The February meeting of Ring 56 began with the installation of officers for the year. Our earlier scheduled date for doing this at our annual banquet had to be postponed due to a large winter storm. Last year's officers continue their work for this year: President Joseph Franklin, Vice President Frank Findley, Treasurer Bruce Mabis, Sergeant at Arms John Rhoades, Secretary Mike Eakins, and Directors Norris Priest and Joe DiVietro.

Business included a possible lecture from Willy Monroe in April, rescheduling the annual banquet, and Frank Findley's announcement that a nursing home was looking for magicians to entertain their residents. Local guest magician Joshua Maxwell spoke about his plans for a magic convention in Evansville in September. Locations are being scouted, and he has others lining up lectures and shows. Conventions are big undertakings, and we hope it all comes together easily for him.

The rest of the evening was dedicated to an

estate auction. The family of former member Arnold Becker gave his magic collection to Ring 56 member Norris Priest. It took quite a while for Norris to go through the equipment, group things together, and note the conditions. Not only did he work on getting the collection ready for auction, but Norris generously donated all proceeds from it to the Ring. President Joseph Franklin was auctioneer, and at the conclusion every item was sold. There were a large variety of offerings, with some collectibles included. Bidders won some nice equipment at bargain prices, such as classic dove magic, a vintage Silk Serenade in mint condition, and an original comb bound Mark Wilson Course In Magic, among many others. It was a profitable evening for the Ring, with many thanks to Norris and Joseph for a fun auction.

Mike Eakins

RING 59, NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT – Frederick Eugene Powell Ring

Meets 1st Mon. each month, 7:00 p.m. at River Valley Retirement Community, 101 Oakview Drive, Trumbull, CT
CJ MAY, Secretary / E-mail: cyril.may@aya.yale.edu
Web site: www.ibring59.org

Midwinter Magic was created by magicians attending the February meeting of the Greater New Haven Magic Society. Jay Reidy “baked” up a cold snowman, fitting the polar vortex settled over Connecticut. CJ May - Resourcerer brought some Brass City magic, fitting to Waterbury Harry Potter Day. “The Amazing Andy” Charney magically produced a restaurant coupon fitting the exact total of the random menu items selected by the entirety of magicians gathered. Join in the fun! We gather on the first Monday of the month at the River Valley Retirement Community in Trumbull, CT. *CJ May*

RING 68, TOLEDO, OHIO – Toledo Society of Magicians

Meets 2nd Tues.. each month, 6:30 p.m. Location varies.
PATRICK PRZYSECKI, President
E-mail: patrick@patrickmagic.com

Ring 68 met on Tuesday, February 10, 2026, at Ye Olde Durtz Bird in Toledo, located downtown on St. Clair Street. Six magicians (George Magill, Martin Jarrett, Johnny New York, Boomer Reynolds, Michael Knight, and Doug Ferguson) were in attendance. After a brief discussion of an upcoming lecture (February 26 Javi Benitez), the magic portion of the meeting began.

Johnny performed a trick using the “wow” gimmick and a clever combination of Chicago Opener and Red Hot Mama. Martin shared a rising card effect that he purchased at Magifest, one that allowed him to cause a random chosen card to rise from a deck inside its case. He also showed a Queen of Hearts effect. George presented a “moving hole” demonstration originat-

ed by Lloyd Barnes. He also showed how the four aces could find a selected card. Doug amazed everyone with a couple of spelling tricks, one based on the 15-card principle and the other derived from Jim Steinmeyer’s “9 Card Problem.”

Doug Ferguson

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

January: The meeting was called to order by President Larry Bean and opened with discussion about the recent Christmas party magic shows that were attended and the upcoming Cavalcade of Magic. Larry Bean started off the performances and Show and Tell with Ribbon Fantastique. Clyde Hayre shared some brief history of the Massey’s Ribbon Fantastique and Tenyo’s Su Te Kina. Jody Birchfield performed a Money change routine and a Coin thru Scarf Penetration routine, finishing with a ring and rope routine. Rod Barrett showed a set of dice and holder along with a couple of Dice Magic Books, followed by a beautiful set of magic playing cards and holder. Patrick Kelley showed his carry case for his multiplying balls and performed a new card matrix routine. Ken Zelnick showed a number of small tricks. Ron Ingram performed a 2026 Tenyo piece called Jail Break. Clyde shared some U.F. Grant phantom tubes. At the closing of the meeting, many members retired to a local restaurant to continue the camaraderie.

February: Meeting was called to order by President Larry Bean and we discussed upcoming auctions, shows, and lectures, with particular attention turned to the Cavalcade of Magic on the 27th and 28th of March 2026. After all the details were worked out, we turned to Show and Tell with the theme of “packs flat and plays big.” Members showed 3D printed props, Stanyon’s magic magazine compilation book, two versions of Pavel’s Walking Knot, Marked Cards, books on Dice, and Tom Craven’s Bottled Air. Effects performed included an impromptu ACAAN, Out of This World, The Memory of Trees, and Cher Chez La Femme, with some 3 and 6 foot silks being produced from nowhere. After all of this, we were dismissed and re-adjourned at a local restaurant for more fellowship and discussion.

Ron Ingram

RING 76, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA – Honest Sid Gerhart Ring

Meets 7:00 pm 2nd Mon. of the month at Immaculate Conception Church located at 2540 San Diego Ave., San Diego, CA 92110
MAGIC MIKE STILWELL, President / Web site: www.ring76.com

For our January 12th meeting Librarian Gary Salisbury greeted us while we signed-in and

were issued raffle tickets. President Magic Mike Stilwell welcomed 29 members, 10 guests and two visiting magicians: Anjo Sanchez (later auditioning to become a member) and David Meredith, the former owner of The Magic Shop in Old Town San Diego State Historical Park.

We were glad to learn from Membership-VP James Thayer that our active membership continues to grow. We now have 78 members. Professor Paul Dwork told us that on February 28th he is hosting the "Rotary Creates Magic" show at the Carlsbad Cultural Arts Center. This will be his 40th annual fundraiser! Thanks to Paul, our club will receive \$30 from each ticket sold when "I.B.M." is clicked at www.magic-magicmagic.com/rotary-magic. Sergeant-at-Arms Mark Booth noted that from January 27th we can register for the "2026 Magic Live!" convention in Las Vegas, Nevada. Greg Wauson noted that award-winning, comedy magician Lucy Darling is performing on March 24th at The Balboa Theater in the San Diego's Historic Gaslamp Quarter. We all sang "Happy Birthday" to Gary Salisbury because he will soon be celebrating his 39th birthday for the 41st time.

On a more serious note, President Magic Mike Stilwell conducted the traditional Broken Wand ceremony to honor the passing of our club member Charlie Goot. Mike reminisced about his pleasant hospital visits with Charlie, about Charlie playing his ukelele, and how Charlie inspired so many of us with his Gospel Magic. We paused for a "moment of silence" as Gary Salisbury ribbon-wrapped the pieces of Charlie's personal magic wand. Gary bowed to offer the bundle to Charlie's son Chuck Goot, Charlie's daughter Debbie Gray and her husband Jeff Gray.

For showtime, Entertainment-VP Paul Dwork introduced the eight "Kids' Magic" contestants:

For his audition, "Riccardo G" Gulioni performed with his "Magic Coloring Book".

For his audition, professional magician Anjo Sanchez performed a remarkably intricate act of rope magic.

Modie Moore made us laugh-and-shout while he toyed with a "Die in The Wooden Box".

Max... with an x introduced us to a different approach to performing "What's Next".

Magical Ms. Charley guided her three willing contestants to tear their large Afghan Bands.

Professor Paul had active knotty silks. His lovely assistant found an egg in a see-thru bag. Others helped him cut and restore pieces of tape.

Mr. Funtastic asked his lovely assistant to

change the color of a doll's dress. They both played a PlayDoh game (with a sneaky snake).

Greg Wauson fooled us kids with his "Hippity-Hoppity Rabbits" named Hou and Dono. (They like eating purple puppy chow.)

Members voted and our ballots were tabulated. Congratulations to the "Kids' Magic" contest winner, Mr. Funtastic (aka Dale Law).

As an encore to the "Kids' Magic" contest, mentalist Mark Booth amazed us with his "Travel-Trip Confabulation". Mark predicted his assistant's destination (Hawaii), flight cost (\$653) as well as her in-flight complimentary drink (margarita).

To close the meeting, nine raffle prizes were handed-out, and the "50/50 Draw" increased the funds of our treasury.

Thank you Alvin Revilas for serving us fresh hot coffee with your brewing equipment.

Kim "Max" Long

RING 81, SARASOTA, FLORIDA – Inez Kitchen Blackstone

Meets 1st Thu., 6:00 p.m. "Social Gathering," 7:00 p.m. start time.

Trinity United Methodist Church in Haley Hall, 4150 South Shade Ave., Sarasota, FL

STAR NEWMAN, President / (651) 491-1050

E-MAIL: prettymagical@gmail.com / Web site: www.ibmring81.com

The Sarasota club did a very successful public show – our 2nd annual – for our host church in the evening of Saturday, January 31. With Dan Walsh as our host and emcee, Gary & Kathy Roberts, Dick Stevens, Tom Vorjohan and Star Newman delivered a fun-filled show that raised over \$1,000 for Trinity United Methodist! They were delighted, and they are already looking forward to next year. A special shout out to one of our newest members, Ed del Castillo, who helped backstage and moved a large shrub for us.

The following week, our February meeting had an impressive seventeen attending for some "Comedy Magic" and much more. Doing the "Teach-a-Trick" portion, Howard Cohen did a version of Spectator Cuts the Aces using David Pitchford as his assistant. This was a clean and strong version that Howard learned from a David Regal video. President Star Newman had us all tell a favorite joke to start, and then she shared two pieces; first, some large money that was offered to a spectator to keep or give back to Star that ended up matching a prediction in two amazing ways. Second, she had a beaded necklace she was wearing, and she took it off and cut the beads off into a glass that miraculously came back together moments later.

Hot off his workshop floor, Dick Stevens showed a picture of a rabbit that went from

white to black and then red and yellow on a two-sided frame. Frank Velasco shared the Dating Game by Tom Frame using Star Newman and Jack Walters to get the Kings and Queens to match up in a deck from all over Vegas. Bob Banta brought a great Jo Anne the Duck and also used the assistance of Jack Walters to do his presentation of Hector the Duck. Continuing his journey to perfect his book test presentation, "Diviner Dan the Dream Detective" Walsh shared his latest version of the psychic hotline (not!) effect using Ed del Castillo as a willing helper while Dan was enclosed in a hysterical cardboard box on his head. Always great to have Wic Cooney share one of his tricks, and he had an arrow on a sign board that always seemed to point left. Visiting from 90 miles away, Bruce Young did a comedic version of Professor's Nightmare using Harlan's awakening – just beautiful and smoothly done.

For the most visually stunning as well as best tongue-in-cheek presentation, we welcomed Geoff Williams who took magazine print the size of money and changed it in a snap to cash and back again while talking about Warren Hamilton and the musical he inspired...too funny! Tom Vorjohan talked a bit about the linking of comedy and magic, then did a Blendo effect while reciting a rather obscure poem about an elevator accident. To end our magic, Ed del Castillo brought the meeting full circle by sharing Ed Marlo's version of Cutting to Four Aces. A great evening of magic, and thank you to Dick Stevens who brought our snacks for the night.

Tom Vorjohan

RING 89, BATTLE CREEK, MICHIGAN – Neil Foster Ring

Meets the second Monday of every month, 7 p.m., at American Museum of Magic located at 107 E. Michigan Ave. Marshall, MI 49068.

ERIC SULLIVAN, President

140 W. Michigan Ave., Marshall, MI 49068 / E-mail: trazdal@att.net

The January I.B.M. Neil Foster Ring 89 meeting is in the books. Susan, John Sherwood, Kevin Rosewood, Phil (Le Grand Wysard Phillip), and Eric Sullivan (Trazdel) were all in attendance!

Eric kicked off the meeting. We talked through different events coming up in Marshall. One event, the Ice, Wine, Beer, and Blues festival, is taking place January 30th and 31st. Kevin is reaching out to Maria's Uncorked to see if Ring 89 would be able to perform some walk-around magic. Kevin will keep us posted on any new information.

The upcoming Michigan magic day was also discussed; it is currently scheduled for April 25th, 2026, and will take place in Flint. More details to come.

Phil got the magic started with an astounding Baffling Boomerangs routine. Phil shared a story that made this classic kids' effect one-of-a-kind. He even brought some boomerangs to share.

Kevin was next to the stage and shared a coin through a silk effect that bent time.

The next meeting will take place on February 9th at 7:00 p.m. at the American Museum of Magic in Marshall, Michigan. The theme is Old Magic.

Until then, keep practicing, performing, and sharing amazement.

Kevin Rosewood

RING 90, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

Meets 1st Thu. of each month about 7:00 pm at Heights Cumberland Presbyterian Church, Academy & Moon NE.

BILL FIENNING, Secretary

(505) 298-0743 / E-mail: wcfienn@att.net

Ring 90's January theme – Mentalism vs. Mentalist Tricks – sparked thoughtful discussion, including: a nostalgic nod to the legendary Mind-Reading Duck routine, various types of Swami Gimmicks, spirits, mind science, and Dead Rebel Products (adding a dash of modern edge to the evening's reflections). The evening opened with exciting news: the incomparable Alain Nu may soon grace Ring 90 in Albuquerque, NM. Though the date remains to be finalized, anticipation is already building for what promises to be an unforgettable performance.

No Ring meeting would be complete without performances: David Dunlap opened the show with his take on Free Will Coins, a demonstration of choice, chance, and uncanny prediction. His calm confidence set the tone for the magic to follow. Bill Fienning presented a routine inspired by 51 Faces North, claiming he had received a whispered tip from his dearly departed Aunt Elsie: the 4 of Hearts would reveal itself. With a fully shuffled deck, he dealt cards one by one until a spectator called halt – then dramatically flipped the top card of the tabled pile. Sure enough, Aunt Elsie's prophecy held true. Not finished charming the spirits, Bill borrowed a newly-opened/shuffled deck and turned his back to the audience. Holding the cards behind him, faces outward, he began correctly naming the color – red or black – of more than a dozen cards as he drew them from the deck. When pressed for an explanation, he simply smiled and credited "certain unseen collaborators," leaving the room delightfully uncertain about just how alone he had been up there. Bill's final act felt like a scene lifted from an ancient saga. He presented a watch displaying a time,

clearly shown to the audience. From a box he produced an aged, mystical rune – an artifact that seemed to hum with history of the occult. Beneath it lay a slip of paper bearing the exact same time the watch had shown moments earlier. But the true gasp came when the watch was revealed once more...now completely devoid of hands! A perfect blend of storytelling and impossible mystery.

Chrissy Beyerlein brought a whisper of mentalism's deeper mysteries to the room – the idea of mind-over-physical-matter. With poised, deliberate focus, she melted a black Ten of Clubs straight through a red Three of Diamonds, the cards softening and sliding through each other as if shaped by thought alone. When the pieces were examined, the black ink had vanished entirely from the Ten and reappeared on the back of the red card – a crisp reminder of what might be possible if the mind could nudge matter itself.

Ring 90 continues to thrive not merely because of the tricks performed, but because of the camaraderie, curiosity, and shared passion that fill the room each month. Whether discussing conventions, debating the nuances of mentalism, or marveling at a watch that forgets its own hands, members leave each gathering a little more inspired than when they arrived.

We held our annual Magic Flea Market at our February Ring meeting. Last year's Board of Directors was nominated for 2026, except that our secretary for two decades is retiring. Chrissy Beyerlein was nominated to be our new secretary. Elections are held at the March Ring meeting.

Chrissy Beyerlein

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.

ROY HOPWOOD, President /Treasurer

Web site: www.ibmring92.com

This is our first Vancouver Magic Circle meeting for the new year. Graham Kita was first to arrive and open up for what would be a great meeting of magic to kick off the new year. Helping Graham to set up were Charles Gauthier, Roy Hopwood, Mike Vetterli, who brought his stage lights, thanks Mike! Also present on the last night of his VMC presidency was Simon Cassegrain. Graham and past International President Alex Zander set up for the night's initiation of our newest members later in the evening.

Simon started things off about 7:30pm with the announcement of the postponement of the

recent passing of past VMC president Greg Dietlein's Broken Wand ceremony due to several family and friends who could not attend. Simon also mentioned the upcoming Broken Wand Ceremony for past member Ken Leonard at the February meeting. We commenced a moment of silence for both Greg and Ken. Simon made a few other announcements before starting the annual AGM. He introduced our newest members, Julius Palme, Michael Levy, and Melinda Zhao, plus the upcoming Children's Magician of the Year contest to be held at Rick Bronson's House of Comedy during Shawn Farquhar's Week of Magic in March. He also mentioned the ongoing discussions to revamp the contest judging system spearheaded by our Director of Competitions Mike Vetterli.

Graham started the AGM off with opening the floor to nominations for the next VMC executive committee. Nominated and voted on for new positions were John Stenning for Sergeant at Arms, Charles Gauthier for 1st VP and continuing as secretary as well, Henry Tom as 2nd VP, and Roy Hopwood as the next President of the Vancouver Magic Circle. In addition to his newest position, Roy is also going to remain as club Treasurer. Congratulations to all the new members of the Executive Team!

Graham then talked about the many upgrades Simon Cassegrain has made to the VMC web site and Members area, with still more improvements to come. Thank you, Simon, for all your hard work on this project! Alex Zander came to the floor to talk about the upcoming PCAM convention. The PCAM will be taking place March 26 – 29, 2026 in New Westminster in conjunction with Past International President Shawn Farquhar's Magic week. Acts announced so far are Benjamin Barnes and Bizzarro, with two more acts to be announced soon. A great line up so far! Way to go guys!

Next up was our treasurer, Roy Hopwood, to give a club financial report. The club is in a strong financial position for the end of 2025, with positive cash flow from the previous year. Roy has done a fantastic job managing the club's finances this past year, thank you Roy! The meeting then broke for a short break before resuming for Michael Levy and Julius Palme's performance of their three tricks, which is a requirement for joining the club. Both did an outstanding display of magic, and both were unanimously voted to join the club. Great job gentlemen!

As the club does every January, it was now time for each of the past presidents to do a trick

for the members. First up was Yoosik Oum, followed by Alex Zander with a brand-new routine, then Graham Kita. Billy Hsueh declined as he didn't bring his Tea Pot with him. The floor was then opened to members who wished to perform a trick. Ki-seon, John Stenning, and James Nguyen all came forward, and each one performed a fantastic card routine. Great job guys!

Scott Barker

RING 93, DUBUQUE, IOWA – Tri-State Magic Club

3rd Sun., 2:00pm, Adam's Dance Connection, 900 Jackson, Dubuque, Iowa

JIM MCCREA, President, (309) 235-6215

E-mail: jrmfpc@gmail.com

The meeting was brought to order at 2:00 p.m. Officers present were Jim McCrea, President; Mark Pepelea, Vice President; and Chris Westemeier, Treasurer. Other members present were Adam Kieffer, Marie Chenery, Terry Paik, Lou Reif, and Phil Niles. Absent were Bob Beardsley, Secretary, Margaret Bussan, and Phyllis Fishnick. The club was honored to have a family of three as guests and performed a short twenty minute show for them. Adam opened the meeting by singing "Do You Believe in Magic" written for the club by now deceased member Rob Gomoll who wrote monthly poems for Ring #93.

Mark started a trick with 21 cards and dealt them in three columns of seven as usual. But then he took a turn and asked the person to think of which row their card was in then the color then the suit and Mark was able to find the card without any further dealing by receiving the information mentally.

Chris performed one card trick and a penny disappearing trick. He also performed three rubber band tricks: Crazy Man's Handcuffs, Crazy Sam's Handcuffs, and a hatch work pattern. Chris gave instructions and eight cards to each member and taught us the The Orlam Subtlety card trick.

Adam explained and performed The Perfect Faro Shuffle. He also performed three card tricks. Adam taught the Perfect Faro Shuffle. He also performed a one-handed Perfect Shuffle, twisting the shuffled cards into a chevron then dropping the cards from one hand to the other, and a Triple Shuffle done with one hand.

Jim performed a shredded dollar bill conversion to a full dollar bill trick, a brass coin trick that appears to fall through his palm, and two card tricks.

Once the family of three left, the club discussed the following topics.

Jim reported that we likely will not get a cred-

it from the hotel for the night that Paul Draper missed because he arrived a day late due to a double-booking mistake.

Jim discussed two possible speakers the group has been looking at booking. Javi Benitez could be booked for February 27 or 28 to perform and teach card manipulation. The other speaker is available just three days from now so is not really feasible. We discussed Javi Benitez and the bulk of the members agreed with Mark that if Javi teaches what he performs it would be way above our ability level for us to actually learn skills from him and the likely \$300 fee plus hotel would put a big dent in our small account reported by Chris to currently be \$800.14. Do we want to pay to enjoy the performance knowing we likely won't learn much? After polling members, Chris is the only member who would vote to book Javi, but said he would not try to persuade others to agree.

Chris collected 2026 membership dues. The members voted unanimously to accept Mark's \$25 payment for Paul Draper's dinner before his performance Friday night, January 16 as Mark's 2026 membership dues.

Since Phil very much would like to see Javi Benitez perform, he generously offered to pay the fees for Javi Benitez to perform if the Ring would cover his hotel costs. The members voted unanimously to accept this offer. Jim will confirm the date and location in a few days after Adam checks dates with his wife.

Jim explained to new members that Ring #93 is fundraising to honor Rob Gomoll, a former member who passed away. He taught at Dubuque Senior High School. The school is in need of a piano and discovered an old Steinway in a storage room. They learned it is much cheaper to refurbish the piano than to purchase a new one, so they are fundraising to cover the \$100,000 refurbishing fees and offering engraved brass labels on a plaque for various levels of donations. Ring #93 has a fundraising goal of \$500 for an engraved memorial label on the plaque in honor of Rob. Adam is collecting donations.

Chris explained that the group had discussed doing a children's performance at the Galena Center for the Arts. Jim has been in contact with the Executive Director, Carole Sullivan, about scheduling. The Center is booked out a few months, so Jim asked members to look at their calendars for summer Saturdays he could offer for a performance. Members present with the skills to perform came up with the following dates: June 6, 13, 20 and July 18 or 25. Jim

would contact the members not present today then reach out to Carole to schedule a performance date.

The group had planned to vote for officers at this meeting. Jim, Mark, and Chris are willing to continue in their positions. There was discussion about Marie becoming secretary because she was scribbling notes today in Bob's absence. Marie declined since she is already the secretary for another organization. With Bob Beardsley not present for the discussion, we voted unanimously to delay the vote for officers until the next meeting.

The business meeting adjourned at 3:40. After the meeting Adam, Mark, and Chris each taught different tricks to new members. Phil learned and successfully performed a card trick.

Below is a review of the Paul Draper lecture held on January 16th. All members shared some very positive comments, but Jim McCrea summed it up best in the following.

We've sponsored a number of good and sometimes great lecturers over the years, each of whom offered us interesting insights or taught amazing tricks. And there has been none of the old dealer-demo-disguised-as-lecture that used to be so common decades ago.

But of all the lecturers we've sponsored, Paul Draper stood out to me as the single most personable one. He was truly interested in getting to know us individually. A few others have done that in the past, but Paul went even further. He began his lecture by listing a variety of areas of performance he would be willing to teach us and allowed our group to select maybe eight different areas we would specifically like him to discuss. Then he did exactly what we had asked. With that type of impromptu beginning, you might think that the quality of material could have been lessened, but he did an outstanding job teaching in both the tricks and theory we had requested.

With a diverse group like ours (and presumably many other rings) it's hard to hit the sweet spot that appeals to both beginners and long-time veterans alike as well as those in between. But even when Paul was fulfilling a request for a couple of beginning tricks, he overlaid it with subtleties and theory that made even those sections inspiring to those of us who have been involved in magic for decades. I would heartily recommend Paul to any magic group looking to bring in an outstanding lecturer.

Bob Beardsley and Marie Chenery

RING 96, LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA – Merlin Eifert Ring

Meets 3rd Sat., 7:00 pm at the Seal Beach North Community Center,
3333 Saint Cloud Dr., Seal Beach, CA

Web site: www.Ring96.com

CLIFF GERSTMAN, Secretary / E-mail: Cliffg37@verizonz.net

On January 17th Ring 96 held its first meeting of the year. The pre-meeting workshop began the night with Kevin Papke showing off some work with a stripper deck. He showed shuffles, and a few tricks. This was extremely well attended, and one of our most successful workshops yet. Better still everyone who participated got a free deck to practice with. We had almost 20 participants.

President George Reis opening the official meeting with announcements updating the success we have been having at reaching out with magic. So far, each month we have had one sessioning, one busking, and two sites for walking around magic. We are doing more magic than just once a month in our meeting room. His program to see who can bring the most potential member guests got off to a strong start as we had ten guests, one of whom is already joining.

George introduced our lecture for the first part of the meeting, Amanda Nepo. Amanda fooled Penn and Teller when she was just 16 years old and is currently studying for an Engineering degree at The University of Southern California. She takes her incredible creativity and Engineering skills to create her own unusual effects.

Amanda began with a presentation in how to apply creativity to an effect. Starting from inspiration, what do you want to see happen, we then follow a path to see how we can arrive at a solution.

Amanda demonstrated her idea of, can you drop a cork horizontally and have it land vertically? Apparently, it is not easy, but you can. Then the question was can you take a cork lying horizontally on the table and stand it up without using your fingers? Yes, to this too, with a little magic.

Next, she explained the system she uses for critiquing her magic. It is a three-step process of, I liked, I notice, I wonder. It is a good system to apply when looking for constructive improvement.

Amanda showed us her appearing toilet paper roll. She came up with that during the pandemic when people were worried about running out, and wouldn't it be great to be able to magically

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

create more on demand. She showed how this system applied to a can of Pringles and a cup of juice.

Amanda took us through her creative and Engineering process of showing an empty pack of gum, and having it instantly fill up with the snap of a finger.

She ended with a card trick in which the chosen card was a three, but Amanda found a five. She magically changed the card in her own unique way.

George introduced Part two in which five Ring members did an effect, and Amanda applied her critique method to help them improve.

Alan Hanson was up first he had had the theme to Indiana Jones playing behind him as he introduced a casino routine that placed a volunteer's \$1 bill on a rack with six spaces. The other five were filled with larger bills placed at random. He told the volunteer when his \$1 came off the rack, he could keep all the other bills. Alan then read 10 instructions that included taking bills off, moving them around, and seeing what landed where. At the end, the \$1 was the only one left, but the volunteer got to keep it and got a \$1 million bill as a consolation prize.

Amanda liked the theatrics of the effect. She noticed it was a little overly complicated and wondered if it could be simplified with some tune up to the script.

Pete Pridanonda was up next. He started with a history lesson about an elderly magician and how he could see the brain and read a mind. Pete had Amanda pick a card. The card was lost in the deck, and Pete put one card face down which he had Amanda cover with her hand. Pete took out a black plastic square just a little bit bigger than a playing card. He held it to Amanda's forehead and the chosen card appeared in the square. It was also revealed to be under her hand.

Amanda thought it was "awesome." She liked the story about the old magician. She loved how the ending tied everything together. Her only criticism was that some of the audience may have had trouble seeing the action on the table.

Mer came up to the stage and had a volunteer pick a card and then sign it. The card was lost in the deck, and the whole deck was placed inside a balloon. Mer blew it up and it popped. The cards went everywhere, but she had the chosen card in her hand. Amanda loved the story Mer told as she worked but felt there were too many hidden moves for the audience to appreciate.

Jheff was the next performer, and he came up with a stack of laminated 8½ x 11 colorful

papers. He split the stack in two, which made two piles of five and called up two volunteers. The volunteers each got one of the piles, and the back of these cards showed a positive affirmation. He asked each to choose while pile would have one card placed on the bottom. After a few moves, they showed the top cards, and it was a two-word slogan confirming the affirmation. Jheff chose different volunteers and repeated this five times each with a different positive slogan.

Amanda felt it was good to involve many volunteers but wondered how that would work out in time on a real stage. Val had her daughter scramble a solved Rubik's cube. She took the scrambled cube and solved it quickly and easily using only one hand held behind her back. Amanda wondered if Val could use any volunteer, or if it had to be the daughter. Otherwise, it was great. Another exciting night at Ring 96.

Cliff Gerstman

RING 102, SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA - The Maurice Rooklyn Ring

Meets 3rd Tues. of month at 7:30 p.m. at Northside Chatswood Salvation Army Church Hall Cnr. Bertram and Johnson Street Chatswood.

JACK SHARP, President / email: jack@sharpmagic.com.au

Meets 3rd Tuesday every month at 7:30pm at Northside Chatswood Salvation Army Church Hall Cnr. Bertram and Johnson Street Chatswood - Jack Sharp President Email jack@jacksharpmagic.com.au

Our first Sydney Magic Club meeting for 2026 kicked off on Tuesday 20th January. The theme was Something New that you haven't done before. Our President Jack Sharp welcomed us and made some introductory comments, then he announced that the convention for this year would be on 8th and 9th of November in Sydney, so keep the dates free.

Jack opened the night by performing the Cup of Water Over the Head routine. He began by introducing some bottles of Coke along with some gags about them. Instead of pouring Coca Cola into the cups, he changed his mind and used water. Jack and a spectator (me) each held a cup of water over our heads. After some byplay, Jack turned his cup upside down over his head. The water had vanished (it was a refreshing drink). Then I turned my cup over and to my surprise (!!!) mine had vanished too.

Joey Presto then got up to perform. He demonstrated a Cards Across version that he does in his children's show. He asked for some feedback on it and some very helpful tips and ideas came forth. The next day Joey told me that he had performed it in his show that day with

some of the ideas from the club... one of the great advantages of trying out routines at a club meeting.

Eugene Zanozin was up next with a bit of mentalism. Instead of using ESP cards, he prefers to use pictures of objects that people can relate to. Eugene displayed a dozen or so pictures, had them shuffled and then a spectator chose one. By using Haptic Perception, which means gaining information from an object by feeling it with the fingers, Eugene was able to describe the picture simply by running his fingers under it. Another spectator chose a card and Eugene attempted to describe that picture, but instead of feeling it, Eugene asked the spectator to imagine the picture on a big movie screen in his mind.

Next on the bill was Anthony Dillon. He entertained us with Liam Montier's "Predictor". A small packet of cards was shuffled and divided into two piles. A spectator took cards from the piles in random order, but Anthony's prediction knew how many red cards there would be and how many black cards. This was repeated with another successful result. The third time, the cards were face up. Random cards were selected again only this time, the prediction matched the backs of the cards....A puzzling poser.

After Anthony came Phuoc Can Hua. Phuoc always presents something unusual and interesting and tonight was no exception. Tonight he demonstrated Tenyo's "Jail Break". A frame with wire bars, like a prison window, was displayed. Phuoc pushed his credit card right through the bars. No! not that way, he went perpendicular to the bars. How did it go through? If we thought that was puzzling, you should have seen what he did next. Phuoc took a can of drink and visibly passed it right through the bars in the frame. Tenyo have come up with some amazing stuff over the years.

We had a new visitor tonight named Jeffran. He has only been studying magic for a few weeks, but Googled us, found our website and came to the meeting. He performed an effect he learned from an online magic course. He was surprised when I named it a version of Design For Laughter. He didn't know it had a name. When I told him that it was in Royal Road To Card Magic he wanted to order a copy, and a great way to learn card magic that is.

Our final magi for the night was Julian Bull who performed a very interesting twist on Out Of This World (the shuffled deck version). He spread the cards before a spectator's eyes and

asked him to remember as much about the cards as he could. As Julian drew cards from the face down deck he asked the spectator if he could remember the colour of the cards. After going through most of the deck it was revealed that the spectator had indeed correctly remembered the order of the colours (in OOTW style).

Can't wait for next month so we can go to our next Ring 102 meeting.

Peter Wood

RING 106, NEWARK, NEW JERSEY – Slydini Pyramid Garden State Ring

Meets 2nd Wed., 8:00 p.m. at The Sparta Avenue Stage, 10 Sparta Ave., Sparta Township, NJ

STAN BLADEK, Secretary / E-mail: quakmagicphil@aol.com

Our February meeting was full of great magic. It always amazes me that no matter how many members attend the meeting, when we present tricks to show the group, the same trick is never presented twice. There is no prior discussion; it is just the diversity of the group, our individual interests, and personal presentations that make each night different.

Joe Garsetti practiced a routine which will be part of his upcoming show in the Catskills, NY. He does an original "Joe's Bar" presentation of the multiplying wine bottles. As per usual, the club gave great feedback, some tweaks to the routine, and compliments which were greatly deserved. Stan Bladek followed up with a homemade chain through bolt routine. The YouTube channel Let's Make Magic is a great source of tricks that are ideal for people who are handy with tools and can extrapolate the size to suit their needs.

Bruce Harpster did an "Add-a-Number routine that utilized a spectator from the audience. With a sum of four numbers totally 23,939, when subtracting this number of days from today's date, the results date revealed the spectator's birthday. He then presented the "Omni" deck as a walk around effect with a startling finish. Tim Fortune presented each of the members with a homemade mini brown paper bag. This is a suitable gimmick along with the use of a thumb tip for the production of a variety of items.

We love to have fellow magicians stop on by and join us on the second Wednesday of the month in the beautiful Sparta Avenue Stage. What are you waiting for?

Stanley Bladek

RING 113, BERGEN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY – Audley Walsh/Conrad C. Bush

Meets 1st Thurs. 8:00 pm, at St. Thomas Episcopal Church, 300 Forest Ave., Lyndhurst, NJ.

ANTHONY FERRER, Secretary / web site: ibmring113@yahoo.com

Fresh from the holidays, members brought their bag of new tricks and a renewed energy to the January meeting. We also had an esteemed

guest visitor in attendance, 'Magic Dave' Ferst. Ring leader Richard Micucci was the first to perform with his one of his signature effects, Jeff McBride's Kundalini Rising. Rich also dazzled us with his skills in the fine art of making elastic loops. Next, Richard performed Doug Henning's version of ring on a string where the ring lies on the table and the ribbon is placed over it and appears to go through the ring with the wave of a hand! After paused his magical endeavors for years and now wants to plunge back in, new member Kevin Deen presented Juan Tamariz' Neither Blind Nor Stupid, card trick involving two spectators choosing cards and mixing the cards. Still, Kevin was able to produce their cards! Special guest David Ferst performed a card prediction that seemingly goes wrong but doesn't! David utilized a simple but strong and humorous torn card reveal! Jay Paul presented his version of the same trick using one deck and no gaffed cards. David retaliated with an under-the-table card trick. A deck is cut in half, the spectator turns one unseen card face down under the table. When the deck is spread face down, the one face up card matches Dave's prediction! Jay Paul reprised with his favorite four ace trick that he also calls Chameleon Aces. Michael Healy presented his newly acquired jumbo deck, McCombical Travel from Vernet. This is a clever McCombical routine involving travel destinations instead of card values and suits. Carl Morano brought in some new purchases and demonstrated some of the new Trickstarter releases from Theory 11. Carl demonstrated the Vanishing Car, the Key Coin Mystery and the Flash Cash wallet where an empty wallet instantly bulges with bills! He also demonstrated Oh No!, a 2023 Tenyo mini illusion, where a finger tip appears to be severed with scissors! Mark Cahill performed Al Smith's Stop Right There where a finder card is used to find the spectator's card that matches a prediction. Mark continued with Rufus Steele's handling of Josh Williams' Think Of A Card. Working under the Gilbreath principle, Bill Schmeelk presented Liam Montier's Predictor, a baffling three-phase routine where the spectator has a total freedom to make decisions while the magician makes things progressively easier and easier. Despite it all, the spectator's choices still match the magician's three predictions! Dan Silvestri performed Ace Triumph In The Hands. After a deceiving slop shuffle, Dan produced all 4 Aces! Rich Micucci returned with the self-working classic, Overkill by Paul Harris. With a randomly arrived at number, a card is selected

from a deck spread and the magician predicted it and proves it with a virtual overkill of revelations! For the finale, David Ferst performed his favorite color-changing coin routine that climaxes with a gold coin. Throughout the evening, Dave graciously tipped many of his favorite sleights and vanishes. *Carl Morano*

RING 115, SINGAPORE – The Great Wong Ring

Meets 15th of each month, 7:00 pm, Function Room 2, #03-01, National Library Building, 100 Victoria Street, Singapore 188064. Website: ibm-ring115.org

JOHN TEO, President / Tel: +62504422, 9750907

10M Braddell Hill #01-49, Singapore 57931

The theme for the first meeting of the New Year 2026 was "Magic Show Business – Your Best Tricks for 2025". 43 members and 1 guest attended this meeting on the 15th January 2026. The venue was the Drama Centre at our National Library building at Victoria Street. The hosts were Mr Bottle, aka Wee Kien Meng, and Joseph Then.

The meeting was called to order by Ng Kah King. He introduced guest magician Rob Ellinger from I.B.M. Ring 148, Australia, and welcomed the following members who were absent for a long time: Aw Kum Seng, Alfred Lim and Dr Lim Thou Tin.

Announcements were made regarding our Anniversary Celebration, our video library and our trip to the upcoming Magic Convention in Taiwan.

The first performer was Charles Choo. He transformed 4 Kings to 4 Aces, and performed Martin Lewis' "Technicolour Prediction" using 3 flip wallets.

John Teo was the next performer. A spectator freely divided 10 cards into 2 equal piles. Magically, all the cards in the performer's pile were "MINE" cards while those in the spectator's pile were "YOURS" cards. His next effect was "Joker Orchestra". 10 Jokers, each playing a different musical instrument were eliminated stage by stage until only one is left, the pianist. He was the winning musician, as confirmed by the award printed behind the card. The other 9 cards were turned over and their black and white backs form the black and white keys of a piano.

There had been many requests for Harapan Ong to show and teach the deck flip. Harapan credited Daren Yeow and T.G.Murphy for this beautiful move. He showed many applications for the deck flip, such as triumph, card production and card and colour changes.

Using a version of Dean's Box, which he called "The 4-D Black & Worm Hole Box", James Pang showed how to link ropes and put a rope through a ring. He also caused a note to be sandwiched between playing cards and a selected

card to be transported back to a sealed case, all through this box.

Chew Liang Huat is a DIY magician. He demonstrated 2 of his home-made props. The first one was an empty gift box which could magically produce an egg. The second prop was a “Run Rabbit Run” effect using a disc and a prop with 2 doors.

Guest magician Rob Ellinger had a spectator put his 2 index fingers on both his 2 eye lids, so that he could not open his eyes. Despite this constraint, he could find a selected card from a shuffled deck of cards.

After a short break, the 2 hosts for the evening, Joseph Then and Mr Bottle, who are professional magicians, shared valuable tips on how to use a sound system for performing a magic show. They also discussed what to do for charity shows and the use of AI. Their sharing, especially on the sound system, was much appreciated by everyone.

Members were challenged to use their creativity to come up with tricks using pieces of Lego blocks that were provided. 5 members took the challenge.

Ng Kah King made a magic wand out of the Lego blocks and then magically changed its colour.

Joseph Then caused a Lego block to change colour and then multiplied them in a spectator’s hand.

Linus Ng did a cups-and-balls routine using 2 paper cups and the Lego blocks. He also used the blocks to spell out “I.B.M.” and then magically rearranged them to “115”. Finally, he transformed a Lego block into a candy.

Dave Karyadi performed a series of mental effects using the Lego blocks. He predicted which of 3 Lego blocks would be chosen, did a “which hand” as well as a “free will” effect, and a prediction of an animal from a list of animals in his mobile phone.

Chunny Teoh manipulated Lego blocks like playing cards, finishing with a dramatic “Lego catch” as a block flew from the deck.

The winners were Linus Ng, Dave Karyadi and Chunny Teoh. They each received an award in the form of a magic book or prop.

The meeting ended with an auction of magic paraphernalia from the late Ashish Lodhavia.

Ng Kah King

RING 129, KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI – Heart of America Ring

Meets 1st. Thu. of every month at Westport Coffeehouse Theater, 4010 Pennsylvania Ave., Suite D, Kansas City, MO 64111

KELLY RUSK, President / E-mail: knr6244@hotmail.com

Mark Strivings braved a snowstorm to get to the KC area in time to present a scheduled lec-

ture January 26. The lecture consisted of several routines that could be performed with items we have on hand – cards, dice, etc. One thing that I liked is a practice that used to be commonplace but is rare nowadays – all of the routines that he taught were included in a ten-dollar set of notes that he had for sale. He did have a number of other items for sale, but these he presented only after the lecture itself had concluded.

February, so far, has been exceptionally warm, in time for our scheduled activities. Cliff Norris led off our monthly meeting with a performance of a four-ace routine. David Sandy showed us some items from his stash of collectible magic items, including a pair of cabinets in which a large block was transported from one container to another. The creator of the illusion was Craig Beytien, who lives in central Missouri and was a guest at the meeting. Craig later showed us some other items he had crafted which were remarkable for their craftsmanship, the sort of things that any magicians would be proud to display in their living rooms.

Ring president Kelly Rusk then displayed several items of pulp fiction which showed magicians as detectives, followed by a discussion of why so many comic books, etc., made this connection between the two professions. Dennis Burks followed with a report on the status of a project he has been working on for several months – having a plaque placed in downtown Kansas City commemorating the time and place that Houdini first performed his upside-down straitjacket escape. He said the ceremony installing the plaque is now scheduled for September of this year.

For the next activity Kelly asked members to describe the worst magic item they had ever purchased. Jerry Jackson began by saying he had bought an item which he could not use because it involved piercing his skin – but Samuel Bricker then demonstrated that he could perform it. Stu Lewis described a set of instructions for a hold-em poker routine written by someone who did not understand the game it was based on. Keith Leff then spoke about a Tommy Wonder video which included a prop which was impossible to construct. Phil Franklin showed us an item called “Gilligan’s Prediction,” which involved manipulating a 52-card index. Tom Burgoon described several unworkable items that he had purchased over the years.

We then moved on to our “Show us the Magic” segment. Dennis Burks performed a book test using what appeared to be an old copy

of Homer's "Odyssey." John Hicks performed his original variation on Marlo's "Devilish Miracle." Steve Steiner then performed a "compatibility test" using playing cards.

On February 7th we held our annual President's banquet, at which past Ring and International president Roger Miller swore in our officers and board members for the new year, including Kelly Rusk, who will be serving his second term as Ring president. Before dinner, Brad Lynn worked as a strolling magician for those in attendance. Kelly Rusk then did a presentation on the history of our Ring, including a discussion of some of our notable now-deceased members: Clyde Glandon, Claude Enslow, Harry Otto, and Jay Vincent. Those of us who have been in the Ring long enough to remember them shared our memories of these illustrious entertainers. *Stu Lewis*

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

January: The most recent meeting of the First Coast Magicians was a smaller gathering, with only three members in attendance, but the conversation and camaraderie more than made up for the modest turnout. We welcomed a newcomer, and now new First Coast Magician, Don Harris, who recently moved here from Texas. Don quickly fit right in, sharing his background in magic and exchanging ideas with the group. His experience is almost opposite of most, mainly performing stage magic and now beginning to dabble in cards. We look forward to seeing him at future meetings and learning more about his magical interests.

We share our past trips to Magic Live, and how much we're looking forward to this next one.

The theme of the night was Dice magic, and we all learned a short routine of Sach's dice. We also shared other routines and clever applications of dice into other routines.

On a more somber note, we had just learned that the club unfortunately and unexpectedly lost one of its members, Dallas Smith. His passing was acknowledged during the meeting, and members reflected on his contributions within the group. A Broken Wand Ceremony is planned to honor Dallas's memory and will be held at a future meeting, most likely in April.

Outside of the meeting itself, Jacksonville offered two competing magic shows on a cold

night in January. Several members attended the Asi Wind magic show, while others went to see Reza the Illusionist. Those who attended Asi Wind's performance reported an exceptional show, capped off by a brief meet-and-greet afterward. In an unexpected and exciting moment, the group also ran into Jeki Yoo, who graciously agreed to take a group photo, creating an even more memorable night.

February: The First Coast Magicians of I.B.M. Ring 130 recently had the distinct privilege of hosting internationally acclaimed Spanish magician Javi Benitez, a Penn & Teller Fool Us "Fooler." This lecture had been nearly two years in the making. Well, finally, the stars aligned and what seems impossible happened. Of course, the tour began with a vanishing act.

Upon arriving in the United States, Javi and his travel partner, Pedro, discovered that their luggage had not arrived with them. For a traveling magician, this borders on nightmare territory. Props, clothing, and essentials were temporarily out of reach. To add to the challenge, Florida had just endured a stretch of extremely (to us, anyway) cold temperatures. Thankfully, the weather cleared and it was warm by the time they reached Jacksonville.

Despite the rocky start, Javi delivered an exceptional evening of magic and insight. From the opening routine – a beautifully structured four-ace transposition culminating in a stunning card-to-wallet – it was clear we were witnessing awesome routines with thoughtful construction. While Javi performed fantastic pieces of magic, he also sprinkled in some sweet bits of information throughout the lecture (a gentle nod to the ending he later shared). During the explanation of his first routine, he introduced one of the evening's most valuable concepts: the creation of false memories. He emphasized that magicians do not simply control what spectators see – we can influence what they remember.

Through careful displays, timing, and layered convincers, an audience can later recall events as being cleaner and more impossible than they objectively were. By shaping recall, we strengthen the effect over time. The trick becomes more powerful in retelling than it was in actual performance. This is a compelling reminder that magic lives not only in the moment, but also in memory.

Despite this great advice, the most profound takeaway of the evening was Javi's discussion of the Spanish school of magical thought. In English, we say "magic trick." The direct Spanish translation would be *el truco de magia*.

However, native usage more commonly reflects un juego de magia – literally, “a game of magic.” That distinction is subtle but powerful. A “trick” suggests something done to someone. A “game,” however, suggests participation – something shared. Javi encouraged us to view magic not as something performed at an audience, but something experienced with them. When magic becomes a game between performer and spectator, the dynamic shifts. The audience is no longer simply a spectator to be fooled, but a partner in the creation of wonder. It’s this experience that fosters a better environment and ultimately makes magic more meaningful. And that may have been the sweetest lesson of all. IYKYK.

If you’re in the Jacksonville area, stop by and say Hi. First Coast Magicians meet on the third Thursday of the month, with another non-I.B.M. dinner gathering on the first Thursday. Contact Chris at info@I.B.M.ring130.com for further details.

Carl Sharp

RING 167, DES MOINES, IOWA – Justo Hijo Magic Club of Des Moines, Iowa

3rd Mon., 7:00pm at F&O’s Restaurant, 4050 Merle Hay Rd.,

Des Moines, IA 50310

STEVE DALY (Hinrichs), President

E-mail: Tinyb1999@yahoo.com

It was 15% BELOW zero for our January meeting. Iowa magicians are tough folks as 14-members braved the cold (some driving 60 miles one-way!) We even welcomed new club member KIRK MARSH! Kirk is a VERY talented young man who has performed around the World. We “warmed up” to the ideas for how to make our Ring 167 club even better for 2026 with discussions of upcoming magic get togethers & conventions including the TRI-STATE MAGIC PARTY (May 16th in Des Moines, Iowa), the I.B.M. NATIONAL CONVENTION (July 22 - 25 in St Louis, MO) and AbraCORNdabra (September 11 - 13 in Des Moines, Iowa) After newly re-elected President Steve Hinrichs discussed possible upcoming public shows & teaching magic to local cub scout troops as well as some upcoming lecturers, it was time to really “turn up the heat” and see some MAGIC! Newly re-elected club secretary MARCUS STEVENS asked our club’s youngest member VEGGO to come join him on stage. Marcus displayed a white die with black spots. Handing the die to Veggo to hold, he brought out a white stick. The white stick suddenly was covered with the black spots from the die! In Veggo’s hand was a completely white die! This trick was DIE-ABOLICAL! (See what

I did there?) Next up, JOHN DAVIS presented two fun card tricks with a Gospel theme. The first featured WALTER YU as a volunteer. Three cards were shown (9 of S, K of H and 6 of D), John handed Walter a Card asking him to hold it to his chest as he showed the two remaining cards in his hand were the 9 of S and the 6 of D. John asked Walter what card he had, Walter turned his card around to find it was a picture of Jesus! (And Walter exclaimed “JESUS!”, which made us all burst out laughing at his reaction!) Next was a card counting routine which spelled out each card’s value and how that card’s value tied into the Gospel. John is a GREAT Gospel magician! VEGGO stepped up next with a fast-paced card routine he bought from Paul Richards at AbraCORNdabra last year. His trick was filled with very funny lines calling the cards “This” and “That”, which left his audience volunteer (John Davis) scratching his head. BARB FUNKE has GREAT Stage presence and is a wonderful family entertainer. She performed a Phantom Tube as she described what it was like being a Justo Hijo Magic Club Member. She then unrolled a plastic sheet that featured a cartoon chicken printed on it - she rolled it back up and suddenly, AN EGG APPEARED!? When she unrolled the tube again, the same chicken was there, but this time taking a bow saying THANK YOU! Barb never “lays an egg” with her performances! Finally, President STEVE HINRICHS showed Veggo a shuffled deck of cards. He asked Veggo to name a number between 1 and 26 - Veggo said “6” - WITHOUT TOUCHING THE DECK, Steve asked Veggo to count down to the sixth card, Veggo was then to look at the card and ONLY HE LOOK AT THE CARD - the card was then sealed in a dark envelope and that envelope was sealed in a second dark envelope. Those sealed envelopes where then signed by Veggo and handed to the club’s Secretary MARCUS to hold until this issue of the RING REPORT is published! NO ONE AT THE CLUB MEETING EXCEPT VEGGO KNOWS WHAT CARD HE SELECTED AT RANDOM... Steve calls this trick, “THE LINKING RING/RING REPORT PREDICTION TRICK”. When this ring report is published, it will be read aloud as Steve’s prediction of the card Veggo chose was... THE THREE OF HEARTS! (Ta-Da!) The club meeting ended as we got to hear from Kirk Marsh about his upcoming show “The Bubble Circus”. We meet the third Monday of each month, join us at F&O’s restaurant on Merle Hay Road!

Steve Daly

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 David Freeman brought the January meeting to order and we had 24 people present and one guest, Reid Chemidling. Treasure Jacki Manna encouraged everyone to pay their yearly dues. Many of our guest lectures are at reduced process for members and the club works hard to keep magic alive in Central Florida. Craig Osterling gave a wrap up report about the recent Gator Gathering Convention of Close-up Magicians. It is a yearly event in January.

For his Magic History Moment #116, club historian, Phil Schwartz performed Thayer's Silk Cabby and Japanese Handkerchief Box. He recounted how he originally became interested in Floyd Thayer's magic company and writing its history, then displayed his "Ultimate Thayer" books and DVDs (published in 2010). Finally, Phil showed the archival materials (acid-free sleeves, notebooks and boxes) he uses to preserve the ephemera of his forty-year collection of related photos, letters, promotions, blueprints, and periodicals in his Thayer Magic Archive.

The post business meeting show opened with Bob Swaddlings unique and original 3 shell game. Rather than shells, Bob used little metal shells. He did things that those "in the know" about shell methods would be baffled. The pea goes from place to place in ways that defy physics. He then gave the set that he handmade to helper Paul Thomy who always wanted to perfect the classic con artist trick. Paul Q had a clever prediction. He was able to accurately predict on a written paper the free choices by a volunteer where the three items would be, either in the pocket, on the table or held by the spectator.

Dan Stapleton always has a clever and seldom seen miracle. This was with a set of ordinary dominos. Two volunteers arranged them in a circle by matching them and Dan was able to predict the last dots on the ends. It is a puzzler.

Greg Solomon showed a plastic daredevil. It was a small cut out of a man in clear plastic and I fit tightly into a case, and he covered it with a napkin and drove ten spikes into it. When the spikes were removed, the plastic man did not have any holes.

Terry Ward one of our active professionals and card whiz, did an excellent job of cutting to four aces.

Eric Geyer showed a flip note pad that he has filled each page with the brand name of a candy.

He has volunteer freely flip though the pad and he was able to tell her wick page she slipped to.

Guest Reid Chemidling had a spectator select a card and the back changed colors and later it turned face down in the deck. *Dennis Phillips*

RING 172, TUCSON, ARIZONA – The Joe DuPerre Ring

Meets 3rd Mon., 6:30 p.m., Barro's Pizza, 410 N. Wilmont Rd. in Tucson

FRANK PROCHASKA, Ring Contact

ibmring172@gmail.com

Ring 172, Tucson, Arizona, January 2026 Ring Report.

Our January 2026 meeting had nine attendees, including Steve E., Mike B., Mitch L., Juan F., Curt, Frank P., Joe J., Zach H., and John S.

The group discussed various topics and performed a number of effects, both as a big group and as smaller breakout groups, including but not limited to the following. The Juan, Mitch, and Joe worked on various card effects, and Juan demonstrated various effects repeating the same card force to show multiple applications. Frank performed Fogel's Three Card Prediction. John performed his handling of a Ben Harris four king production, a Max Maven effect, as well as the Atomic Deck. Mike had questions about different types of egg bags and egg bag effects leading to a discussion and comparison of various bags at the table. Steve performed, among other things, Al Koran's Do as I Do, Pegasus Aces by Derick Dingle and two ace routines by Steve Forte.

The next meeting will be February 16th, 2026.

RING 175, TAMPA, FLORIDA – Warren Hamilton Ring

Meets 2nd Tue., 7:00 pm, Grace Lutheran Church, 3714 W. Linebaugh

Ave., Tampa, FL 33618 / Website: <https://tampamagicclub.com>

KEN SPANOLA, President

(813) 249-7325 / E-mail: KSpanola@gmail.com

February brought in 31 members and guests for another powerhouse lecture! Enter one of the great entertainers and card magicians from Spain: Javi Benitez! He is fun as well as funny, and he has that disarming carefree attitude that we have learned to expect from our Spanish card experts. It was a great two hours of entertainment and explanations. Oh, and Javi's luggage still hadn't made it to the states in five days, but that seemingly did not affect his lecture in the least.

"You are here to see surprises and impossibilities," he said, and his opening sequence showed us both and then some. First, a signed selection along with any four of a kind requested changed to four aces, the selection vanished, and then it was found in an envelope in his wallet. He used the four aces to do a visually stunning Cards

Thru Table one-by-one – it was jaw dropping! He finished this set with a Follow the Leader trick using ten red and ten black cards that stayed with their respective colors regardless of all the switching and shuffling he did...it was organized chaos to impress!

Those three effects were worth the price of admission! During the explanations, Javi said, "In the beginning I share some comedy and create my character." He also gained our respect as he taught the work that goes into each of these effects, the timing, the flow, and the disarming relaxation that he exudes...like he's doing nothing complicated. Just beautiful to watch him work, and even more impressive when he detailed the work that he puts into making the impossible possible.

He did his version of Hopping Halves with a copper and silver coin where he shared "how to transform a 'challenge routine' into something different." It was completely different – he made the magic have a purpose other than proving the spectator wrong repeatedly. His much-anticipated Gypsy Thread was truly amazing; using our President and his wife (Past President), Ken and Melissa Spanola, he showed "the power of love." It appeared that Javi never touched the thread – Ken broke it from the spool, Ken and Melissa both tore it to pieces, and they also picked them up and rolled them into a ball. But when Javi took the ball from Melissa and found an end – it was completely restored!

Javi finished the lecture with a special Okito Box routine with three half dollars and a small coin that traded places. (I'd loved to share more, but my mind was still fried from that dang thread, and I didn't write a thing down!) The lecture was fantastic, Javi's performances were great, and his explanations clear. We highly enjoyed ourselves.

Tom Vorjohan

RING 179, BALTIMORE, MARYLAND – George Dency Ring

Meets 2nd. Thu., 7:30pm at Chestnut Ridge Church, 1010 Saters Lane, Timonium, MD 21093

ANDY LONDON, President / Email: alondon@concast.net

The joint meeting of I.B.M. Ring 179 and SAM Assembly 6 took place on January 8, 2026 at the Chestnut Ridge Church in Timonium, MD. Twenty members attended.

Announcements: (1) Dave Thomen recognized Joe Bruno for his achievement in getting his 12th One Man Parade published in the December 2025 issue of the I.B.M.'s *Linking Ring* magazine. Joe's latest Parade included the trick he created and performed at our October

meeting. (2) Dues are \$30 per year for the Baltimore Magician's Alliance. (3) Magic Lecture: Rich Bloch is lecturing for free on Monday March 8, 2026 at the Episcopal Church located at 6800 Oakland Mills Rd, Columbia, MD 21045. Video Magic Education - Andy London played a video of John Carey performing and explaining two card tricks, one of which is called Splitsville. At the end of the meeting, Dave Thomen led a giveaway of many magic books and DVDs as door prizes for everyone in attendance. Jay Silverman was recognized for arranging to get one box of the giveaways. Everyone attending went home with some new magic to learn.

Performances - Ten members performed for the meeting's theme, which was Tenyo tricks, and also Tarbell tricks for those who don't have a Tenyo trick:

Dave Thomen - demonstrated a few Tenyo tricks, mentioning that many Tenyo tricks would never be performed in a show for practical reasons. Dave also discussed the Tarbell book series.

Mike Stringer - performed a card trick from Tarbell, Volume 1, called Joe Berg's Countdown Card. A card is selected, the deck is dealt into several piles, and after the deck is re-assembled, the magician eventually finds the selected card.

Jared Raitzyk - performed a trick he saw on YouTube. A volunteer and the magician each have a deck, and each select cards from their decks under a table. They put the selected card in the other person's deck. They then exchange decks, and find that their selected cards match.

Angelo Mileto - performed a sort of story telling deck routine, involving lots of cutting and shuffling of the deck, and dealing into piles, about jewels and diamonds, and a Queen in a castle.

Rick Beatty - (1) tried a 4 Ace spelling trick, and (2) did a select a card trick, where the chosen card is eventually found.

Harry Damareck - showed a Tenyo trick that like many, was a plastic box.

Noah Danker - performed an interesting trick themed around alien technology and invisibility. He showed a Bic style pen, and a small blue box a little larger than the pen. The pen is placed inside the box, a hatch is opened in the middle of the box, and the middle part of the pen is invisible. When the pen is pulled back out of the box, it is shown to be normal.

Michael Worsham - performed a Tenyo trick called Eye of the Idol, which is no longer made. 5 differently colored crystals are placed around

a circular plastic tray. A volunteer selects one crystal. A small Moai statue, like the giant ones on Easter Island, is placed in the middle of the 5 crystals, facing ahead and away from all of the crystals. An empty plastic cup is placed over the Moai, and the magician waves his hand and says some magic words. The plastic cup is then removed, and the Moai head is now facing the same direction as the chosen crystal.

Andy London - displayed some Tenyo tricks, including a pencil that goes through a plastic plate with a coin, and a crystal pyramid.

Mark Wolfire - shared a few Tenyo tricks. He performed a money printing trick, where a blank white sheet is placed in a plastic tray, and when the other end of the tray is removed, the blank sheet has turned in a real \$10 bill. Mark also showed a trick called Card Surgery from 2013, but which he said is not practical to perform.

Michael Worsham

RING 183, VICTORIA, BRITISH COLUMBIA – The Victoria Magic Circle – The Ernie Crockford Ring

1st Tue. (Sept.-June). 7:30pm Langford Fire Hall. #1 2625 Peatt Rd. Langford BC.

RYAN STANLEY, Secretary / E-mail: ryanstanley1015@yahoo.ca

DAVID ATTWOOD, President / E-mail: info@attwoodmagic.com

January slowed down a little (from December) for our members. On January 31st four of our members did a show to raise money for the BC Paramedic's Foundation at a local coffee shop. This may become a semi regular event.

Our Annual Banquet was held on February 7th with 102 people in attendance. 10 magicians entertained the guests for an hour of closeup before dinner. Kerry Zado was awarded Magician of the Year and made a lifetime member, what an honour.

The clubs annual auction was a fun evening with several items being sold (some for the third or fourth time) in the auction. Three members donated their entire earnings, or leftover items to the club which will be used for the Junior program.

Kerry Zado

RING 185, HONOLULU, HAWAII – Curtis Kam

Meets 4th Thu (except Nov. & Dec.), 7:00 p.m., at Kalihi Palama Library, 1325 Kalihi St., Honolulu, HI 96819

LAUREEN TANAKA, Secretary

E-mail: laureentanaka@gmail.com / www.hawaiimagicclub.com

10 members attended our January meeting, in person & via zoom. Willy Chen, current President, shared an assortment of DVDs for members to take. The 2025 Hawai'i Magic Festival show on Dec. 27, 2025, was SOLD OUT! 600+ seats!

Strolling Magicians: Alan Arita, Joe Page, Jr.,

David Brown, Susie Roth, Reuben Lauronal, & James Lee wowed the guests as they waited for the show to start. Host / Emcee: Kaulana Chang warmed up the audience.

Stage Magicians were: Dr. Brad Kerwin & Magic Students, Yona Chock, Kelvin Chun, Jared Lum, Willy Chen, Kenton & Kaden Chun, Landon Espiritu, Richard Hucko, Tom Dobrowolski from Chicago and Special Guest, Mycah Muranaka. The applause, oohs & aahs were nonstop throughout the event. Overall, the guests shared their delight and vowed to return next year.

We talked about continuing Community Service Magic at various places like Senior Homes, Hospitals, etc. Hawaii magicians are ready and willing. If there are any magicians visiting Oahu and want to schedule a lecture, please contact us in advance.

For the Trick portion of the evening ...

Willy Chen performed "The Venom Cube" and the "Eject Card Stab,"

Brad Kerwin shared "The Tree of Diamonds,"

Harvey Ouchi reminded us of the "Fill Man Principle" as taught & performed by Jimmy Yoshida.

Bradley Choy performed Optical Illusions ... are we seeing things? "Boomerang Effect," "Mummy In Coffin," Mesh Egg Bag Method, and some metal rod with holes and metal balls ... what is that called?

Kelvin Chun scrambled our minds with the "Grey Elephant in Denmark" on zoom from China.

We gobbled down Bob Festa's delicious hot pizza and went home happy. A Hui Hou (until next time). Stay Magical! *Laureen Tanaka*

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.

MONT DUTSON, President / E-mail: montd84@comcast.net

Web site: www.utahmagic.org

This month's theme was "Romantic Magic".

Mont recited an Indian wedding poem with a red & yellow ribbon turning into a blended color ribbon. Mont used this poem at his wedding and so did Jeff McBride.

Doug had a number between 10 & 99 (12) thought of and written down correctly on a sticky note. A number was written on a sticky note by an audience member and placed in his pocket, and Doug knew the number. A drink was then produced from a handkerchief.

Eric performed a story about his grandfather

who brought a pocket watch home from New Zealand. Doug wrote his name and a number (4) on a picture of Erik's grandfather. Erik has a picture of the pocket watch in an envelope. The time his grandfather passed away was 4 o'clock, and the watch stopped then. Erik's father also passed away at 4 o'clock, as well as his oldest brother. His brothers eldest son took a picture of the pocket watch for Erik. Erik then ripped the picture into pieces then restored the picture in an alternate format. The picture of the pocket watch was then shown to be at 4 o'clock.

Javier had a two digit number thought of and shown. A prediction was written on a card and placed in his pocket. The deck was riffled and the card stopped at was correctly named. Then the card stopped at was the one in his back pocket.

Kerry did a trick where a washing machine was used. A red sock was washed and came out with holes in it. Next a tie was washed and shrunk. A white glove was washed and came out stretched out. The washing machine was then opened and shown empty.

Dan did a torn & restored newspaper trick.

Al borrowed a dollar bill, folded it, ripped it, then restored it.

Dale, with Dan's help, had both sit in chairs. A deck of cards was verified normal, shuffled and cut. Dale doesn't want Dan to concentrate on the card he chose from the riffle. Five cards with silly questions were used to distract Erik from reading Dan's mind. Erik was able to "guess" the card. Dale then shared the story of how he met his wife.

Chuck showed how Walmart pipe cleaners can be used to make flowers appear. A multicolored pen was shown. Then a normal looking pen was shown. Javier signed his name on a page, then the pen was shown to write in multiple colors.

Bob inspected cards and found okay, then showed them to be different, blank on one side with a voodoo doll on the other. A volunteer picked the names of three people he loves and wrote the first names on the cards. They were placed face down on the table. He then wrote the name of someone he didn't like, and mixed the four cards up. The cards were randomly placed on a board and poked with a pin. The pins wouldn't penetrate three of the pictures but did the fourth, which was the person he didn't like.

Greg performed a Super Bowl themed trick. Whiteboard used to write State & NFL. A blindfold was verified to be non see through. The blindfold and a magic wig were put on by

Robert. The state of New Mexico & Steelers were written down and Robert read our minds and picked them both. They switched places. The number 14 was written and the 14th president looked up on a phone. The name & years served were correctly picked by Greg. Lastly Super Bowl was chosen (17) and the teams & score were correctly picked. *Rudy Chacon*

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

Alain Nu Lecture January 20th: What usually happens in Vegas stays in Vegas, but not the Alain Nu lecture. The evening started with "The Man Who Knows" not knowing how to use a phone's GPS, but came only a little late. This was mentalism at its best. From the opening, Unfabulation, with Matt Growden's prediction written down before the lecture, to the ending of bending spoons (Fender-bender), everything was excellent. Because some members trust no one, writing in the third person, Patrick brought forks to bend, and Bill Mullins brought spoons. Patrick, being two feet away, could not see how Nu did the bending. Metal turned into liquid and back to solid. Wow what an evening. 3 short hours.

February Meeting: Treasurer's report with Dean Carter included the legal banking minutes taken from *The Linking Ring*. Bill Mullins reported on Magifest in Columbus, Ohio and said, "a great convention and one of the strongest closing shows he had witnessed". David Thompson and Brett Boyer attended via Online and watched while ordering pizza. Brett, Trace Cooper, and Matt Growden all had shows since the last meeting. Jared Cassidy brought up the Cook Books and their whereabouts. Both Evan Tate and Kenneth Jordan denied even knowing about the Cook Books. Someone unrelated to Penn or Teller asked that the business close and the magic start. The 194 Ring opted to use Halifax time rather than Central Time so shut-ins could attend meetings online from around the world.

Trace Cooper told several stories about his four daughters and the money it cost to raise them. As Trace told the stories he probably placed fifty \$100.00 bills in a small blue wooden box. Upon opening the box, all the bills had vanished. Wow. The story brought tears to the tag team of Payton and Russ Ward. VP Matt Growden performed a mentalism memory trick

called Amnesia using David Thompson as the spectator. Very good. This trick was taken from *The Linking Ring*. David in turn performed Heroes and Villains using Dean Carter and a Stay Stack deck. Great. Patrick Brunson performed a dice trick taken from a Facebook reel lasting less than 2 seconds. President Brett Boyer used jumbo cards to tell the story of Diamond Jack via Sam the Bellhop principle. All this magic was followed by the breakout of small groups teaching one on one. Just as the meeting wound down, Jack Baldwin reminded everyone of Halifax time and the meeting room cleared quickly.

Patrick Brunson

RING 197, MARIETTA, OHIO – The Tommy Windsor Ring

Meets 2nd Thu., 7:00pm at 200 Franklin St., Marietta, OH
DALE WHEELER, President / E-mail: dalew3314@gmail.com

Ring 197 met on Monday, February 2. Jay Foresta called the meeting to order. The time change from 7 to 6 PM was to accommodate those who travel quite a distance to the meetings. The meeting included the usual activities of reports, updates, and performances along with an induction ceremony for Keith Matheny.

While no theme for this evening's performances was assigned, several performers presented effects that utilized repetition in "honor" of the meeting being held on Groundhog Day. Performers included Dale Wheeler, Dock Cutlip, Bill Stokes, and Keith Matheny. Keith led off with a Martin Lewis effect, "Technicolor Pocket Prediction." Velma, Dock, and Jay assisted him. Keith continued his performance with "What Happens in Vegas" by Liam Montier. Dock chose the number of cards.

Next up was Velma who did not perform but brought several potential props and asked for suggestions. They included a reverse fold umbrella, a couple of small pop-up umbrellas, a Lota bowl, and 2 small mailboxes. The group offered ideas for the patter, as well as altering of the devices to make them magic props.

Bill performed Andy Dallas' "6-Card Repeat." Following was Dale, with the help from Keith, who performed Nathan Kranzo's "Repetition." Next up was Dock who began his segment with coin magic from Craig Petty. This was a multiplying effect with a subsequent individual coin vanish. Continuing Dock performed Rubic's Cube magic with the assistance of Keith. This was the "Crystal Prison" by Flat Base & TCC Magic.

The suggested theme for March is related to St. Patrick's Day and/or the color green.

We would love it, if you would like to join us, either as a guest or a new member. If you are

traveling through or live in our area and would like to come to a meeting, get in touch with us.

Charleen Stokes

RING 198, LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY – Thoroughbred Magic Guild

Meets 2nd Sun. afternoon of most months at Hope Springs Community Church, 1109 Versailles Rd., first building.

MIKE WOODWARD, Secretary / E-mail: mikewmp@aol.com

Web site: www.ring198.com

Ring 198 elected new officers. Congratulations to: President: Graham Ricks; Vice President: Jon Rees; Secretary General: Mike Woodward; Secretary: Allison White; Treasurer: Jim Holsinger; and Webmaster: Eric Haddix.

John Shore, an electrical engineer and leading performer in our region, led our February gathering. John reviewed several books including *Monster Midway* and *Nightmare Alley* by William Gresham. Gresham, known for his deep research, provides an authentic look into the "devil's sandbox" of carnivals, exploring the lives of show folk, hustlers, and performers. *Monster Midway* (1954) is a non-fiction, "uninhibited" look into the gritty world of traveling carnivals, sideshow freaks, and carnies, serving as a real-life companion to his noir novel *Nightmare Alley*. It is praised for its authentic, insider perspective, including a carny lingo glossary, detailing the scams, psychology, and lives of sideshow performers. *Nightmare Alley* (1946) is a novel by Gresham. It is a dark noir classic about a ruthless con man, Stan Carlisle, who rises from a carnival worker to a successful spiritualist, exploiting the wealthy until his ambition leads to his downfall. *Parallax* (2023) by Max Mavin is a collection of 61 of his influential essays from *MAGIC Magazine*, originally published between 1991 and 1996, offering commentary, observations, and philosophical insights on the art of magic and mentalism rather than teaching specific tricks. Praised as essential reading and a "manifesto on magic," the book is known for its distinct, thought-provoking, and often humorous tone, making it a significant work for serious students of the art form. *Teaching Magic* (2017) by Eugene Burger and Lawrence Hass is a collaboration between the legendary master magician Eugene Burger and Dr. Lawrence Hass, focusing on the philosophy and practical methods of instruction in the magical arts. Outstanding review of each of the above books.

Our members also brainstormed new topics of interest to discuss in future meetings. *Magifest 2026* was discussed as well. February

performances included Mike Woodward performing a Special Night of Illusions in Cincinnati (Cincy Magic) at Artsville. John Shore performed at his annual 'The Fantastic Valentines Magic and Dinner Show' at the Campbell House. The following magicians also performed: Jon Rees (coin magic and card deck disappear), Graham Ricks (Supercan by Greg Rostami), Mike Woodward (changing side of tip of wand and salt shaker with salt changing to white silk), and Randy Roberts magically bending signed coins (with a little help of Ox Bender).

I was able to attend Cody Clark's performance for the Harstad Fine Arts Series. He was their first ever magician to perform. Cody is a member of the Louisville Magic Ring 64 and an autism advocate/speaker who fielded 20 minutes of Q&A discussing magic and autism. Fantastic performance and Cody engaged an audience of about 50 people.

If you are in the Lexington area, please do not hesitate to contact us and attend our meeting. Stay happy and magical. *Jon Rees*

RING 199, RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA – Lee & Snavelly Ring

Meets 1st Sat. of month, United Church, 820 E. Williams St., Apex. NC
 DAN HARLAN, Secretary
 E-mail: contact@danharlanmagic.com
 Website: www.raleighmagicclub.org

February! Oh no! The groundhog has predicted six more weeks of card tricks. But, for now, we're gearing up for Valentine's Day by trotting out our first loves... in the form of tricks that inspired us to become magicians.

Tricked into hosting our performance section, Russ Condrey really put the ball in balloon by really putting a ball in a balloon. Going from putting to pulling, Wayne Haarhaus yanked a coin from an ear and pushed it through a table... the coin, not the ear... and made it vanish... the coin, not the table. Hilariously, his method required him to mime a wall all the way back to his seat.

Next, Sean MacBain shared a likely story of two sets of twins, some redheads, and an Irish pub. Fortunately, no pasteboards were harmed in the making of this epic tale. Proving card tricks are in fashion, Chloe Glaser revealed that tiny images of a chosen card had been dangling from her ears the whole time. Then, Gale Molovinsky had a ball as he tossed a crumpled piece of paper around the room selecting random participants who created a card that matched what was written in the paper ball. They all got it write... ahem, right. And he probably had something to do with it, too.

If you can guess what David Darmody did with a piece of rope, a safety pin, a ring, and a handkerchief, then you're probably as old as this writer... and just my type. Next up, junior member Josh made a couple of Erno's cubes obey his bidding, as we have all come to expect. Fighting the February chill, Jim Collins really turned up the heat with a book filled with fire, and then he did the obligatory card trick with a cold deck. With a gung-ho spirit, The Great Paul K showed off his latest handiwork... a fancy box that magically produced both M's and M's.

Fifty cards short of a full deck, Dan Breeding warped our minds with his pasteboard portal. Proving the groundhog properly prophetic, Bob Crane transformed a card as it passed through a dollar bill and trapped a card in his cell phone. Wrapping things up, Dan Harlan stretched the limits of believability with rubber bands.

Dan Harlan

RING 202, MALTA – The Magicians' Society

Meets on alternate Mondays at 19:00 Volunteer Centre, 181 Melita Street, Valetta
 GEOFFREY BUHAGIAR, Secretary
secretary@magicinmalta.com
www.facebook.com/groups/2785030921/

Our Christmas session was more about eating, drinking and chatting than about performing magic. We had great fun comparing notes about our ups and downs during the Christmas performances. It seems to have been a very good season for most of the magicians, especially for those who work for kids. Our guest performers were Noel D'Amato and past president, Glen Mercieca. Noel performed a cute miniature version of the Topsy Turvy Bottles, where two bottles change directions while under the tube and the magician's control. Glen entertained us with Mike Maxwell's version of the Dan Harlan's trick 'Cardtoon', which is called 'Toony Angel'. A card is freely selected and a picture of an angel, on the backs of the cards starts moving and fluttering while the cards are riffled as in a Flip Book, until it displays the chosen card. It was a great ending to a year full of activities.

The first meeting in January was opened by another past president, Brian Role, who showed a rather unusual finger ring with a very large cameo stone. A card was chosen and the stone changed into an image of the chosen card. An idea that came from Matthew Wright. Glen Mercieca performed a routine with sponge balls, which climaxed into a classic spirit effect. The ball was placed on the side of an empty box while an empty stemmed glass was on the other side. When the door was closed, the ball found

itself inside the glass. Kris Attard performed the latest version of Grandmother's Necklace where two furry strings are inserted into large transparent beads, and penetrated uncannily. Our current president, Gwilym Bugeja first performed one of his original effects, where the torn corners of two chosen cards with different coloured backs are restored in a mismade way. The other trick was the Flying Coins performed with Casino chips. TVP, Alfred Mifsud, showed us two small boxes that fit into each other. When they are put together again, the one that was outside went inside and the one that was inside covered the other one. He repeated this a few times, each time producing a sponge ball from inside the boxes. Lorenzo Brincat gave a very impressive presentation of the Classic Seven Keys to Baldpate. This was one of the most successful mechanical versions, called Key-R-Rect by Carl Wolf. PIP, Vanni Pule, entertained us with a Mikame trick where a hole in a giant keychain moves from end to middle and vice versa. He also penetrated a coin through part of the deck of cards to reach the chosen card and made a piece of paper change visually halfway inside a wallet, the latter by Seo Magic.

The last part of the meeting was one of our "Highlights". This time, the spotlight fell on our well-loved balloon man, Robert Ellul. He started with some standard magic involving a Silk Blow, the Colouring Book and the Rigid Rope. Then he twisted several balloons into various shapes and spoke about how he could adapt these shapes to various holidays, whether Christmas, Easter, Halloween or birthdays. His show emphasises movement, direct participation, lively music and colour. It was a very entertaining session, and it brought a smile on the faces of all the members who attended. *Geoffrey Buhagiar*

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: Ecraft@woh.rr.com
Web site: www.angelfire.com/oh/ring205

Ring 205 met on February 1, 2026 at Mike's home. Our regular meeting, January 25, was postponed to tonight because of severe weather conditions.

Chris Topel opened the meeting at 7:00 PM. Chris attended the Magi-Fest and reported on performers and shows at the convention.

Doug Ferguson informed everyone that Lowell Forbes had passed away. Lowell was one of the charter members who organized Ring 205. He was also Magician of the Year for the

I.B.M. in 1972. Our club chose to dedicate a magic book to the Tiffin library in memory of Lowell. Gene Craft will follow up on this.

Doug passed out the treasurer's report and explained all transactions.

Gene Craft began the evening's magic with Spelling Bee. Similar to spell check on our phones it took a magic twist to correct a misspelled word. Gary Friedrich caused four nine of diamonds to change to four Jack of diamonds. This routine is called "Reset". Doug Ferguson presented a new version of Oil And Water. Surprise finish, though, when Doug caused the black cards to change into a Royal Straight Flush in Spades.

Chris Topel presented the evening lecture. He dealt off four piles of cards and had different members count off cards to "Everyone Loves Me". When the top card of each pile was turned over they all revealed one of the four Aces.

Mike Grubbs began the evening show. He presented several card manipulation routines. He then had us match up some "Funky Faces" resulting in finding a selected card. He concluded with a Cups and Balls routine that seemed very well performed. This was some very good club magic. Eddy Grubbs was also present.

Gene Craft

RING 216, SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA

Meets 2nd Wed each month at the Yu Ai-Kai Cultural Center, 588 N. Fourth St., San Jose, CA
DAVID MARTINEZ, President
E-mail: president@ring216.org / Web site: www.ring216.org

President Cal Tong introduced the last competition of the year, the Stage/Parlor competition, on December 10, 2025. It was a well-attended meeting with an audience of about thirty-five adults and youths. Before beginning, Cal announced that January will have teach-ins by member, and soon he will reveal the first two lecturers of the year. Then he gave the floor to Yitian Liang as the competition MC, who passed out the ballots and explained the scoring.

Greg opened the Standard Division with flowers that appeared and two ropes that became one. Jeffrey Friend risked bad luck by placing a mirror in a bag and hitting it with a hammer, taking out pieces, and eventually restoring the mirror again. Harold De Armas led spectators in playing the part of "Clue" suspects, who made choices how a crime would be committed, culminating in revealing his evidence packet had already predicted the choices. Jolie Morgan tore up a selected card, then restored it, all but for one piece which was found in a rose selected by the audience from a bouquet.

In the Masters Division, five volunteers freely arranged themselves next to Alan Leeds and selected envelopes; another spectator made a pickleball-themed set of choices that turned out to match the volunteers' selections and order. Alex Wu using only one hand found four aces, followed by performing an Ambitious Card routine with a surprising wallet ending, rounding off with a four ace assembly set to music. Magic Mitch was silent as he used signs to have spectators freely select a card, then he revealed that chosen card was in his mouth. Jonathan Chen, amazingly costumed as a KPop Demon Hunter, combined an exciting dance routine with a multiple cut and restored rope and a clothes quick change; really, you had to be there.

After a quick tabulation of the ballots, the winners were announced. In the Standard Division, the First Place and the People's Choice awards both went to Jolie; in the Masters Division, both awards went to that demon, Jonathan.

I.B.M. Ring 216 of Silicon Valley meets the second Wednesday of every month. We welcome all visiting magicians. *Gary Goldberg*

RING 236, CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS – Don & Dorothy Schultz Ring

Meets 3rd Wed., 7:00pm, (except Nov. and Dec.) at The Salvation Army, 502 N. Prospect, Champaign, IL 61820 (and Zoom).

KEN BARHAM, Secretary

2318 Winchester Dr., Champaign, IL 61821 / (217) 841-5616

E-mail: Kebram@aol.com

The club will be doing a show at the Danville, VC on Wed February 11th at 2pm. To participate on stage or doing walk-around, please show up by 1:00. It might be a good idea to talk to Chris ahead of time as well.

Dues are due at the February meeting. \$20 if paid in February and \$25 after that. Elections at the February meeting. Offices are President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary. As we are a combined club, you must be a member of the SAM, I.B.M., and CIMA to be an officer.

The meeting opened with discussion of online meetings, lectures, and conventions coming up. Dave Wernick gave a good review of Cocktail and of How to Entertain a Cat. Hesham Hassan gave a review of a show he saw out of town. I won't mention the name because, while the audience liked it, he felt some of the routines were word for word copies of some famous routines by some well known magicians. This prompted discussion of copyright legalities and ethics. Bill Pierce recommended we search Youtube for a video called Frank Garcia Rare.

It's worth a watch. Ken Barham opened the magic with Link King and Rubber band through pen. Eric Fang showed us Inject 2 which led to discussion of Mentalism and pre-show/off camera work. Rob "The Professor" Higgins took the floor with a 4 Dimensional Card Change. Andy Dallas showed us his ACAAN, Cut to the Aces, and Ambitious Card with a Svengali Deck. Eric Fang returned with Double Exposure and Dave Wernick closed out the meeting with Ladies Night. As usual, there were many discussions and a lot of magic after the meeting as well.

The next meeting will be Wed, February 18th at 7:00 PM at the Salvation Army at 2212 N. Market St. in Champaign, IL. Come early and meet us at Manzella's Italian Patio on First Street in Champaign. The topic will be "Loooooooooove Magic. Or Valentines magic. As usual, anything you want to bring to show is fine with us. *Ken Barham*

RING 250, FORT COLLINS, COLORADO – Presto-Digitators

Meets 2nd Sat. of month at 11:00 a.m. at Oregon's Restaurant, 4235 S. College Ave., Fort Collins, CO 80525

LEW WYMISSNER, President / Lewiswymisner@comcast.net

(970) 484-7014 / Web site: www.prestodigitators.com

December Meeting: December '25 meeting was an opportunity to have a "blast from our past." President Neil Holstein suggested we recreate what our late/great founder, Lloyd Worley presented every year, which he called the "We Ourselves Show." Club members could invite friends & family and we would put on a show. This year the following folks performed: The MC was Lew (The Great Loudini) Wymisner. Neil performed his Chop Cup. Doug Zimmerman presented an elaborate card effect with multiple endings. Jake Lapp performed two mentalism effects, Baxter Dunn & Cameo Heitzman presented The Bucket, a liquid effect like Sands of the Desert. Mike Frey did a jumbo card effect and referenced Derek Dingle. CJ Adams presented a card effect he called Comedy of Errors. Lloyd (Lloydini) Mobley performed his version of ACAAN. Tim (TimFoolery) Pendergast performed a Smash & Stab effect that resulted in him giving the female assistant from the audience (Toni Ferguson) a long stemmed rose. Cody Landstrom performed an effect from his repertoire, the Lasso Card Trick where he combines the card effect with some real cowboy trick roping moves. Byron (The Great Byrini) closed the show with his Comedy Straight Jacket routine. More than 20 people attended this event.

January Meeting: The January '26 meeting

featured a Teach-in by Tim (Tim Foolery) Pendergast of his version of The Chicago Opener. Discussion ensued about variations of this classic card effect. During the performance phase of the meeting, Mike Frey performed a jumbo version of The Eight Card Brainwave using ten cards. Gary Hickox demonstrated a effect he created using a Christmas tree ornament, which he smashed at the climax to produce a previously selected card he had torn into pieces, which was restored except for the piece his spectator was holding. Brian Hallisey performed a mental effect from Alakazam Magic called PIN. Byron (The Great Byrini) performed an effect he labeled, Memorial for a Friend. CJ Adams showed another variation of the Chicago Opener which he called, Brainwave, my way. Chris Manos showed us X-act match. Lew (Loudini) Wymisner performed Sean Taylor's The Crazy Man's Marked Deck. Doug Zimmerman gave the members what amounted to a second teach-in about effects that could be performed with a Pendulum. After the official meeting ended, those interested stayed around to discuss ideas for this year's upcoming meetings; lectures, whether to travel to Estes Park again to Aiden Sinclair's Underground at the Stanley Hotel for a lecture & show, and whether to reintegrate something from past years, meeting a second time in month on occasion at an alternate location for members to perform effects and get feedback/constructive criticism from other attending members, among other ideas.

Lev Wymisner

RING 258, LEESBURG, FLORIDA – The “Magic Ian” Ring

4th Thu. at 7:00 pm, in the Ball Room of the Lake Square Mall, Leesburg, FL 34748

ROGER L. REID, Secretary / (321) 945-7500

E-mail: rogerreid1114@gmail.com / Website: www.Ring 258.com

Our first meeting of the year was a good one with 22 attendees and a lecture by Mr. Steve Hart.

On Thu., Jan. 8th a meeting was held including Ring Pres. Andy Rohweder, V. P. David Ginsburg and three members of the management of the Lake Square Mall where we are currently meeting. Minutes of that meeting were read at tonight's meeting. Details included confirming that we will provide four (4) shows during the year as payment for the meeting room. Beyond those four shows there may be opportunities for members to perform paid gigs. The Mall will publicize the I.B.M. and Ring 258! V.P. David Ginsburg will be our liaison with Mall management.

After closing a brief business meeting Pres.

Rohweder introduced lecturer Steve Hart! Steve gave some background on his life in Magic. Mentored by one of our members, Jeff Arnold and long-time friendship with Bev Bergeron. (Rebo the Clown) Over the next hour and a half Steve performed, demonstrated and explained seventeen (17) effects that he uses in performances for children and senior citizens. Some of the standouts were Jumbo King Card, Watering Can Bowtania, Vanishing Soda Bottle, Misprinted \$1.00 and Vanishing Elephant.

Steve produces many of the effects himself. Others he designs and has made by others. At the end of the meeting there were some brisk sales.

Next month's Theme... Perform What You Received for Christmas or Chanukah! *Roger Reid*

RING 265, LONDON, ONTARIO, CANADA – London Magicians Guild

Meets 2nd Wed., Labatt's Engineering Bldg. unless otherwise notified.

MARK HOGAN, Secretary

The January meeting was held just before the “storm of storms” hit our city, so hats off to the brave souls who took some risk to come out and show us their “Newest Trick”.

Andy Parr opened the night by having a spectator shoot a fully loaded Nerf gun at a board covered with playing cards, eventually selecting one (a very cool way to “pick a card”!) – which also happened to be the only card reversed in his deck! Mark Hogan did two Craig Petty effects from this year's Penguin Magic Holiday Spectacular: A different take on a “Card to Wallet” using a Misdirection card and some “sleight of hand” performed by a photocopy of his own hand! He also performed Christian Grace's Paradox, where a selection is shuffled into a packet, and cards added to the packet by the spectator until the packet contains the entire deck, except the selection!

Andrew Olmstead showed us a very nice “Ring and String” effect that he had not performed in years, adding a terrific reveal of the ring at the end using Nicholas Einhorn's “Nest of Wallets” he recently received. Later he used his winning item from our “Pass The Deck” contest to find a spectator's selection by spelling items we all had for lunch! Sam General performed Ollie Mealing's Discarded, had a spectator select a card and shuffle it into the pack, and with Sam discarding clumps of cards he didn't like, he eventually found the selection! And Harvey Poole showed us that one object can fit holes shaped in a square, circle, and a triangle! He also did some of his favorite rubber band effects, and also used questions submitted to an

“AI deck” to find a spectator’s selection! Thanks to everyone who came out to have some fun showing us their newest tricks! *Mark Hogan*

RING 266, TYLER, TEXAS – East Texas Court of Magic

1st Mon of the month, 7:00 pm, at Church of Living Hope on Hwy 69-North in Tyler, Tx.

JENE CARROLL, President

Ring 266 focused on Valentine’s Day magic during its February meeting. We had 13 people in attendance, including visitors. Some lively discussion transpired, focused on the possibility of a future mini festival or workshop, to potentially appeal to younger performers. The club is also considering a possible new venue. David Gish wowed the members with an amazing appearing silk streamer effect. If you’re in Tyler soon, please visit our Ring! *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

Good meeting this month. Some of our regulars were not available, but we had some returning members that we had not seen in a fair while. We had Kristian Giles, Yile Zhang, Kieran Taylor, Dimitri Diamand, and Joe McGrail-Bateup and his daughter Audrey. And me.

The theme was “New Stuff for the New Year”. So we had a bit of a mix of the old and new. Luckily, with Dimitri’s long absence, almost everything was new. I started with a card trick. Two spectators each thought of a card, then generated a fairly random looking number. The cards at those numbers were removed, and each had found the other person’s thought of card at their number. This was one of mine, TOCARN (Thought Of Card At Random-ish Number). In light of Dimitri’s return I did a trick with an alphabet deck. Spectators shuffled the deck face up and face down in a very haphazard way. Then the face down cards were removed, and they spelled “welcome back”. This was Shuffle Bored, with an alphabet deck.

Kristian now did a 4 ace production from a genuinely shuffled deck. He did a bunch of riffle shuffles, periodically cutting to an ace. This was done by glimpsing the aces during the shuffles, narrowing down their locations. Not an easy process. I followed with another card trick. Two spectators cut the deck into three piles, selected cards, shuffled each of the piles and reassembled the deck, all without the magician touching the cards. The magician then took the cards and found both selections, with no fishing or outs. A very fooling effect. This was Thot Echo by Sam Schwartz.

Yile had a set of mini linking rings. Kieran also showed some nice moves. It had been years since he had done anything with linking rings, but the muscle memory still worked. Joe followed with a phone trick. He had a list of 100 celebrities on his phone. A prediction was handed to a spectator, then the spectator chose a number from 1 to 100. The spectator scrolled through to this number to find the corresponding celebrity, which matched the prediction. This was Digital Force Bag by Marc Kerstein. Joe then did another phone trick. A spectator used their own phone to search for something (anything they chose) on Wikipedia. The magician divined what the spectator searched for. This was WikiTest, again by Marc Kerstein.

I followed with a quick card trick. The magician took 3 cards as predictions, then the spectator selected a card (this selection was genuinely fair, although subsequent actions were significantly less fair). The three predictions were the same value as the selected card. This was Discrepancy City Prediction by John Bannon. Kristian kept up the card stuff with a very hands off effect. A spectator dealt, shuffled, cut the cards, selected one, then again shuffled and cut in a very haphazard way, without the magician touching the cards. Despite this, the magician identified the chosen card. Very fooling. This was Red Herring by Benjamin Earl.

Joe followed with another phone trick. He placed his phone face down on the table, then had a spectator simply name a song. That song started playing on the magician’s phone. Some people suspected that Siri had heard the name of the song, so Joe repeated it, this time with the song being written down rather than said out loud. Again the magician’s phone started playing the song. This was Earworm, once more by Marc Kerstein. Dimitri continued with another hands off card trick. A spectator selected a card, then repeatedly cut the deck. The magician never touched the cards but successfully found the selection. This was the Lazy Man’s Card Trick by Al Koran and Jack Miller.

I then did a packet trick, with 4 blue backed aces. This was a twisting the aces effect, with the story that the subtle markings indicate which ace will next be appearing. As a kicker, the backs changed to red, with the name of the ace printed in large letters. This was Marked Cards. I followed with another packet trick, this one with a voodoo theme. Six cards were shown, each depicting a voodoo doll with a particular torture (eg a hot foot, or arm torn off). There was also a “cure” card that was put aside as a

prediction. A spectator chose one of the cards, then the "cure" card was shown - it had a bandage on the exact torture selected. A fun effect. This was Deja Voodoo by Dan Harlan.

Dimitri then did another card trick. A spectator selected a card, which was lost in the deck. The magician attempted to find the selection, and pulled out the ace of spades. But this was not the selection. Oops. But then the spectator was asked to read the fine print on the ace of spades. It was the name of the selection! This was Fine Print by Jay Sankey. Kristian then did one that was still a bit of a work in progress. A spectator selected a card, that was lost in the deck. The magician dribbled the cards onto the table, during which he reached in and grabbed one of the falling cards - the selection. Very impressive, although he only succeeds about half the time.

Yile showed us his 4 ace production. He gave the deck a shuffle, then cut it into 4 piles, to get the 4 aces. I finished with a card trick, one I learned at my very first magic club meeting (a long time ago). A spectator shuffled the cards. The magician then removed one card, which was put aside face down. The cards were cut to (say) a ten. So the tenth card was counted to - it was another ten. Another ten was found, and the card put aside at the start was the final ten. A very nice trick.

We finished at that point. Next meeting is on 19 Feb, the theme is Lennart Green. *Peter Foster*

RING 289, MACON, GEORGIA – Mike Fuller Ring

Meets 1st Tue. each month at 6:00 p.m., Fresh Air BBQ on Riverside Dr., Macon

DANNY WATSON, President / (478) 338-5572

Web site: www.angelfire.com/magic2/maconmagic

In Attendance: Mike and Linda Fuller, Tony Zelonis, John and Rhonda Donahue, Ronald Livingston. Our February meeting started off low in numbers but still had a good meal at one of the finest B-B-Q places here in central Georgia, Fresh Air B-B-Q here in Macon.

After our meal, Mike Fuller filling in for our missing president, Danny Watson, started us off with some riddles he came up with on the web then we talked about upcoming events and going's on in the magic world.

Now on with the magic with this months theme being Magic Wand Magic and Mike Fuller shared with us his collection of magic wands thru the years some as old as 100 years old, some just regular, some gimmicked. Good Stuff.

Next Tony Zelonis showed us his multiplying magic wands that looked great, a wave of the

wand and there was two, another wave and he had three and finally one more wave and there was four. Looked good Tony.

John Donahue closed out the night with a card trick but before he started he stated the ambience in the room was lacking so he brought out a small flower pot and sprinkled some flower seeds in the bottom. He took a little water and added to the pot then grabbed up a magic wand and gave it a stir and all of a sudden there was a pretty red flower in the pot. Looked great. Next with the help of Tony Zelonis he had him memorize a number card in half of the deck then John shuffled it in with half the deck face up and the other half face down, a cut here, a cut there and John was to find the card mentioned but a cut in the wrong place and the effect didn't turn out as planned. Better luck next time, back to the drawing board.

Next month the theme is going to be sponge magic. If your in the area stop in and see us as we'd love to see you. Be well. *John Donahue*

RING 313, ORANGE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA – The John Fedko Ring

Meets last Tues. of the month, Irvine Valley Water District,

15600 Sand Canyon Ave., Irvine.,

ALAN HANSON, Secretary

Email: AlanHanson15@gmail.com

Web site: www.ring313.org

Club officers were sworn in by a surprise guest visitor, I.B.M. President, Stephen Levine.

Officers and directors present to take the oath included: Steven Longacre, President; Alan Hanson, Secretary; Chris Wynkoop, Treasurer; Richard Zucker, Second Vice President/ Sergeant-at-Arms; Sam Konugres, Second Vice President; Steve Tran, Director of Technology; Philip Henderson, Newsletter Editor; Todd Reis, Director-at-Large; and David Peltier, Director-at-Large.

Fresh from their Magic Castle engagement, Bond Lee and Yanyan Ma performed and lectured our John Fedko Ring 313. Many members were already familiar with Bond Lee through products sold on his MS Magic website. Yanyan Ma was known from her cover story in the November 2025 issue of *The Linking Ring* and her appearance on Penn & Teller: Fool Us television show.

Bond Lee began his presentation with a demonstration of stage magic. Bond's effects included a silk production from the flames, both of which appeared within an empty bottomless box. A silken knot was pulled free from the tied silk which was revealed to then have a hole missing from its center. The silk changed to confetti.

Retrieved whole again the silk transformed into a matching colored cane. A long silk scarf was taken out of a top hat from which multiple long stem roses were produced, one even appearing clenched in Bond's teeth. These roses were placed in a vase of decorative greens which then went through a miraculous blooming process where a dozen or so roses slowly appeared. Everything was expertly coordinated with the music. As Bond later summarized: "Stage magic is cool."

All the mechanics of the performances were revealed. The sale of needed mechanical devices were available on his website including the blooming bush.

Bond next demonstrated a routine he performs for the Magic Castle brunch crowd. Using a white silk from his top hat to produce and manipulate small white balls that multiplied and traveled impossibly from hand to hand. The effect was mesmerizing – simply astonishing. This routine which uses two shells in place of the normal one, is the subject of an instructional tutorial which his website also offers (Caution: this effect requires many months of practice to acquire the necessary skill to perform, but looked worth the effort).

On a sheet of paper, Bond drew a cartoon sketch of a Teddy Bear. He inserted the paper into a colorful paper shopping bag of modest size. To everyone's amazement, Bond reached into the bag and slowly materialized a full-sized brown teddy bear – nearly five feet tall, dwarfing the much smaller bag. The room erupted in delight.

A Rubik's Cube routine using the Japanese Six Move solution technique ended with the random stacking of freely mixed cubes from the audience. This wall of cubes was then turned around to reveal a pixelated video game Mario which had been previously selected from a stack of paper images.

A similar effect using giant X's and O's to play Tic-Tac-Toe with an audience member. This resulted in a coherent image of Johnny Depp as Captain Jack Sparrow when the finished game stack was turned around.

Next, Yanyan Ma demonstrated her masterful card handling – using specially made cards for cardistry – combined magic, ballet, and acrobatics into a breathtaking performance. Her elegant choreography and flawless card manipulation created a seamless fusion of two art forms. Though she demonstrated basic grips and techniques, it was clear that her skill reflected countless hours of disciplined practice.

Bond concluded the evening by demonstrating several close-up effects, including Rubik's Wall, Tic-Tac-Toe, Hopping Key, and a rising card gimmick currently under development – unlike anything many of us had seen before. Numerous instructional videos and products are available through his company, MS Magic, at www.magicismstore.com. *Alan Hanson*

RING 325, BRANSON, MISSOURI – The Tri-Lakes Tricksters

Meets 3rd Sat. of the month atli's Magic & Joke Shop, 6:00pm, 124
South Business 65, Branson, MO
DR. CHRISTOPHER BECK, President
E-mail: beckibmring325@gmail.com

Branson Magic Ring #325

The following attended the annual Auction/Sale for our December meeting; Athony Mullins, Gary Geise, Jim Holmes, Seth Dreams, Yak Williams, Jeff Pyzocha and Thom Taylor. Jim Holmes called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm Everyone agreed the Carson dinner show was great and worth attending. Carson did some awesome magic tricks, After the show our host Gary Carson came to our table and visited with us. Yak and Anthony particularly enjoyed the green beans. All said the meal was great for the price including chicken, rice, mashed potatoes, beef cubes with gravy, corn, desert cake, coffee, tea and lemonade.

Discussion and information regarding the upcoming convention in Eureka Springs, March 27 & 28, The Thursday night before usually includes an auction after set up. Everyone begged and encouraged Jim plan on attending. Club members scheduled to go are Thom, Yak, Gary. There being no additional new business to share the club meeting was adjourned.

PERFORMANCES

The floor was open to any and all who wanted to present some of the items available for auction/sale. Yak showed several items he had available including various card decks, a TV card frame, Temple screen and prediction jar.

Jeff was up next and shared his collection of used magic linking rings, tippy topsy bottles, color changing feather wreaths and several different card decks.

Jim brought several of his tubs full of magic. Several people chose and purchased a variety of included items. As agreed, 10% of all sales were donated to the magic club and \$7.00 was received. Three members paid their dues for 2026.

After the auction Jeff wanted to show us his appearing straws he made from Lowe's hardware. It worked very well. He also showed his

bag holder for straw(s) which worked very well and pronounced “cool” by Yak. The idea was to hold the straw(s) in place in the bag or box as they pull it out. Yak also had fun demonstrating his gag joke using a credit card with the person’s name on it. He even took it to Steak & Shake after the meeting adjourned and had more fun with it there. The credit card offers five different jokes on the same card

Mary Geise

RING 334, MYRTLE BEACH, SOUTH CAROLINA – Grand Strand Magicians Society

Meets 1st Thu., 7:00 pm at the Southatlantic Bldg., Unit C, 908

Seaboard St., Myrtle Beach, SC

GERRY THOMPSON, Secretary

www.sandyshoesentertainment.com/ (843) 650-0767

We had no meeting in January but had a lecture on Jan. 14 by Vince Wilson, a presenter at the East Coast Spirit Sessions. After door prizes Michael Bairefoot told of his experiences performing at Wonderground in Las Vegas. What an experience! Following Michael we took a break of Chinese cuisine and fruit. Yum!!

Our theme for February was Eastern Magic. Paul McTaggart spoke on items used in celebrating the Chinese New Year. It was very interesting.

Michael Case, of Just in Case Productions, spoke on putting on productions in churches and theaters, i.e. lights and sound. Bryan Wilson, dressed as Charlie Chan, told about the famous Chinese detective. Vlad spoke about the successful East Coast Spirit Sessions. They had a great turn out, lots of dealers, and interesting talks on ESP, bizarre magic, and seances.

Ray Hardee started off the open table. He presented a routine with a silver ball, shot glass, and a leather cup. It looked like a chop cup routine, but, the ball kept jumping into the shot glass ending with an orange appearing in the leather cup. Very nice routine. Bryan Wilson performed a “killer” effect with a poison cherry and four mini cocktail shakers. Regular cherries were placed in the shakers, Janice replaced the poison cherry for one of the regular one and the helpers took the shakers at random. Bryan was able to deduce who had the safe cherry and who had the bad one. Nicely done. Amy followed, she handed out scratch off fortunes and small Chinese coins. We scratched off the foil and read the fortunes to everyone’s enjoyment. Very thoughtful of her. Thaddeus Plezia took a bag from a box, and then mementos from the bag. While blindfolded, Thaddeus was able to divine what item was put in the opaque box, a cork, a pocket watch, and a pocket knife. Very nice all around.

Paul McTaggart performed and then taught the “Whispering Queen” trick. This will be fun to perform. To follow, Paul showed a long tap-estry from and back. Folding it in half, he produced a string of silks from it and a large beer mug. Cool! Jonathan Cox had a card selected and returned to the deck which he made rise out of the top of the deck. Cool! Gene Voshell did a trick with the world’s smallest magician. He took a tiny magic wand from a manila envelope, it belongs to the world’s smallest magician. A card is selected and put back in the deck. Opening the envelope, Gene removes a paper with a picture of the World’s Smallest Magician, little Davey Tanner. With a flick of the paper, the selected card pops on top of the top hat Davey is holding. Excellent and funny! To finish, Gene takes out the pieces needed to make a box. After putting the box together in front of us, he removed a large number of sponge balls, chop sticks, and decks of cards. He then takes the box apart. Wow! Gene is quite the craftsman. Ron Conley closed the evening. From four handkerchiefs he produced mini Solo cups and a big glass glass to finish. Beautiful slight of hand. He had more ideas on the cup productions. What an evening!

If you are in Myrtle Beach the first Thursday of the month, come join us.

Dale Rabon

RING 359, MURRIETA, CALIFORNIA – The Jeff McBride Ring

Meets 2nd Thur., at 7:00 pm at 40215 Sierra Maria Rd., Murrieta, CA. 92562 and Via Zoom.

KARL JOHNSON, President

Email: karl.johnson@gwcmi.com / (818) 632-6324

On Thursday February 12th Ring 359, the Jeff McBride Ring met on zoom. While there were only six of us in attendance, the conversation and magic were both strong.

Karl Johnson, our host and facilitator, opened the meeting at 7:30 pm. The first topic was Jeff McBride’s “Bravo Bravo” routine. This highly stylized “cups and balls” routine features a squeaker hidden in his mouth and is very strongly choreographed move for move.

Karl spoke about his schedule changing and planning to take the meeting from 7:30 back to 7:00. A vote was taken and all seemed to agree. Paul has been busking on the Seal Beach Pier and spoke of his experiences and what can be learned through busking. Aside from good magic performance, crowd gathering and crowd control can be helpful to any magician. Cliff has been working with Paul and added his own bits about how rewarding it can be.

Cliff, who is an escape artist and stage performer talked about how he is working on learning

to do a double lift and an Elmsley count in hopes of making his show a larger selling point. Karl shared about working at Senior Centers. He feels that many of the residents might not really be present for the show, but it is good practice. Cliff shared his experience of working in a halfway house in Hollywood in a show arranged by Phil Van Tee.

A broken wand announcement was made for the passing of magician Peter Winch.

Ron performed "Jail Break" where about 1/3 of a deck of cards is somehow passed through a frame with bars running across it. It was very startling to see. He then did a pen through card routine with an unusual pen. Old Jasper showed a nice cloth napkin and proceeded to fold it and flip it over. He did this several times producing a coin each time. He ended this by producing a shot glass with a drink in it, which he drank. He ended by passing a half dollar through the computer screen to Karl who put his finger through the solid coin.

There was a discussion about selling "knock-off" magic. There is an issue going on at a well-known magic company.

The meeting ended with a discussion about skin lotion to use before performing sleight of hand. This was a small meeting, but it covered all the bases.

Cliff Gerstman

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

President Fletcher Roberts asked members to share items of interest with the group. Cato Holler indicated he and his wife Susan attended a spectacular magic show featuring The Ehrlich Brothers in Charlotte. It was their second show offered during their U.S. tour. The show featured grand illusions and outstanding pyrotechnic effects. There was also a "cannon" which shot out candy attached to mini parachutes for the children. Cato encouraged us to see their show when they return to the US from their home in Germany.

Nelson Brookshire shared his experience of a failed trick that ultimately turned out to be "true magic." Having forgotten to make a prediction prior to Rachel Colombini's Card in Wine Glass trick, it boiled down to hitting a 1 in 52 chance of the spectator naming their favorite card (hopefully matching the one in the wine glass). The magic gods were with him when the spectator announced the "QH" which by sheer chance matched the card in the glass!!! Oops turned into whoops!

Next Dr. Gerry Hayes gave a historical overview about Abbott's Magic Gathering and how it all came to be. It was a very interesting presentation which led to us being encouraged to attend the event in August.

Following old business, new business resulted in our Ring committing to do a public show at Joe Mazzola's PT Marvel's Magic Theater in May.

Gerry Hayes and President Roberts offered the idea of having posters printed which would be strategically placed in areas where we intend to hold our monthly meetings. This is anticipated to help spread the word about our Ring and potentially increase membership. This will be tried once in person meetings resume in April.

The magic part of our meeting began with Fletcher Roberts sharing that he has several magic videos on sites like YouTube, TikTok, etc. He has one video that has had 15,000,000 (yes, that's 15 million) hits. Several others have had over a million hits. This could result in very nice financial rewards as well as exposure for future opportunities to share his magic. Fletcher shared a couple of his video which were excellent! Keep them coming!!!

Nelson Brookshire provided a slight variation of "Two-Bit Pincher." Two quarters instead of one are held between the thumb and forefinger horizontally. A penny is pinched in front of the quarters vertically so that the quarter cannot be seen when presented at the proper angle. As he explained how he made his money, the coins were manipulated so that the penny disappeared, and the two quarters came into view on the palm of his hand. This is a fine little pocket trick that allows you to give away the quarters to a child or children. Let's call it "Four-Bit Pincher" for clarification!

A very nice penny and dime effect was presented by Gerry Hayes. After showing the two coins, Gerry secretly chose one of the coins to place in one hand. To determine who possibly had the best extrasensory perception each participant was asked which coin was enclosed. After guesses were made, he revealed the coin. Gerry repeated the process. Each response was noted. A third turn was presented and following the responses, he revealed which person had extrasensory perception. It turned out that Nelson was right all three times. Gerry explained that having the penny/dime transposition items and the turnover technique allow the magic to happen. Nice work, Gerry.

Joe Mazzola performed a Greg Gleason effect. He had Fletcher pick his favorite state in

the US that he had visited. Fletcher chose Virginia. Joe then showed a deck of cards that had one state printed on each card. Following appropriate patter, Joe showed that among the cards only one was reversed. Virginia was the reversed card. This is a variation of the Invisible Deck which Joe handled very well. Great idea!

Cato Holler concluded with a terrific optical illusion where the front and back of a playing card mysteriously change places. It was not a double-sided card! He then performed Bob Swadling's Sympathetic Matchboxes. Even when held together, apart or even separated with a playing card, one box mimicked the action of the other, whenever its drawer was pushed in or out. As always, it was a treat to see what Cato shares.

After the magic we agreed to ZOOM again in February. Adjournment followed.

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

Our January meeting started with some business. Our President, Daryl Rogers, discussed plans for Houdini's hometown promotions leading up to the SAM convention in July. The group discussed potential venues for performances, and explored opportunities for lectures and community engagement.

The magic part of the meeting began with Bruce Hetzler performing a magic trick called "Double Agent," which involved a humorous story about espionage. Dr. Lynn Miner then shared a trick called "Phantom Poker" that he had received for Christmas in 1955. He also

showed us a clever way he had embroidered a pair of suspenders to perform that same trick!

Daryl jumped in to present a Front Table, teaching us a "Linking Card" routine. A conversation ensued about whose trick it was (Harry Lorayne) and a variety of subtleties to enhance the illusion.

Up next was Mike Desotell shared his Christmas gift: two Marvin's Magic sets (50 magic tricks and 50 card tricks). Although promising to perform all of them for us, he settled on performing a matchstick levitation effect. Tal Kuhn performed a monte-adjacent card trick involving a queen, two kings. The queen jumped back and forth as Tal recited a rhyming script. Marvin Roth then demonstrated a trick where a solid ring appears to pass through a wand. In addition, he described how he built the box out of laminated cardboard. Secretary Kevin Koehne followed that up with a performance of Daryl's Whole Thing.

Jason Ransom shared various decks of cards he collects, including marked decks and special editions. Jason then performed a clever trick where a corner of a card disappears and reappears in the box. The group discussed learning and practicing magic tricks, with some members sharing tips on memorization and performance techniques. Daryl showed us a clever four ace trick, but with a set of Wizard of Oz cards and with a script to match the theme. It generated much discussion about the importance of scripting in magic, which was a nice segue into the Back Table discussion led by Kevin – a review of the book "Scripting Magic" by Pete McCabe. Kevin highly recommended the book to everyone.

It was a cold night of magic to warm the heart!

Kevin Koehne

Submitting Ring Events

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

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

NEW APPLICATIONS AND REINSTATEMENTS

SEND DUES, CHANGE OF ADDRESS, AND APPLICATIONS TO:

I.B.M. HEADQUARTERS

13 POINT WEST BLVD.,
ST. CHARLES, MO 63301

APRIL 2026 20 NEW MEMBERS

BERDIN, JESUS, Cypress, CA

CICERO, RON, Westlake Village, CA

JACOBS, HENRY, Irvine, CA

AKIN, WILLIAM, Cartersville, GA

BRODEUR, MATTHEW, Weymouth, MA

CHOU, TE-YEN, Newton, MA

HESTON, STEVEN, Potomac, MD

FULLER, JOSEPH, Lapeer, MI

SHEPPARD, PATRICK, Eagan, MN

CARTER, TIMOTHY, Joplin, MO

MCPHERSON, JEFF, Saint Louis, MO

OBANDO, LAURA, St. Louis, MO

CHROUST JR., WILLIAM, Henderson, NV

ANTONIO, PAUL, Buffalo, NY

WEBB, MIKE, Commercial Point, OH

BEALE, BRIAN, Erwin, TN

GOMES, FELIPE, Johnson City, TN

POLZAR, BRIAN, Two Rivers, WI

HERMAN, SHELDON, Osoyoos, Canada

RAGHUVIR, JITENDRA, Pune, Maharashtra, India

11 REINSTATEMENTS

CRISTALL, JONATHAN, Los Angeles, CA

KAPLAN, JOEL, Woodland Hills, CA

REEVES, JOHN, Galetton, CO

DUNSTON, MARC, Savannah, GA

THOMPSON, RICH, Belleville, IL

RINGO, DUANE, West Terre Haute, IN

COLE, JOE, Omaha, NE

COLON, JOSE, Youngstown, OH

HOFMEISTER, DAVID, Amelia, OH

ELAM, MICHAEL, Kingsport, TN

JACOBS, MARTY, Colchester, Essex, England

I.B.M. YOUTH TRIVIA CONTEST RULES

(Continued from page 35)

Send your answer on a single sheet of 8½" x 11" paper. Answers must be typed or legibly handwritten. Include your name, mailing address, telephone number, and I.B.M. membership number. Make your answers as complete as possible. *These questions are not designed to be easily Googled. We recommend that you ask the senior members of your local Ring to help you come up with the answers.*

Contest Rules: You must be a Youth Category member of the I.B.M. in good standing and not have reached your eighteenth birthday on or before the date of the postmark of your response.

The Youth member who supplies the correct answer will receive a valuable gift package from one or more of the world's best magic shops. In the event more than one correct answer is received, a drawing will be held to determine the winner. Results will be published in *The Linking Ring*.

To allow enough time for mail from international members to reach us, we will announce the winner and answer in the third issue after the question runs. For example, May's answer and winner will appear in the August issue. **For more information, see page 35.**

Answer to Pictures from the Past – from page 14

Arthur Herbert Buckley was born on December 15, 1890, in Brisbane, Australia. One of his first noted advertisements was in 1908 as the “Young Dante, King of Kards” and also “King of Koins.” Arthur also used the stage name “Mysto” during his early performances in Australia and New Zealand.

During his youth, he saw a few select magicians perform near his hometown. More often than not, he found the professional gamblers and con artists of interest to him. During his youth, he made friends with another young magician named Percy Abbott. (Note: Abbott eventually came to America and made a name for himself with his unique show. Abbott was even a part of Howard Thurston’s brother’s short-lived touring show. That show featured Harry Thurston, and his “Mysteries of India” included Abbott and even Leslie “Levante” Cole. Then, Abbott became partners with the famed illusionist Harry Blackstone Sr., and in 1934 they created the now-famous Abbott’s Magic Company in Colon, Michigan. Later in life, both Arthur and his old pal Abbott caught up with each and spoke about the old days. Between Arthur’s coin and mentalism acts, he kept busy throughout the 1930s and 1940s.) Arthur came to the United States in 1918, where he soon became known on the major vaudeville circuits of the 1920s. He was schooled by the great sleight-of-hand artists he met in the entertainment business and by professional gamblers he met in his early years touring Australia.

In 1920, with the assistance of his wife Helena, Arthur demonstrated his sleight-of-hand skills for the guests of the Improved Order of Red Men. Escape artist The Great Marcus was also on the playbill, performing an amazing effect in which he quickly released himself after two sailors spent ten minutes roping him up.

By 1921, Arthur was in charge of sales and new ideas at the Magic Products Company. If you walked into the shop, you most likely saw Arthur bent over a board, working away at blueprints and drawings. He also worked there as a magic instructor. Arthur’s “Magic Products Co.” catalogue was published monthly. His “New and Improved Card Effects” sold leather playing card cases by mail. Arthur advertised in magic magazines and *Billboard* magazine. By 1925, he and Helena were working as a two-person mind-reading duo.

In 1934, Arthur became an electronics engineer in a creative and consulting capacity for the Chicago-based Reliable Electric company, where he developed several commercially successful patents. He became close friends with the attorney and magician Alton Sharpe. During the 1940s, Arthur booked a number of shows in and around Chicago. He also created and sold tricks advertised in *The Sphinx* magazine, and wrote several influential books. Beginning in 1946, these included *Card Control*, *Gems of Magic*, and *Principals and Deceptions*.

In the early 1940s, Arthur and his wife Helena booked a show at recently converted movie theaters. In the years after the Great Depression, numerous vaudeville theaters either closed down or were acquired by large companies like Keith-Albee and Orpheum, which converted the theaters into movie theaters. The theater would present current movies of the day with live acts in between film showings.

Several Chicago-area theaters hired Arthur to present his magic show. On one occasion, he set up his show tables on stage before showtime and walked back to his dressing room to wait for his cue. When he was introduced, he and Helena walked out and to their surprise, all the tables were gone. There wasn’t a prop in sight. Without a moment’s thought, Arthur made a hasty exit to his dressing room, grabbed a few decks of cards, some stacks of coins, and a few other small effects he could stuff into his pockets. Helena did her best to keep the audience entertained until Arthur returned. He made his way past the stagehand manning the curtain ropes and rushed back on stage, then immediately began to perform several card effects. The show was a success albeit a slightly different one for the Buckleys.

Unbeknownst to the audience, they had just witnessed a once-in-a-lifetime performance by the Buckleys. After the audience left and the theater was empty, Arthur found out what happened to his equipment. In those days, the large movie screen was rolled up out of sight for the acts to perform their act. Arthur set his tables a little too close to the screen. He had no idea the movie screen had metal hooks, used for other theatrical purposes, protruding from the base of the curtain batten. When the screen was moved above the stage floor, the hooks slipped under Arthur's magic tables and lifted them out of sight without spilling one single prop. Going forward, Arthur made sure he walked every stage to prevent similar incidents from happening.

Arthur developed "Muscle Pass," one of his most well-known coin sleights, sometime before 1948, as well as originated the "split fan" card production. He was a member of the International Brotherhood of Magicians and served as president of Chicago's Ring 43. During the Ring's September 1952 meeting, he came up with the idea to have a "Trick of the Month" at meetings.

Arthur was asked to be a part of the *You Asked For It* television show based in Hollywood, California. He expertly performed his coin act for the cameras.

A few months after returning from California, Arthur passed away on February 20, 1953. In his book, *Principles and Deceptions*, he reminisced of his life in magic: "as my knowledge and dexterity grew, my self-bestowed titles, were allowed to diminish to more sensible proportions." His dedication and passion to the art of magic can still be found with those who remember his skills, kindness, and books.

Gary R. Frank

Had a Brief Lapse in Your Membership? Consider the Reinstatement Option.

Over the years, some I.B.M. members have allowed their active membership status to lapse because their dues were not paid. Provided that the lapse of membership is relatively short, not exceeding three years, the person may have his or her membership status *reinstated*, provided that a full payment is first made for all back dues owed. A reinstatement restores the original membership, as though the lapse never occurred, and the member's "continuous membership" span is not interrupted. Therefore, a reinstated member does not lose his or her "credits" toward induction into the Order of Merlin, which requires twenty-five or more years of continuous membership. Note, however, that only one such reinstatement may ever be considered for the purpose of adjusting a member's Order of Merlin eligibility.

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.

A grand stage with red curtains and a large chandelier. The chandelier is ornate and glowing, hanging from the ceiling. The curtains are deep red and draped in a classic theatrical style. The stage floor is visible at the bottom, and the overall atmosphere is one of elegance and drama.

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**For more information magician.org/contest
or email IBMMagicContest@gmail.com**

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