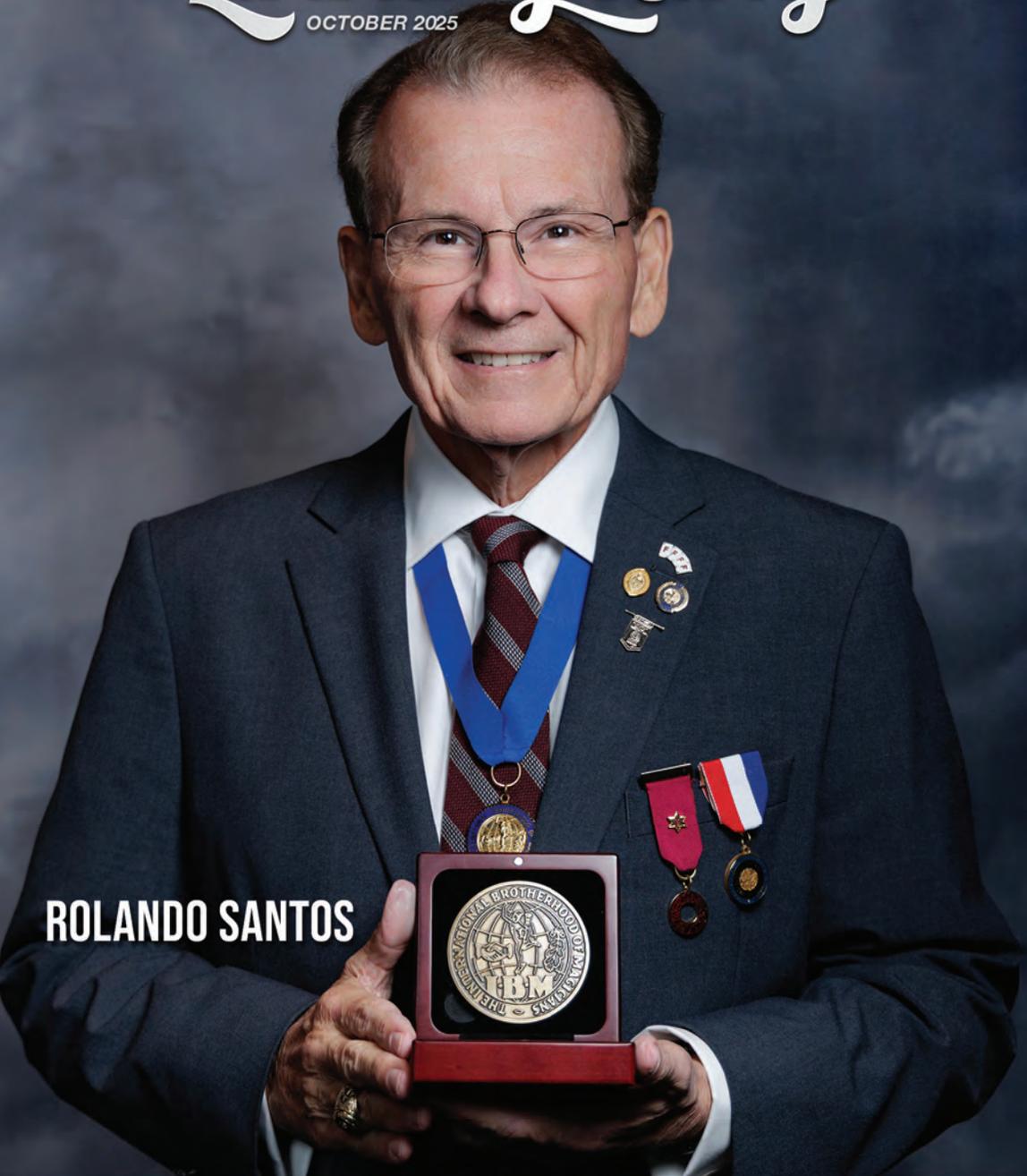


VOLUME 105 • NUMBER 10

The Linking Ring

OCTOBER 2025



ROLANDO SANTOS

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(ISSN 0024-4023)

USPS NO. 314-460

The Linking Ring

Official Journal of
The International Brotherhood of Magicians

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THE LINKING RING (ISSN 0024-4023) is published monthly by the International Brotherhood of Magicians. Office of Publication, 13 Point West Blvd., St. Charles, MO, 63301, for members only. Annual dues, \$60.00, includes \$20.00 for 12 issues. PERIODICALS postage paid at St. Louis, MO and other places. ©2025 by the International Brotherhood of Magicians. All rights reserved under international and Pan-American conventions. Reproduction of THE LINKING RING magazine in whole or in part is forbidden without prior written permission. For airmail, address changes, and other official business, contact our International Executive Secretary (see above). POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE LINKING RING, 13 Point West Blvd., St. Charles, MO 63301.

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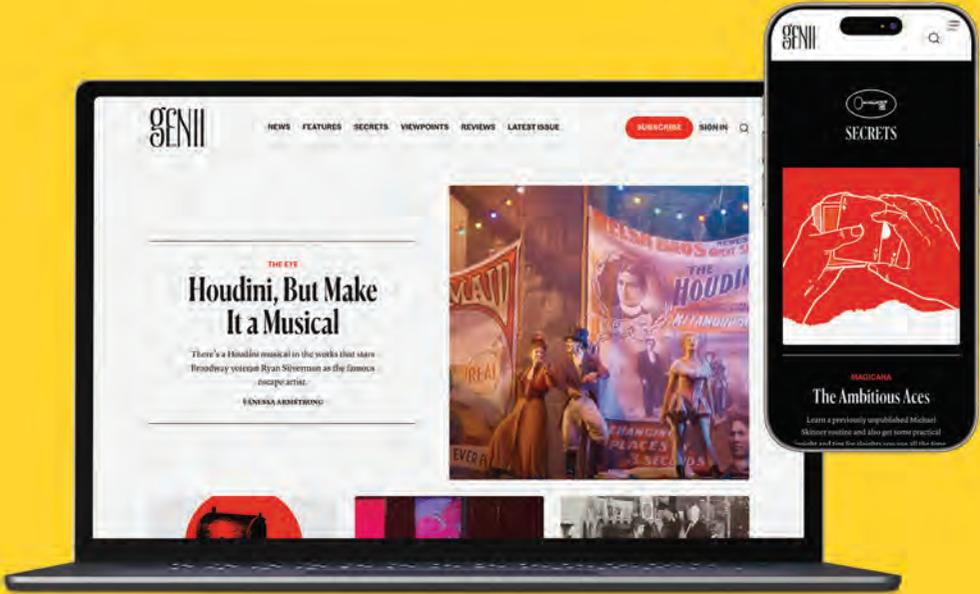
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Had a Brief Lapse in Your Membership? Consider the Reinstatement Option.

Since its inception in 1966, the Order of Merlin has served to recognize many of our most loyal and active members by providing a very few privileges or perquisites. Of course, the Order also serves as an incentive for members to recognize that maintaining one's continuous membership status is a worthwhile pursuit. More than one fourth of our current members have been inducted into the Order of Merlin by virtue of their maintaining an uninterrupted membership status within the I.B.M. for twenty-five years or more. Note, however, that only one such reinstatement may ever be considered for the purpose of adjusting a member's Order of Merlin eligibility.

Over the years, some I.B.M. members have allowed their active membership status to lapse because their dues were not paid. This, of course, is unfortunate, since some of those people have maintained or re-kindled their deep interest in magic, and many of them have also continued to adhere to the principles that led to the foundation and growth of the I.B.M.

What options do such magicians have if they wish to resume activity as I.B.M. members following such a lapse? Obviously, they may re-apply to become members again, just as they did when they originally joined. This would require their submission of a new application form, a new sponsorship by active members, a prescribed prepayment of dues and initiation fees for the new membership, and a period of time to allow for the orderly processing of the application.

A second option is available, provided that the lapse of membership is relatively short, not exceeding three years. In such a case, 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 person'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. Do it now, even if your lapse occurred many years ago.

If you have any questions concerning the above, please contact our International Executive Secretary, Sindie Richison at office@magician.org or at the physical mailing address for the Headquarters Office, on page four of each issue.

Feel the Power

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



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

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

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

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

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

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



From the Editor

SAMUEL PATRICK SMITH

During the Great Depression, my grandfather was a farmer in South Georgia. With a wife and young children to support, he struggled to keep food on the table. At one particularly low point, he had come to the end of his resources and did not know where to turn. Finally he got up the nerve to apply for a bank loan. His goal: to buy enough seed for the next crop. With profits from the harvest, he would repay the debt.

His interview with the banker, however, was brief. “Mr. Smith, how much does it cost you to run your farm?”

Granddad replied, “I can make it on five dollars a week.”

“Mr. Smith,” the banker declared with a hint of disdain, “you’re going to have to lower your standard of living.” Of course, back then five dollars went a lot further; today, adjusted for inflation, it amounts to about ninety-five dollars.

Granddad left the bank without a loan, but the interview gave him something more valuable than money. He was mad and – I suspect – humiliated, but that negative encounter deepened his determination. His anger and embarrassment were the catalyst for regrouping, getting creative, and figuring out ways to make it work. Somehow he made it through the season, and future years, without the loan. There was no instant, magic solution, but he gradually arose from the miry clay of poverty. He never became rich, but he made a comfortable living as he continued farming – and loving it – into his late nineties.

I don’t know that my grandfather ever heard of Abraham Maslow, but he was surely acquainted, by personal experience, with Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs. By

hope and necessity, Granddad climbed the rungs. When one solution didn’t work, he tried another, and he kept trying until he found a way out, over, or around the problem. “The story of the human race,” wrote Maslow, “is the story of men and women selling themselves short.” If this is true, we must have more internal resources than we realize.



Thurman Smith, 1926.

Many years later the banker saw my grandfather in town. Curiously, the man remembered their conversation from decades earlier. He told Granddad he regretted treating him in a highhanded manner and not issuing such a small loan. “Don’t worry about it,” Granddad replied. “You did me a favor. I found out I didn’t need it.” What a glorious realization to know that our future does not depend on others’ common sense or kindness. Success and happiness, we discover, is an inside job. It’s up to us to do the work.

President's Page

STEPHEN LEVINE



Secrets in Magic. Do you want to know what the best-kept secret in magic is? There is no single secret. In magic, the art relies on countless secrets, techniques, and illusions. But there is one best-kept secret, which is the value and benefits you receive from your membership in the International Brotherhood of Magicians.

How can I make such a bold statement? Simple: I can do so because it is true. I do not need to sell you on the concept because you are reading this article and realize the value of your membership includes this amazing monthly publication.

Did you know that if you are an international member of good standing for at least six months, and seeking a visa to the United States, the I.B.M. Legal Advisor will provide a letter of support to the Immigration and Naturalization Services on your behalf at no charge?

For those of you who do not live close to a Ring, we have our monthly Virtual Ring 2100 and we recently started our virtual lecture series. I know that hundreds of you attended the two virtual lectures we presented featuring Ryan Pilling and Michael Breggar. Many members said that these lectures alone, offering tips and self-working tricks, were worth their annual dues. If you missed them, they are or will be available on our website.

Our new website will be groundbreaking and jaw-dropping, with extensive members-only content. Executive Board member Eric Schuster is leading this exciting project.

The members-only I.B.M. Convention, scheduled for St. Louis next July, has just announced some of its talent lineup and I could not be more thrilled. There will also

be some special activities to celebrate St. Louis Ring 1's one hundredth anniversary.

Being a member of the I.B.M. connects you with a global network of magicians who share your passion. This affiliation opens doors to local meetings, conventions, and a supportive community that fosters growth and collaboration. We have the power to create magical moments with strangers, often brightening their days and bringing smiles to friends and family at gatherings and special occasions.

As many of you know, an organization is only as strong as the passion and dedication of its membership. In that context, the I.B.M. is as strong as a diamond. Our stability comes from you, our members, and the role you have unselfishly chosen to take at all levels of the organization.

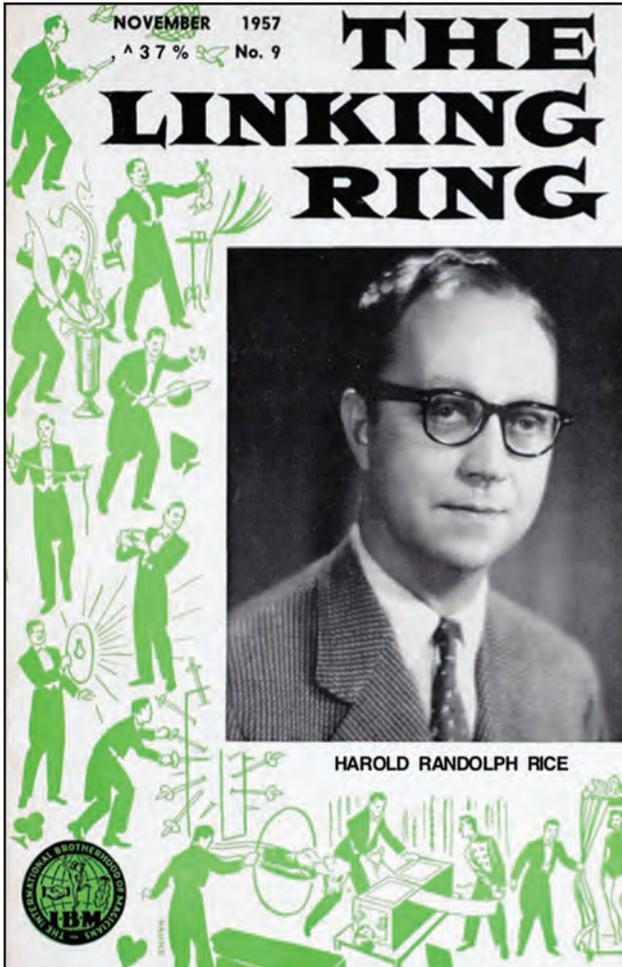
Looking ahead, passion and dedication alone are not enough to keep us strong. We cannot ignore the future and the issues that we will need to confront in order for us to stay strong and viable in a new world order that is crowded with alternatives to traditional magic societies. Still, there is nothing as satisfying as being in a Ring with your peers, socializing and performing a trick that amazes them. Ring meetings bring you together with your fellow magicians. At most Rings meetings, there will be a theme such as wizard wars, fix a trick, spooky magic, and teach a trick, as well as competitions, a swap meet, and more. When you go to a local Ring, you can work on a routine and get tips from professionals. You can learn a new move, or you can be astonished at other member's talent. The Rings located in eighty-eight countries are the

(continued on page 13)



Pictures from the Past

THE LINKING RING



Harold Rice and his wife Thelma were known around the world for supplying top-quality silks and silk effects to magicians. Harold's three hardcover books can be found in magicians' libraries because of the sheer in-depth research that went into each of the volumes as well as the excellent way he was able to break down each effect. It made it easy to find that perfect silk effect and eventually perform it with ease. Whether you were looking for a simple knot-tying effect with silks or a complete silk production with panache and elegance, Harold's silk books would be the first (and best) set of books to have in your library. Selling silks wasn't the only interest Harold had during his lifetime. To learn more, turn to page 144.

President's Page – from page 11

backbone of the I.B.M. and you, our members, need to help them continue and grow.

The challenges ahead do not lie solely with the Board of this international organization, but rather with us as an organization. The I.B.M.'s greatest asset is our collective creativity, energy, and spirit of volunteerism.

I am extending an invitation to you to help keep the I.B.M. strong and move forward by volunteering and accepting positions at all levels of the organization from local Rings, to international offices and committees. Contact me at stephenlevineibm@gmail.com. This is not the time to be shy. Please reach out to me and tell me what you are interested in doing.

Wishing you a magical month!

Stephen M. Levine

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WANT TO SUBMIT AN ARTICLE OR NEWS ITEM?

Email editor@magician.org.

WANT TO SUBMIT A TRICK OR A PARADE?

Email editor@magician.org. Parades should be between 8,000 and 10,000 words and include photographs or drawings so our artist has something to follow.

WANT TO SUBMIT A RING EVENT?

E-mail a Microsoft Word document and high-resolution jpegs (not embedded in the Word document) to Dr. Steven Schlanger at ringreports@magician.org. Note: Ring Events are articles about special activities conducted by your Ring, such as banquets, shows, or charity events.

WANT TO SUBMIT A RING REPORT?

E-mail a Microsoft Word document to Dr. Steven Schlanger at ringreports@magician.org. Note: Ring Reports are reports of the activities of your regular Ring meetings.

HANDY TIP: Look on page four of every issue to find contact information for officers of the I.B.M. and staff members of *The Linking Ring*.

ROLANDO SANTOS

Recipient of the I.B.M. Medallion of Honor

By Simone Marron

Past International President Rolando Santos was born on August 14, 1956, in Eagle Pass, Texas, on the Texas-Mexico border, where he spent his formative years. He graduated from Texas A&M University in 1978 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in journalism and was a proud member of the Fightin' Texas Aggie Band. Rolando has an older brother who also attended A&M, and they have two younger sisters.

Rolando started working at the age of fourteen at a local radio station in his hometown. He reminisces: "I walked into the station and told them I wanted to be a disc jockey. They didn't have a job for me, but they allowed me to hang around cleaning the floors and bathrooms. I did that for six months."

The general manager soon realized that Rolando's interest in newscasting was greater than his music interest, so when the news director took three months off during the summer, Rolando became the news director under the GM's tutelage at only seventeen years of age. This set him on a lifelong career in journalism.

While in college during Christmas break, spring break, and summer, Rolando would automatically slip right back into the news position at the radio station. As a high school graduation present, the GM gave him the six months of pay that

Rolando hadn't been paid for cleaning the floors when he was fourteen.

After college, Rolando's career started to advance and he relocated to San Antonio to be a weekend assignment editor and reporter. He soon became a full-time anchor and reporter for the NBC affiliate there, which is now WOAI-TV. After a year and a half, he moved to Salt Lake City to KSL and was an anchor and reporter for two years. Rolando's career continued to move in leaps and bounds,



Past International President Rolando Santos.



Rolando Santos receives the I.B.M.'s highest award, the Medallion of Honor, from then-International President Mike Dunagan at the 2025 I.B.M. Annual Convention in Houston, Texas. PHOTO BY MICHAEL MESSING

and his next advancement was huge. He explains, "From there I made a huge jump from Salt Lake City, which was in the top forty market at the time to the number four market in the country as an anchor and reporter at KPIX in San Francisco. It was a huge fast jump for me as a journalist. I was in San Francisco at twenty-seven years old and usually you had to wait till you were well in your thirties."

In 1985, Rolando met and married Pam, the love of his life who he encountered while working on a news story in San Francisco. In 1992 while living in Studio City, California, the Santos family expanded when they were blessed with twin girls, Allie and Roz. Roz currently lives in Denver working for a private foundation that funds Hispanic initiatives for minorities, and Allie is in Atlanta where she operates a photography business.

Next on the career train for Rolando was another important promotion to director of operations, and then assistant news director three months later at KTTV, a Fox station in Los Angeles that was the second

largest market in the country. Rolando explains, "I was there as assistant news director, and only one step away from what I wanted to do. After three years, Telemundo asked me to be the news director for their Spanish-language station. Our station had a .02 rating for news, and our competition had a .09 rating which had never been beaten. Three months later we beat them and never lost to them again while I was there."

That was only the beginning for his newsroom. Under Rolando's direction, Channel 52 was the first Spanish-language newscast to be awarded an Emmy for Best Newscast in Los Angeles, beating out the English stations as well as the Spanish-language competition. What made the win so important was that his newsroom had twenty-five people. The English-speaking stations had over one hundred and thirty-five. He was a star in the journalist galaxy but always managed to remain humble and grounded.

CNN and Telemundo were in a joint venture at that time. They recognized Rolando's talent and grabbed him up and



From l to r: daughter Allie, his wife Pam, Rolando, daughter Roz, and son-in-law Allen.



took him to Atlanta. A year after, the joint venture fell apart and Rolando was asked to stay as the director of operations for CNN Headline News. After about seven months, Ted Turner asked Rolando to launch a network for them in Spanish. Rolando tells us, “I launched CNN en Español first, then a network in Spain, and another in Turkey, and then I became the ‘fixer,’ meaning that whenever there was a problem at any of the networks, they sent me in to fix it as the executive vice president for international relations CNN worldwide.”

CNN sent Rolando to Chile to build a twenty-four-hour network from scratch and after two years, he was made the CEO of the joint venture company. Although he was originally scheduled to be there for two years, he liked it so much that he stayed for ten. Rolando effectively became a bridge between the two cultures, which is one of his hidden strengths.

Bridging is one of Rolando’s great talents. He has a rare ability to look at both sides of any situation and, with logic and a level head, find ways to bridge the gaps. For this reason, many I.B.M. International Presidents have chosen him as their advisor, as his knowledge, impartial problem-solving, and empathy just make organization and decision-making better.

After ten years in Chile, Rolando was now sixty, and he decided to retire and return to Atlanta for a final transition year, and shortly afterwards made the move to San Antonio, where they live today. Rolando explains, “Pam had been living in the United States and visiting me back and forth, and we decided that after being with the company for twenty-five years, it was time to retire as a CEO.”



In 1992, Rolando led his team at Channel 52 to an Emmy Award for Best Newscast in Los Angeles.



Lecturing at the 2024 Magistorum Magic & Mentalism Convention.

Rolando came to magic at a later age. He explains, “I had always wanted to get into magic as a kid, as I used to watch the Alakazam Hour show on television with Mark Wilson and Nani, but it conflicted with mom wanting me to take piano lessons. Mom won, but I didn’t learn to play piano or do magic at that time.” Around 1989, Rolando was an assistant director at Fox in Los Angeles. After sixteen years in front of the camera, he missed being in front of people, and decided that as he was in Los Angeles, it would be a good time to renew his magic passion.

Rolando started to frequent Hollywood Magic and purchased some props. At that time, an executive producer he worked with managed to get them an invite to the Magic Castle. Rolando reminisces, “Tomsoni and Company were performing in the Palace and afterward I got to spend some time with them and Mark and Nani Wilson. A week or so later in the mail I received a gift from Mark of the *Mark Wilson Course in Magic*. That started it all for me.”

At that time, Rolando was more interested in reading and learning about magic than performing. He had moved from the Fox Network to Telemundo and then progressed to being employed by CNN in Atlanta. When they sent him to launch a

network in Spain, he experienced a life-changing event.

He explains, “I was dining one night in a restaurant alone, reading the Roberto Giobbi Light Books with a deck of cards in my hand. This was long before they made their way to the United States, and they were written in Spanish. An elderly woman with her three adult daughters were seated nearby, and she dropped her cane. I picked it up for her and she asked if I did magic. I told her I was not a performer, but she was insistent that I show her something. I did three tricks and amazingly they all worked. As I was leaving the restaurant, one of the daughters came over to thank me and emotionally explained that her mother was dying, and now she would be able to have this memory of her laughing and enjoying herself. That was the moment I decided I was going to be a magician. I had an epiphany that magic was a universal language, and made a difference, no matter where you were in the world.”

Rolando found out that the two best magicians in Spain at that time were Juan Tamariz and Rafael Benatar and he reached out to both, and told them his story, and said, “I want to be a magician, will you meet me?” He tells us, “They did meet me, and looking back, I had a lot of book knowledge but absolutely no physical skills. I look back on it and I cringe. It was embarrassing, though at that time I was oblivious to that.”

To this day, Rafael and Rolando laugh together about Rolando’s lack of skills at that time, but when Rolando asked why they were willing to work with him, Rafael answered that it was really clear to them that Rolando was determined to do this, and they both decided that they wanted him to learn to do it the right way, which is the Spanish way. Rolando laughs, “Did they start me off with easy stuff like a riffle shuffle? Nope, Rafa’s first lesson was how to faro shuffle.”

Thirty-five years later, Rolando was giving his first lecture at the Magic Castle and Rafael was working in the Palace



Reporting live from Santiago, Chile, just hours after one of the most powerful earthquakes in modern history.

where Rolando's magical journey had started. He had come full circle.

When Rolando returned to Atlanta from Spain, he became active in the I.B.M. At that time Phil Willmarth was the editor of *The Linking Ring*, and Rolando, being a journalist, offered to write a Parade for the magazine. Soon after, Phil gave him the responsibility of writing the obituaries, which graduated into a column on ethics, as Rolando was on the CNN Standards and Practices Board. Soon Willmarth was giving him all kinds of assignments, and Rolando's giving nature had him donating a lot of his time to the I.B.M.

When Willmarth was moving up the chairs to become International President, he had his eye on Rolando to be the new editor of *The Linking Ring*. However,



Pam with daughters Allie and Roz at their home in Atlanta, Georgia.

although this was a position that Rolando was well qualified for and really wanted, the universe had a different plan and he was promoted to senior executive vice president of CNN International Relations. Rolando relates, "I became a part of the search committee for a new editor, that eventually landed Sammy Smith, who was a great choice. Next thing I know I'm on the Executive Committee and then eventually became International President, which was not something I had ever aspired to." Everything worked out the way it was meant to.

From the position of senior executive VP, Rolando was then promoted to the position of CEO of CNN in Chile in Santiago where he remained for ten years. Rolando tells us, "So it was a win-win for all of us. For me it worked out professionally, and it worked out for the magazine."

Rolando was a reviewer for *The Linking Ring* from the beginning of his career. He is the longest-tenured reviewer of the magazine and was the copy editor for Ed Solomon's column for many years, ultimately helping Ed write his columns for the last couple of years. Ed ended up bequeathing everything to Rolando because he knew that Rolando could read and write in his voice and understood his character and nuances. Ed was a huge

influence in Rolando's turn to bizarre magic during that fifteen-year period that they were working together.

Soon Willmarth appointed Rolando to the position of associate editor, and then to assistant editor. It was never discussed – it just happened. In those days, the magazine was laid out physically, not digitally, so once every three months, Rolando would fly to Willmarth's home in North Carolina and practice laying out the magazine with him on the dining room table.

Rolando considered both Raphael Benatar and Pepe Carrol as his mentors in general magic. However, his true calling, bizarre magic, was shaped by the illumination of that kind of magic – Eugene Burger, Max Maven, Lary Kuehn, Ed Solomon, Larry White, and David Goodsell – what Rolando called his “Stonehenge of Mentors.” Rolando relates, “They are all the reason I went into mystery, bizarre entertainment magic.” Rolando had developed a natural storytelling ability, and he could come up with a story to fit any routine on the spot.

Bizarre storytelling was the natural route for Rolando to follow. He had come into magic later in life, at thirty-five years of age, and didn't have the finger-flicking talents of some of the younger magicians. This was his niche.

In addition to writing for *The Linking Ring*, Rolando published “The Why Grid” – a system for improving storylines and routines – in the March 1999 issue of *MAGIC Magazine*. Rolando tells us, “It was a result of a conversation that I had with Eugene and Max because they were both fascinated by my ability to do live news reports while being shot at or in earthquakes, and to adlib confidently. Very few people can do this.” Rolando believes he developed this talent by being a radio reporter at the age of sixteen when he had to use his instinct to report on a story immediately by calling it in over the phone live.

“The Why Grid” is Rolando's explanation of how the words and actions come



A fifteen-year-old Rolando works at his local radio station, where he got his first job cleaning bathrooms before being promoted to news director at the age of seventeen.

together to tell a story – not unlike a television script. It gives the reason for what is being said and done, along with why it would be done that way. If the action or words can't be justified, then it must go, which shortens the outcome and allows you to feel and read your audience, resulting in a better connection. Rolando continues, “If I sense the audience isn't with me, I will change the direction. Probably the best compliment I ever got from Max was when he told me ‘I want to know how you choose your words, because when you speak to me it's compelling.’”

Rolando is a member of the Magic Castle, the Inner Circle of the Magic Circle with gold star, the Inner Magic Circle of Bizarre Magic, the East Coast Spirit Sessions, and of course the I.B.M. and Ring 9 in Atlanta. He is a regular lecturer at Magistorum in Dallas, which is a convention of bizarre magicians.

Bizarre magick began as something with heavy occult satanic overtones in the Tony Andruzzi times, which for good reason lost its popularity, and was later transformed into mystery entertainers with storytelling magic. Rolando tells us, “I see mainstream

magicians telling more stories with their magic now than ever before, because they understand that a story will evoke a long-term memory rather than create a fleeting memory. The difference between a magic trick and a storytelling trick is that a magic trick generally provokes a reaction, which can be strong and memorable, but a storytelling trick evokes an emotion, and because you evoke an emotion, that memory tends to be longer lasting.” He continues, “Evoking an emotion can create a shared personal reality ... that is, each person mentally creates their version of what they are seeing. They come in as an audience, but they leave feeling as if I was speaking directly to them using their own memories.”

Rolando has given keynote speeches around the world, but believes that one of the most interesting ones was standing in for Colin Powell at his alma mater, Texas A&M. One of his strengths is communicating across borders and getting past the natural tendencies that we all have not to listen to one another.

Rolando wants magicians to understand that magic is a universal language that makes a difference. “You don’t have to say a word for it to have an impact,” he says, “and it’s almost universally a positive impact. It is an icebreaker and will give you confidence.” He continues, “Don’t try and do everything. Figure out the two or three things that interest you the most, and work with that. It doesn’t have to be complicated sleights and routines, unless that is your interest.”

Rolando has received multiple awards throughout his career. In addition to his prestigious personal Emmy, he was also a CNN team Emmy winner. Other awards he has received include the Sigma Delta Chi award for excellence in journalism, along with awards for best writing, best spot news coverage, and breaking news reporting.

In Houston on July 10 of this year, Rolando became the tenth recipient of the most prestigious award that the



Rolando makes Hispanic Business's Top 100 Most Influential Hispanics and is featured on the cover in 1999.

International Brotherhood of Magicians can bestow on an individual, the Medallion of Honor. This award can only be conferred on a Past International President of the I.B.M. and requires a unanimous vote of the Board of Trustees. Currently, including Rolando, there are three living recipients of this great honor.

Rolando is completely deserving of this award. He has done so much for other people and the I.B.M. He has given his time and efforts unselfishly for decades to the organization with empathy, understanding, and a deep caring for others.

Rolando is quite emotional about receiving this honor. “I’ve been very lucky to have been recognized a lot in my career,” he says, “but I don’t remember being more surprised and humbled by an award. This was a momentous moment because it wasn’t even on my radar.” The truth is that Rolando received this award because he did the right thing and dedicated himself to the organization, and he was recognized for that. He continues, “I now have an even greater responsibility to do every-



Rolando was a member of the Fightin' Texas Aggie Band while studying at Texas A&M University.

thing I can for the organization and the membership. All I can do is promise to do everything I can to live up to this legacy that I have been entrusted with.”

Nobody can express Rolando's feelings on this award better than him, so here is the speech he gave on the evening he received this award:

Over the last few days, I constantly find myself overwhelmed by a myriad of emotions. I want to thank Mike Dunagan, the Executive Committee, the officers, and the Board of the I.B.M., Sammy Smith, Sindy Richison, Simone Marron, Joe Turner, Bill and Pam Evans, Joan Caesar, Phil Willmarth, and the late Jack Greenberg, Don and Joyce Wiberg, members of Ring 9, and everyone who has taken the time to guide and befriend me. And especially my wife Pam and my daughters, Allie and Roz. They grew up coming to this convention.

This moment feels surreal, improbable, moving, and above all sincerely humbling. I'm filled with profound gratitude, not only for this extraordinary recognition, but also conscious of the responsibility this legacy carries.

This Medallion is not a symbol of accomplishment. To me it is a reminder of duty – a reminder that we are not just creators of illusion, we are stewards of a sacred tradition.

We are called to uphold the integrity of this craft, to nurture those who come after us, and to honor those who came before – those who shared secrets in quiet corners, trusting that wonder was a gift worth preserving. Magic doesn't endure because of clever hands – it endures because it rekindles something essential in us: joy, wonder, and hope.

I'm keenly aware that I follow in the footsteps of just two other living recipients of this honor – Bill Wells and Dr. Bill Spooner. I was fortunate beyond words that they took me under their wings and shared their wisdom.

I remember, on the night I was first elected to the Executive Committee – long before I became International President – Dr. Spooner pulled me aside and said: “Rolando, whatever decisions you make, make them based on what is best for the members and the I.B.M. No matter what the cost to you personally, the members come first.”

I could not have agreed more then, and I hold those words even closer now. In every decision, and in every challenge, I've tried to ask: What is best for you? And that question will continue to guide me, now more than ever.

Thank you for this extraordinary honor. I'll do all I can to be worthy of it.

Finally, Rolando wants to express thanks to everyone who has been a part of his magical journey, but especially Roz, Allie, and Pam, who never begrudged all the time that he was away working and on his I.B.M. journey.

Simone Marron serves as International Secretary for the I.B.M. and webmaster at www.magician.org. You may reach her by email at internationalsecretary@magician.org.



By Tom Ewing

PHOTOS OF AWARDEES BY DIANE PONTIUS PHOTOGRAPHY

On Saturday, September 6, magicians and their guests from around the world gathered at the Garde Arts Center theater in New London, Connecticut for the thirty-third annual Milbourne Christopher Foundation awards ceremony. As in the past, the honorees spotlighted the best magic has to offer contemporaneously in performing, writing, publishing, and invention.

The categories reflect Christopher's diversified career, including the areas of author and/or publisher, outstanding illusionist or illusion creator, rising star, mentalist, lifetime achievement, close-up performer, award of excellence, and master's award. The evening opened with a cocktail reception where guests and awardees mingled. And then at 7:30 p.m., the awards presentations began.

Each awardee received an engraved plaque, a custom-designed wand with 24 carat gold tips in a presentation case fashioned by magic craftsman Tony Karpinski, and a beautiful Milbourne Christopher token struck for these occasions. After a brief video reviewing past and present winners, the award ceremony began.

Close-Up Award: Daniel Garcia

Besides being one of the most skilled and amazing close-up magicians, Garcia is also a consultant to stars like David Copperfield, David Blaine, Jon Dorenbos, Dynamo, and many others who come to him looking for ideas and effects to amaze. These stars come to him from many directions. Some come with an idea or an impossibility they want him to make a reality. Some come to him and just say, “Give me something” and he’ll come up with a hundred ideas.

He has the uncanny ability to visualize his creations, transfer them to paper, build working models, and then move them to stage or television, where audiences around the world enjoy his efforts. He’s like a ghostwriter – the talent behind the talent.

Garcia is constantly on the move, splitting his time between performances, lecturing at conventions, appearing at Hollywood’s Magic Castle and his consulting business. He has created well over a hundred effects that have been sold by all the major magic websites and businesses. His effects have inspired thousands of magicians. Garcia said, “Magic is not about smoke, glitter, fancy lights, or big boxes. It’s about joy, wonder, love, and how magic makes you feel.” Currently consulting on *America’s Got Talent*, he accepted his award by video from Hollywood.



Literary Award: Richard Hatch

A childhood interest in magic that began in Germany became a lifelong obsession and career for Hatch. He has been a full-time professional “deceptionist,” as he calls himself, since 1983. He honed his craft entertaining guests as one of the house magicians at Houston’s Magic Island night club before devoting himself exclusively to private and corporate work.

In 2010 he and his wife, the talented violinist Rosemary Kimura Hatch, opened the Hatch Academy of Magic and Music. He is now dedicating himself to preserving the history of Guenther Dammann, a Jewish German who published a book in 1933 in Berlin chronicling the lives of Jewish magicians. Dammann and his entire family perished in the Holocaust.

Last year, the *New York Times* devoted three pages of their Arts & Leisure section to Hatch’s work translating Dammann’s book, which he discovered in the magic section of the Yale University Library card catalog. He thought it was an antisemitic tract at first, given the date. He then realized it was an important text and contribution to magic history. Hatch lectured on the subject at the Holocaust Museum of Houston this past March and his translation of the Dammann book will be published by Tannen’s Magic next summer.

Among his other literary efforts are a translation of Ottokar Fischer’s second book on the magician Hofzinsler, the first four volumes of *Card College* by Roberto Giobbi, *The Magic of Paul Potassy*, and numerous magazine and online articles. From Budapest and Taipei to



the Kingdom of Bahrain, he has delighted audiences worldwide with his performances. He says his favorite performances are those with Rosemary and their son, Jonathan – an ensemble performance that made its debut at the Stony Creek Puppet House Theater in Branford, Connecticut, in 1984.

Award of Excellence: Connie Boyd

Connie Boyd received the foundation's Award of Excellence. Of course, all the awards recognize excellence in various forms. This award, however, is special and the person receiving it must be special as well.

Boyd is a classically trained performer, not just a magician. She began her performing career as a dancer with the National Ballet of Canada. She then performed as an aerialist and juggler with the circus. That continued until a piece of rigging holding her aloft broke, sending her plunging to the ground where she broke both of her feet. During rehab and under the guidance of Barkley Shaw, she started to study and perform magic and eventually ended up as the principal magician on the Folies Bergère show at the Tropicana, replacing a recently departed Lance Burton.

Last May she lectured at the Magic Collector Expo in Las Vegas on the topic of magical women. It was outstanding and tremendously well received. Along with her lectures on magical women, Boyd arranges shows featuring them and is finishing a new book titled *The Power of Magical Women*, published by Vanish Press and Paul Romhany this coming November.

She has performed on many stages and cruise ships, at corporate events, and for thirteen years in Las Vegas and Europe. She is also a producer and director. In 2022 she received a Fellowship Award from the Academy of Magical Arts in Hollywood.

Through her diligent efforts, Boyd is revealing the wonderful and long-overlooked contributions of magical women. Magic has been and still is, in many ways, an all-boys club. Through her research and efforts, she's proving that's not true. Women have always been at the forefront of performing magic.



Ambassador of Magic Award: Terri Cook

The role of ambassador is an important task that can, and should, have wide-ranging impact. It takes a special person – someone dedicated, understanding, sensitive, and willing to put in the hard work. Those qualities perfectly describe this year's awardee Terri Cook. She is closely associated with Tannen's Magic Camp, which takes place each year in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, the city that has served as its location since 2007.

It's the only sleep-away magic camp for young magicians in the US. The days of this week-long camp are filled with instruction from professional conjurers, counselors, and guest lecturers, with performance time and plenty of space for personal interactions and more. Cook took over as director of the camp in the mid-1990s and continues to preside over the event to this day.

The list of past performers and lecturers who have appeared at the camp is quite extensive. In the past forty years, the lineup has included performers like Criss Angel, Banachek, Harry Blackstone Jr., John Calvert, John Cassidy, Michael Chaut, David Copperfield, Eric DeCamps, Marc DeSouza, and Joe Devlin, just to name a few.



Cook and her talented staff have launched many a career through the camp, including those of Jay Sankey, Steve Cohen, Joshua Jay, David “Silly Billy” Kaye, David Blaine, Nathan Burton, Harrison Greenbaum, Darren Romeo, and TV stars Jason Alexander and Michael Carbonaro.

Cook handles not only the details of running the camp but also the interpersonal relationships among counselors and campers. As she has done for forty years, she continues to preside over the camp where she is known affectionately as “Mamma Magic.”

Rising Star Award: Alexander Boyce

The Rising Star Award is uniquely named because it can refer to either a young magician who is rising in prominence, or a magician who is constantly rising. Both of these are true of Alexander Boyce, especially the constantly rising part.

Not yet thirty, Boyce has accomplished more than many magicians who are much older and have been performing longer. His appearances include New York City’s long-running Speakeasy Magick, appearances at The Magic Castle in Hollywood, Harvard’s American Repertory Theater, and Salon Rojo in Havana, Cuba. Boyce has appeared on national television shows like *Penn & Teller: Fool Us*. Teller said of him, “He joyfully melts my brain with virtuoso sleight of hand. He’s a master.”

His magical expertise extends beyond live events, serving as magic consultant for the Lincoln Center’s show with Marisa Tomei, NBC’s *New Amsterdam*, and Netflix’s feature *The Week Of*. Boyce has performed magic for clients like NASDAQ, Amazon, Google, and Hugo Boss. *The New York Times* named *Bizarre Brooklyn*, a production he co-created and in which he starred, among the best theater of the year.

Along with loving and supportive parents in his younger years, Boyce also credits his success to early experiences at Tannen’s Magic Camp, which he attended when he was eleven. David Corsaro, one of those Tannen guys, said of him, “His enthusiasm is infectious, and he is wise beyond his years. A deeply studious magician, a classically trained actor, and a surprisingly good dancer – I would jump at any opportunity to collaborate with him again.”



Masters Award: Steve Valentine

There was no question among the nominating committee that Steve Valentine deserved its Masters Award. The one question that arose was, “Is he a magician-actor, or an actor-magician?” Well, he’s both – and to a tremendous degree.

Valentine was born in Britain and began his career as a magician, but was also very interested in acting. When he came to Los Angeles to make his way, he believed he could do both magic *and* acting. He soon realized most producers did not consider magicians to be actors, so he left magic behind and jumped into acting.

That has gone pretty well. The various television shows, movies, and other performances he’s done include playing Nigel Townsend on NBC’s crime



drama series *Crossing Jordan*, and guest starring on shows like *House*, *Monk*, *Just Shoot Me*, *Will & Grace*, *Dharma & Greg*, *Psych*, and *Charmed*. Valentine was the voice of Harry Flynn in the video game *Uncharted 2: Among Thieves*, and the voice of Alistair in the *Dragon Age* video game franchise. He also portrayed Dracula in *Monster High: The Movie* and its sequel *Monster High 2*.

But with acting success came the urge to return to magic and that he did. Valentine appears regularly at Hollywood's Magic Castle, has starred in his own one-man show *Life and Other Deceptions*, completed a national tour with *The Illusionists*, streams magic lessons and personal training to people around the world, and has been featured on the cover of nearly every English-speaking magic magazine in the world. The foundation is pleased Valentine decided to be who he has chosen to be.

Illusionist Award: Leon Etienne & Chelsea LaCongo

The recipients of the Christopher Foundation's Illusionist of the Year award, Leon Etienne and Chelsea, were originally selected in 2024. However, they were so busy performing that they were moved to 2025 when they could take an ever-so-brief break from their non-stop performance schedule. Their website gives you an indication of their busy and accomplished lives.

From Radio City Music Hall to Planet Hollywood Casino, and from Studio City Casino in Macau to his very own theater on the beautiful island waters of Saipan, the unique performance style of illusionist Leon Etienne attracts entertainment producers to book him all over the world. He's rocked stages from coast to coast in the US and dozens of other countries, including England, Ireland, France, China, and Australia. His performances frequently leave celebrities like Jimmy Fallon, Howard Stern, and Heidi Klum speechless.

Hailed by critics as "America's Rock Illusionist," Etienne is a worldwide hit with audiences, critics, and producers. He is recognized for his on-stage charisma, no-nonsense approach to magic, and a fast-paced, high-energy, edgy rock n' roll performance style. He has appeared on the world's biggest TV shows, trended worldwide on social media, and performs live at entertainment hotspots around the world.

Etienne's original creations, a passion for sleight-of-hand magic, and the best jaw dropping grand illusions in the world explode on stage in his critically acclaimed hit show, "Magic Rocks!"

However, Etienne has not done it alone. He has had by his side the skills and daily contributions of Chelsea LaCongo. They met years ago on a cruise ship, where he was doing magic and she was a professional dancer. When they started working together the effect was immediate: they hit it off and their audiences saw that. LaCongo is active both off stage and on. She co-produces and choreographs the show, checks people in, sells merchandise, and runs the entire production, allowing Etienne to focus on getting ready to amaze people.

Etienne and LaCongo have logged thousands of shows over the years, and both have grown into the entertainers honored that night. They've already won a few awards along the way, including successfully fooling Penn & Teller on their CW show *Fool Us*, being named Illusionist of the Year from Madrake d'Or in Paris, winning the Wizard Wars as seen on the SYFY network, and being awarded Stage Magic Winner at Magician's Alliance of Eastern States.



Lifetime Achievement Award: Alan Watson

This year's winner of the Lifetime Achievement award, Alan Watson, is no stranger to awards. Most recently, as part of his seventy-fifth birthday celebration, he was honored with a star on the New Zealand Walk of Fame. The installation will take place this November. The New Zealand Walk of Fame celebrates legendary Kiwi entertainers who have made a lasting impact on the country's entertainment industry, an accolade that is certainly true of Watson.

Alongside his wife Michele and his family, he has enjoyed an extraordinary career spanning decades. Once one of the busiest teams in show business, the family's cornerstone of success has been their enjoyment of performing, whether it be at a children's party, corporate event, television show, or live tour.

Over the years, he and Michele have brought their magic to countless audiences across New Zealand and beyond. He performed more than 1,400 nights over five and a half years at Fisherman's Wharf Restaurant; spent eleven years amazing guests at Waipuna Hotel's Wellingtons Restaurant; was the resident magician for twenty-six years at Rainbow's End, New Zealand's largest theme park; and was also the resident magician for The Pavillion of New Zealand, Auckland Lion Safari Park, and Foot Rock Flats.

In 1987, he and Michele made history as the first Kiwi close-up magicians to perform at the world-famous Magic Castle in Hollywood, proudly promoting their country with a New Zealand-themed magic act. In 1991, their three daughters, ten-year-old twins Larissa and Melanie and thirteen-year-old Nicole, performed at the Palace of Mystery at that same Magic Castle. They were the youngest and only twins to have performed there.

Watson also founded the world's first online graphical magic bulletin board and published the globally read *Magic New Zealand* e-zine, connecting more than seventeen thousand magicians in seventy-eight countries each week for twenty-five years.

As for awards, in 2006 he received both New Zealand's prestigious Benny Award and the Grand Master of Magic Award. Internationally, he and Michele were honored with the DRAGON Award in 2002 in New York. In 2015, he received the Award of Merit from the Academy of Magical Arts in the US and was inducted into their Hall of Fame. In 2015, he received the Queen's Service Medal for his services as a magician – a testament not only to his talent but to his generosity and impact. The foundation was extremely proud to present him with its Lifetime Achievement Award.



The evening closed with a magic show performed by the amazingly funny and astounding Jim Spinnato. The foundation was lucky to lure him away from his regular, four-shows-a-week schedule at the Mohegan Sun Casino, a gig that he has held for the past fifteen years. The noted magician, author, and magic dealer Meir Yedid filled in for Spinnato at the casino that evening. Spinnato is very well known in the New England and Connecticut area. For five years he lit up New Haven with a monthly comedy magic show. For twenty-five years he produced seasonal magic shows at Ocean Beach Park in New London. Appearing at the Garde Arts Center was very meaningful to Spinnato, who sat as a young boy in that same theater. Now he was performing there, completing the circle. The audience roared throughout at his humor and magic.



Chair of the foundation, David Haversat, (far left) and Tom Ewing (far right) flank this year's recipients listed above. (Daniel Garcia not present).

The chair of the foundation is David Haversat and the treasurer and secretary is Lorraine Anderson. These awards would not be possible without their hard work and attention to detail. The award winners were selected by a panel of judges comprised of leaders in the magic community, including: Tom Ewing as chair, David Haversat, Tony Clark, Paul Mayer, Rob Allen, Kenneth Trombly, and Mike Miller.

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!



Ring Events

THE INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF MAGICIANS

A Milestone Evening for Ring 112 (Chattanooga, Tennessee): Dan Stapleton's "Magic for the Working Magician"

July marked a special turning point for Ring 112, the Chattanooga Magic Club. For the first time since the Ring resumed regular meetings last year (after more than four years of inactivity), the club hosted a major event: a lecture by Orlando-based magic veteran Dan Stapleton.

This was more than just a lecture. It was a celebration of how far the Ring has come in such a short time. With roots tracing back to 1919, Ring 112 is arguably one of the oldest continuously recognized magic organizations in the United States. Today, it's thriving again, and this milestone event reflected that renewed energy.

Dan's lecture, titled "Magic for the Working Magician," lived up to its billing. A lifelong professional with decades of experience in virtually every venue, from

theme parks to cruise ships, Dan delivered a program packed with tested, real-world material. As promised, there was truly something for everyone at every skill level.

From close-up to parlor magic, to mentalism, to card tricks that play big, Dan offered material honed over years of professional performance. One standout moment came when he transformed a close-up card routine into a full-audience spectacle, sailing paper plates into the crowd to choose volunteers, eventually bringing four helpers on stage for a finale that filled the room.

Throughout the evening, Dan wove in practical advice drawn from his twenty-three years performing on cruise ships. He shared insights on presentation, audience

(continued on page 146)



(l to r): Dan Stapleton. • Longtime Ring 112 member Ron Williams helps Dan Stapleton with his updated version of the classic Miraskill principle. • Dan Stapleton shows Ring 112 member Mike Edwards the details of his Silk Through Rope routine.



A Portrait of the Professional

DALE SALWAK

Only in Colon

PHOTOS BY WAYNE WISSNER

I just love the village and how the Get-Together fits into it. How many other high school stages can you say have featured so much talent over the years?— Longtime attender

The quiet charm and gentleness of Colon, Michigan (population under 1,500), Magic Capital of the World (coined by Lester Lake), opens annually like a comforting Barbara Pym novel to about 1,000 arrivals.



It is a separate place, far away from the thrum of modern-day noise and the world's many distractions, where during four exquisite days and soft summer evenings with temperatures in the seventies, everything seems right with the world.

This year, July 30–August 2, I was privileged (owing to the invitation of President Greg Bordner and Talent Coordinator Mike Miller) to join for the fifteenth time in my career an incredible line-up of talent at the 87th annual Magic Get-Together.

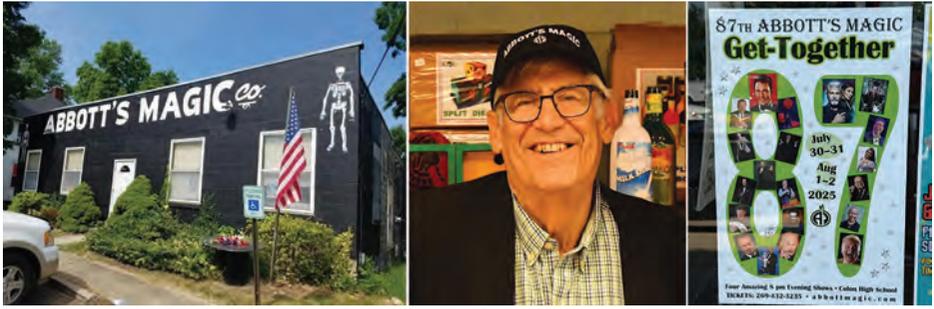
Accompanying me was Steve Kelley, who I first met at a fateful time in 1963 and with whom I have been attending since 1964. We

became fast friends in those early days, even genial competitors, as I published for the next seven years *The Magic Carpet*, official journal of my Magic Club of America (MCA), and Steve published *Top Hat* for his International Club of Magic (ICM). Someday I will write about the importance to our early development of such youth organizations.

Unlike most magic conventions that move into a hotel for a few nights, blaze with a burst of activities, then fade into black and leave, here the art is woven into the fabric of Colon's history, enriching the village's culture and beckoning visitors to come and experience the mystique year-round.

The romance began in the summer of 1926 with the chance arrival of Harry Blackstone, Sr. and his wife, Inez. They fell in love with this peaceful slice of Americana sandwiched between the summer-cool waters of Lakes Palmer and Sturgeon. The couple bought property, which is still known as Blackstone Island, and spent each summer designing and rehearsing their shows for the next season's tour.

An unexpected meeting in 1927 with Australian-born magician Percy Abbott led to the opening of the Blackstone Magic Company. Although the two dissolved the partnership eighteen months later, Percy and his wife



(l to r): Abbott's Storefront. • Greg Bordner, President. • Convention Poster.

Gladys felt emboldened to establish their own business with a small loan from Will Nicola.

Soon the Abbott Magic Novelty Co. was catapulted into the front ranks with a simple mission that continues to this day: "To provide the best magic products and service to our customers, at the lowest prices possible."

The inspired idea for a Magic Get-Together goes back to 1934, after Percy had taken on Recil Bordner as a business partner and held an informal open house for magicians. Eighty attended. The event, including a public show, was such a success that he decided to make it a yearly affair.

Percy knew instinctively that magicians want to connect with like-minded souls. Set aside politics and all other barriers in favor of a relaxed, friendly atmosphere where everyone feels welcome in the sharing of secrets, friendships, and memories, and people will not only attend but coalesce into a community.

After the passing of Percy in 1960, Recil Bordner (1910–1981) and now Greg Bordner have stayed true to this formula. This is one convention that has matured over the years but has never had to reinvent itself.

So this time they returned: magicians, both

seasoned professionals and amateurs, hobbyists and enthusiasts, along with many family members. They pitched tents, settled into their RVs, stayed at motels in nearby towns, and rented rooms from residents in the village or by the lake.

Daytime activities included **street performers** (Jania Taylor, John Sturk, Cap'n Sean and Mirf, Gordon Russ, The Amazing Bibik, Odd Corey, BJ Mallen), **Abbott's Magic Showroom** (Joe Bennett, John Gilmore, Hansen Kreutzberger, Rocky Clements, BJ Mallen), **lectures** (Craig Diamond, David Charvet, John Shryock, Jeff Hobson, Marc DeSouza, Lance Burton), **close-up shows** (Tom Ewing, Marc DeSouza, Hansen Kreutzberger, John Shryock), **Vent-O-Rama** (Brynn Cummings), **dealer displays** and a **Famous Magicians Graveyard Tour** (hosted by Al the Only), an **American Museum of Magic Tour** (bussed by Lance Burton and hosted by Jania Taylor, Bill Smith, and team) and, earning several standing ovations, four spectacular **evening stage shows** brilliantly stage managed by Mark Holstein and his crew and preceded by the stirring music of organist John Sturk:



(l to r): The results of street performers. • Traditional opening banners. • Vent-O-Rama with Brynn Cummings.



(l to r): Lance Burton. • Fielding West. • Michael Goudeau. • Keith West. • Mike Caveney. • Jeff Hobson. • Terry Evanswood • Derek Hughes. • Tom Ewing. • David Charvet. • Craig Diamond. • Dale Salwak. • Greg Frewin. • Alexandra. • Dan Sperry. • John Shryrock.

Wednesday: Lance Burton, Fielding West, Michael Goudeau, and Keith West.

Thursday: Mike Caveney, Jeff Hobson, Terry Evanswood, and Derek Hughes.

Friday: Tom Ewing, David Charvet, Craig Diamond, Mark DeSouza, and Dale Salwak.

Saturday: Greg Frewin, Alexandra, Dan Sperry, and John Shryock.

An empty chair front and center with her

name imprinted honored the memory of the beloved Harriet Jackson who had passed the year before. In the audience Dick Steiner, 94, beamed as Lance Burton introduced him from the stage.

On Saturday evening, after showtime, awards were presented to Terry Evanswood (Senator Clarke Crandall Award for Comedy), John Sturk (Jerry Conklin Award), Greg



Award recipients (l to r): Terry Evanswood. • John Sturk. • Greg Frewin. • Dale Salwak.



Stage Crew (Front row, l to r): Nicole Potorowski. Brian LeBeouf (sound). (Second row): Tim Simenec (lights). Steve Chezaday, Keri Stockton, Anthony Stockton, Sam Stockton (spotlight). (Back row): Mark Holstein, Richard Hughes. Not pictured: Jeff Boyer (spotlight)

Frewin (Jack Gwynne Award for Presentation), and Dale Salwak (Bill Baird/Neil Foster Award for Manipulative Magic).

After four days of splendor, I came away, as I'm sure did everyone, filled with gratitude and optimism. Few magical gatherings on the planet resonate in the collective imagination so powerfully. Nobody can attend Colon's and be quite the same again. May it continue to flourish.

Dale Salwak continues to perform internationally while directing (since 1978) the Chavez Studio of Magic in Southern California. Currently he is serving as an International Relations Officer for the I.B.M. Special thanks to Ryan Salwak for valued input. Some of the above history is drawn from Dale's article in the September 2012 issue of MAGIC Magazine covering the 75th Get-Together.

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.

Get Published in *The Linking Ring!*

The Linking Ring is always looking for new articles, including Parades with a theme, individual tricks, feature stories, biographies, historical essays, and other creative writing. If you want your work to reach as many people as possible, contact *The Linking Ring*. We have the largest circulation of any magic periodical in the world. Submit your articles or ideas to the Executive Editor. Address on page 4.



Youth Trivia Contest

October's question: In the late 1700s, a famous magician became embroiled in an angry, hostile dispute with a lawyer who was also a magician. *Who was the lawyer?*

Answers must be postmarked by November 20, 2025.

July's question was: At one time, this influential magician sought to make his or her entire performance using beautiful glass. *Who was this conjuror?*

A small handful of Youth Members responded to July's question, but unfortunately, none of those Youth members sent us the correct answer. Hold that thought for just a moment ... While we're talking about "a handful of Youth Members," let's find a solution to a burning question. You know how we say "a murder of crows," and "a tower of giraffes?" Well, what do you think the collective noun should be for a group of Youth Members? Hmm ... In any case, here's the gist of what we were hoping you'd tell us regarding the answer to July's question.

Michael Hartz, whose full name was Joseph Michael Hartz, was born in Liverpool, England, in 1836. His father, Naphthali, was a fabricator of horological devices ... That means his father made watches and clocks. When Michael was twelve years old, he watched a magic performance of Jean Eugene Robert-Houdin (also a clock maker, and the son of a clock maker), who was touring his show in England. The young Hartz was captivated by the illusions, and he worked diligently to invent his own methods for recreating the effects.

He wasn't the only member of his family to be fascinated with magic. His father was bitten by the magic bug, as were his brothers Augustus ("Gus") and George. They gave him feedback and advice, and by his late teens he was performing for paying audi-

ences. He also shortened his name to "M. Hartz" in his stage billing.

When the Hartz family moved to London, Michael's community of magical friends and associates grew. He became acquainted with Anton Kratky-Baschik, a well-known magician from Eastern Europe. Micheal Hartz frequently attended Kratky-Baschik's shows, and he took advantage of the opportunity to learn about performing. Soon, he made the decision to make the art of magic his career.

Michael continued to receive guidance and assistance from his friends and family in creating his magic act – an act deliberately designed to be out of the ordinary, so as to stand out and be noticed. The decision was made to create all of the equipment out of glass. His father oversaw the design and construction of the illusions. Within a year; in early 1859, M. Hartz debuted his show titled Crystal Magic.



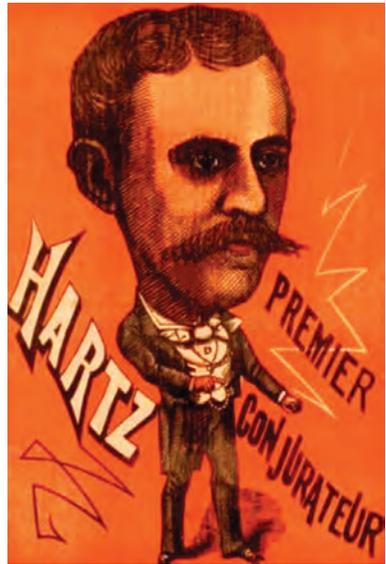
M. Hartz, and his distinguishing hairline.

In the opening segments of his show, Hartz humorously quipped to his audience that, although they could see through the apparatus, it was his hope that they would not see through his tricks. The illusions that he presented were largely recreations of the illusions that he had seen performed by Robert-Houdin about a decade earlier, but used his own methods. In a few cases, the illusions were significantly improved. His method for "The Crystal Bell" (essentially a spirit bell) used a mechanical gimmick, and required no electricity; Robert-Houdin's was battery powered. And Hartz's adaptation of "The Crystal Column and Glove" was reportedly superior to Robert-Houdin's version in many ways. In this effect, four borrowed finger rings and a glove – which was sometimes also borrowed – were stuffed into the barrel of a muzzle-loading pistol. M. Hartz then fired the pistol at a hollow glass column, several inches in diameter, and two or three feet tall. When the pistol was fired, the glove instantly appeared at the bottom of the column and mysteriously zoomed to the top. It perched at the apex of the crystal tube as though a hand was inside of it. Each of the glove's extended fingers was adorned with one of the four borrowed rings. The rings were, of course, then returned to their owners while the audience applauded loudly.

As he travelled across England and Scotland, he made additional changes and improvements to his show, and he learned and grew as a performer. The name of his show evolved as well. Within a few months, Crystal Magic became Transparent Illusions. M. Hartz took his show all over Britain for over seven years, drawing positive reactions from audiences and the press wherever he went.

In late 1866, Hartz began a second career in the field of magic – a simultaneous venture that paralleled his performing work. Michael, along with his brother Gus, opened what is believed by many to have been the USA's first brick-and-mortar magic shop. They opened two locations actually, at 743 Broadway and 850 Broadway in New York City, about a third of a mile away from each

other, and they specialized in finely crafted apparatus. The business, named "Hartz's Magical Repository," did very well. So well in fact, that Michael's other brother, George, opened a location in Boston, Massachusetts. There was a problem however, in that George's identically named "Magical Repository" shop was not created with the approval of his brothers. George was soon joined by Mark Levy as a partner in the venture. When George moved his shop to a better Boston location, the clash was still mostly limited to sibling rivalry. But when George moved his business to a New York City location – a location with another Broadway address – things became competitive and ugly. George added fuel to the feud when he began expanding into other states, including Louisiana, Texas, and Tennessee. All three of the brothers continued to work as performing conjurers while the magic shops were in operation.

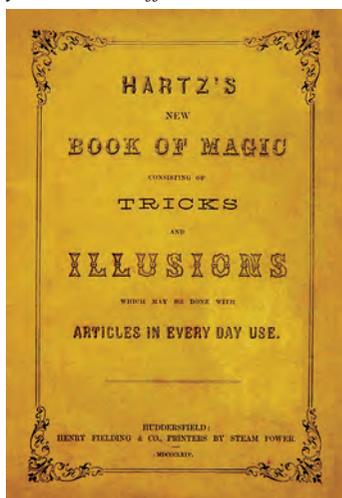


A piece of a woodcut advertising image for Gus, who performed as Professor Hartz.

For those of you who are curious, the 743 Broadway location is now home to a parking garage and some automobile rental agencies. The 850 Broadway address currently houses a coffee shop, a movie theater, and several other functions. George's spot at 58

Winter Street in Boston has a bank branch office, and several other spaces for rent. His Broadway place was in a hotel, but now is surrounded by restaurants. The remainder of George's store locations are too numerous to chase.

Outside of his magic dealership, Michael Hartz was a tremendously creative conjuror. The same year that he and Gus opened their magic shops, he published a magic book; Hartz's New Book of Magic. The volume included explanations and instructions for performing the linking rings, some coin tricks, second-sight routines, and other relatively common stuff.

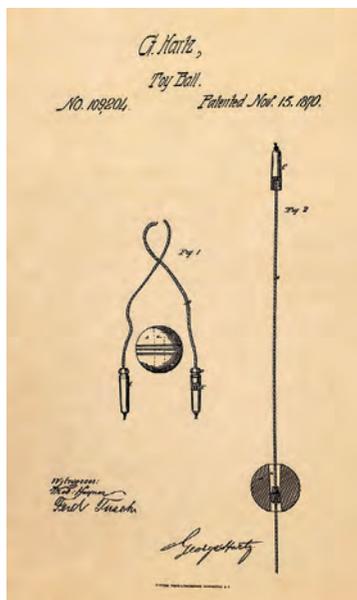


The title page of Michael Hartz's New Book of Magic.

George made some creative contributions to conjuring as well, and even received a patent for an improved design for what we know as "The Obedient Ball." Interestingly, Michael had previously claimed to have received a patent on the original version.

Gus was a very successful and respected performer, but eventually moved on to several different vocations, including a very effective stint as the manager of the Euclid Avenue Opera House in Cleveland, Ohio. He managed the theater, the shows, the performers, and the productions there for thirty-six years – including the period of restoration from 1892 through 1893, when the theater was completely renovated follow-

ing a fire. For those of you who are curious, the location of the Euclid Avenue Opera House is now occupied by a bowling alley with a bar and grill.



A drawing from George Hartz's patent paperwork (courtesy of Scott Penrose).

We've already mentioned the improvements that Michael Hartz made to the illusions he had seen performed by Robert-Houdin and others, as well as his original methods for existing effects. But the trick that's most often associated with M. Hartz is done with a top hat. And, what he extracted from that hat was more surprising than a small, fluffy rabbit. The effect was basically a version of "The Inexhaustible Hat."

When M. Hartz first performed this effect, he called it "The Wonderful Hat," and he included it among his other tricks and illusions. At some point, he realized the potential impact the trick could have on the audience if he boosted the production. When he revamped the presentation, he called it "Le Chapeau du Diable," or "A Devil of a Hat." The production lasted twenty to thirty minutes, and M. Hartz was busy the entire time. He began with a stage unadorned by anything except a half-dozen empty tables. And then, he began pulling objects from the

hat, one after another ... There were four dozen silver cups, a dozen lady's large purses, several large birdcages with live birds inside of them, huge quantities of silk handkerchiefs, two dozen beer glasses, two dozen champagne bottles, a half dozen metal and glass lanterns, a dozen boxes of cigars, playing cards, dolls, a glass bowl filled with water and live goldfish, and a human skull, which slowly rose from the hat on its own. By the time the skull made its appearance, all of the tables were overflowing with the items that came from the hat.

Hartz is also one of the two people who are often credited with inventing ... **the thumb tip!** The other person is William Humpage, also known as Professor Herwin. It's a frequently discussed and debated subject, and one that was covered in the Youth Trivia Contest question in May 2012.

Written by Professor Hoffmann as a sort-of "tribute" to his friend and colleague, *Recollections of Hartz* was a section of more than one hundred and thirty pages dedicated to Joseph Michael Hartz and his magic. The material first appeared in a book titled *Magical Tidbits*, but the text was eventually incorporated into the second and following editions of Hoffmann's *Later Magic*.

We owe a huge, very special **THANK YOU** to magician, illusion creator, and historian Scott Penrose for his knowledge and generous help with this month's subject.

You can learn more about the life and magic of Joseph Michael Hartz in books, including the previously mentioned *Magical Tidbits and Later Magic* (second edition and later), by Professor Hoffmann. There's also information in back issues of periodical publications like *The Magic Circular*, especially in articles by Edwin A. Dawes, and in *The Linking Ring*.

Joseph Michael Hartz died in 1903. George Hartz died in 1926. Augustus "Gus" Frederick Hartz died in 1929.

If you sent us an answer to this month's question, but you didn't submit the *correct* answer, please, keep trying! These questions can be difficult and obscure. They aren't intended to be easily answered using Internet search engines like Google, DuckDuckGo, or Archie. Take your copy of *The Linking Ring* to your local Ring meeting and ask the senior members to help you find the answer. Show the whole world how much you know, get your name published in *The Linking Ring*, and win some great stuff from one of our finest brick-and-mortar magic shops!

Calling All Youth Members!

Do you feel that you have an appropriate question for the I.B.M. Youth Trivia Contest? Then please mail 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 an unmatched pair of used ceramic garden gnomes or a *really* cool magic book – our choice.

See if you can win! Follow the Contest Rules on page 146 and mail your responses to the address above.

Answers must be postmarked by November 20, 2025.

HOUDINI AND SPIRITUALISM

Pulling Back the Veil on the Search for Cecilia

By Rolando H. Santos

In 2019 I had the privilege of presenting the closing lecture for the Houdini Exhibition at the Breman Jewish Heritage in Atlanta, Georgia. At the client's request, I was asked to explore the popular belief that Houdini's devotion to his mother, Cecilia, led him to spend the latter part of his life searching for a way to communicate with her spirit. The client also wanted me to explore Spiritualism, and the role Houdini's Jewish heritage may have had on his career and his anti-spiritualism crusade.

The lecture was open to the general public and, as a result, the client had some firm ground rules. They did not want me to conduct a séance, nor present anything that might be seen as the raising of spirits, or the gathering of occult energies on the premises. In fact, we had to call the two demonstrations a "theatrical simulation." What I found in "Pulling Back the Veil on the Search for Cecilia" was as amazing as Houdini's illusions.

By any definition, Harry Houdini was an extraordinary person. Almost one hundred years after his death, new genera-

tions of people continue to be fascinated by him. His name continues to be synonymous with escaping from impossible situations. However, most people don't realize that in the early 1900s, Houdini's influence extended far beyond his performing persona.

He was a global superstar and an influencer long before either term was known or understood. Houdini impacted social customs, global politics, religious practices, and racism. He publicly asserted his Jewish roots in the face of growing anti-semitism around the world.

There is also plausible evidence that Houdini may have secretly helped American and British intelligence agencies prior to World War I. It's believed that he shared information about political leaders and security practices that he observed while performing in Germany, Russia, and the rest of Europe.

While securely grounded in his Jewish upbringing, Houdini was also married to a Catholic woman. Houdini would leave a lasting legacy as the most visible protector of people of all faiths, in



Houdini with his mother.

COURTESY OF THE HOUDINI MUSEUM



Houdini. COURTESY OF JOHN COX/WILD ABOUT HARRY

the fight against fake oracles and charlatan psychics during the era of Spiritualism. The accepted popular portrayal of Harry Houdini's life is that he was driven to expose fraudulent mediums in a grief-induced search to communicate with his beloved mother, Cecilia, after she died.

This is perhaps one of Houdini's final and most enduring illusions. As should be expected with anything having to do with the "World's Greatest Escape Artist," nothing is exactly as it appears. When we pull back the veil on the search for Cecilia, there lurk powerful emotions like love, despair, guilt, fear, ego, and greed. Remove another veil and the showmanship, the brilliant understanding of the human psyche, and some painful truths about the world of Harry Houdini are also revealed. Among them is the fact that Houdini once made a living by exploiting the same kind of fear and desperation he publicly condemned in later life. Whether it was by divine intent, cosmic convergence of energies, or spirits from the other side manipulating events in our world, the better part of Houdini's life played out against the backdrop of the rise of one of the most significant social move-

ments of the turn of the twentieth century: Spiritualism.

Spiritualism was like a slow-moving fogbank that you see in the movies. A nebulous, shadowy, hard-to-define mist, slowly and irreversibly moving across the globe. It seeped into every aspect of early 1900s life. Within this "metaphysical" fog was turmoil. It fed on society's discontent with established religions and socioeconomic inequality.

Also hidden in the shadows "beyond the veil" was political anarchy that would lead to the Mexican Revolution. From Spiritualism were sown the seeds of a new world order that would lead to, among other things, equal rights for women. By fate or by luck, Houdini the Master Manipulator would become one of the pawns in Spiritualism's rise and global recognition.

When we strip away all the veils in his life, we were left with the fact that Houdini made a living off the fear of death, as well as basic human emotions like our innate need for hope. In Spiritualism, there is no death. There are no dead. Which means there is always hope.

At the core of Houdini's career and life is our universal fascination with death and what lies beyond it. I have traveled the world as a journalist for more than forty years. I've had conversations about death and the afterlife with Christians, rabbis, Satanists, Wiccans, Muslims, atheists, and even Mother Theresa. I found that even those who do not believe in an afterlife spend a lot of time reflecting on what it means to them. Let me share a fascinating observation with you.

"The belief in the afterlife is a learned belief, something that is passed down through generations. Every culture around the world has an afterlife belief. But the simple truth is, death and the afterlife are a mystery, and it has been viewed in many different ways by many different cultures." This insightful summary of the search for the afterlife comes from the blog *The Spiritual Satanist*. It reinforces my point



Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Harry Houdini.

that people from every walk of life and religion ponder the question of the after-life.

It doesn't take supernatural powers to know that there isn't an adult in this room that has not contemplated death.

Those of Jewish ancestry have been forced to think about death and the after-life for the most horrific of reasons. As a journalist, I have come face to face with death in many forms. I have been shot at. I have watched innocent people die in front of me in a hail of gunfire, held people in my arms as they took their last breath, and consoled loved ones trying to understand death.

I've witnessed attempts to reach across the veil during a séance, and also participated in attempts to push evil back across the veil during an exorcism. Most of us in this room either fear death, embrace it, or ignore it. Perhaps we feel all three emotions, depending on the stage of your life and your religious beliefs – or lack thereof.

It is fair to say that Houdini embraced death. At least in the sense that he understood the public's fascination with it and that cheating death was good business. Houdini had a unique, lifelong, symbiotic, and profitable relationship with death.

It was a relationship that would propel him to unprecedented worldwide recognition as a death-defying escapologist. Death would devastate him by taking his mother Cecilia on July 17, 1913.

In Houdini's final years, his old friend death – in the form of fifty million lives

lost in WWI and the Great Influenza epidemic of 1918 – would give Houdini a last burst of stardom. He became crusader and hero focused on rooting out fraudulent mediums and psychics preying on the grieving, those distraught people who sought one last chance to speak to their loved ones who had been suddenly ripped from their lives by war and pestilence.

Houdini was, in fact, well equipped to deal with frauds and charlatans – not because of his knowledge of legerdemain, but because Houdini himself once made a living trading in people's misery, secrets, and misfortune as a séance worker.

Let's pull back the veil of time and go back to 1897. We've just arrived in a small town called Garnett, Kansas, population six thousand. In his extraordinary book *Houdini and Conan Doyle: Friends of Genius, Deadly Rivals*, Christopher Sandford writes about a young Houdini and his wife Bess trying to make a living in those first three years after getting married.

One thousand residents, representing 16 percent of the town's population, made their way on a cold November night to attend a variety show to see "a petite brunette from Brooklyn dressed in a lace wedding dress, and a twenty-three-year-old Houdini dressed in ill-fitting clothes, perform a séance."

The advance publicity in the local newspaper, *The Evening Review*, assured patrons that "pianos would float over the heads of the audience, tables would levitate by unseen hands, messages will appear." All of that happened and more.

By the end of the evening, one businessman had stormed out of the theater. This happened when the spirits speaking through the medium, Mademoiselle Beatrice – Bess Houdini – revealed that he was "cruelly neglecting to tend his own mother's grave, despite enjoying the many merry excursions with [his] lovely secretary." The crowd gasped as "Houdini announced that a young woman



Houdini, center, with his mother Cecilia (left) and his wife Bess (right).

in the audience was ‘surely thinking of her deceased baby, Louise.’”

He went on to callously state that baby Louise and many other of the town’s dearly departed were there with them in spirit that night. Then demonstrating the deft touch of showmanship that would catapult Houdini to fame, he and Mademoiselle Beatrice attempted to reveal the name of the person who had brutally murdered a well-liked local resident named Sadie Timmins. Houdini assured the crowd that they would soon know who the murderer was because “you cannot hide a nefarious deed from the spirits and Mademoiselle Beatrice.”

According to Sanford and newspaper clippings at the time, “with the help of mournful music from the orchestra” the spirits described through Mademoiselle Beatrice how Sadie was stabbed seventeen times in her own kitchen. Houdini worked the crowd – his questions became increasingly insistent – until finally, shouting into Beatrice’s face, he demanded the spirits name the murderer. Bess began to utter something and swooned into a dead faint.

The house lights came up and the curtain came down. That, folks, is showmanship at its best – almost one hundred years before reality TV and YouTube.

By all accounts, the audience went wild. Sanford writes, “Some people were cheering and whistling ... some women were left in tears. The audience’s reaction left such an impression that decades later, Houdini vividly remembered the night.” Sanford’s book and Houdini’s own writ-

ings leave no doubt that decades later, after the death of his mother, Houdini would rue his part in such theatrics – theatrics that knowingly hurt vulnerable people.

His experiences during that time in his life would be a driving force behind Houdini’s tireless exposure of fraudulent mediums and charlatans thirty years later. While less romantic than the popular myth that he was endlessly searching for a way to talk to his deceased mother, this was clearly a motivator for his drive to protect those vulnerable during the grieving process.

But in 1897, séances popularized by a budding religion called Spiritualism in the United States, or Table Rapping in England, were putting Houdini and Bess in the headlines – and food on the family table.

Spiritualism is based on three core beliefs:

1. The spirits of the dead exist. They have the ability and are willing to communicate with the living.
2. The spirits are more advanced than we are because they have continued to evolve while on the other side.
3. This evolution means there are “spirit guides” that can provide knowledge about the nature of God, as well as guidance on moral, ethical, and spiritual issues. Spirit guides can also tell us the future.

Spiritism, which is usually considered a branch of Spiritualism, adds a fourth core belief: reincarnation.

Although forms of Spiritualism have been around since the Egyptians, it is generally accepted that modern-day Spiritualism began on March 31, 1848.

Two sisters, ten-year-old Kate Fox and fourteen-year-old Margaret Fox, decided to pull a prank on their family by popping their toe and ankle joints to produce a rapping sound. They claimed they were receiving messages from the other side.

According to Sir Conan Doyle’s *History of Spiritualism*, “During the night of March 31, Kate challenged the invisible



Left to right: Margery. Houdini. Harry and Bess (known as “Beatrice the medium”), around the time of the Kansas séance.

noisemaker, presumed to be a ‘spirit,’ to repeat the snaps of her fingers. ‘It’ did. ‘It’ was asked to rap out the ages of the girls. ‘It’ did.”

No one understood or foresaw the seismic social and political revolution that would envelop the entire North American continent, as well as Europe. From the minds of two young girls who professed to speak to the dead and see fairies, centuries of mankind’s desire to know the future and what lies beyond death metastasized into the modern-day spiritualism movement.

Pulling back the veil to see if perhaps his Jewish upbringing helped form his opinions of Spiritualism, we find that Houdini writes that he believes in the tenets of Judaism. In daily life, he is open to other religious beliefs and is flexible about the way he practices his religion.

Houdini expert John Cox explains: “He believed in God and did say the Kaddish, the Jewish Mourner’s Prayer. But Houdini also married a Catholic and celebrated Christmas (and sent out Christmas cards).”

At his funeral, Houdini’s casket was covered in flowers, which is contrary to Jewish custom. He was also given Masonic funeral rites. A statuary bust was added to his grave site in 1927 – unusual in that graven images are forbidden in Jewish cemeteries.

For all intents and purposes, Houdini’s adult life revolved around three things:

his public image, his wife Bess, and his beloved mother Cecilia. Houdini described his mother as “my saintly mother, one of the two women that I ever loved.”

While Houdini was on a trip to Copenhagen, Denmark, Cecilia passed away in the United States on July 17, 1913. The Master of Escapes would never be able to free himself of the shackles that death had placed on him in the form of lifelong grief.

Archival documents from the Houdini Collection of the Harry Ranson Center, at the University of Texas at Austin, show that “Houdini was in such a state of grief that he visited his mother’s grave every night for a week and was in an unshakable depression for over a year. For the rest of his life, Houdini mourned deeply for his mother.”



Houdini at the New York Hippodrome demonstrating spiritualists’ trickery, circa 1925. WIKIPEDIA COMMONS



Houdini, at the height of his fame as an escape artist.

Cecilia's burial was delayed, against Jewish custom, so he could see her one last time. He placed a woolen slipper, size six, on the casket. Cecilia had asked him to buy her some slippers during his trip to Copenhagen.

His personal stationery was rimmed in black. According to Houdini expert John Cox, four months after Cecilia's death, Houdini wrote his brother Theo, professionally known as Hardeen, saying "It's tough and I can't seem to get over it. Sometimes I feel alright, but when a calm moment arrives, I am as bad as ever." Houdini would recite the Jewish Mourner's prayer for his mother every night for a year.

However, despite his evident and understandably overwhelming grief, there doesn't seem to be any concrete evidence in the form of diaries or letters that support the theory that he attended séances specifically to try to communicate with his mother.

As John Cox points out, "His own past as a séance worker would be enough to make him realize how easily deception could occur." Further proof that Cecilia's death was not the catalyst for Houdini's tireless pursuit is that it would be more

than a decade after her death before Houdini would begin his anti-spiritualism crusade.

According to papers in the Houdini Collection of the Harry Ranson Center at the University of Texas, what thrust Houdini into the Spiritualism spotlight was a gesture of kindness by the wife of his friend Sir Conan Doyle, the creator of the world-renowned consulting detective Sherlock Holmes.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Doyle and Houdini were two of the most well-known people in the English-speaking world and by all accounts initially had a great deal of admiration for one another. Houdini would say of Doyle, "He is a brilliant man, a deep thinker, well versed in every respect."

Doyle emerged as one of the staunchest believers and proponents of Spiritualism after losing eleven family members, including his son and brother, during WWI and the Great Influenza epidemic of 1918.

Houdini and Doyle often discussed the subject of Spiritualism, or the "Great Philosophy," as Doyle referred to it. Houdini would write, "I believe in a Hereafter, and no greater blessing could be bestowed on me than the opportunity, once again, to speak to my Sainted Mother ... gladly I would embrace Spiritualism if I could prove its claims."

As friends, Houdini and Doyle initially agreed to disagree. Houdini was never convinced, meanwhile Doyle continued to try to prove that communication with the dead was possible.

On June 17, 1922, while visiting with the Doyles at the Ambassador Hotel in New Jersey, Lady Doyle offered to try to contact Houdini's mother via automatic writing. Houdini later wrote, "I walked with Sir Arthur into Doyle's suite. I was willing to believe, even wanted to believe. With beating heart, I waited, hoping to once more feel the presence of my beloved mother."

In Houdini's own words, this is what happened: "Sir Arthur started the séance with a devout prayer. ... Lady Doyle was



Left to right: Lady Jean and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. WIKIPEDIA COMMONS Margery, the Witch of Lime Street, in the middle of a séance with a spirit trumpet. COURTESY OF WWW.TRANSCOMMUNICATION.ORG.

seized by the Spirit. Her hands shook and beat the table. Her voice trembled, and she called for the Spirits to give her a message. Sir Arthur tried to quiet her; her whole body shook. Making a cross at the top of the page she started writing.”

After describing the séance in detail, Houdini writes further, “I cannot, as much as I desire, accept that, as having been written by the Spirit of my sweet mother.”

Chief among Houdini’s reasons for not believing that contact had been made is that his mother never wrote or spoke in English. The automatic writing session took place on his mother’s birthday, yet she made no mention of it. Finally, the night before the séance, Lady Doyle and Houdini’s wife Bess had talked a great deal about his mother. Houdini, having used the same method of informal conversation to get information prior to his séance performances, considered the information from Lady Doyle tainted by those conversations.

While careful never to attack Lady Doyle’s belief in her abilities in public after the session, the session clearly affected Houdini. It would be fair to conclude that after his experience with Lady Doyle, combined with what he felt after losing his mother, Houdini now understood the pain he had inflicted on the people who attend-

ed the séance act that he performed early in his career.

He also realized how vulnerable people desperate to believe and hear from their loved ones were, and decided that someone needed to be their champion.

It was at this point that Houdini appeared to begin his crusade to discredit mediums and clairvoyants in earnest. In 1926, Houdini even testified before Congress to support a bill to outlaw individuals from engaging in spiritual practices with the intent to deceive for profit.

Houdini and Doyle were the original “frenemies.” Initially, they were friends in private while publicly presenting competing public lectures about Spiritualism – with Houdini touring to educate the public against the dangers of fake mediums tricking people out of their fortunes, and Doyle touring in hopes that his “Great Philosophy” would bring comfort to the many people who had lost loved ones in the wars. They became intense rivals, damaging their once-close friendship beyond repair. Privately, each spoke bitterly and disparagingly of the other. Although they continued to communicate via letter until Houdini’s death, they were never close again.

While Houdini’s public feuds with Doyle on Spiritualism would generally be

civil, his confrontations with other mediums – in particular Margery the “Witch of Lime Street” – were caustic and vitriolic. So much so that when Houdini died, Margery had to issue a public denial that she had not killed Houdini by putting a hex on him.

One could also argue that in his efforts to pull back the veil in search of Cecilia, Houdini’s efforts to discredit Spiritualism inadvertently gave it credence. Even today, it helps keep the movement alive in the form of traditional Houdini séances held on Halloween.

Houdini died on Halloween in 1926 at Grace Central Hospital in Detroit, Michigan, room 401. As he lay dying in that room, Houdini promised to make contact with the world from the other side – were it at all possible.

Bess was given a code word or phrase so she would know it was him. For the next ten years, she held yearly séances. Contrary to accepted lore, they were not always held on Halloween. Initially, some were held in spring. However, toward the end of the ten-year period, they were permanently moved to Halloween night and became something of a national spectacle.

The last one involving Bess Houdini was held in 1936, after which Bess declared: “My last hope is gone. I do not believe that Houdini can come back to me – or to anyone. The Houdini shrine has burned for ten years. I now reverently ... turn out the light. It is finished.”

Now that we have pulled back the veil in the search for Cecilia, we find that:

The prevailing belief that Houdini was primarily driven by a desperate search for a way to contact his deceased mother is a myth. At the very least, it has become romanticized over the years.

Early in his career, Houdini was guilty of preying on people using the same methods he would later expose and fight to outlaw. That guilt appears to be more of a driving force in his fight to expose fraudulent mediums and clairvoyants than

a search for a way to talk to his deceased mother. The more cynical might say the Kansas experience was a convenient and emotionally powerful marketing hook for Houdini to use to grab the hearts and headlines of the times. He enjoyed being seen as the champion and protector of the vulnerable.

Houdini’s Jewish background did not necessarily play a significant role in his beliefs about Spiritualism, though he did believe in the hereafter where he would be reunited with loved ones, especially his mother. While he was strong in the defense of his faith, Houdini was flexible enough to marry a Catholic and celebrate Christmas.

On several occasions, Houdini publicly professed a willingness to believe it was possible to contact the dead. However, his own past as a séance worker may have kept him from being completely open to the possibility. His disdain for Spiritualism became bitterly personal when Spiritualists called into question his credibility. In the process, it destroyed a long friendship with Sir Conan Doyle.

One has to wonder if perhaps his experiences and his anger over the way his credibility had been questioned may have led him to miss actual contact with those from the other side. Put another way, just because he could replicate an event doesn’t mean such contact may not have actually occurred.

Most likely, Houdini did believe that if a message could be brought back across the veil, he could do it.

Finally, for all his efforts to fight Spiritualism, he played a significant role in the global awareness and growth of the movement. Houdini’s legacy continues to bring attention to it even today.

Rolando Santos has spoken at conferences worldwide. This article is based on a talk delivered at an East Coast Spirit Session. You may reach Rolando by email at rsantos10@gmail.com.



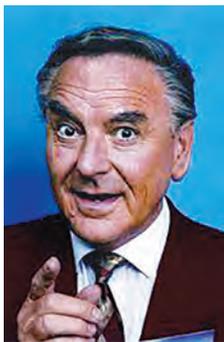
From Our UK Correspondent

BRIAN LEAD

As we lived just across the bay from Blackpool (famous these days for hosting the world's largest magic convention) I spent a week there every summer with my family when I was growing up. We saw a different variety show each night and even caught a matinee at the Tower Circus. The resort was a magnet for the top media celebrities of the day, all playing lengthy summer seasons in the town's many theatres.

Among them, I recall the chaotic comedy magician Tommy Cooper (also reasonably well known in the United States for his numerous appearances on *The Ed Sullivan Show*) and the less internationally known Eric Morecambe, who had derived his performing surname from his home town – another seaside resort just a few miles up the coast. *The Morecambe and Wise Christmas Special* of 1977 still holds the record (27 million) for the most viewers ever for a United Kingdom comedy show – representing almost 50 percent of the population, all tuning in at the same time. The top performers of the day (including Sir Laurence Olivier and Elton John) queued up to be guests. Tommy and Eric both died in 1984, but are still seen regularly “on the box.”

A third comedian, who I never saw performing live, was Bob Monkhouse. He wrote material for countless other comedians, including Bob Hope, with whom he shared a similar style of delivery. He was slick and sophisticated, without the vulnera-



Bob Monkhouse.

bility which made Tommy and Eric so lovable.



Eric Morecambe.

Well, I recently returned to the magnificent Matcham-designed Grand Theatre in Blackpool to see the play *The Last Laugh*, based upon these three comedy giants of yesteryear. The writer of the piece is Paul Hendy, who recalls watching these comedians as a child of six or seven and being overwhelmed by them. He says: “I have always been fascinated by what makes something, and, more importantly, *someone*, funny. I wrote this play to examine these questions and to delve into the mechanics of comedy ... how a pause, a look, or a single word can totally change the way a joke lands.”

The play is set in a generic dressing room, adorned by pictures of comedians of the past. Soon, these three are going to join them, for, unknown to them, they are about to receive, literally, their last laugh.

Although they never shared such a dressing room in real life, the three chat here about the nature of comedy and swap material. All, for example, try out the visual comedy of simply walking through a white gate set in the centre of the stage, with varying results. Tommy wins that one hands down. Bob, the master of verbal comedy, wins out



Grand Theatre, Blackpool. • The cast of The Last Laugh.

with a one-liner which Eric is unable to adapt to his own more innocent family-friendly style. It all makes for a fascinating analysis of comedy which far outstrips the theoretical approach of Bergson, et al.

The play came into being through a touch of serendipity. Actor Damian Williams had been touring with a Tommy Cooper tribute act, while Bob Golding had developed a one-man show based upon Eric Morecambe. Rather cheekily, comedy impressionist Simon Cartwright had asked Bob Monkhouse if he could do an impression of him on a television show which Bob was hosting. He not only agreed, but spent hours teaching the young Simon how to be him. Paul Hendy had seen all three performing individually and had the inspired idea of combining them in this way. It is unlikely that the piece could be recreated with other actors, although Richard Hodder,

who chaired an illuminating question-and-answer session in the second part of the evening, was understudy to all three!

After being an immediate success at the Edinburgh Festival, *The Last Laugh* moved into the West End, then Broadway. Bob Golding said: "Our experiences in New York showed what a well-written piece of theatre this is. The audience there absolutely loved it, but they hadn't a clue who any of the three characters were. They thought we had made them up and that they were just three performers in a dressing room. The opening [Tommy Cooper standing in his underwear, wearing a huge pair of chicken's feet and proclaiming 'these feet smell fowl!'] was met with total confusion! By comparison, when we did the opening show of the UK tour it was like getting a warm hug from the audience."



(l to r): Bob Golding in character. • Simon Cartwright, in character. • Damian Williams as Tommy, with Dippy Duck. • Tommy Cooper.

Dippy Duck makes an appearance as a running gag, and popular catchphrases and patter lines run like golden threads through the script, with suitable audience responses.

The play is a beautifully modulated blend of the poignant and the hilarious, managing to blend Cooper's broad physical comedy with references to the suicide of Monkhouse's writing partner and his seriously disabled son. But it is Cooper, in fact, who raises the final tear, as he gathers up his golden robe and exits to meet his final audience.

At the end, the audience rose as one in a standing ovation – rarely seen over here. The friend who recommended the play to me had already seen it twice and was planning a third visit. I can see why.

Paul Hendy sums it up perfectly: “*The Last Laugh* is my love letter to the golden age of British comedy, and the heroes who made children, parents and grandparents howl with laughter.”

Continuing the theme of sadly departed comedy performers, I recently came across an amusing item relating to Billy McComb and a trick he used to pull in an attempt to get an upgrade when flying.

When he handed over his passport for checking, he was seen in the photograph to be wearing a clown's nose. The checker looked up to find that Billy, in real life, did have a big red clown's nose!

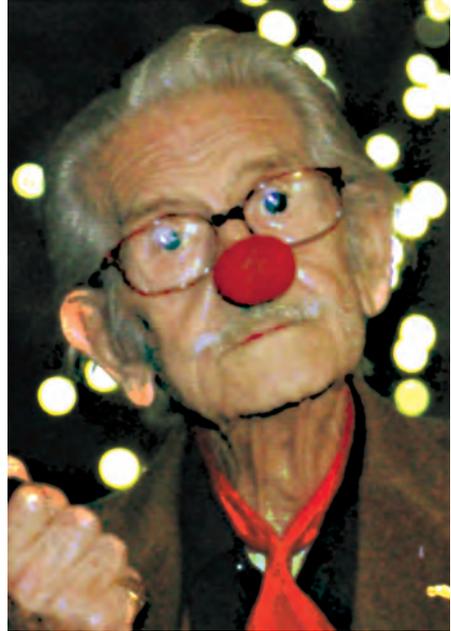
It wasn't a “proper” false nose, but a red sponge ball which he had sliced with a razor so it could be easily hidden in the hand and put on in a split second – which of course he did under the misdirection of the attendant looking at the document.

The red nose on the photograph was made by simply punching a hole in the sticky part

of a red Post-It Note and using the “spot” created. He could get several from one note and kept them stuck to the back of the passport for easy access. They did, of course, cause no damage to the picture and could be easily removed.

The ploy did not always work in raising a smile from a stern-faced member of staff, however, and many humourless ones reacted as though nothing had happened.

Billy commented that he had pinched the bit of comical business from the late Tom Mullica, for whom it always seemed to work: “Tom got upgraded with frequency using this gag, but it was partly his natural charm. The McComb charm lasted until his thirties, then went into a rapid downward spiral.”



Billy McComb.

PARADE CONTRIBUTIONS WANTED FROM RINGS AND INDIVIDUALS

Please submit the complete Parade as a single Microsoft Word document. Total length: 8,000 to 10,000 words. If your Parade is accepted for publication, our staff artist, Tony Dunn, will draw illustrations based on your rough sketches and/or photos. Submit your Parade by e-mail to editor@magician.org with Parade Submission in the message line. Thank you!



Marketing Magic

KENT CUMMINS

Authenticity

“Be real!” – Kent Cummins

Do you love being a magician? Does your audience sense that, or are you just showing off a bunch of tricks that you can do but they can't?

Why This Topic?

Sometimes you may wonder, “Why is this column called ‘Marketing Magic’? There isn't anything about marketing in this month's column!”

As I insist on saying, “marketing” is everything you do to become successful as an entrepreneurial entertainer. Business cards, flyers, brochures, and a web site? Yes, of course. Your marketing efforts will probably include advertising and publicity, and maybe a blog, a podcast, a magic camp, and/or a magic course.

But the first step toward effective marketing is to have a good product. Harlan Tarbell said this nearly a century ago, and I have been saying it myself for more than half a century. Therefore, anything you do to make your show better is part of your *marketing*!

I Love Being a Magician!

“Tales from the Fantastic Magic Center” is my weekly podcast where I share my experiences as a magician for more than seventy-five years. The episode from the first week of August was called “Being a Magician,” about how I have loved being a magician for all of my life (well, except for the first six years, before I got my first Mysto Magic set).



(l to r): 14-year old Kent (1957). • Kent's grandfather at Buckhorn Museum.
• Kent Cummins podcast photo.

It was podcast episode #160, which means I have been doing these weekly broadcasts for just over three years! This *Linking Ring* column is #121, which means I have been writing these for a little more than ten years.

Why do I keep putting out these podcast episodes, the “Marketing Magic” column, the “Tricks of the Trade” column for JD Stewart's *Imagine* digital magazine, and the “Magic with a Message” column for the *South African Magical Society* digital magazine? Why do I write for *The Yankee Magic Collector*?

My goal in retirement is to share the information and experience I have gained from



(l to r): Houdini collection card. • Display with Houdini movie posters. • Kent with Houdini poster.
• Some of the Houdini books in the Fantastic Magic Center Library.

more than seventy-five years as a magician, in ways that will hopefully inform and inspire others. (Since you are reading this, maybe it is actually working!)

Do I still perform magic shows? Yes. I talked about this in last month's column. Part of my love for magic includes the audience reactions when I perform.

But You've Gotta Be Real!

I think audiences can tell when you're more focused on entertaining them than on showing off what you can do. Most of my recent magic shows have been at Fantastic Magic Camp, which I founded in 1993 when I turned fifty (www.magiccamp.com). I no longer run the camp, but they still hire me to perform at nearly every camp session. "If it were not for this performer," they tell the kids, "you would not be here, because he is the guy

who started the camp more than thirty years ago!"

During the past year, I have made a conscious effort to be more "real" with these kids.

Am I a Superhero?

I am eighty-two years old and legally blind. I wear a button every day that says, "I HAVE LOW VISION." I have a hangtag so that I can park in handicapped parking places. I stopped driving nearly four years ago, but I still use my Kia Soul with the MAGICK license plate for magic shows – I just hire a driver.

For several years, I took off my vision button whenever I performed. I thought that as a magician, I shouldn't have a disability. But then I realized that even Superman has his kryptonite. The fact that I have a disability makes me human, but it does not keep me from being a magician. So now, I proudly



Houdini tricks and souvenirs at the Fantastic Magic Center.

wear that button on the lapel of my tux when I perform, and during the show I include the fact that I am legally blind in my patter.

Are You a Real Magician?

Jeff McBride has said that if you are a magician, you need to always be a magician – ready to perform whenever appropriate. I admire Jeff and understand this is the perfect strategy for him and many other magicians, but it is not appropriate for “The Fantastic Kent Cummins.”

Yes, I am always a magician. I am also always a son, brother, husband, uncle, dad, grandpa, and friend. I am a retired lieutenant colonel in the United States Army and a certified military community executive. I am also a juggler and a certified juggling instructor. I am a public speaker and a legacy member of the National Speakers Association. I am a published author. I am an old white guy with a disability.

I’m not bragging or complaining (well, maybe a little). What I’m saying is that all of us are more than just one word, even if that word is “magician”!

When I am introduced as “The Fantastic Kent Cummins” and I’m wearing a tux, top hat, and flowing cape, I am a magician. But when I sit down at the Thanksgiving dinner table, I am part of a family. (I don’t do magic tricks at family gatherings.)

Keeping It Real

You might be a completely different character when you perform. When I perform as Felonious the Fool at Renaissance festivals, I am obviously a very different character than “The Fantastic Kent Cummins.” When I am giving a keynote presentation as a motivational speaker, I am completely different than either of these other characters.

The Bottom Line

I love being an entrepreneurial entertainer, and I want to keep getting better! Share *your* stories and ideas: kent@kentcummins.com.

Do you love magic? Me, too! Listen to “Tales from the Fantastic Magic Center” at www.fantasticmagiccenter.com.



I.B.M. Member Spotlight

Table Hopping from Town to Town

By Keith Leff

I am a native of the Kansas City area and began my magical journey at age seven. It was then I received a magic kit for Christmas, “Hat Full of Magic.” After I opened the box, the rest of the presents remained wrapped and untouched until the day after Christmas, when my mother made me open the rest of my gifts. I was immediately smitten and bitten by the magic bug. An amateur magician lived next door to me growing up, and another magician also lived next door to my grandmother as well, where I spent much of my time as a youth. That magician was a professional by the name of L.C. Collier. Both men encouraged me in my magical pursuits, and became mentors to me as a young boy. It’s no wonder, as I like to say, “Sometimes we pick our careers, sometimes our careers pick us.” It was definitely the latter my case.

I earned a B.S. in mass communications

with a minor in public relations from Kansas State University, where I graduated in 1992. I earned my way through school by working construction jobs and as a bartender, performing magic behind the bar in order to increase my tips. I then went on to perform magic part-time as I worked in the Marketing Department at Sprint for five years. I then attended my very first magic convention, “The Workshop” in St. Joseph, Missouri, in 1996. It was there I met other magicians who were working as full-time professionals. I had found my calling. I could no longer sit behind a desk working nine to five, as my heart was just no longer in it. One of my mentors told me to, “Follow my heart, and the money will follow.” I then took a leap of faith and resigned from my position at Sprint and started my own business, founding Magiccreations in 2000 when I began performing full-time. I then landed



my very first restaurant gig at Tony Ferrara's Italian Ristorante in Lenexa, Kansas. At the height of my restaurant magic career, I was working in six different restaurants, six nights a week. As a result, the routines and sets I performed at the tables became polished rather quickly. I learned a lot about the restaurant business and entertaining patrons during that time. I have been a professional restaurant worker most of my adult life, and have worked in more than twenty-five restaurants in twenty-five years. I have been the resident house magician at Old Shawnee Pizza in the Kansas City area for more than thirty years now. It is the oldest restaurant in Shawnee, and has been voted best pizza in Kansas City numerous times. At one point, the restaurant was rated the seventeenth best pizza place in the country.

I conducted a two-month lecture tour across the country from the beginning of October to the end of November in 2023. My restaurant magic lecture, "Table Hopping: 'A 'Close-Up' look at The Art and Science of Restaurant Magic," is based on my real-world experience as a professional restaurant magician for nearly thirty years. The Art side of the lecture includes the magic I perform, teach, create, and sell. The Business side of the lecture I refer to as a "Blueprint for Success" for obtaining and keeping a restaurant booking. My lecture notes debuted at the number 12 spot in Penguins Magic's Top 50 new arrivals for that year. Initially, I had given the lecture at a few magic clubs and at the Cavalcade of Magic Convention in Eureka Springs, Arkansas. During my actual tour, I traveled to more than twenty-five cities in more than twenty states. My goal is to empower and enable other magicians to

go out and get a restaurant booking. I encourage anyone and everyone to go out and get a restaurant gig, whether one is just starting out in magic, or has been involved in magic their entire life. If you are retired, entertaining in restaurants is a great way to get out of the house. Whether you are retired or not, restaurant magic is a great way to supplement your income, especially if you are just getting started in magic, or if you are looking to start performing magic professionally full time.

The lecture tour was a "ton of fun," as well as a lot of work. My tour was a learning experience, as I had a lot of time to think about my presentations, as well as reflect upon my experience in the restaurant magic field. It was also a wonderful chance to make some new friends in the magic world, as well as a great networking opportunity, as it opened some doors for my magic career. I had several months to prepare for the tour, which allowed me to create the outline for the lecture, as well as produce the effects I sold on the tour. Although the time required and the process of getting ready for the tour was very long and arduous at times, I also found it very rewarding. I had help creating the package design for the merchandise, and came up with more than twenty different effects to sell as merchandise during my tour, producing fifty of each of the effects. It also took me quite some time to produce the performance videos and online tutorials for the effects as well.

The lecture tour was without incident for the most part, with the exception of having to replace the fuel pump in my vehicle, which was thankfully covered under warranty. It did force me to have to reschedule

one of the dates on the back end of the tour. I was also very frustrated as I received a speeding ticket for going only a few miles over the speed limit on Thanksgiving Day, during the eighteen-hour drive home from the last stop of the tour in Tucson, Arizona.

Although there were times in my schedule when I was giving back-to-back lectures every day, I was extremely grateful to have had some free time to do some sightseeing in several states I had not yet had the opportunity to visit. Some of the highlights of my visits included stops at The Chicago Magic Lounge, Magic Inc., Navy Pier, Wrigley Field, and the Willis Tower in Chicago. I was also able to tour The Louisville Slugger Factory and Churchill Downs and the Kentucky Derby Museum in Louisville. In addition, I was able to tour Daytona International Speedway. I got to see the House of Cards, The Country Music Hall of Fame, and the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville, Tennessee. One of my favorite places was The Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, Florida. In Washington, DC, I had the opportunity to visit the White House, the National Monument, and the Jefferson and Lincoln Memorials. I also had the opportunity to go see the site where Lincoln gave The Gettysburg Address in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, as well as see The Liberty Bell, and Independence Hall in Philadelphia, where the Declaration of Independence was signed. I also really enjoyed visiting Hershey Chocolate World and Hershey Park in Hershey, Pennsylvania. I had already visited the Ground Zero site from September 11 in New York, so I was extremely grateful to have had the chance to visit the Flight 93 Memorial, in Stoystown, Pennsylvania, as well as the Pentagon Memorial in Washington, Virginia. I was able to visit the Jersey Shore in Atlantic City,

New Jersey, The Alamo in San Antonio, The Red Rocks Amphitheatre in Denver, Colorado, and The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland, Ohio.

I was honored and humbled about how well my lecture was received, with some of the clubs I presented the lecture for calling it, "The best lecture they have had all year!" Scott Wells, The Southern Lecture Tour Coordinator who put the tour together said this about the lecture:

"I have coordinated lecture tours for nearly two hundred magicians over the past twenty-two years, and rarely receive unsolicited complimentary emails from hosting clubs about lecturers I have booked for them. Keith Leff is one of those rare individuals who was unilaterally enjoyed by all groups. His variety of material, knowledge of magic, as well as his skill level and talent are just a few of the reasons his magic is thoroughly entertaining, and what makes his well-organized, and well-presented lecture, excellent. Keith's knowledge of the restaurant magic business is unsurpassed, and his original magic is both commercial and strong. I would highly recommend him to any club because the solid and practical effects in his repertoire are within reach of all magicians."

My lecture is specifically designed with the real-world worker in mind. The material covered is ideal for "table hopping" in restaurants or any close-up or strolling venue.

While I attribute much of my success to hard work, determination, and dedication, I recognize my God-given talent as a blessing. My goal is to make magic, magically memorable.

You may reach Keith Leff by email at keith@keithleff.com.

Sign up 1!

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

Magic and

Memories

David Ginn



Breakfast with Three Magicians

I'd like to share with you a few stories about three magicians I ate breakfast with at magic conventions in the past.

Each of these morning meals occurred long ago and far away, *before* I thought of keeping food in my hotel room and before I drank coffee. Nowadays there is a coffee maker in virtually every hotel room, and usually a refrigerator. I typically bring cereal, bananas, milk, and a few other things with me so I can have breakfast in my room following my morning exercises. Then I take a mile-long walk inside or outside the hotel, followed by showering and grooming for the day. That routine suits me a lot better than getting dressed for breakfast. You have to do what works for you.

1

Gene de Jean

In 1965 at the Patton Hotel in Chattanooga, Tennessee, the Southeastern Magicians Convention (SEAM) held its annual convention. This is the same event where I met Doug Henning and started a lifelong friendship, which included that partly famous trip to Europe in the summer of 1966. Since I was rooming alone and was not smart enough to bring food with me, I dressed in slacks and a short sleeve button-up shirt and by 8 a.m. headed downstairs to the hotel restaurant.

When I stepped through the doorway, I found myself standing on a four-foot square platform two steps above the restaurant

floor. It was like a small stage with a railing around it.

I immediately saw the place was not just crowded – *it was packed full of people*. Looking around, I spotted a table for two against a side wall. I hurried to that table and sat down. Moments later a waitress arrived with water and handed me a menu.

While studying the menu and prices, I also looked around the room and spotted several magicians I knew from Atlanta and other cities. I nodded or waved at them, and they waved back.

When the waitress returned, I ordered three pancakes, bacon, and a large glass of milk, half white, half chocolate. It was one of my quirks when I was nineteen. Stirred, not shaken.

Then it happened. *The restaurant door opened, and in stepped a tall, dark-haired man dressed in a black tuxedo, wearing a full-length black cape and a top hat. He looked like the groom on top of a wedding cake, a stereotypical magician if there ever was one.*

He gazed around the room, just as I had done five minutes before, and saw the full house. He then spotted my table for two with only one teenager sitting there – me. Quickly he stepped down the two stairs from the platform. Then he swept across the room until he stood at the chair on the opposite side of my table.

“Pardon me,” he said in a dramatic voice, “is this seat taken?”

What was I to answer?

“No,” I said, “please have a seat.”

Quietly he removed his top hat and placed it on the table to one side. Next, he loosened his cape and laid it across the back of his chair. Then he sat down and looked directly at me.

“I am Gene de Jean,” he stated, “from Houston, Texas.”

I responded: “I am David Ginn from Atlanta, Georgia.”

“May I study your menu?” he asked. I said sure, handing it over to him.

“I have already ordered,” I explained, “but I’m sure the waitress will be right back.”

“Thank you,” he said, not raising his eyes from the menu. He silently studied the menu. The waitress returned and he ordered scrambled eggs, hash browns, wheat toast, and black coffee.

“How long have you been in magic?” he asked me.

“Well, officially seven years. It started as a hobby at age twelve. Now I’m nineteen, and I just finished my freshman year at the University of Georgia, majoring in journalism. What about you?” I countered.

He hesitated. How much do you tell a nineteen-year-old about your magic life? Would he say he was a magician, illusionist, publicist, hypnotist, cardician, charlatan, rogue, con man, raconteur, deep thinker?

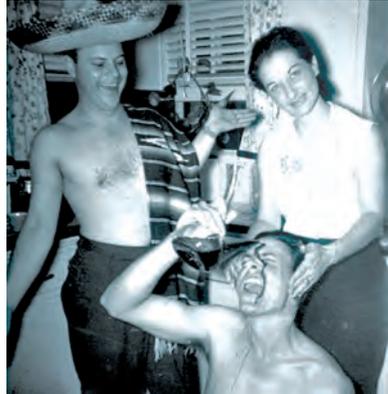
You want to know the truth? Gene de Jean told me nearly nothing.

He said simply: “Oh, I do magic and illusions all over everywhere, Texas and beyond.”

This was three years before I met and worked with one of Gene’s close friends, Bev Bergeron, and for some reason Gene never came up in my conversations with Bev over the years. I’m sure Bev could have told me plenty!

What I *can* share with you came from Trixie Bond, formerly Trixie Dodson, whose father Charles Dodson was a good friend of Gene de Jean. In fact, says Trixie, who remembers Gene at the house constantly in her childhood, “Dad and Gene were drinking

buddies, as you can see in a photo I’ve shared nearby.”



*Charlie Dodson, Marjorie de Jean,
and Gene de Jean.*

What I will share with you came from a talk Trixie did at the Houston I.B.M. Ring several years ago. Here is the story in Trixie’s own words:

*In the heart of midcentury Houston, a trio of talented magicians formed an unforgettable bond: Bev Bergeron, Doug Kornegay, and the inimitable Gene McIntosh – better known on stage as **Dr. Gene de Jean**.*

While each magician had his own flair, Gene stood apart with his mix of genius, mischief, and complete unpredictability, which made him a local legend.

Gene wasn’t just a magician. He was a showman, a daredevil, and, by most accounts, a lovable lunatic. Tall, handsome, and bursting with charisma, he constructed his own illusions, including the stunning and original levitation act “Shiva,” in which a woman rose gracefully from a lotus position, seemingly defying gravity itself.

A frequent performer in Houston’s nightclub scene, Gene’s act was bold and bizarre. He ate fire, read minds, and even drove blindfolded through downtown Houston in a black, velvet-flocked Cadillac hearse. His most astonishing stunt? Driving blindfolded from Houston to Dallas – long before GPS made such feats feel less death-defying.

But magic wasn’t Gene de Jean’s only hustle.

In a different chapter of his life, Gene

dealt cards at an illegal Galveston, Texas gambling club. He was a master of the second, top, and bottom deals – a talent so refined he earned a place in the notorious Griffin Book, which listed professional card cheats and banned them from casinos worldwide.



Gene de Jean eats fire.

Never one to sit still, Gene's curiosity took a strange turn in the late 1960s. He earned a mail-order doctorate in divinity, became a licensed hypnotist, and opened a clinical hypnotism office. It didn't take long before things spiraled. He began writing prescriptions for narcotics and was eventually arrested and sent to jail. Even then, Gene remained as sharp and charming as ever.

Talking to Gene was never ordinary. One day as an adult, I accidentally called him. When I realized I called the wrong number, I apologized. Gene simply replied, "Go ahead and ask me – I know all the answers." And I believed he just might!

Gene de Jean was a magician, a con man, a philosopher, and a mystic rolled into one unforgettable character. He wasn't just a friend of my father – he was his drinking buddy. The two could often be found at our house sharing wine and stories, laughing about the absurdity of life and magic alike.

While his antics may have pushed the

boundaries of legality and sanity, Gene McIntosh lived and performed like no one else. In Houston's magical underground of the 1950s and 1960s, Gene was the unpredictable spark that kept things exciting and his legend still lingers in smoky memories and faded photographs.

Now you know who I had breakfast with that August morning in 1965, without ever learning any of that!



Bill Siros, Gene de Jean, and Charles Dodson perform Gene's one-man suspension of Marjorie de Jean during a television show taping in 1957.

2

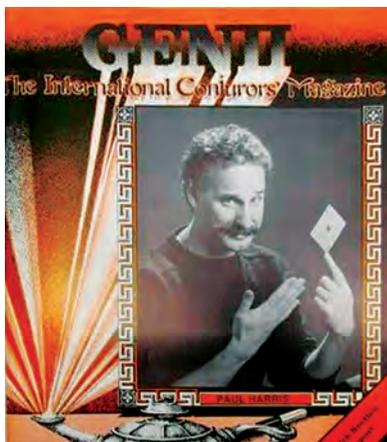
Paul Harris

My next breakfast took place in Greenville, South Carolina, at another SEAM Convention in the summer of 1978. That was the summer my wife Lynne was pregnant with our daughter Autumn. Mark Merchant and I attended the convention together. I lectured in my early days and probably sold things at a dealer table.

Paul Harris had already performed, standing up at a table and doing things like "Helicopter Cards" and other storytelling routines. I enjoyed his patter stories and delivery. Not that I cared a great deal for close-up magic, but it was Paul's personality that engaged me.

Understand that I am talking about Paul Harris, the inventor, magician, and writer described in *Genii* magazine's December 1996

issue as “the most innovative magic mind of our day,” and listed in the August 1999 issue of *Magic Magazine* as one of “the 100 magicians who shaped the art of magic in America.”



Paul Harris on the cover of *Genii* magazine.

This is the same Paul Harris who invented many original tricks including linking playing cards, the solid deck, a Torn and Restored card effect, coins materializing from mirrors, a card that appears to turn ninety degrees when pushed into the pack, and a Torn and Restored quarter.

Yes, the same Paul Harris who went on to write and publish three volumes of *The Art of Astonishment* years after our meeting. But let's get to that morning meeting in the hotel restaurant.

The morning after his presentation, I arrived hungry at a crowded hotel restaurant. In a flip of the Gene de Jean story, Paul Harris already sat alone at a table for two, and I saw no other seats empty. Since I was thirty-two years old, a veteran of the army, and early in my lecturing career, I boldly approached *the* Paul Harris and asked if I could sit with him.

Paul said, “Sure.” Dressed casually in tee shirt and jeans, he was studying a menu.

I picked up the other menu and took a quick look. Then the waitress arrived.

“I’ll have three eggs scrambled, grits and toast, plus a large milk, half white, half chocolate,” I said.

Suddenly my breakfast companion spoke up.

“What are *grits*?”

The Southerner in me smiled.

“It’s a corn product, ground up and eaten with butter and a little salt,” I told him. “Often as a side dish to breakfast items like eggs and omelettes. If you’ve never had any, let me buy you a bowl.”

That made him laugh.

“Order whatever you want,” I said to him, then to the waitress I added, “and put a bowl of grits for him on my tab.”

She took his order and left.

“You’re the new kidshow guy on the block,” Paul Harris said to me. “I know you have out a hardback children’s book.”

“Yes, *Professional Magic for Children*. It means magic I have used to entertain children as a profession. Not magic kids can do professionally. It is my first hardbound book after eighteen pamphlets.”

“I am still in the pamphlet stage,” said Paul.

“I understand. You want to hear a funny story?” He nodded yes. “I’ve known Lee Jacobs, the poster king, for years and years. When *Professional Magic for Children* came out a year and a half ago, Lee said to me at a convention, ‘Well, David, I see you finally learned the *magic word*.’ I said, ‘What magic word do you mean?’ He said, ‘hardback.’ And you know what? He was right.”

“What does that mean?” Paul asked.

“Well, *PMC* – that’s what I call it for short – sold out a thousand hardbound copies in six months, so we printed another thousand. None of my paperbacks ever sold that fast, not even the *Fantasio Cane & Candle* books. So ‘hardback’ must be a magic word.”

“Hmm, Lee Jacobs may be right,” replied Paul. “It’s worth thinking about.”

“I think magicians in general prefer hardbound books because they are made to last longer, as long as the price is reasonable,” I told him.

“Maybe so.”

At the time, all of Paul Harris’s books

were softbound, either staple stitched or spiral bound. Years later I saw that *Las Vegas Close-Up*, written by Paul and published by Chuck Martinez, debuted in hardback. All these years later, I wonder if our conversation led to that.

Anyway, the food came and I started to fix my grits.

“How do you do that?” asked Paul.

“Oh, it’s easy. Just put some butter in the grits and a little salt like this.” I showed him.

He started to imitate me – butter, salt, and stirring it around.

“Then you eat it.”

Paul stirred the grits which were in a bowl, then lifted the spoon and took one bite.

“Some southerners put a little red-eye gravy on it, but I don’t care for that,” I added.

Paul put the grits in his mouth. He tasted and swished and swallowed. He nodded his head. Then he picked up the sugar shaker and poured several teaspoons of sugar into the bowl of grits.

“Paul,” I said, “that’s blasphemy! A Southerner would never sugar his grits.”

“But I am not a Southerner,” he replied. “I grew up in California, and I loved cream of wheat growing up. This tastes like a version of cream of wheat.” And he ate the entire bowl of grits that way, sugared to his taste.



A candid photo of Paul wearing a cap.

I thought it was funny, from a Southern boy’s point of view. Turns out we had a pleasant breakfast together, and after that, I can always say I fed Paul Harris his first bowl of grits.

3

Norm Nielsen

I believe this happened at the 1972 I.B.M. Convention in Cincinnati, Ohio. During the Friday night show, Norm Nielsen presented his act consisting of card fan productions, the Floating Violin, and the Miser’s Dream Coin production with his coin ladder.



Norm Nielsen with his Floating Violin effect.

He absolutely stunned the audience, and he received a well-deserved standing ovation for his performance. My friends and I were watching from the third row and as we stood up to applaud an act no one could duplicate, a fellow magician behind me said out loud:

“What’s the big fuss about? He only did three tricks!” Cards, coins, violin. Yes, it was a joke, but if only you could do those three tricks that well, it would be a real feat of magic.

Something of note: Norm did *not* close with the violin at that time. It was in the middle of the act. Instead, he produced coins the size of silver dollars, dropping them into a bell-like bucket, then climaxing with what felt like a never-ending coin shower down the ladder at the front of his table. It was spectacular.

Years later, as he emphasized the musical aspect of his act and added a Vanishing Flute to Silver Dust to open, he moved the coins to the middle and closed with the floating/vanishing violin.

I am telling you this as I remember it, and thereby setting the stage for what happened at breakfast the next morning. I don’t think I’ll tell you any more about Norm, one of the finest stage magicians ever. If you don’t know

who he was, Google and YouTube him and watch the act. Educate yourself!



Norm Nielsen promotional poster.

I don't know why I was alone, but I was, and the hotel dining room was packed. You've heard this story twice before, just different years and cities. In this case, the only seats left were at the bar and Norm Nielsen occupied a stool seat with an empty stool on each side of him.

As I approached him from the right, I asked, "Is this stool taken?"

"No, have a seat," he said.

I sat down and looked at the menu, decided what I wanted, and when the waitress came I gave her my order, which was probably pancakes, bacon, and chocolate milk.

"Norm, I am David Ginn from Atlanta, Georgia, and I loved your act last night."

Norm thanked me and we made small talk. Then another magician, a man in a suit, came and sat beside Norm on the other side. Like me, the other guy congratulated Norm on his performance. Then he changed his tone, saying, "That violin is a pretty good trick. Did you build it yourself?"

Norm said, "Yes, I did."

"You must have quite a workshop," said the other guy. "Say, how did you attach the gimmick to the violin? The Zombie thing to make it float?"

Norm stopped eating. He paused, and as I kept my mouth shut and listened, he gently said one of the most brilliant things I've ever heard:

"Friend, I will talk magic with you all day. But I never discuss the details of my act."

"Oh, so you want to keep it a secret?" the other guy remarked. "Okay, sure, I get it."

Breakfast continued.

"So, Norm," I said to break the ice, "what was the first magic trick you ever owned?"

Norm laughed and told us about his barber who showed him cigarette tricks while cutting his hair. To some degree that did not matter. What mattered was that Norm Nielsen drew a very definite line and gave me an important lesson.

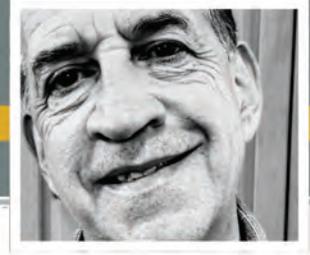
The lesson? If you invent or develop something new and totally different, keep it a secret. Don't tell your fellow magicians at the magic club or convention. Why? Because there are unscrupulous people who will make some version of it in their basement workshop and perform it a week later at the Rotary Club ladies night – and perform it badly.

Never discuss the details of your own created act! Or how you're booking three hundred school shows a year and where. Or why you're getting so many birthday party shows. Or how you are working three restaurants a week for good money.

I learned that at breakfast from Norm Nielsen more than fifty years ago. Thank you, Norm. And thanks especially to Lupe Nielsen for sending me the charming photo of her with Norm in their Las Vegas workshop, where Lupe carries on the Nielsen Magic business in Norm's absence.



Norm and Lupe Nielsen in their workshop
(PHOTO CREDIT: Karl Handler, courtesy of Lupe Nielsen.)



Greetings – I hope wherever you are, you are enjoying the wonderful fall weather. This month, I offer another take on an old effect. I saw the actor Owen Wilson do it on a talk show and I immediately thought of a way to make it look more random.

I hope this might prompt you to revisit old nuggets you're doing and think about how you can update them. When teaching magic, schools love it when you show students anything that relates to math

A Country, an Animal, and Some Fruit

EFFECT: “Please take this deck of cards and cut it into two piles.” After they have cut the deck, place the bottom portion crossed over the top portion. You want to let everyone see where the cards were cut.

“Now I want you to think of a single-digit number. Once you have it, multiply it by 9. At this point, you either have a single-digit number or a two-digit number. If it is a two-digit number, I want you to add the two digits together to form a single digit. Do you have a single-digit number?”

Give your helper time to do the math. You may want to repeat the steps to ensure they got it right.

“Okay, now your number is in your head. When we started, I asked you to cut the deck. Look at the card you cut to. Is it a number card or a picture card?”

Your helper will say it is a number card.

“Good, subtract the value of the card from the number you arrived at in your head. Now think of the alphabet: 1 = A, 2 = B, 3 = C, and so on. Do you have a letter? Think of a country that starts with that letter. Do you have one? Okay, now take the last letter of the country and think of an animal that starts with that letter. Let's go one step further now. Take the last letter of the animal you're thinking of and think of a fruit that starts with that letter. I am starting to get an impression that is very strange. I see a Kangaroo walking down the streets of Denmark eating an orange.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION:

We should all be familiar with the main working of this effect, as it has been around for years. I changed it up by forcing the number five using the crosscut force. Then, instead of the grey elephant, I used the last letter in Denmark to get kangaroo, and the last letter in kangaroo to arrive at orange. This makes it easier for the person working with you.

When you ask your helper to subtract the number 5, it seems too contrived. Adding the force of the number 5 makes it seem random. After doing summer camp shows all summer, I can tell you this played very well. Using the last letter of each word to form the next word made it flow nicely. I love exploring old magic and devising new ways to present it. Taking something old and making it new again is always a fun exercise.

Until next month,

Bob Durante

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Polishing the Rings

SKIP WAY

One of my first teen jobs was as a busboy and dishwasher for a small Italian diner. The owner was a stern yet fair Italian gentleman who regularly treated his diners to fun little treats. His wickedly clever ideas were my introduction to guerrilla marketing.

Each week he handed me a slogan for his outdoor marquee with one misspelled word. I thoughtfully corrected his spelling the first time and he patiently asked me to go back and post the sign the way he wrote it. You see, the people in town went out of their way each week to spot the misspelled word. Guess where those looky-loos ate lunch and dinner?

He frequently changed some minor but obvious detail inside his restaurant. He might hang a picture upside down, change the color on one set of drapes, add some nonsense item like “Kangaroo Stew” to his menu, or change a server’s nametag from Maryann to Frank. Little nonsensical things! He offered a complimentary dessert to the first group of patrons to spot the change. It was like a crazy, fun treasure hunt with pasta and wine!

He didn’t forget his staff. Each week he chose a neglected corner, table base, or lampshade and rewarded us with a few extra dollars (I earned \$1.35 an hour back then) if he found the spot cleaned after closing. He had the cleanest restaurant in town.

He never announced these little games and let word of mouth do it instead. His clever and simple games attracted the curious, drove word-of-mouth promotion, and made dining and working there a treat. Do I have to tell you that customers packed the place from lunch through dinner?

He taught me that promotion is more about delivering a fun and memorable experience

than simply a quality product. Decades later, I still draw upon these early lessons. What if we applied this same fun experience to our magic clubs?

Guerrilla humor adds a little unexpected fun to our meetings and boosts member participation. It creates strong word-of-mouth promotion, sparks positive chatter about your club, and creates an entertaining connection with members. There’s only one rule to guerrilla humor. Unleash your imagination and do the unexpected! After all, we’re magicians. This level of creative thought should be second nature to us, right?

Appoint a club jester – a spirited member or team – to inject a bit of fun and humor into each meeting. Their task might include arranging small celebrations for a member’s birthday, membership anniversary, or unique achievement. Put them in charge of your club’s raffle, recognition program, and reward chest.

What is a reward chest? Every magician has a drawer, box, or garage filled with unused impulse-purchase magic items. Collect them, dust them off, and place them in a reward chest. Bring a guest, choose a prize. Perform an effect, choose a prize. One member’s unused purchase may be another member’s treasure. (Tip of the hat to Dan and SarahElla Harlan for this idea.) Members may deduct these donations from taxes if your club is a 501(c)(3) non-profit.

You might start each meeting with a “Fact or Fiction” challenge. Recruit three members to share amusing or bizarre events they experienced as magicians: two members tell believable (yet false) anecdotes while one member tells the truth. The other members may each ask one question before voting for the most believable story. The member who

receives the most votes visits the reward chest.

Invite one of your club's collectors to bring a unique item to the meeting. This may be a unique prop or item connected to an historic magician or location. Open the floor for one question from each member. Members then have three guesses as a group to name the item's connection or function. The collector visits the reward chest for stumping the club.

Be creative! Encourage the collectors to bring a fake item now and then. Let's say a tuxedo jacket worn by Howard Thurston or Bigfoot plaster prints. Bigfoot prints are easy to create, and I found three men named Howard Thurston and one Harry Kellar living within a hundred miles of my home. Challenge members to decide whether the item is real or fake.

Set aside ten minutes for laughter. Recruit members to share humorous magic-related anecdotes, quotes, or jokes. Don't wait for volunteers to step up! Reach out and draft members to share.

Shoot short, fun "member in the hall" videos to capture members' impromptu thoughts on the club and meetings and post these to your club's social media.

Get creative with meeting themes! Ditch the tired old "packet trick" and "holiday magic" themes. Try themes like "perform in the third person," "one-handed magic," or "patterless effects." Encourage members to perform an effect using a specific word of the day. The member who uses the word the most hits the reward chest.

Start your meetings with an icebreaker "question of the day" that each member must stand and answer, such as, "What's your favorite TV sitcom of all time?" "What was your worst audience experience?" or "What was your most embarrassing magic flub?"

Play Member Bingo! Create bingo cards with a mix of occupations, degrees, hobbies, or accomplishments. Leave space for a printed first name in each square. Members mingle and fill in the names of those who match each square. The first Bingo hits the reward chest!

It's important to end each meeting on an upbeat note so participants feel positive and encouraged after a meeting. Raffle a final door prize at the end of each meeting, or end with a thought-provoking quote or the Irish farewell: "May the road rise up to meet you, may the wind be always at your back. May the sun shine warm upon your face, and the rains fall soft upon your fields. And until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of His hand."

Whatever you do, make it fun!

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.



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50 Golden Tips for Magicians to Earn a Great Name and More Shows

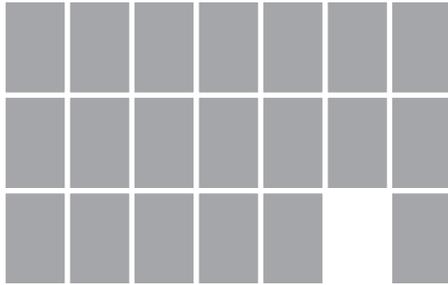
By Balasubramanian “Magic Balu” Chandran

1. **Dress smart and stage appropriate.** Your look creates the first impression even before the first trick.
2. **Carry a neat and clean table or backdrop.** Your stage setup must look professional, not like a hasty picnic.
3. **Carry a small emergency kit.** Extra batteries, tape, glue, marker, rope, scissors, and safety pins can save the day.
4. **Use a wireless microphone if possible.** Clear audio = better connection with the audience. Also, carry a microphone holder.
5. **Personalize your introduction.** Mention the host’s name or event theme, which will show you’re not copy-pasting your act.
6. **Start your show on time.** Punctuality is professionalism.
7. **Arrive at least an hour early.** This gives you time to settle and check the venue. It also reduces last-minute stress.
8. **Always double-check your props before and after the show.** Avoid leaving anything behind or forgetting an essential item.
9. **Inform your client once you reach home safely.** It builds personal rapport and shows your professionalism.
10. **Send a short thank-you message the next day,** indicating you appreciated their arrangements and hospitality.
11. **Engage the audience warmly.** Don’t just “perform,” involve them and make them feel magical.
12. **Treat your volunteers with respect, especially kids.** Make them feel like stars and never embarrass them.
13. **Avoid lengthy explanations or boring patter.** Keep routines sharp and punchy.
14. **Leave on a high note.** End with your strongest trick and a clear thank-you.
15. **Never speak ill about other performers.** Your class speaks louder than your words.
16. **Be ready to adapt if the venue is small or noisy.** Modify your act accordingly.
17. **Carry visiting cards or QR codes.** Make it easy for people to contact you.

18. **Have someone take good photos and/or videos (with permission).** Posting show content on social media can help you build your brand.
19. **Tag and thank the host publicly (if appropriate).** It makes them feel valued and it spreads your reach.
20. **Reply promptly to all show inquiries.** Don't delay, even if you're busy.
21. **Avoid discussing your performance fee in front of guests.** Keep such talks private and respectful.
22. **Offer fixed professional rates, with scope for customization.** Be transparent but flexible.
23. **Train your assistants to behave professionally.** Your team reflects you.
24. **Avoid overselling or showing off too much.** Let your magic do the talking.
25. **Give something memorable at the end,** such as a magical souvenir, sticker, or thank-you card.
26. **Keep learning, upgrading, and innovating.** Stale acts will fade; fresh ideas shine.
27. **Have your audio or music in a pen drive and as a backup in the cloud.** Tech can fail but backups save your show.
28. **Scout the venue layout in advance, if possible.** Knowing the space helps you plan better.
29. **Smile genuinely and maintain a positive body language.** It adds charm to your performance.
30. **Avoid controversial or offensive jokes.** Keep your humor family-friendly and inclusive.
31. **Practice your routines regularly.** Confidence comes from rehearsal, not just talent.
32. **Record your performances.** Occasionally reviewing them helps you improve.
33. **Keep your mobile phone on silent or airplane mode during the show.** This helps you stay fully present and reduces the risk of disruptions.
34. **Use simple, memorable catchphrases.** These help people remember you.
35. **Take feedback positively.** Even criticism is a chance to grow.
36. **Respect every audience, both big and small.** Every stage deserves your best.
37. **Maintain a performance logbook.** Note the tricks you've performed, audience reactions you received, and any other important event details to avoid repeating the same act next time.
38. **Keep track of the event type and date for annual or special events such as birthdays, weddings, and anniversaries.** Schedule a follow-up message or greeting the next year.
39. **Create a customizable set list.** Adjust your routine based on your audience's age group, mood, and setting.

40. **Keep your gear organized in labeled boxes or pouches.** It saves time and avoids mix-ups.
41. **Stay calm during tech failures or interruptions.** Your poise is part of the magic.
42. **During key moments, avoid using tricks with a high risk of failure.** Save the experimental stuff for casual gigs or practice sessions.
43. **Have a few quick icebreakers ready** in case the crowd is cold or unresponsive at the beginning.
44. **Avoid repeating tricks at the same event, unless requested.** It reduces the effect's impact.
45. **Have a post-show ritual to review what went well and what could be improved.** Reflection boosts mastery.
46. **Keep some quick-fix props handy:** rubber bands, coins, cards, and thumb tips are great for casual magic offstage.
47. **Follow local cultural and religious sensitivities.** Some tricks or patter may unintentionally offend your audience.
48. **Use social media to stay connected with past clients.** Wish them on occasions, comment on their posts, stay on their radar.
49. **Send a feedback form or message after a major show.** It shows you care and helps you improve.
50. **Last but not least, always stay humble and grateful no matter how famous you become.** The audience is your magic mirror.

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*.

The Mystique of Playing Cards “A Portal to Infinity”

By Michael “Podini” Geleher

I’ve been practicing and performing cards for the past thirty-five years. My main interest is playing cards, but I also do some rope magic and mentalism. There is usually a deck of cards in my pocket, and I try to do a card trick for anyone who does something nice for me. It is my way of saying thank you. I always ask them “Can I do a card trick for you?” Usually they will want to see one, but every so often I get a “no, thank you” or worse.

Believe it or not, some people are rhabdophobic. That means that they have a fear of magic. They probably think magic is the devil’s work and want nothing to do with it. It isn’t, of course. Magic is a branch of the performing arts, like dancing or acting. It is meant to inspire wonder and joy. But people often think that anything they can’t understand or anything they can’t find logical, or can’t control, must be evil and should be avoided at all costs.

The art form we are exploring is a dying art. Card artists I know are older folk, mostly men. There are a few women of course, but not many. Thirty years from now, who will be doing these routines? Who will be teaching magic to their youth? It is our responsibility to pass on these techniques and magic customs to our younger generation. If we don’t do this, our art form will become extinct. It will be similar to the way the great dinosaurs have vanished from our planet. We cannot let this happen.

The more we perform our art, the more the general public will be exposed to it. We have to show them that we, as magicians, are generators of light. We need to perform, teach, and share magic to keep it alive and bring amazement into a chaotic

world. Even in this crazy society we live in, there is truly “magic.”

Of the people who appreciate us, maybe, just maybe, we have motivated them to learn and perform our art. We have to bring magic into their lives. That should be our function, and that should be our purpose.

Let me tell you how all this began for me. I was introduced to a deck of playing cards when I was in the United States Navy. I was stationed on a guided missile destroyer from 1968 until 1971. When you’re out at sea on a warship, there isn’t much to do other than work, eat, and sleep. You do not get a lot of private time. The living compartments are very crowded and the US Navy believes sleeping and eating are done on your own private time.

There was another sailor who lived in the same compartment as me who could do card tricks. I do not remember his name, but I remember he was a second-class machinist mate who was a very talented with cards. Whenever he performed his tricks, he always had an audience, including me. I became fascinated with his tricks and asked him to show me how to do them. Of course he refused, citing the magician’s motto: “Never show how a card trick is done.” I couldn’t accept that, so I kept pestering him about teaching me. He finally gave up and, in private, showed me a basic card trick. You know, I still use that trick today. As a matter of fact, I used that same routine this afternoon when my wife and I visited a jewelry store.

I purchased a deck of cards from the ship store. I think it was a red-backed Bee Deck. I started practicing with it and I learned some basic card tricks. That was

fifty-seven years ago and was my introduction to card magic. A second-class machinist mate on the USS Semmes, DDG 18, in the year 1968, is the reason I am where I am today. He introduced me to this wonderful art form.

For the next twenty-some years, my life's road took many twists and turns, and my wife Maryann and I wound up living in central Pennsylvania. During that time, I occasionally picked up a deck of cards, but I wasn't very serious about it.

One day while I was out shopping with my wife, I discovered a magic store at one of the malls in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. I went in and told the owner how I was introduced to playing cards. He asked me if I wanted to see a card trick and the routine he showed me blew me away. Once again, I was hooked. I spent about an hour in that magic store and I'm pretty sure he showed me every card trick he knew. Before I left, I purchased *Card College Volume 1* by Roberto Giobbi. That was the beginning of my current card education and my library.

I drove a tractor trailer for a total of twenty-six years, and fortunately I was able to get home every night. Whenever I visited a warehouse, to either pick up or deliver freight, I practiced the sleights and techniques that define my style today. That is how I learned to handle a deck of cards.

In 2009, I became a member of the Freemasons. Last year, in 2024, I joined the Shriners International. I am now a proud noble of the Zembo Shrine in Harrisburg, and I'm also a member of their clown unit.

Every year, the Zembo Shrine holds a circus for the general public. I had the great honor to be one of their featured acts, performing card magic and rope magic. I was introduced to someone who introduced me to the President of I.B.M. Ring 20 (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania). It turns out that he is also a Shriner and a Freemason. That is how I got from here to there.

It was a long, twisty, meandering, sometimes bumpy but sometimes smooth road, but it led me to where I am now. I'm sure

anyone who has explored an art form has been down a similar path.

Enough about me. I want to tell you about a deck of cards.

Each individual deck of cards creates its own unique portal into infinity. I'll explain that in just a little bit. Consider the parallels between a deck of cards and a calendar. Let us consider the mirror dualities we find.

In every standard deck, there are red cards and black cards. We find similar dual unions throughout our culture: yes and no, night and day, month and year, right and wrong, up and down, left and right, on and off. There are many others.

The English alphabet that we use contains twenty-six letters. A deck of cards has twenty-six red-suited cards and twenty-six black-suited cards.

Every year has four seasons. A deck of cards is divided into four suits: clubs, spades, hearts, and diamonds.

In every year there are twelve months. A deck of cards has twelve face cards in it: four jacks, four queens, and four kings.

Each year is divided into fifty-two weeks. There are fifty-two playing cards in every standard deck, not counting the jokers or the advertising cards. If you divide 52 by 4, you get 13. There are thirteen cards in each suit, ace through king.

If you spell A-C-E T-W-O-T-H-R-E-E all the way through K-I-N-G, you use fifty-two letters. This is true in English, Italian, French, German, and Spanish.

If you spell J-A-C-K-Q-U-E-E-N-K-I-N-G you will use thirteen letters. There are four jacks, four queens, and four kings. Multiply 13 by 4 you get 52.

Here's a good one: if you assign a number value to the cards – with ace being one, the number of cards being their face value, jacks being 11, queens 12, and kings 13 – and add them all together, you will get 364. When you add one joker to that you will get 365. Add two jokers to that, you will get 366. That's the number of days in a leap year.

This brings me to the title of this article.

A deck of cards is a “portal to infinity.” A standard deck contains fifty-two cards, not counting the two jokers. In order to find out how many combinations of cards there are, you must multiply 52 by 51 by 50 by 49, all the way through 1. Mathematically, that is called 52 factorial, and is designated like this fifty-two!

This number is beyond gigantic – it is astronomically vast. The total is approximately 8.6×10^{67} . That means it’s eighty-six followed by sixty-six zeros. That number is more than the grains of sand found on any desert or any beach on Earth. It is larger than the total number of galaxies found in the observable universe.

In summary, whenever a deck of cards is properly shuffled, the cards go into a different order. Every shuffle creates a likely never-before-seen sequence. That particular order of cards may never have happened before at any time, and once that order is changed, it may never come up again. That is why I refer to a deck of cards as a “portal to infinity.” It is also why cards are used for gambling, fortune telling, entertainment, and of course magic.

Mathematically, the number of ways a deck can be combined is a finite number.

It is not infinite. However, that finite 8.6×10^{67} power is so large, so enormous, so vast that it seems truly endless to us mere mortals.

Here’s a fun fact. If you go into a casino that has a blackjack table, they will sometimes deal their cards from a device called a shoe. That device can hold up to eight shuffled decks. If 52 factorial is vast, imagine how incredibly vast 416 factorial is.

A week or so ago, my wife and I were eating at one of our favorite restaurants. The server who waited on us enjoys my card magic and I told her I was preparing an article for this magazine. After we finished our meal and I performed my trick *du jour* for her, she said something very clever to me:

“Make your words as magical as you make the cards.” I hope I’ve achieved that.

To anyone who does card tricks, please feel free to use this information in your own routines. It adds depth and wonder. Because when you handle a deck of cards, you are holding a “portal to infinity.”

Let me know how you have used this information and applied it to your routines: marymike23@gmail.com.

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Please notify the I.B.M. Headquarters Office at least four to six weeks before you move. By notifying the office ahead of time you will receive *The Linking Ring* at your new address and avoid paying a five-dollar per issue charge to resend the missed issue to your new address. This charge is merely what it costs the I.B.M. to resend an issue, which includes the USPS charge for sending the cover of the misdirected magazine back to us, plus the cost of resending the issue to your new address. This does not include the cost of the extra issues or the office staff’s time. Plan ahead and save the extra cost for all of us – and get your issues of *The Linking Ring* coming to your new address right away. Please see page four of every issue of *The Linking Ring* for the contact information for the Headquarters Office.

A Magician's Speech

By George Hunter

Most performances of magic and mentalism involve a speaking role: audiences would seldom experience much wonder without the performer's speech. Yet when most performers converse, prepare, or perform, they seem more interested in matters like their secrets, sleights, moves, misdirection, props, persona, or their attire than in their speech.

Many magicians seem to think, "What is there to learn about speaking? I have been speaking my whole life." When they do give it attention, their level of thought is called "patter." The term seems to refer to little more than the need to have something to say while performing. Is it only coincidence that "patter" rhymes with "chatter"?

Let me suggest that we should never, I repeat never, refer to our speaking as "patter." "Patter" is to "speech" as "chatter" is to "conversation," and as "toning" is to "training."

Our tribe declares that good magic is a genre of theater. Well, have you noticed that theater people never refer to a character's speech with a word like "patter"? Actors have a "speaking role," and that role is never a mere adjunct to the play or film. That is why they have auditions for the speaking roles.

Should magic performers rethink the role of speech in their act? After all, most magi-

cal effects need effective speech to carry them, especially if the effect's purpose is to communicate some meaning.

Beginning as long ago as Plato and Aristotle, scholars have studied the art of effective speaking and writing, also known as rhetoric. They studied the most effective speakers and writers and asked what those communicators know, and how they accomplish what less effective communicators cannot. They believed that effective practice, once described, might be prescribed for the education of aspiring writers and speakers.

They gradually classified their field into four "canons."

- **Invention:** How do we discover the message to be communicated?
- **Disposition:** How can the message be best organized?
- **Style:** What words and sentences can best express the message?
- **Delivery:** How should the message be publicly presented?¹

We focus for now on style, the term for how communicators use words (and other symbols) to communicate ideas. Scholars have studied style extensively. By the eighteenth century, the rhetorical tradition had reached a consensus on the criteria of effective style: the effective speaker or writer typically uses words that are accurate, clear, appropriate, and sometimes embellished.²

¹There is a fifth canon of rhetorical study: *memoria*. Some writers have addressed how the planned speech can be mentally mastered and lodged strongly within the speaker's consciousness between the speech's preparation and its delivery. Memory and delivery have been even more thoroughly researched in theater studies and performance studies than in rhetoric.

²In word choice, your thesaurus is your best friend – whether fishing for the most precise, appropriate, colorful, or energizing word or the clearest word.

Alas, western society was still beleaguered by a widespread problem that continues to linger. Many aspiring communicators had an entrenched problem: they were verbose and drowned their ideas in excess verbiage. The problem was not limited to impromptu or extempore speakers who called up words on the fly. Many prepared communicators assumed that more was better.

Then, in the mid-nineteenth century, a polymath named Herbert Spencer came to the rescue. In Victorian England, Spencer was as lauded and famous as Dickens, Darwin, Doyle, and Disraeli. He was a self-taught scholar in many fields of knowledge, including mathematics, engineering, government, economics, education, and psychology. His psychology text was studied at Harvard. He is the father of sociology. He was also a rhetorician.

His influential essay, “The Philosophy of Style,” was published in 1852. It addressed the epidemic of verbosity and related issues. To the four criteria of the effective use of words in speaking and writing – accuracy, clarity, propriety, and embellishment, he added a fifth – economy.³

This is Spencer’s governing insight: He observed that a listener or reader has limited mental energy to spend in trying to grasp a communicator’s idea. So, to craft an effective message, each word should be chosen, and each sentence crafted, for people to follow it with the least mental effort – leaving enough mental energy to grasp the idea, and perhaps the meaning.

Spencer declared, “language is the vehicle of thought,” so economy in a communicator’s use of words is profoundly important. An effective sentence features the words that are needed for the listener to “get it” with the least effort; extra words are surplus baggage. This does not mean to use only simple words, or only short words, or only short sentences, or only plain words; figures of speech can add enjoyment and ignite imaginations and move souls; and a long word may sustain attention and empower the idea

(like “majestic” vis á vis “real big”). The golden rule: speak the words and sentence length needed.

Spencer believed that Anglo-Saxon words are usually more effective than words rooted in Latin; that a sign or gesture may communicate more powerfully than a word, as in a forefinger to the lips. Direct sentences are more effective than indirect sentences, although an intentional indirect sentence can empower the thought, as in, “Grand was the Princess Diana.”

Moreover, specific words usually carry the freight better than general words. Spencer gave an example of this point (and others).

- We should avoid such a sentence as, “In proportion as the manners, customs, and amusements of a nation are cruel and barbarous, the regulations of their penal code will be severe.”
- In place of it we should write, “In proportion as men delight in battles, bullfights, and combats of gladiators, will they punish by hanging, burning, and the rack.”

Spencer was primarily writing for readers⁴, so adapting his insights for speakers is necessary. Two adaptations come to mind.

For instance, when an insight engages a reader, she pauses to think and process it. A speaker’s audience, however, cannot pause the message, so the speaker’s “rhetorical pause” must contribute the absorbing moment.

Again, if a reader comes to a word they do not understand, they consult their dictionary. In Emily Dickinson’s opening line, “There is no frigate like a book,” a reader may get stuck on the fourth word; when they look it up, the whole line becomes memorable. Effective speakers have less latitude than Dickinson; speakers are more confined to the hearer’s recognition vocabulary.

For magicians, Spencer’s principle of economy is a window into wider fields of

(continued on page 146)

³Some scholars regard his principle of economy as an addition to clarity.

⁴British-English readers.

The Subtractive Multiple of Nine Principle

By Thomas Henry

The witty and perceptive eighteenth-century poet Alexander Pope once cautioned, “A little learning is a dangerous thing ...” The implication is that with only a cursory understanding of a subject, one is condemned to mediocrity and missed opportunities. Such is the case with how the so-called “property of nine” is often misconstrued.

There’s no denying the number nine is rather special in magic. However, its utility stems not from a single but from some half-dozen different and distinct properties. Sadly, the details, hidden benefits, and pitfalls of the latter have rarely received the attention deserved.

This article spotlights one particular aspect; let’s call it the Subtractive Multiple of Nine Principle to distinguish it from the rest. We’ll learn a bit of its heritage, uncover some previously overlooked essentials, as well as meet a new and sleeker version of it. A practical reading list, pointing out further avenues for exploration, rounds out this survey.

The General Case

Ignoring requisite motivation and theatrics for the moment, here’s a somewhat austere account of the general Subtractive Multiple of Nine Principle. For any given whole number, if its digits be scrambled to create a new number, and that subtracted from the original, then the result is guaranteed to wind up a multiple of nine.

Did I catch you yawning just now? Expressed so baldly, it’s difficult to imagine anything wizardly springing from this. Well hang on; there are indeed some genuine possibilities lurking within that dreary statement.

For openers, notice the range of possible outcomes is substantially limited. After all, every non-multiple of nine has been eliminated from consideration. We’re edging our

way toward a practical ranging force!

Further, suppose the digits of that difference are totaled; this is called the *checksum* in many technical fields. It can be proved that the checksum is restricted to the least multiples of nine: nine, eighteen, twenty-seven, and so on. The span depends solely upon the length, i.e., how many digits comprise the original number (Fig. 1). Specifically, the greatest checksum possible is $9 \times (\text{length} - 1)$.

Number of Digits	Possible Checksums
2	9
3	9, 18
4	9, 18, 27
5	9, 18, 27, 36
6	9, 18, 27, 36, 45

Fig. 1

But then if the checksum business is iterated until a single digit remains – known as the *digital root* – the number nine itself is assured. And now we have a definite force, that is, an ostensibly random process terminating in an invariant value.

An example should clarify the above. The participant is requested to think of any number whatsoever and jot it down. Suppose it’s 9645. Rearranging the digits on a whim, she might come up with 4569. Then, possibly with the aid of a pocket calculator or a smart phone app, the participant subtracts the smaller from the larger, yielding 5076 (Fig. 2).

Fig. 2

$$\begin{array}{r} 9645 \\ - 4569 \\ \hline 5076 \end{array}$$

Observe that this is indeed a multiple of nine (9×564). Moreover, the checksum is a familiar $5+0+7+6=18$, and the digital root $1+8=9$.

To summarize, if a person thinks of a secret number of any length, mixes up the digits, and subtracts. Then:

- That difference is a multiple of nine.
- The checksum will be one of 9, 18, 27, etc.
- The largest checksum possible is $9 \times (\text{length} - 1)$.
- The digital root is locked in at nine.

The earliest account of this general form I've run across appeared in John Scott's *The Puzzle King* of 1899. The principle became more widely known a half century later thanks to Martin Gardner's beloved handbook, *Mathematics, Magic, and Mystery*. Going forward, refer to the bibliography, below, for details of any citations.

Imparting Interest

It's a rare individual who finds abstract numbers intrinsically fascinating. Even more uncommon is a participant who relishes obeying seemingly arbitrary instructions. If the Subtractive Multiple of Nine Principle is to tantalize, not torture, then it must be motivated by some sort of internal logic.

For example, a demonstration of numerology serves well. First off, most people are interested in "finding out about themselves" via arcane oracles. And then, it's fairly well known among the general populace that arithmetic has long been part and parcel of this occult art.

Fifty years ago, the performer might have asked the participant to jot down a Social Security, license plate, or phone number to get the ball rolling. In this day and age of identity theft, that's hardly appropriate. Far safer, and truly more intriguing, is to have the participant scribble a *word* representing the name of a friend or a pet, a concern, a desire, etc. This, then, is transliterated from letters to digits, and we're off to the races.

All it takes is a small chart displaying which digits go with the letters of the alpha-

bet. For example, I created one with a word processor and slapped it on the back cover of a phony (and heavily gaffed) fortune-telling pocket guide (Fig. 3).

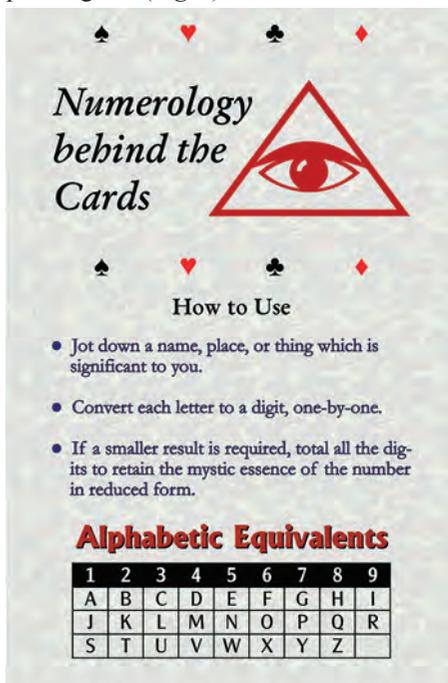


Fig. 3

While you're turned away, the participant jots down a word, let's say the name of a city she'd like to visit. Imagine it's Rome. Then guided by the table of Alphabetic Equivalents, she converts that to a number, 9645 in this case. The Subtractive Multiple of Nine Principle kicks in, leading to the result seen earlier in Figure 2.

If this appeals, be sure to look up my "Your Personal Number," which appeared in *The Linking Ring* not long ago. This explains how to craft a notepad of numerology forms, neatly organized for the participant's convenience.

If dreaming up a new routine around a numerology theme, it's definitely worth your time to look into the meanings and histories of *isopsephy*, *gematria*, and *onomancy*. By the way, divination by assigning numeric values to letters dates back at least to the Assyrians of the eighth century BCE. So if nothing else, we've got tradition on our side!

Presentational Considerations

It's just conceivable the participant's subtraction will choke on zero. This occurs if the original number consists exclusively of a repeated digit, e.g., 666. Likewise, if she somehow neglects to scramble before subtracting, then obviously a naught must ensue.

However, it's simple enough to nonchalantly mention that zero conveys no information concerning the future, and facing that situation, the participant needs to make a different choice. And, oh, it should be obvious that the smaller is always subtracted from the larger number, just to avoid negatives. More about this in a moment.

But how can the subtraction rigmarole be theatrically motivated? A scheme I've always found passes muster is soberly to assert life is an interplay of fate and free will. Whilst fate determines the original number (or the word leading to it), free will is represented by the participant fairly rearranging its digits as desired. Finding the difference, of course, combines those influences for the resolution. Sort of like Hegel's dialectic of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis.

As for the climax, by all means let it be anything other than a dreary old number revelation. For example, see my routine "Any-Gram" which climaxes with an evocative symbol. Book tests, rigged lottery tickets, stacked playing cards or Tarot cards, a modulo-nine forcing wheel, etc., can supply other enchanting translations. The point is, just because the method is mathematical doesn't mean the denouement must be.

A Special Case

The Subtractive Multiple of Nine Principle is truly general, applying to numbers of any magnitude. However, by restricting it to three-digit numbers and modifying the rearrangement procedure a trifle, it's a snap to greatly streamline it.

Have the participant think of a number less than a thousand, with the stipulation that all three digits differ. (Did you catch the silent implication in that?) Let's say it's 813. Then ask her to reverse that number, i.e., read it right to left now, so 318 here. Finally, she's

to subtract the smaller from the latter. The result is 495, whose checksum is eighteen. In fact, the checksum will always be that value, rendering the digital root unnecessary.

You might have noticed that this is nothing more than the initial step of the venerable 1089 Force. As such, it could be termed the Half-1089 Force. Providentially, after the subtraction, there are only nine possible outcomes (Fig. 4). The table also shows how often each occurs, along with its associated probability.

Outcome	Frequency	Probability
99	144	0.20
198	128	0.18
297	112	0.16
396	96	0.13
495	80	0.11
594	64	0.09
693	48	0.07
792	32	0.04
891	16	0.02

Fig. 4

Another pattern worth noting is that nine is always the middle digit of the difference, and the first and last digits sum to nine, of course. (Visualize 99 as 099 for this to be consistent.) No doubt more ancient, an early account of these details can be found in W. W. Rouse Ball's 1892 classic, *Mathematical Recreations and Problems of Past and Present Times*.

A century later, Banachek enthusiastically endorsed the ruse in his much-respected *Psychological Subtleties*. Other exceptional applications of this special case are to be found in Karl Fulves' "Demon Digits" which incorporates the one-ahead principle for some devilish layering, and Walter B. Gibson's "Nine Out of Nine," which transforms it into a far more visual color prediction.

The somewhat enigmatic magician and writer John Mulholland managed to coerce *Collier's*, a popular periodical, to rig a 1948 issue for a magazine test (Fig. 5). Using the

three-digit algorithm just described, a photograph appearing on page eighteen is forced for a rather nifty bit of nonverbal thought-reading.



Fig. 5

One final point of interest: so far we've assumed the participant was choosing three different digits from zero through nine. But if constrained strictly to non-zero digits, the possibility of 891 evaporates (**Fig. 6**). So, there's one less out required of the ranging force.

Outcome	Frequency	Probability
99	112	0.22
198	98	0.19
297	84	0.17
396	70	0.14
495	56	0.11
594	42	0.08
693	28	0.06
792	14	0.03

Fig. 6

A New Rendition

Barking commands may be part of a drill sergeant's repertoire, but it hardly befits a performer attempting to read a participant's

thoughts. Moreover, *showing* rather than *telling* is always stronger stagecraft. So we come to a fresh variation which not only reduces the chatter, but simultaneously relaxes the demands put upon the participant. As icing on the cake, the required outs narrow even further. I believe this tack to be original.

Grab some tokens bearing the numbers one through nine. These are readily available from Amazon, or you can make your own with poker chips and stick-on vinyl numerals.

The required actions are smooth and sweet. Bid the participant to take any three tokens and arrange them to form the largest number possible. The remaining tokens are pushed aside.

She punches that three-digit number into a calculator. Now, she's to rearrange the tokens, forming the smallest number possible, then subtract it. Done!

Despite the nonchalance throughout, pleasing results arise (**Fig. 7**). In particular:

- Using tokens ensures the initial digits are unique.
- The proper order of subtraction is inherent.
- The outcome is always three digits long.
- Only seven outs need be accounted for now.
- The checksum is still fixed at eighteen.

Outcome	Frequency	Probability
198	7	0.08
297	12	0.14
396	15	0.18
495	16	0.19
594	15	0.18
693	12	0.14
792	7	0.08

Fig. 7

It's easy to miss the subtlety and power suggested by these attributes. There's no need to blather on about unique digits; they come along for free, thanks to the tokens. And the proper order of subtraction is automatically guaranteed, sans the usual excess verbiage. Even the zero case is now a thing of the past. One small change in the procedure has truly

greased the skids throughout and probably shaved a couple dozen words from the script.

This subtle twist debuted in my “Entice Dice” in *The Linking Ring* some years back. Since then, I’ve come to appreciate it’s truly at its best when deployed with number tokens. One final thing: we also now have an

ideal way to kick off the old 1089 Force, devoid of irksome anomalies.

Send comments and appreciations to:

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It’s time well spent to see how our magical ancestors approached the Subtractive Multiple of Nine Principle. Most of the following resources are readily available in print, new or used. Members of the I.B.M. can access articles from *The Linking Ring*, *The Sphinx*, and *Hugard’s Magic Monthly* via Ask Alexander. Turn to the Internet Archive and Google Books for the more archaic documents.

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Did You Know?

By Joe Hernandez



After recently visiting Buenos Aires, Argentina, where my wife and I both vacationed and lectured, I had the privilege of visiting the late René Lavand at his home in Tandil. His wife, Nora, graciously gave me full access to René's studio and impressive collection. As I explored, I was reminded of the delightful stories René had previously shared with me. Here is one of those memorable tales.

The story begins in March 1992, when René was hired for a lucrative performance in Cali, Colombia. Promised a generous fee and a luxury hotel, René expected a standard engagement. However, reality proved far from routine. At the appointed time, he was picked up, blindfolded, and driven to the city's outskirts. He arrived at a sprawling 240-room mansion, which had once been a five-star hotel. When the blindfold was removed, René saw the property surrounded by armed men. He realized he had been hired by the infamous Cali cartel.

Inside the mansion, the situation became clearer. René discovered his host was Gilberto Rodriguez Orejuela, a notorious drug trafficker known as "The Chess Player" for his ability to outmaneuver authorities and adversaries. The atmosphere at the party was tense, as Rodriguez Orejuela, who organized the lavish gathering, would later be imprisoned in the United States and die in 2002.

Despite the intimidating circumstances, René continued. With composure, he entertained eighteen guests, including Rodriguez Orejuela. The performance was a clear success.

Still uneasy, René turned to Rodriguez Orejuela and asked, "Do you want to know how I do these things?"

"Why?" he replied.

"That speaks well of you – why destroy your sense of wonder?"

René, upon retelling the story, then confided in me, "First you have to be an artist, then a card player."

Un Oso Rojo (A Red Bear) is a 2002 Argentine film written and directed by Israel Adrián Caetano.

The film takes place in a poor and crime-ridden area of Argentina. A character nicknamed Bear (Julio Chávez) has just been released from prison after seven years of incarceration for homicide and armed robbery.

René Lavand appears in the film as a character known as the Turkish, the leader of the gang for which Bear worked. René's performance earned him a nomination for a Silver Condor Award (the Argentine equivalent of the Oscars) for Best New Actor.

Joe Hernandez is the author of *Magic Babylon: 1,001 Strange Conjuring Facts, Fallacies, and Tales* and his new book *Houdini, The Ultimate Trivia Compendium*. Available at www.booksbyjoe.com or Amazon.com.

Conjurer's Foolosophy

JOE HERNANDEZ



I've learned that your magic will always be at its best when your routines do not contain any traces of your mentor.

I've learned that individuality results from one's approach to performance, not from the routine itself.

I've learned that it requires significantly more creativity and imagination to focus on the positive aspects of a routine than to identify its shortcomings or flaws. Finding ways to appreciate and enhance the elements that work well often demands a deeper level of thinking and a willingness to explore new possibilities, a process that makes us feel adventurous and open minded. This shift in perspective challenges us to be innovative in celebrating our habits' effectiveness and cultivating a mindset that values growth through recognizing what is beneficial.

I've learned that when confronted by a magician's performance, choosing to see things as they are is not a choice.

I've learned that magic is most enjoyed by those who can remove their ego, judgments, and preferences from the performance and accept what they perceive.

I've learned that you should take a moment to think of the power of your magic. Your performance, as it moves outside the point of your physical perception, causes your intended deception to become a continuum of awareness of what appears impossible.

I've learned that I practice unconditional magic. Conditions get in the way of deception.

I've learned that perfection is the result of illusions.

I've learned that magic results from perception, which agrees with the deception that the illusion witnessed is accurate.

I've learned that all tricks lie in achieving "inner silence." This means quieting my thoughts to focus entirely on the task at hand. When I can clear my mind and let go of internal chatter, I create space for creativity and spontaneity to flourish. By being fully present in the action, whether performing a trick or creating an illusion, I can connect more profoundly with the magic itself, enhancing both my experience and that of my audience. This process of inner silence is not just about quieting the mind but about fostering a deep sense of inspiration and reflection.

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



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Garnet Garven

Don't Pick a Card One-Man Parade

Written by Garnet Garven • Edited by Lauren Jurgensen

I'm back again with some interesting "non-card card magic." This is my fifth Parade, which puts me in the company of a small cadre of repeat contributors over the past eighty-four years of the "Hocus Pocus Parade," one of the most popular features in *The Linking Ring*. Multi-Parade contributors who have appeared five or more times include Ian Adair, Max Maven, Joseph Bruno, Ed Marlow, Leonard Austin, Ron Bell, John Roberts, Paul Gordon, and Thomas Henry. Wonderful company, indeed!

I am reminded of fellow Canadian Lorne Michaels, the creator and producer of the infamous *Saturday Night Live (SNL)*, which celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in 2025. I grew up watching *SNL* and doing magic. One of my favorite recurring *SNL* skits is when they celebrate the people who have hosted the show five times, who are admitted to a tongue-in-cheek "Five-Timers Club." The newest member receives a fancy dinner jacket with a gold embroidered "Number 5" emblazoned on the left chest. While *The Linking Ring* may not formally recognize us "Five-Timers" with a dinner jacket, we know our magic is appreciated and I am delighted to join this distinguished non-club.

Finally, I am reminded of the idiom "many hands make light work," so I want to thank I.B.M. members Warren Morse of Los Angeles and Lisa Krol of Saskatoon, Canada for their testing, reviewing, and editing assistance on all my parades.

"Pick a card, any card," exclaims the magician. How many times have we heard or said this? There is no question that card effects continue to exert their heavy influence on magic. Critics might even say card magic is endemic. Like it or not, card tricks have become the face of magic in many circles.



Card magic provides the opportunity for entertaining flourishes, visual color changes, mathematical applications, and knuckle-busting sleights. Cards offer a mystical connection to the past with interesting designs and features. The magic can often happen in the hands of spectators, increasing audience engagement. These performances offer deep and rich opportunities for storytelling, predictions, premonitions, matching and baffling revelations. They pack flat and can play big.

Just think about the classics Oil and Water, Chicago Opener, Three-Card Monte, 21 Card Trick, Triumph, Ambitious Cards, Twisting the Aces, Card to Pocket, Four Aces and Piano Cards. Did I miss your favorite? Of course I did. There are just too many to list. Stripper, Svengali, Invisible, Brainwave, Rough & Smooth, Marked, Stacked are familiar decks to many magicians. Let's not forget the almost limitless number of gaff cards, gimmicked products, special decks, and mechanical features. The list goes on and on.

But like most things in life, "everything in moderation." This Parade offers eight full patter routines which are non-card, card effects. I have taken some of my favorites from the field of card magic and presented adaptations that might strengthen your performance. Using convention name badges, drink coasters, UNO cards, wooden scrabble pieces, menu cards, Yahtzee decks and more, this parade offers ideas that can enrich your presentations without the direct use of our standard deck of 52 playing cards. A distinction, hopefully with a difference.

Garnet Garven is a retired business school professor and longtime dean. A lifelong hobbyist, his magic has appeared in *M-U-M*, *VANISH*, and *The Linking Ring*, where he has received three Awards of Excellence for his One-Man Parades. He is a member of the International Brotherhood of Magicians, the Society of American Magicians, The Magic Circle (MMC), Fédération Internationale des Sociétés Magiques (FISM), and is the immediate past president of the Palm Springs Magicians Club (Ring 291). He resides in Canada but spends winters in Palm Springs, California.

Bartender's Selection

EFFECT: A stack of cardboard drink coasters each with the image of a popular libation and its associated mixer are shown. The coasters are mixed and separated into two piles. Spelling the names of various liquors, the coasters are moved from the top to the bottom of the piles, separating the coasters into pairs. With five pairs of face-down coasters, the magician correctly selects the only matching pair (e.g., rum and coke or gin and tonic) while all the other drink pairs are non-matching (e.g., scotch and lime or tequila and soda). Drink up!

METHOD: The method behind this routine was first published by Norman Gilbreath in 1958 in *The Linking Ring*, under the name "Magnetic Colors." Over the years, this mathematical method became known as the "Gilbreath Principle." In 1982,

Howard Adams created the routine "Will the Cards Match" using ESP cards. Larry Becker popularized the method, which was later published in 1987 in Harry Lorayne's *Apocalypse Collections Vol. 10 – Number 5*. Using this mathematical principle, I have adapted my routine using cardboard drink coasters and an entertaining cocktail storyline.

SET-UP: Collect ten square cardboard drink coasters from your local drinking establishment or purchase cardboard drink coasters from a party supply store. Using your favorite internet search engine, locate the color logos shown in **Figure 1** or use other liquor and mixer choices. Print these logos in color, then cut and glue the images on the blank side of the drink coasters. While the coasters are generally handled by their edges, the images can be laminated to offer more durability.

Fig. 1



WORKING AND PRESENTATION: This storytelling patter has the magician sharing his experience with a friendly New York bartender. It is a first-person point of view with the magician as the main character narrating the story directly to the spectator or audience. During the performance, the magician has a spectator participate at various parts of the routine.

The magician begins, “During a recent trip to New York City, I had a free evening and found myself in the bar area of the famous *Smith & Wollensky* steakhouse in Midtown Manhattan. As I waited for the bartender, I surveyed the wide and colorful selection of liquor bottles on display. I had a rather somber, maybe even sober, revelation. It occurred to me that at some time in my life, I had sampled almost all of the libations behind the bar! When the bartender arrived,

he asked, ‘What’s your poison?’ Surprised by his greeting, I told him that I was not sure what I wanted to drink and then shared with him the story of my misspent youth. He said many customers don’t know what to order so he gives them a special set of drink coasters to help them decide. The bartender continued, ‘Here is a stack of drink coasters. Five coasters with the picture of a popular liquor (rum, tequila, gin, vodka, and scotch) and five with a picture of a common mixer (cola, lime juice, tonic water, orange juice, and club soda).’ He told me to shuffle the coasters to make sure they were all mixed and to divide the coasters into two face-down piles.”

Before you begin, arrange the coasters face up in the numbered order shown in **Figure 1**. Follow the steps outlined in **Figure 2** and adapt your patter as necessary.

Fig. 2

Step-by-Step Summary

1	Set-Up	Stack face-up Rum, Tequila, Gin, Vodka & Scotch followed by Cola, Lime, Tonic, Orange & Soda
2	Mix 1	Mix by cutting coasters several times – face-up
3	Mix 2	Turn coasters facedown – mix by cutting the coasters few more times
4	Pile 1	‘Deal Count’ five coasters facedown creating pile #1 – dealing reverses the order
5	Pile 2	‘Spread Count’ five coasters facedown creating pile #2 – this does not change the order
6	Spell 1	Pick any pile – spell ‘wine’ or ‘beer’ moving the top coaster to the bottom four (4) times
7	1 st Pair	Remove the top coasters from each pile. Set the pair aside facedown (these will match)
8	Spell 2	Pick any pile – spell ‘rum’ or ‘gin’ moving the top coaster to the bottom three (3) times

9	2 nd Pair	Remove the top coasters from each pile. Set the pair aside facedown (these will match)
10	Spell 3	Pick any pile – spell ‘vodka’ moving the top coaster to the bottom five (5) times
11	3 rd Pair	Remove the top coasters from each pile. Set the pair aside facedown (these will match)
12	Spell 4	Pick any pile – spell ‘tonic’ or ‘water’ moving the top coaster to the bottom five (5) times
13	4 th Pair	Remove the top coasters from each pile. Set the pair aside facedown (these will match)
14	5 th Pair	Set aside the remaining two coasters as a pair as these will also match
15	NOTE	When spelling and moving coasters, you can switch back and forth between piles

Fig. 3



With the Bacardi Rum coaster face up on top of the stack, display and name the image on each coaster. While face up, thoroughly mix the coasters by doing several cuts. As long as you cut the coasters and do not shuffle, the relative order will be maintained. Turn the coaster stack face down and perform several more cuts. Deal count the top five coasters face down to create pile #1. This will reverse the order of these coasters. Spread count the remaining five coasters to create pile #2 without changing the order. Reversing the order of half of the stack is key to the “Gilbreath Principle.”

The magician continues: “I said, ‘Okay, the coasters are all mixed and divided into two face-down piles. What now?’ The bartender replies, ‘We are now going to separate the coasters into pairs but in a very random way. First you need to select the left or right pile. Let’s call this the beer pile and the other the wine pile. You chose the beer pile and spelt the word *beer*, moving the top coaster to the bottom of the pile for each letter in the word.” **Note:** You can switch back and forth between the piles at any time – your choice. When you are done spelling the word, place

the top coaster from each pile aside in a pair.

“The bartender continues his instructions: ‘Now we will name the two piles *rum* and *gin*. Choose a pile and spell that word, again moving the coasters from the top of the pile to the bottom, moving randomly between either of the piles. Again, take the top coaster from each pile and set them next to the other pair.’”

Repeat this again, choose either pile, spelling the word *vodka* and setting aside another pair of coasters. Do this a final time, spelling the words *tonic* or *water* and again, after spelling that word, set aside that pair of coasters. You now have one pair left over, please set it next to the other four pairs.” **Note:** The coasters should be in a row of five pairs (Fig. 3).

THE REVEAL: The previous process returns the shuffled and mixed coasters to matching paired order – rum and cola, tequila and lime, gin and tonic, vodka and orange, and scotch and soda. Hooray for the magic of the Gilbreath Principle! However, this is not seen because the coasters are still face down (Fig. 3).

There are two options for the reveal. One is to reveal all the coasters as matched pairs. If selected, you will need to adapt the patter

Culinary Delight

presented in this routine. The option that I use for this routine is to have only the “selected pair” match (i.e., gin and tonic) with all the other coaster pairs mismatched with odd drink combinations such as scotch and lime juice or tequila and club soda.

“The bartender finally said, ‘You have five highball drink options. Please select any pair and that will be the drink I will pour for you.’”

Note: All the coasters in **Figure 3** will be in matching pairs but the method will not allow us to know in advance which liquor and mixer is where. Have your spectator select any of the five coaster pairs. Move the selected pair of coasters below the row of coasters in preparation for the final reveal. You can comment, “I hope you did not select some weird combination for me.”

Next is the only “dirty work” you need to do. As you collect the top row of coasters, you need to mix the order of the remaining pairs. Collect the coasters in a single stack. Begin on the right end, picking up the two coasters, dropping them on the next pair, picking those two pairs and dropping them on the next pair. When you get to the last pair, pick up the top coaster, drop the other six coasters on top of the bottom coaster, and drop the remaining single coaster on top of the eight-coaster stack. Do this casually and set the stack aside. This will mix up the order of the pairs. **Note:** You only need to place one coaster out of order on the top of the stack, and this will mix up all the eight non-selected coasters.

“The bartender continues: ‘Remember, your drink is the one you selected and placed here. Before we see what I will pour you, let’s see what combinations you could have had . . . or luckily avoided.’” Take the top two coasters off the stack and, as a pair, turn them face up on each side of the stack. Comment on the nasty combination (e.g., gin and soda, tequila and tonic, etc.). Do this for all four pairs in the stack. Finally, turn over your selected pair of coasters to reveal a perfect drink combo. Remember, you will not know in advance the pair you have selected. Say to the bartender, “Thank goodness. I will have a rum and coke [for example] and keep ’em coming.”

EFFECT: This is a self-working effect where the spectator chooses a series of picture cards that contain restaurant food items (appetizer, entrée, side dish, drink, etc.). Five meal cards are dealt for the dinner guest (spectator) and five meal cards for the dinner host (magician). When the meal cards are revealed, the dinner guest receives a bland meal while the dinner host receives a wonderful steak dinner, accompanied by a martini (shaken not stirred) and a glass of red wine. Depending on the audience and the style of the performer, the routine can be reversed so the dinner guest receives the premier meal.

BACKGROUND: There are many ten-card poker effects in the magic literature. Many of us likely first encountered the intersection of gambling cons, cheating, and magic in Vernon’s *Inner Secrets of Card Magic* or Harry Lorayne’s *Deck-Sterity*. John Bannon, Darwin Ortiz, and David Solomon are well known for their routines. Bob Farmer’s *Flim-Flam* column was a popular feature for many years in both *Magic* magazine and *Genii* magazine, and dealt extensively with this idea. I have adapted this routine using a food-based storyline.

SET-UP: The routine uses ten blank playing cards with the image of different dinner menu items on the face side of the cards. Use your standard internet search to locate color pictures of the ten items **Figure 1** below and glue these to one-sided blank playing cards.

Fig. 1

The menu cards are arranged in the following ordered stack:

Onion Rings
Mashed Potatoes
Glass of Water
Paper Napkin
Chicken Soup
Bread
Caesar Salad
Martini
Steak
Red Wine

Alternatively, one can print on Avery blank business cards using cardstock, although I have found that using blank playing cards offers the best physical handling. Also needed as a prop during the performance is a mocked-up Morton's Steakhouse gift card (Fig. 2). Substitute your favorite steakhouse. This image, or similar, can also be sourced on the internet. Even better if you can obtain a real, expired steakhouse gift card.



FIG. 2

WORKING AND PRESENTATION:

The magician asks, "By a show of hands, who has been to a Morton's Steakhouse? One of my favorite steakhouses. I recently performed at a house party and received this \$150 gift card to Morton's as a bonus to my regular fee." Show the gift card and place it on the table. The magician continues, "I don't like to eat alone, so I would be pleased to have one of you join me for dinner – my treat. Before you and I Uber over, I want to be sure that the \$150 gift card is enough to cover the cost of our meals. I have ten menu cards that represent some of Morton's most popular items. As the perfect host, I will invite you to choose the drinks, salad, entrée, and side dishes for both of us. After all, I am the hostess with the mostest."

Follow these six steps:

Step 1 – Selecting the Guest and Host Piles

Deal face down two menu cards, one on the left and one on the right. Your dinner guest selects their menu pile. The other pile will be for the dinner host. **Note:** One will be onion rings and the other mashed potatoes. This is a free choice. Push both cards forward.

Step 2 – Two Menu Cards for the Guest

On each of the deals, the magician will

deal two menu cards side by side, and the spectator will choose one of the cards to place on their pile. The magician will drop the packet of cards in hand on top of the unselected card and pick up the packet. This is repeated again so that the dinner guest will have three cards and the host one card.

Step 3 – Host's Turn

Repeat Step 2 with the dinner guest selecting two menu cards for the dinner host's pile. Deal two cards for them to choose from. Move the selected menu card to the host's pile, drop the stack in your hand on the non-selected card, and pick up that packet. Do this twice. Each final pile will have three cards.

Step 4 – One More for Each

Deal two menu cards for the dinner guest, letting the dinner guest select their menu card. Repeat this for the dinner host, letting the dinner guest choose the menu card. Again, each time, dropping the packet of cards in your hand on top of the non-selected card. Each pile will now have four menu cards.

Step 5 – Final Host's Selection

There will be two menu cards remaining in your hand. The dinner host says, "Since you selected all of the menu items so far, let me as the dinner host choose the final meal item." Quickly glance at the two remaining cards and place the "better item" on your pile and the "lesser item" on their pile. Your piles will now be complete – yours with the wonderful items, theirs with the bland items.

Step 6 – The Reveal

The dinner host says, "Let's see what you have selected for your culinary adventure!" Pick up the dinner guest's pile and look at the menu cards concealing the images from the guest. The menu cards will be in random order. Lay down the menu cards one at a time, starting with the least exciting item and build the story as you go. For example, the dinner host says, "I see you have selected a glass of water, no ice and no lemon. You also have a paper napkin, very important in a fancy steakhouse like Morton's. You have also selected a piece of bread ... to go with the water, I assume. You also have a tasty

bowl of hearty chicken soup. And to complete your Morton's experience is a delicious side of mashed potatoes (or onion rings)."

Note: This will depend on the positioning of the first two cards selected.

Similarly, pick up the host's packet and look at the images. The dinner host says, "Let's see what you selected for me. First, I start with a wonderful gin martini: Tanqueray No. 10, shaken, not stirred, with a lemon twist. Followed by a Morton's house Caesar salad, made table side with chopped white anchovies. For my entrée, le pièce de résistance, a 12 oz. USDA Prime filet mignon, cooked medium rare. My side dish is a steaming bowl of garlic mashed potatoes (or a tower of home-made beer-battered onion rings, depending on the first selection of the guest). Finally, to wash this all down, a lovely bottle of Duckhorn merlot from Napa Valley."

The dinner host says, "You did a wonderful job in selecting my meal. I assume that you must be on a diet or maybe you're vegetarian! On reflection [show the \$150 gift card] I am not sure that my gift card is going to cover the cost of both our meals. I will need to go solo. But next time you will be the first one I will call." Finally, conclude with the words of Julia Child: "Bon appétit."

High School Reunion

EFFECT: A stack of "HELLO My Name Is" name tags is displayed. The magician invites a spectator to reflect on the memory of a lost but not forgotten high school sweetheart. The spectator shares how old they and their high school crush were at the time. The spectator deals down to the number/age provided. The only name tag with a message is the one selected by the spectator.

METHOD: This is a self-working mathematical principle called the "10-20 Force," where a spectator selects a playing card in a deck between the numbers 10 and 20. This is an old principle, but it first saw print as part of an effect by Billy O'Connor called "After the Four Ace Trick" in *The Magic Wand*, June-September 1935 (Vol. 24, no. 166, page 85).

I have replaced playing cards with "HELLO My Name Is" paper stick-on name tags and provided a personalized patter about a high school reunion. The limitation with this classic force is that the spectator must select a number between 10 and 20, which raises suspicion. The props and patter that support this routine use the teenage years of the spectator or sweetheart which eliminates the number range suspicion. The name tags provide an easily recognizable, multi-color prop.

High school students in the United States are typically 14 to 18 years of age. The typical age range for each grade level is: ninth grade (freshman) 14–15 years old, tenth grade (sophomore) 15–16 years old, eleventh grade (junior) 16–17 years old, and twelfth grade (senior) 17–18 years old. Some students may be 13 or 19 so the force fits well.

SET-UP: Purchase stick-on type "HELLO My Name Is" name tags. These are inexpensive and come in quantities of 100 or 200. Purchase double-blank playing cards and stick the multi-colored name tags on 30 cards. Use 3.5 inch by 2.25 inch poker-size blank cards, and 3 inch by 2 inch peel-and-stick name tags. Once created, these cards will be easy to handle. On one name tag, print a message, "Still Thinking of You, Your High School Sweetheart" or "Guess Who XOXOXO" or a similar romantic message (**Fig. 1**).



Fig. 1

With the name tags face down, place the message name tag, as shown in **Figure 1**, in the tenth position from the top of the face-down stack.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION: The magician welcomes a spectator and produces two name tags. He writes the first name of the spectator on one tag and Mr.

Magic on the other. Once peeled and stuck, both spectator and magician proudly wear their name tags.

The magician says, “I assume you are a proud high school graduate? I only got half of my grade 12 ... grade 6! A friend of mine said that high school was the best five years of his life! So, I am glad you completed high school. I want to take you back to where it all began. To your high school experience, your teenage years. Let’s pretend that you are planning to attend an upcoming high school reunion. Depending how long ago you graduated, this can be a stressful event. Particularly, if there is an old flame that might be in attendance. I don’t want to put you in an uncomfortable position, so no names will be used, just the initial of the person’s first name is all we need. Do you have such a memory – real or imagined? Great. The initial is G, you say. What were both of your ages at the time? Young love indeed! You were 14, you say? [Note: It will work with any high school age.] Just like at a class reunion, we have a stack of name tags at the registration desk. Please turn these name tags face down so you do not see any of the names of your classmates. Not yet at least.”

The magician continues, “Please deal 14 name tags face down in a pile on the table. Now place that pile of 14 name tags back on top of the stack. Not sure if you did this but often sweethearts would find an old tree in the neighborhood and would carve a heart shape in the trunk as well as the initials of both sweethearts (Fig. 2).

Fig. 2



You said your sweetheart’s initial was G. But, out of an abundance of caution and because of privacy laws, let’s not carve any lettering. Instead, let’s only use numbers. Your number was 14, so two numbers, 1 and 4. Because she or he is *the one*, let’s take 1 and

add 4, which totals 5. Please take the stack of name tags and deal five more tags face down. You stopped on this last name tag. Let’s set this name tag aside.”

The magician continues, “Let’s see who else was to attend this class reunion. Maybe there was some competition for your sweetheart’s affection!”

Take hold of the name tags. Turn the tags face up and spread them, showing them all to be blank. The magician says, “Maybe this was a make-believe high school reunion, something that only happened in your imagination. But you *did* imagine that old flame, didn’t you? The name tag you selected is still face down. Please turn it over.” Have the spectator read and show the message, “Still Thinking of You, Your High School Sweetheart XOXOXO.”

Hollywood Squares

EFFECT: This routine is a play on the old *Hollywood Squares* American television game show where contestants compete in a game of tic-tac-toe to win cash and prizes. The show originally aired in 1965, running for decades in various forms with many international adaptations. A new version of *Hollywood Squares* premiered in January 2025. The set-up for the television game was a three-by-three vertical stack of open-faced cubes, each occupied by a celebrity seated at a desk facing the audience. The stars were asked questions by the host and the contestants judged the truth of their answers to gain squares in the right pattern to win the game. A feature of the game was to find the “Secret Square.”

My routine is based on this game show and uses an adapted version of the self-working method of the “Round and Round” effect from *The Royal Road to Card Magic* (1949). A spectator is presented with a number of name cards of various celebrities. The spectator selects a secret celebrity and buries their choice in the packet of celebrity names. The magician locates and reveals the name of the spectator’s secret celebrity – the “Magic Secret Square.”

Fig. 1 List of 24 Celebrities

WHOOPI GOLDBERG	STEVE MARTIN	ROSIE O'DONNELL	ELLEN DeGENERES	ALEC BALDWIN
WILL SMITH	SANDRA BULLOCK	BILL MURRAY	ADAM SANDLER	JIM CARREY
MIKE MYERS	BILLY CRYSTAL	CENTER SQUARE	MARTIN SHORT	CHRIS ROCK
WILL FERRELL	TINA FEY	DANA CARVEY	TIM ALLEN	BEN STILLER
KEVIN HART	DAVID SPADE	JON LOVITZ	AMY POEHLER	JANE LYNCH

Fig. 2



SET-UP: This routine uses twenty-four celebrity name cards (Fig. 1). Substitute other celebrities more suited to your performance style if desired. Instead of the traditional three-by-three grid, I use a five-by-five with twenty-four celebrities and an empty center square. This adds more interest with a larger number of celebrities. While not necessary, you can print and show the audience a printed grid.

To prepare the name cards, print on card stock and cut into 3.5 by 3.5-inch squares. If you wish to improve the physical handling of the celebrity cards, an internet search will locate images of these celebrities. Figure 2 provides an example of a celebrity caricature. These can be printed, cut and glued to blank playing cards, making a set of twenty-four. Alternatively, standard color images can be used. As an option, the images can be laminated. For an inexpensive alternative, use clear packing tape – a tip provided by Canadian I.B.M. magician Ryan Pilling.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION: Introduce the routine covering some of the information from the Effect section above. Hand half of the celebrities to a spectator to examine as you thumb through your stack,

casually identifying the various celebrities.

Step 1 – Two Celebrity Piles, Free Choice: The magician says, “We have two dozen celebrities. Please shuffle these and deal the celebrities into two face-up piles – one for you and one for me. To keep it simple, we will just use some of the celebrities. Do you want to use my celebrities or yours? Free choice.” Once the discarded pile has been identified, sort through the pile reading aloud names of the rejected (and likely distraught) celebrities. You can make a few comments about the tender egos of the rejected and sensitive group of social hobnobbers. The magician comments, “You have rejected (for example) “Tool Man” Tim Allen, *SLN* star Amy Poehler, and Martin Short. Now there are only “Two Amigos” left.”

Step 2 – Secret Selection: Pick-up the twelve celebrities selected by your spectator, holding them face down, and hand them to your spectator. The magician says, “So you have selected these stars. Please shuffle again so we can all be sure the celebrities are thoroughly mixed. When my back is turned, turn the packet face up. Sort through the name cards and select your favourite celebrity. Show the audience your celebrity,

turn the packet face down and place your selection face down on top of the packet. Please remember your secret celebrity. They hate to be forgotten.”

Step 3 – Secret Number and Transfer: The magician says, “With my back still turned away, the celebrities face down, and your secret selection face down on top, I want you to secretly think of a number between 1 and 10. Got a number? I want you to quietly move, one celebrity at a time, that number of cards from the top to the bottom of the packet. This is just like show business. One day you are on top and the next you are on the bottom – such is Hollywood. Let me know when you are finished and I will turn around.”

Step 4 – Reverse the Order: Take the packet from the spectator and turn the celebrities face-up so the names are visible. The magician comments, “Remember, I do not know the celebrity you selected or the number you chose.” Slowly and while seeming to study the faces of the celebrities, reverse the order of the cards by moving each celebrity, one at a time, from your right hand to the left hand. This move reverses all twelve name cards. As you are moving the cards, casually separate the twelve name cards, holding six celebrities in a messy fan display in each hand, pretending to weigh each as you ponder their fame and fortune. The magician can say, “You know celebrities all have varying net worths that might weigh differently, but I am not sensing much of a difference in their net worths.” **Note:** With the name cards still face up, place the six celebrity cards in the left hand on top of the other six in your right hand. Close the packet and return the stack face down to the spectator.

Step 5 – Magician in Trouble: The magician says, “I was hoping that this would be black and white, but it is still very grey to me. I’m having some difficulty divining your secret celebrity. Sometimes in show business you have to do a second audition, a call back or a scene retake. I’m going to turn around once more and ask that you again move the celebrities from the top to the bottom. This time move the number of celebrities you did the first time but move one extra celebrity be-

cause we repeated the process. Let me know when you are finished.”

Step 5 – The Reveal: Turn around and face the audience. The spectator’s secret celebrity will always be fifth from the top. This is a mathematical result. Have the spectator deal the celebrities face down in two rows of six each. Take note of the fifth celebrity in the top row. Randomly, while avoiding the spectator’s secret name card, turn over each card. Read the name aloud, making the odd comment about some of the celebrities. Eliminate all the other name cards, announcing and confirming the last one (position five) as their secret celebrity. The magician reveals, “Congratulations, your secret celebrity is xxxxxxxx.”

Scra-Numerals

EFFECT: Like the game Scrabble, which has wooden tiles labeled with letters of the alphabet, I call this routine “Scra-Numerals.” Instead of letters, numbered wooden tiles are used by the spectator to create a multi-digit number. The spectator creates a large number and hides one numbered tile. Using the wooden tiles to create a pattern, the magician discovers the spectator’s hidden number.

SET-UP: The game Scrabble uses 100 pieces, but this routine only uses 45 wooden pieces or tiles that can be purchased at your local craft store. Using a black Sharpie marker, number all the tiles from 1 to 9 creating five sets. Alternatively, pre-numbered wooden tiles can be purchased (**Fig. 1**).

Fig. 1



METHOD: The method used in this routine is called “casting out nines,” which is a

technique as old as the hills. It is an old-fashioned method of checking for errors in basic arithmetic. Many of today's modern check-digit systems for verifying numerical data, such as credit card numbers or UPC symbols, are based on techniques not far removed from the "casting out nines" method.

A version of this method has been used in two of my previous mathemagic One-Man Parades. I have also seen this effect performed using playing cards. The limitation with playing cards is that one cannot use the court cards or the 10-spot cards. Using numbered (1 to 9) wooden tiles solves this problem, offers a non-card variation, and adds a pleasing tactile experience for the spectator.

The spectator creates a random number by multiplying the numbers on the individual tiles by the number 3, twice. When the digits of the final number are summed, the total will always be a common factor of 9 such as 18, 27, 45, 54, etc. The example used below totals 45. When one tile is removed, the number will be that value less 45. For example, if the 6 is removed the tiles will total 39. The next factor of 9 is $45 - 39 = 6$ (Fig. 2).

WORKING AND PRESENTATION:

The magician explains, "Scrabble is a word game where players place wooden tiles bearing a single letter to create words in a crossword fashion. The game was created in the 1930s. It is sold in 120 countries and available in more than 30 languages. It is reported that there are as many as 4,000 Scrabble

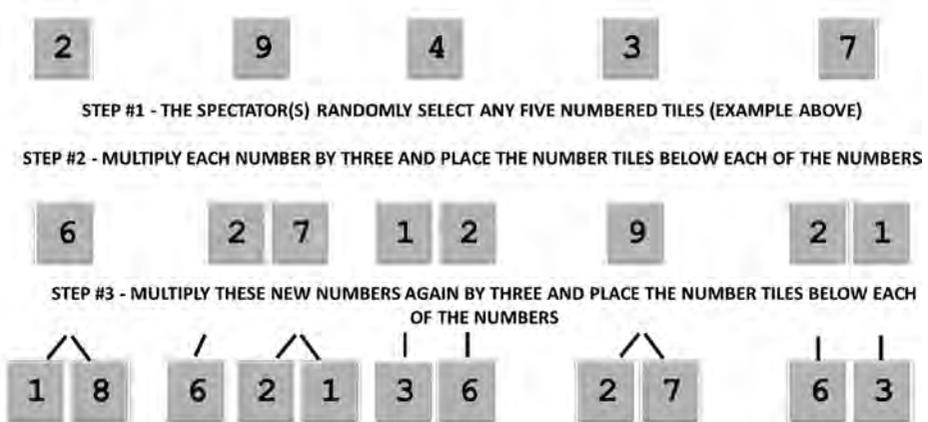
clubs around the world. Instead of letters, this routine uses numbered wooden tiles."

The magician says to a spectator, "Please mix these face-up numbered tiles and select five tiles at random. Arrange these in any order you like to create a multi-digit number." The number in this example is 29,437 (Fig. 2 – Step #1). Alternatively, a three or four-digit number can be used, but I find that five digits works best. Have the spectator space the number tiles so there is room to place more tiles below. The magician says, "We are going to multiply each of your number tiles by 3 and place new wooden tiles below the first row of numbers (Fig 2 – Step #2). We will do this a second time to create a truly random number in case you think I'm some sort of savant mathemagician. Multiply the number by 3 but this time, place the numbers face down. This will be the third row.

The magician continues, "Please push away the top two face-up rows and mix the face-down wooden tiles in the third row. When I turn my back and without looking at the numbered side, remove one of the face-down tiles and hide it in your hand. You can mix the tiles again."

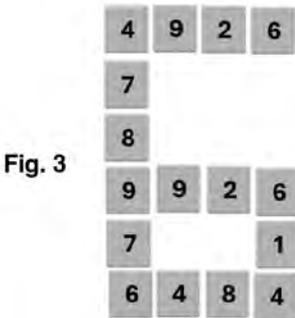
The magician says, "As I turn around, let's recap. From a pile of 45 to 50 numbered wooden tiles, you randomly selected 5 numbers. You mixed the tiles to create a random five-digit number. You then multiplied each of the tiles by 3. You multiplied the next row

Fig. 2



of number tiles by 3 again and placed these face down. When I turned away, you removed 1 numbered tile. Now I will try to magically discover the number on the tile you are secretly holding.”

Turn the wooden tiles face up, mixing them in a random manner. As you mix, stack, unstack, and sort, secretly total the numbers on the tiles. If the total of the numbers on the tiles is 39 (for example), you will know that this is 6 fewer than the next factor of 9, which is 45 ($39 + 6 = 45$). Now that you have discovered 6 as their secret number, it is time to mysteriously discover their hidden number. As you mix, slide, stack, and unstack the wooden tiles on a table top, use the wooden tiles to create the image of the number 6 for the reveal. (Fig. 3). The magician exclaims, “I see a pattern in the tiles. The tile you removed is the tile numbered 6.”

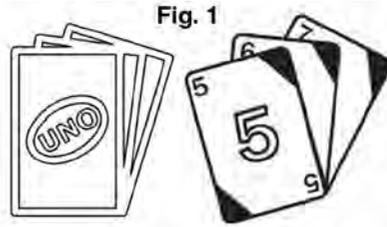


Only UNO Knows

EFFECT: This is a follow-on to the previous Scra-Numerals routine. It is a simpler routine that uses mini-UNO cards. The routine is so self-working that the magician does not have to handle or even see the cards. With the magician turned away, a spectator mixes a dozen or more face-down UNO cards and secretly removes one numbered card, which the magician discovers.

SET-UP: Regular-sized UNO cards can be used, but I find the smaller, mini-sized deck easier to use. Retain only the cards numbered 1 to 9. I also add three to four of the number 1 and number 2 cards from a second UNO deck. This will ensure that you

have enough 1 and 2 cards for the multiplication steps. Your special UNO deck will have about forty-five cards (Fig. 1).



WORKING AND PRESENTATION:

First Row: All the following steps can be handled by your spectator if desired. Shuffle the cards and square the deck. Because of the small size of the cards, doing a table wash shuffle works well. Next, have the spectator cut the deck into three face-down piles, spacing the piles about 6 inches apart in a horizontal row. Turn the top card of each pile over and place it above each pile to reveal the number of the card. Leaving the three face-up cards, collect the remaining card piles, square the deck and turn the deck face-up.

The magician says, “Great job. It is not often we find an UNO aficionado! We have three numbered UNO cards that have created a random three-digit number. You can keep this number or rearrange the order of the digits to create a new number. Your choice.” I think it adds to the magic for the spectator to rearrange to cards so this should be encouraged. The magician could say, “I don’t want you going away and thinking that you should have changed the order of those darn cards! Okay, so you did change the order. Because we have three UNO cards, we are going to multiply each of these numbers by 3. You can proceed left to right or right to left. Your choice.”

Second Row: By sorting through the face-up deck, the spectator finds the card or combination of cards that completes the multiplication by 3. For example, if the first card in the row is a 1, place a 3 card below that card. If the card is 9, the multiplication result is 27. Place a 2 and a 7 below that card. Complete this for the three cards in the

top row, creating a horizontal second row. For reference, see **Figure 2** in the previous routine *Scra-Numerals*.

Third and Final Row: The second row above will have between three and six cards. Complete the same process for each of these cards and create a third row. This time, have the spectator complete the multiplication and place the cards face down.

The Reveal: Ask the spectator to collect and set all the face-up cards aside. Have the spectator “wash” or mix all the face-down cards. With your back turned away, have the spectator remove one of the cards without looking at the number. They can hold it in their hand or place it in a pocket.

The magician says, “Let’s recap. You shuffled the deck of UNO cards, cut the deck into three piles, created a three-digit number, and rearranged that number. You then multiplied each of the number cards in the top row to create a second row and a larger number. You multiplied that row of numbers to create a third row and placed those UNO cards face down. You mixed the face-down cards and secretly removed one card. No one, including you, knows the number on the card you removed. And let me remind everyone that I have not touched the cards.

But UNO Knows All! We will employ the “UNO: Unique Number **O**uting” technique. The magician picks up the cards, turns the cards face up in a fan, and studies them. Here is the secret. All the added cards will total 27, each and every time. This is thanks to the mathematics of the procedure. As you study the cards, secretly add the numbers on the cards. The difference between the sum and 27 will be the value of the hidden card. For example, if the face-up cards add to 20, then you know the hidden card is a 7. Complete the number reveal with your usual theatrical flair!

EXTRA THOUGHTS: In some of my performances, I have had spectators suggest that I saw the first or second row of cards and that I was counting the face-up cards. You can perform this routine with your back turned away, but you need to make your instructions very clear. Alternatively, one can

increase the first row of selected cards from three to four or five. With four cards the total will be 36, and with five cards the total will be 45.

Yahtzee

EFFECT: The routine mimics the popular dice game Yahtzee. A spectator and magician draw several mocked-up Yahtzee cards attempting to locate five matching dice cards to score a Yahtzee. The spectator has no luck, but the magician matches five dice cards – a true Yahtzee!

METHOD: This self-working routine using twenty-five dice image cards and is my adaption of the ESP routine “Cidentaquin” by Howard A. Adams, which appeared in *Genii* Vol. 34, No. 12, August 1970, p. 519. It was not until the 1980s that this effect gained popularity, with many variants since published. It has been written that Howard Adams belonged to the Stewart James, Charles Jordan, and Nick Trost school of self-working card and mental effects, and *never* originated any effect involving sleight of hand after publishing his first routine at age sixteen in 1946. He created and published more than three hundred effects, many which were ESP related.

The mathematic method is quite amazing. Five sets of five cards are arranged in a repeating sequence. In my routine, I use dice image cards, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, eliminating the single-spot die cards. The twenty-five cards can be mixed as much as desired so long as the cards are cut, not shuffled. This maintains the relative order of the cards.

One random card is placed face down in the center of a tabletop. This is a free and unknown choice. The remaining twenty-four cards are separated into two piles. Twelve cards are dealt face down (reversing the order) and the remaining twelve cards are set down without reversing the order. The top cards of the two piles are turned over simultaneously in search of a matching pair. Mathematically, the third and eighth card pairs will match. After the twelve pairs are turned over, the unknown center card will

match the other matching pairs (third and eighth). It's that easy. The hardest part of the routine is counting or remembering to pause on the third and eighth pairs.

SET-UP: You will need to make a set of twenty-five dice image cards. Source your favorite Yahtzee image from the internet; print, cut, and paste this image on the back of double-blank playing cards. One could also simply print the Yahtzee name on self-sticking labels. The cards need to be face down and repeated in the order (2-3-4-5-6, 2-3-4-5-6, et cetera) for all five sets. You are now ready to mix the cards and perform.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION: The magician begins, "With a show of hands, how many of you have played the old dice game Yahtzee? This is a card-based version of the popular Yahtzee game that can be traced back to the 1940s. The game was invented by an anonymous Canadian couple, who called it 'The Yacht Game' because they played it with friends on – you guessed it – their yacht. It was later marketed and became the modern game we play today. According to the Hasbro Company, more than 50 million games are sold annually."

Step 1 – Display and Mixing

Display the cards, showing the Yahtzee symbol, making sure not to change the order of the stack. You can thumb through the cards explaining that the cards have various dice images. Note, it is unlikely that anyone will observe that there are six sides to a die but only five sides used in the card display. The magician continues, "So let's play some Yahtzee." Select a spectator and have that person sit across from you. The audience can be positioned to view the table from the front of the room.

The deck can be mixed with multiple cuts of the cards. This will not change the "relative" order of the cards. If desired, one can also use the "Charlier Shuffle" as a further convincer, but I have not found this to be needed. In my performance, I ask the spectator to roll an invisible die. If they say a low number like 1, 2, or 3, I ask them to roll again and combine the numbers. I have the spectator cut the cards that many number of times.

This should be enough to convince the audience that the cards are mixed.

Step 2 – Free Choice Secret Card Selection

The magician says, "You cut the cards eight times (for example) so the cards are thoroughly mixed. Fan the cards and have the spectator freely select any card – it does not matter which one – and without looking at the card, place it face down in the center of the table (Fig. 1). **Note:** When the spectator drops the selected card on the table, make sure to place the bottom of the cut cards on top of the fan to complete the cut. As long as the deck is cut and the cut completed, the "relative" order will not change.

Step 3 – The Deal

Deal twelve cards face down on the spectator's side of the center card. Doing this reverses the order of the twelve cards. Place the remaining packet of twelve cards (without dealing) on the other side of the center card. This is key to the method. One side/pile in reverse order, the other side/pile in non-reverse order (Fig. 1).



Step 4 – Matching and the Reveal

The magician says, "Okay, let's play. Using both hands, I want you to simultaneously lift the top cards off each pile. The idea is to find matching dice pairs. If you do, holler Yahtzee!" Have the spectator place the revealed faceup cards on either side of the face-down center card (Fig. 2). **Note:** They will not match.

The magician says, "Oops, you missed. Try again but concentrate on the dice values and yell Yahtzee with more conviction." Again, the spectator will not find a match. Have them place the revealed cards on top of the other revealed cards.



The magician takes a turn on the third iteration. The magician says, “They say three times is a charm. Let me give it a try.” After shouting Yahtzee, matching cards will appear on the third iteration and eighth iteration. Lift both cards and it will be a match. Place the first matching pair face up above the center card (**Fig. 2**). The actual card value is subject to the random cutting of the cards. But whatever dice value appears, it will match the eighth card iteration and the face-down center card.

The magician says, “Hmm, it worked for me. Try it again, but this time try harder!” The spectator will repeat this four more times with no luck. On the eighth iteration, say “you seem to be having trouble. Let me try.” You will be able to turnover another pair of matching values which also match the previous matched dice values. Place these pairs below the center card (**Fig. 3**).



The magician says, “Wow, not just a matching pair but cards that match our pre-

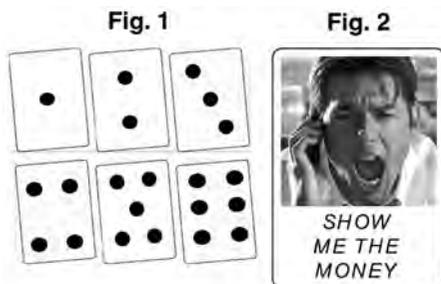
vious pair. A double-double match! I have four-of-a-kind and you are still struggling. Try again.” The spectator will try four more times with no success. The magician observes, “I matched four cards which is very, very impressive, if I do say so myself! Remember, you selected one card in advance. Please turn the center card over (**Fig 3**). It’s a match! Five of a kind – a true Yahtzee!”

Show Me the Money

This self-working routine is called “Six Chances.” The origin of the effect is not known, but the handling is similar to several packet routines. I have created the patter and named my version “Show Me the Money,” using the storyline from the 1996 Tom Cruise movie *Jerry Maguire*.

EFFECT: The magician reminds the audience of the 1996 American sports movie *Jerry Maguire* starring Tom Cruise as a bigger-than-life cutthroat sports agent who uses the catch phrase “Show Me the Money” in the movie. The magician tests the skill (luck) of the audience to see if they can outsmart this ruthless sports agent and “Win the Money.” After six tries, the audience fails and Jerry Maguire keeps all the money.

SET-UP: The routine uses seven one-sided blank playing cards. Use dark blue or black three-quarter inch round stick-on dots to create cards with the standard six die images (**Fig. 1**). Source the internet for a “Show Me the Money” image, cut and paste this on the seventh blank card (**Fig. 2**).



Before the routine begins, with the cards face up, arrange the cards in the following order: Money Card first, followed by die

cards 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1. Turn the packet face down. You are now ready to begin with the “one die” card on the bottom and the Money Card on the top of the packet.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION:

The magician begins, “I have what may seem to be some playing cards, but I assure you that this is not a card trick. Instead, I want to talk to you about one of my favourite movies of all time, *Jerry Maguire*. This was a 1996 American romantic comedy-drama sports movie starring Tom Cruise. Jerry Maguire was a bigger-than-life cutthroat sports agent. The catch phrase in the movie was, “Show Me the Money.” The movie depicted the ruthless, cutthroat, and highly competitive world of sports contract negotiations. I thought we would have some fun today exploring this fast-paced world.”

Step 1 – Count and Reverse the Card Order

While holding the card packet face down in one hand, count the seven face-down cards to the other hand. This shows the audience the back of the cards and confirms the total number of seven cards. The magician says, “I have in my hand seven mystery cards: one, two, three, four, five, six, and seven.” This reverses the order of the stack and puts the “Show Me the Money” card on the bottom of the packet. Turn the packet face up, displaying the “Show Me the Money Card” now on the top of the face-up packet. The magician explains, “This first card shows Jerry Maguire yelling into the telephone his favourite line, ‘Show Me the Money.’ We will call this the Money Card.”

Step 2 – The Money Card

Remove the “Money Card” and place it face-up on the tabletop. At the same time, tip the face of the cards towards yourself so the audience cannot see the top card (six die card). The magician says, “I told you at the start that this was not going to be a card routine. In fact, this effect is a dice routine!”

Step 3 – Six Die Display

Tip the packet forward to show the face of the top card (six die card). While moving the cards from one hand to the other, count the six cards face up, showing all six die

cards. You can read aloud the number of spots – 6, 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1. The magician continues, “As you can see, we have six die cards. **Note:** This again reverses the order of the cards, leaving the “one die card” on top face up.

Step 4 – Mix and Cut

Close the packet with “die card number one” facing up, then turn the packet over (face down) placing “die card number one” on the bottom. The magician says, “Let’s mix the cards up.” Deal the six cards face down, alternating, into two piles. First to a pile on your left and second a pile on your right. Place the left pile on top of the right pile. Place the Money Card face down on top of the packet. The magician says, “Let’s cut the cards a few times to make sure that the Money Card is thoroughly mixed.” Cut and complete all cuts as many times as desired. This will not change the relative order of the cards.

Step 5 – Search for the Money Card

The search for the money card will result in six failed tries. Each time a die card will be flipped over. The last face-down card will be the Money Card. This is a self-working mathematical method.

The magician says, “I’m told that sports contract negotiations are a matter of both skill and luck – some say mainly luck. So let’s see.” You can choose six different volunteers. Alternatively, you could also choose a single or a couple of volunteers giving each two or three chances to “Win the Money.” The volunteers can stay seated.

The magician continues “I need a few volunteers who want to test their ‘skill,’ I mean ‘luck.’ Before I turn over the top card to see if you ‘Win the Money,’ you must do your best imitation of Jerry Maguire and holler ‘Show Me the Money.’ [Volunteer hollers ‘Show Me the Money.’] Now remember, if you don’t get the Money Card, Jerry keeps the money and we move on to the next ‘sucker’ – I mean volunteer.”

You can have the spectator practice their holler which is always entertaining. As the spectator is yelling “Show Me the Money,” lift off the top card and throw it face down

on the tabletop, saying “No Money.” Announce the number of the die card. Pick up that card, place it face up on the bottom of the packet counting aloud “one,” then move the indicated total number of cards (individually and face down) from the top of the packet to the bottom of the packet. For example, if the card you threw down was “die number four,” you place that card face up on the bottom of the packet, counting “one” aloud, followed by three more cards from the top of the packet, keeping those three cards face down and finishing the count – two, three, four.

This is repeated for all six cards. Use the patten below or create your own.

Card #1 – “Sorry, no cigar! Try again, I believe in you.”

Card #2 – “May the universe conspire in your favor or at least not conspire against you.”

Card #3 – “We need a ‘winner-winner-chicken dinner.’ Who’s next?”

Card #4 – “You all need to ‘try harder’ this time. May the force be with you.”

Card #5 – “Alright – concentrate this

time! Let’s try again. May the odds be ever in your favor.”

Card #6 – “There are three kinds of luck in this world: good luck, bad luck, and no luck. All we have seen today is no luck. Jerry Maguire and his Money Card are here somewhere. We just need to find him. This is not looking very good. Let’s not let Jerry outsmart us. This is the final chance to ‘Win the Money.’”

The volunteer hollers “Show Me the Money” one last time. Let’s try, “Please Show Me the Money!” Turn over the card, which will be another die card, but do not move any cards this time. Spread all the cards into a fan and there will be one card face down. Turn that card over – it will be the Money Card.

The magician concludes, “It looks like Jerry Maguire is the big ‘Money Winner’ after all. Better luck next time!”

Send comments and appreciations to:

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Parade Contributions Wanted From Rings and Individuals

Sharing your original magic in a Parade builds your reputation, establishes your contributions to the art, and adds value to our journal. Getting published also means your work will be considered for a *Linking Ring* Award. Names of winners are announced at the Annual I.B.M. Convention and published in *The Linking Ring*. Submit your Parade or individual tricks to the Executive Editor at editor@magician.org

TEXAS NOTEPAD

GAG: When you are paying for a small ticket item pull out what everyone thinks is a checkbook. Actually, it's a notepad made up of genuine dollar bills. You peel out the necessary amount and pay for your items. The person taking your money, and those in close proximity, will look at you as if you are from another planet.

SECRET: Go to your local bank and purchase some new one-dollar bills. The new bills are crisp and should line up perfectly. I typically like to get a stack of 30 bills or more. While at the bank you may want to ask for a checkbook cover, unless you have an extra one at home. When you get home, sit down at a desk with the checkbook cover, a pair of scissors, some rubber cement, a notepad, and some baby powder.

Cut out a dollar-sized piece of cardboard from the back of the notepad. Place this dollar-shaped piece of cardboard behind your stack of bills. Align the bills with the cut-out cardboard. Place some rubber cement onto the top edge of the stack. As the glue is drying sprinkle some baby powder onto the cemented edge of the stack. Typically, I'll repeat this procedure one or two more times. This creates a flexible rubber material (like those used on traditional notepads). Once the cement dries your stack of bills will function like a notepad or checkbook.

Slip the Texas notepad into the checkbook cover and imagine the fun you'll have the next time you pay for something in cash! I'll ask, "Will you accept..." as I pull the checkbook from my pocket, "cash?" Just as they are prepared to say no for taking a check, they will see the cash and do a doubletake. As you peel off the money to pay them, be sure to keep a straight face.



It's called a Texas Notepad because the rumor is that most Texans have more money than they can spend due to all of the oil in the Lone Star State. I want to dispel this rumor. *I can tell you, as a native Texan, that I am about a million bucks shy of being a millionaire.*



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



This month we have a quick but very effective sandwich routine using three selections. The effect is from my good friend Luis Carreon. Luis is a full-time magician who can often be found at the Chicago Magic Lounge. By the way, if you're in Chicago this is a fantastic venue. Be sure to spend an evening there if you're in the Windy City, and tell Luis that Mike Powers says "hello!"

Video tutorials for all moves tagged with a * are available at www.mallofmagic.com/themoves, password marlo7d.

Chicago Handshake Sandwich

EFFECT: The magician removes the two black jacks and tables them. Now, three selections are taken by three different spectators and then lost in the deck. Selection 1 appears in a magical way between the two jacks. The magician says that he will cause Selection 2 to appear between the jacks. However, no new card appears. The magician tries for Selection 3, but again there is no appearance. It turns out the problem is that the two jacks have become the two missing selections!

SET-UP: None.

PROCEDURE: Remove the two jacks and set them aside face down as you say, "These two cards are 'the finders.' Let's generate some cards for them to find." Have each of three spectators select cards. When the cards are returned to the deck, you'll have to control all of them to the top. Luis uses the Neal Elias Multiple Shift* which is not too difficult to master. It is also very deceptive.

Any multiple shift will do. But you can simply have the cards returned one by one as you control each of them to the top via a Double Undercut* control, ending with all three cards on top of the deck. The Vernon Multiple Shift* is a bit easier than the Elias

and is also very effective. The magic will now unfold:

Secretly obtain a left fourth finger break under the top selection. Place the two jacks face up on top of the deck as you say, "The finders will find the selections." You will now secretly load the upper selection between the jacks. Luis uses a very efficient method as follows:

Pull the upper jack to the right with right thumb (**Fig. 1**). Notice the position of the right thumb and second and third fingers. Now insert the inner left corner of the jack into the break (**Fig. 2**). The right thumb slides over the inner right corner of the double as the pad of the right third finger contacts the face of the selection under the jack. Lift the three cards (as two) off the deck to the right.

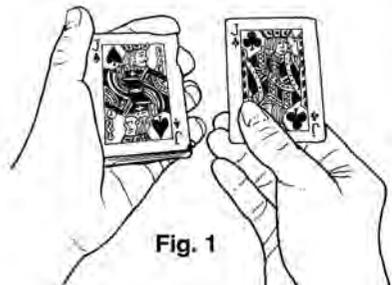


Fig. 1

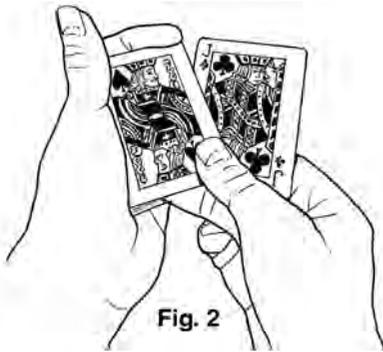


Fig. 2

Luis uses a very visual revelation as follows: Move the three cards (as two) under the deck until they appear to the left of the deck (Fig. 3). Now move the sandwich to the right under the deck as your right thumb pushes the upper jack to the left, revealing the back of the hidden card in the sandwich (Fig. 4). This will look very magical to the spectators. A card has appeared between the jacks.

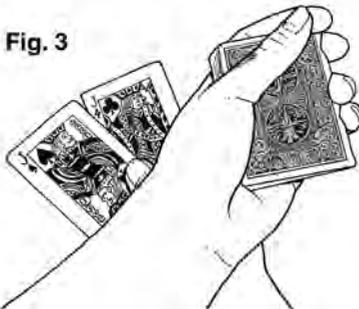


Fig. 3

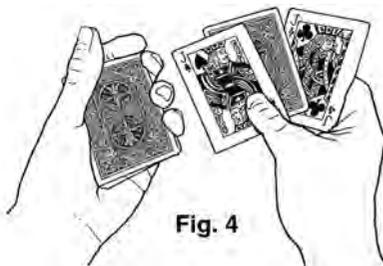


Fig. 4

Pull the card free with the left thumb and fingers as you raise the deck so the spectators can see the face of the card (Fig. 5). Say, "The finders have found your card!" Place the jacks onto the back of this card as your right hand takes all three cards. The face of the selection still faces the spectators. Move the three cards to the deck masking the front

edge of the deck (Fig. 6). It appears that you're displaying the selection. This allows you to secretly push the top two cards to the right so you can obtain a left fourth finger break under them as you pull them flush again.

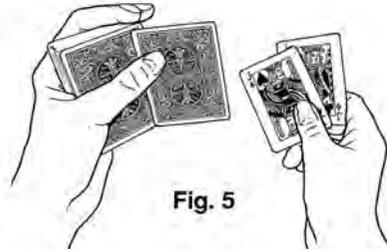


Fig. 5

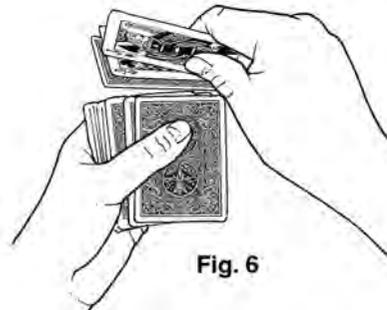


Fig. 6

Now move the three-card packet to the right and place the left long edge along the right long edge of the deck. Finally, begin to flip the three cards over onto your left thumb as in Figure 7.

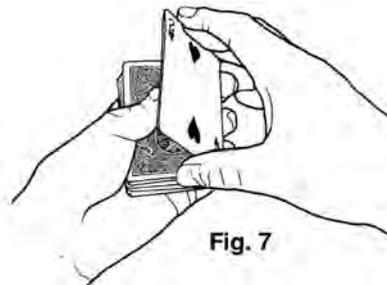


Fig. 7

Let the cards square up, gripping them with the right thumb at inner short edge, fingers at outer short edge (Biddle Grip*). You are about to use a very deceptive switch to switch the two jacks for the other two selections. Crediting this switch is tricky since it is related to a number of switching techniques. It's similar to the Tazalac Switch and Le Temps Switch. But the thumbing off of the top card as the switch is executed is

related to Ed Marlo's Packet Switches 1 and 2 from M.I.N.T., which were inspired by Hastings & Bendix from Hugard's Magic Monthly. J.K. Hartman's Multiple Count Change also comes to mind. Whew! Here are the details:

Remember, you have a left fourth finger break under the top two cards of the deck. The selection is face up with the two jacks face down under it. This packet is in a Biddle Grip* in the right hand (**Fig. 7**). You will now appear to peel the selection face up onto the deck. Actually, the entire packet of three cards will be peeled as one, as the right hand pulls the two cards above the break free from the deck. To wit:

The right hand places its packet of three onto the two cards above the break as the left fingers slightly elevate the two cards above the break. This allows the right third finger to contact the outer right corner of the two-card group. **Figure 8** is a view from the front. The distances are exaggerated for clarity.

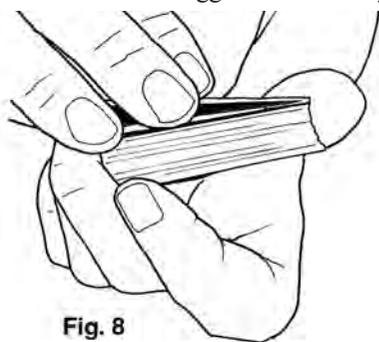


Fig. 8

You should angle the front edge of the deck down a bit to hide this condition from the spectators. Use the right third finger to begin to rotate the two selections in a clockwise direction. Once the outer left corner of the packet has moved about a centimeter, the left thumb contacts the upper packet at its outer left corner, pinning it against the deck as in **Figure 9**, where the right hand has been removed for clarity. The right third finger would be in contact with the outer right corner of the double card and the right thumb would be in contact with the inner right corner. The left hand now moves forward and to the left. This leaves the right hand holding

the two selections in Biddle Grip*. The left thumb now pushes the face-up selection off the deck and onto the table.



Fig. 9

It appears that the face up selection had been peeled onto the deck. But in reality, the entire three-card packet was taken onto the deck switching the two jacks for the remaining two selections.

Say, "Now the jacks have to find the next selection." Hold the two selections face down in the right hand, slightly spread. Perform the previous action of moving from the right to the left under the deck. Move the two cards back to the right as before, presumably to catch another selection. But this time there is no third card. Say, "Hmmm, they missed. Let's try the other selection." Repeat this process ending again with a seeming failure. Raise the two cards so you can see their faces as you say, "Something must be wrong. Oh! I see." Now slowly reveal that the jacks have actually become the selections for the big ending.

FINAL THOUGHTS: In practice, this is a quicky that involves three people in a very magical experience. Once you see what needs to happen, you will find your own path. For example, any control of three selections to the top will do. How you handle the first sandwich can easily be customized to suit your own tool set. Finally, the switching sequence can be accomplished in many ways. Check out the references given earlier.

See you back here in November, right after Halloween when you may treat people to a trick.

Mike Powers

mpowers@mallofmagic.com



Simple Diversions

ANDREW WOO

Fiery Tea Bag

On various marketplaces are particular papers that, once lit, will ascend upward and descend as burnt carbon remnants. There is an alternative to accomplish this small feat that can be put into a presentation. This effect looks enchanting, is extremely easy to do, and is terrifically entertaining.

EFFECT: The magician produces a small, folded piece of paper. It is lit and rises rapidly in a vertical fashion. At its peak, the paper burns out and descends. The magician grasps at the singed remains, which are then miraculously transformed into a real cigarette. The cigarette is handed out for inspection.

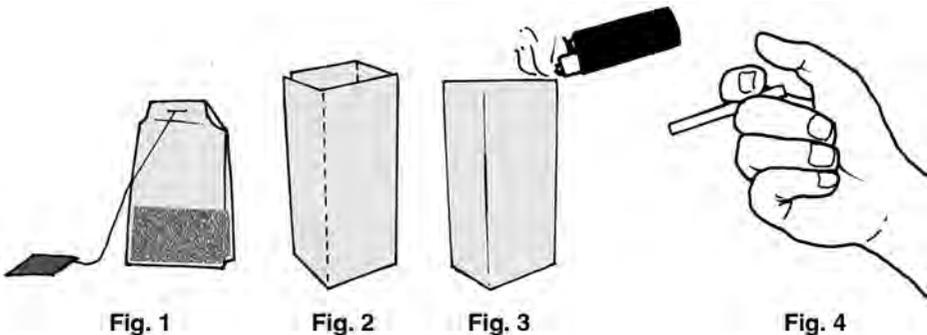
SET-UP: A lighter or matchstick, a typical tea bag (Fig. 1), scissors, and a cigarette. Use a tea bag such as the Tetley brand, or similar brands, and carefully remove the contents. Using the scissors, cut a rectangle shape out of the opened and laid-flat tea bag. Make three vertical folds so that it resembles a rectangular tube once completed (Fig. 2). Place the cigarette vertically into your right pant pocket, being careful not to bend or crush it. Place the lighter into the same pocket as the cigarette.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION: Hand the pre-folded tea bag form out for examination. Once retrieved, complete its shape by creasing at the pre-existing folds. Place the rectangular tube vertically on the performance surface. The right hand reaches into the right pant pocket and removes the lighter, proceeding to light the edge of the tea bag (Fig. 3).

As your spectators intently gaze at the amazing flight of the tea bag, the right hand delves into the right pant pocket, ditches the lighter, and places the cigarette in a thumb-palm position. As the burnt carbon remnants float downward, extend your hand to grab the diminished floating piece and then immediately extend the cigarette by clipping it with the first and second fingers to produce the cigarette (Fig. 4).

At this point, the cigarette can be handed out for examination or returned to the right-hand pocket where the remnants are disposed.

TIP #1: As an alternative to a cigarette, consider producing a tea bag, a pack of gum, or a lollipop.



TIP #2: Refrain from demonstrating this effect directly under a smoke alarm.

TIP #3: Practice holding the lighter deeper into the hand with only the hood exposed. So, if at any point there is a question regarding the whereabouts of the lighter, your response could be, “What lighter?” There are spectators who will actually believe that the first supernatural effect performed is the lighting of the tea bag paper

with your magic thumb. Believe it or not.

TIP #4: Exercise some caution when pinching your wife’s tea bags. That is all I am going to comment on the topic.

Enjoy this pretty and unique visual transformation. Until next month take care.

Andrew Woo

andrew@magicalwoo.com

www.magicalwoo.com

Moving?

Please notify the I.B.M. Headquarters Office at least four to six weeks before you move. By notifying the office ahead of time you will receive *The Linking Ring* at your new address and avoid paying a five-dollar per issue charge to resend the missed issue to your new address. This charge is merely what it costs the I.B.M. to resend an issue, which includes the USPS charge for sending the cover of the misdirected magazine back to us, plus the cost of resending the issue to your new address. This does not include the cost of the extra issues or the office staff’s time. Plan ahead and save the extra cost for all of us – and get your issues of *The Linking Ring* coming to your new address right away. Please see page four of every issue of *The Linking Ring* for the contact information for the Headquarters Office.

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 memberships 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*.



Auto-magic

MICHAEL BREGGAR

With only a few months to go with our ten-year anniversary re-examination of *Auto-Magic* faves, we paste pages that have flipped off our calendars to return to November 2022. I had just purchased what would turn out to be (sadly) Harry Lorayne's final book: *The Essential Harry Lorayne*. At the time, I wrote:

The Essential Harry Lorayne captures thirty items (routines and moves). All but a few have been published by Harry in the past (surprised by that? Harry has authored fifty-three books and wrote twenty years' worth of *Apocalypse* magazine). These are those effects that are near and dear to Harry's big heart, and essential reading for anyone interested in card magic. They are not just reprints of the past writing, for Harry has taken all years of performance experience in refining and bettering these effects. Talk about having a chance to polish your works ... these items positively gleam with mirror brilliance.

You can find the book at www.harryloraynemagic.com/shop.

One of my favorite Lorayne effects is actually the second routine detailed in the book. "Deal & Duck." It was first published in Harry's *Deck-Sterity* (1967). It was based on a Bill Simon idea from 1964 ("Four Queens" from *Mathematical Magic*). I absolutely love Harry's version, but I took it a few steps further to better fit my style and approach to comedy card magic. I was fortunate enough to become friends with the Maestro. We spoke often and explained to him how adding one tiny extra, and changing a tiny bit of handling, reframed the routine to make it better fit my style. Harry "blessed" my version and

generously gave me the thumbs-up to teach it to you.

"Let's Make a Duck ... Reducks"

I perform this routine *a lot!* Essentially, your audience participant thoroughly shuffles a deck of cards and gives you half. Under cover of the table, you both blindly and randomly remove four cards from your respective halves. These four card packets are shuffled and combined. The balances of the two halves are shuffled together and set aside. Next, the helper randomly "ducks" or "deals" the eight cards into two packets and designates one to keep and the other to pass to you. Revealing the "hands," she has dealt you a mess-of-nothingness, but her hand consists of four cards towards a royal flush. She flips over the top card of the shuffled deck set aside earlier, or ducks it and flips the *next* card face up – and it's the missing fifth card!

Harry's version sets out to reveal the four aces at the end. Here, we put another card in play. You will need a *duplicate* Ten of Spades. Remove the five royal flush in spades cards (AS-KS-QS-JS-10S) and place the duplicate 10S under the five (so the AS is at the top of the face-down packet and the two 10S are at the bottom). If you are sitting, slip this packet under a leg or just place it on your lap. You could also retain them in a pocket or elsewhere until needed. If I am wearing a sweater or jacket, I slip the packet under the belt of my pants. Just be certain there is no visible movement when you eventually fetch them.

I start by pattering about the "secret skills" necessary to make a good poker player or

even a good poker dealer, and then I drop this line of patter until later (this makes for a funnier “call-back”). I hand the deck (sans the cards noted above) to my assistant to shuffle. “Randomness is very important, so please shuffle these cards thoroughly,” I tell her. When she is comfortable that the cards have been mixed beyond reason, ask her to cut the deck into two approximately equal piles. “You keep one to use and slide the other to me.”

You take the half she hands to you and bring it under the table, requesting your helper do the same while commenting, “Let’s make certain all our actions are done without any influence – including us seeing what we are doing!” Instruct her to give the half deck a little shuffle or cut it once more. Meanwhile, you move your arms and just riffle your half a little as if you are shuffling, but secretly, you take the hidden flush packet from under your leg (or wherever) and place it on top of your packet.

Continuing, you say, “Marilyn, please now pull out a card randomly from your packet and place it face down on the table in front of you. Like this.” Make some noise as if moving your cards around, but just take the top card (one of the royal flush cards) and place it face down in front of you.

Compliment your helper for her “lovely placing-a-card-on-the-table-face-down skills,” then request she again mix her cards and place one more on the table sight unseen. Each time, of course, you will make some card-mixing noises and place one of the flush cards from the top of your packet on the table in front of you. Do this twice more so you and your helper end up with four face-down cards in front. After four cards are in front of you both, bring the half decks back into view. Take your helper’s half and shuffle it casually into your half, being certain not to disturb the two 10S on top of the deck.

When bringing that fourth card to the table, use this beautiful Lorayne subtlety: still under

cover, take that fourth card (the jack) and insert it halfway into the half deck. That is, half of the card is jutting out from the middle of the deck. As you bring your deck back into view, it appears as if you are pulling that card from the middle of your half and placing it on the table. This little action is fabulous and really sells the action of randomly removing four cards.

Finally, you and your helper mix your respective four-card packets. You hand yours over, asking her to either place her packet on top of yours or “**duck** your packet under mine.” This is the first time I have used the word “duck” so far, but it sets up the fun yet to come. It makes no difference, by the way, whether her packet is on top or vice versa.

Now, patter in an increasingly rapid manner. This tempo gain makes the proceedings seem shadier, more surprising, and funnier in the end. “Hold the eight cards like a casino dealer. You’ll be dealing out two piles in the middle of the table. And you’ll do it in a way that keeps mixing all the cards. Two random cards here, then two to the other pile . . . and we’ll keep alternating until all cards are dealt.” Now point to a spot on the table to your right (her left) where Marilyn will deal the first cards. “Here’s how you’ll randomize your deal. Starting with the top of the packet, you can deal and duck, or duck and deal. That is, you can take the top card, deal it to the table, and duck the next card underneath the packet. Or you can do just the opposite: duck the first card and deal the next to the table. What’ll it be?”

Marilyn says, “Duck and deal.” She takes the top card of her packet and slips it to the bottom of the packet, then takes the next card and deals it to the table (let’s call this pile “A”). “I mentioned I will do two cards over here first, so what do we do now? Duck and deal, deal and duck, deal and duck, or duck and deal?”

She chooses to “Deal and duck,” so the top card of her now six-card packet is dealt to the

table on top of the card already there. The next one goes under her held packet.

“Exciting, isn’t it?” you ask as you roll your eyes. “Let’s get the second pile started here.” You point to a spot to the left of the small, tabled pile. “And . . . here we go again! Duck and deal, deal and duck, deal and duck, duck and deal. Deal the dirty duck until you get some luck. Don’t get stuck.” You get the idea. Now you sound like an insane carnival barker!

Marilyn chooses to duck and deal the next cards, then repeats that action starting pile “B.” She now holds a four-card packet.

She chooses to duck and deal, dropping a card to the first pile (“A”) and then to pile “B.” She now holds two cards in her hand.

What happens next is important: The top card of the two *must* be dealt to the first pile “A.” Go through your crazy gibberish and if she says, “**deal** and duck,” tap pile “A” and say, “Okay, deal that here.” The remaining card then goes to pile “B.” If she says “**duck** and deal,” have her duck the top card and tap pile “B,” directing her to deal the card there. The remaining card goes to “A.”

Now you are set up for the jaw-dropping finale.

After the cards are laid into two separate piles, I smile deviously, compliment Marilyn on her dealing, and then ask nonchalantly, “Nicely done. So how much do you wanna bet?” This reels back the original poker comment and is such a surprise at this point you will get a nice laugh from the audience. Marilyn, however, may be laughing nervously.

“Tell you what, Marilyn, I’ll even give you a chance to choose whatever pile you want. I’ll take the one you don’t want. Just push one towards me.” She does so.

“Let’s take a look at the hand you dealt yourself. Remember, all the cards were removed blindly from the deck, and you made all the decisions as to who got what card!” One by one, turn over the four cards in Marilyn’s hand. It will either be the royal flush or the random cards. Either way, comment as each successive card is flipped face up. If she has the royal hand, congratulate her on somehow managing to deal herself the best hand in poker. “You probably gave me nothing!” Then quickly show your bad beat! If she has the random cards, comment that “I sure hope you at least dealt *me* something good!” Then turn over your cards.

Finally, comment that there are only four cards towards the royal flush. A poker hand needs five. Slide the “shuffled” deck talon toward her. “Okay, one more card . . . duck or deal, deal or duck?” Since there are two 10S on top of the deck, it doesn’t matter what choice she makes. She will always throw a 10S to the table, thus completing the royal flush in spades and showing off her amazing poker dealing skills!

Duck Soup

Harry has always mentioned that strong commercial magic depends on “The 3 Ps: Personality, Patter, and Presentation.” Like the vast majority of the magic Harry has written over the years, you are given the basics to adapt to your personal 3 Ps. That is exactly what I did, adapting my presentational style to the effect here. Such is the essential gift Mr. Lorayne has given us.

Essentially email me at:
mbreggarmagic@gmail.com

Broken Wand

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



TERRY DALEY

Terry Daley, 66, of Lexington, Kentucky, died January 1, 2025. He held I.B.M. number 37809 and had been a member since 2008. He belonged to Ring 198 (Lexington, Kentucky).



GEORGE ERDEL

George Titus Erdel, Jr., 71, of Murfreesboro, Tennessee, died December 26, 2024. He held I.B.M. number 63436 and had been a member since 2002. He belonged to Ring 252 (Murfreesboro, Tennessee). He was born in Houston, Texas and resided across the United States before settling in Murfreesboro in 1997. George served in the United States Navy and retired from the US Department of Transportation, Federal Aviation Administration, after working as an inspector for thirty years. He was a member of Heartland Baptist Church. He is survived by his wife Marilyn Joyce Dodson Erdel, children George T. "Ted" (Kelly) Erdel, III, Karen Opferman (Michael) and Martin (Trinity) Erdel, sister, Deborah Lou Ann Mayer and eight grandchildren.



JOHN "JACK" GOULD, JR.

John "Jack" Philip Gould, Jr., 85, of Chicago, Illinois, died December 17, 2024. He held I.B.M. number 47102 and had been a member since 1991. He belonged

to the Order of Merlin (twenty-five years of continuous membership). Jack earned a doctorate in economics at the University of Chicago Graduate School of Business, where he served on the faculty for fifty years. From 1983-1993 he was dean of the school. His research interests included microeconomic theory, law, and economics. He was editor of the *Journal of Law and Economics* and was co-editor, with Edward Lazear, of an introductory college textbook, *Microeconomic Theory*. Jack took a leave to serve as the special assistant for economic affairs under Secretary of Labor George P. Shultz. He was also a consultant for economic affairs to the Office of Management and Budget under President Richard M. Nixon. Jack grew up in the Czech community of Cicero, Illinois. On Saturdays, his grandfather would take him downtown to Chicago theaters to see magicians such as Harry Blackstone Sr. and Dante. This led to a lifelong interest in magic and friends in the magic community, including Eugene Burger. He is survived by his wife of twenty-nine years, Kathleen Carpenter, and sons John P. (Evan Michelson) Gould III and Jeffrey H. (Cassie Althausen) Gould.



CHARLES "CHUCK" HANSON

Charles "Chuck" Hanson, 97, of Moline, Illinois, died July 6, 2025. He held I.B.M. number 7389 and had been a member since 1943. He belonged to the Order of Merlin Excelsior (sixty years of

continuous membership) and Ring 11 (Davenport, Iowa). His eighty-one years of membership is among his Ring's longest. Chuck was born in Ottawa, Illinois, where he became interested in magic. He moved to Rock Island, Illinois at age twelve. After graduating high school, he enlisted in the navy and was training to be a pilot when WWII ended. After receiving a degree in engineering from the University of Iowa, he married Jean Gordon. He began his career with John Deere, where he retired in 1983 as a senior vice president. He loved being a part of the magic scene where he learned, performed, taught, and helped others develop their skills. Wherever his work or retirement took him, he became involved in a local Ring, including Moline; Buffalo, New York; Phoenix, Arizona; San Diego, California; and West Palm Beach, California. He enjoyed performing close-up and parlor magic. He tried to have something to show at every club meeting, often with an off-beat twist. He also did a lot of emcee work for magical and non-magical events. Chuck enjoyed sharing a fond memory of being on stage at the 1940 I.B.M. Convention in Davenport, Iowa, at age thirteen, on a bill performing between Harry Blackstone Sr. and Dai Vernon. His other interests included a love of jazz music (both playing it and listening to it), photography, and fishing. In the community, he was active in the American Cancer Society, Human Relations and Commission, Goodwill Industries, and the Health Planning Council. He is survived by his children, Stephen (Joyce) of Naples, Florida; Pamela of Santa Cruz, California, and Terry (Shelly) of East Moline, Illinois.



MICHAEL HODGE

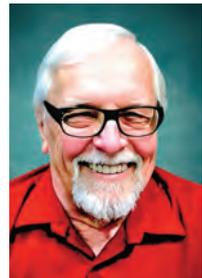
Michael Alan Hodge, 79, of Gaston, Indiana, died February 13, 2025. He held I.B.M. number 42891 and had been a member since 2006. He belonged to Rings

1 (St. Louis, Missouri) and 310 (Muncie, Indiana). He was born in Muncie, Indiana. Michael married Reva Auline Maynard Hodge in 1967, after they met as music majors at Ball State University, where Michael earned a degree in music education. Michael taught band and choir at Redkey High School, worked as a dispatcher for a trucking company, and retired from Borg Warner. He was a member of Forest Park Church of the Nazarene where he sang in the choir, sang specials, played soprano saxophone in the church orchestra, and taught a Sunday School class. He played the bass clarinet in Clarinet Connection. Mike was also a member of the Fellowship of Christians Magicians. He and his wife and children led Bible Schools in Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. The family sang together at many events. He is survived by his wife, six children, and grandchildren and great grandchildren.



GEORGE PHILIP "PHIL" HOY

Rev. George Philip "Phil" Hoy, 88, of Evansville, Indiana, died September 4, 2025. He held I.B.M. number 50370 and had been a member since 1993. He belonged to the Order of Merlin (twenty-five years of continuous membership) and Ring 56 (Evansville, Indiana). He performed for businesses, charities, churches, nursing homes, and family celebrations. He gave every grandchild a magic show for their fifth birthday. His first magic act was serving as an assistant with his sister Margaret to older brother Phil Hoy. The act was born when professional magician Phil Foxwell loaned his stage illusions to the Hoy family for five years when he went to Japan as a missionary. When the equipment was returned to Foxwell, Phil developed his own



act. Both Phil and David, who also was a minister before becoming a professional magician, performed tricks illustrating Christian teachings. They called it “Magic with a Message,” and Phil was editor of *The Christian Conjurer* for two years in the early 1960s. An ordained minister in the United Church of Christ, Phil served seven churches during his ministry. He also was executive director of the Tri-State Food Bank for thirteen years, a Vanderburgh County Councilman for twelve years, and an Indiana State Legislator for four years. He was the founding director of the Metropolitan Evansville Youth Service Bureau, served as chaplain at Evansville State Hospital, and taught at Brescia University in Owensboro, Kentucky. Phil is survived by his wife of twenty-six years, Sandra; daughters Rene (Bill) Riegle (and Sherri (Tom) Haas; son Matthew (Kim) Hoy; stepchildren Wendy Bredhold and Ben Knipe, sixteen grandchildren and fourteen great-grandchildren.

STEVE WATSON

Steve Watson, 80, of Martinsburg, West Virginia, died August 21, 2025. He held I.B.M. number 401102 and had been a member since 1985. He belonged to Ring 94 (Hagerstown, Maryland) and was a member of the Society of American Magicians and the Magicians Alliance of Eastern States. He served in the Air National Guard, Mount Wesley United Methodist Church, Bedington Ruritan, and was a founding father of the Bedington Fire Department. He is survived by his wife Dian Lindsay Watson, daughter Tamara Watson, and three grandchildren.



DAVID WIEDEMER

David Wiedemer, 84, of Kenmore, New York, died December 10, 2023. He held I.B.M. number 43181 and had been a member since 1988. He belonged to the Order of Merlin Shield (thirty-five years of

continuous membership) and Ring 12 (Buffalo, New York). After serving in the US Army, Dave earned a degree in architecture from the University at Buffalo. Beginning in 1984, he served as an architect for firms in Buffalo, Syracuse, and Rochester, including the design and construction management of east coast Lowe’s stores. He helped renovate the Western New York Veterans’ Housing Coalition building and designed the Vietnam Veterans Memorial on the Buffalo Waterfront. He served as a eucharistic minister, a building and grounds committee member, and a member of the St. Vincent DePaul Society at his home church of St. Andrew’s in Kenmore. He also belonged to the Society of American Magicians and helped organize the Junior Ring 12. Dave was a member of the Buffalo Museum of Science Photo Club and Twin City Camera Club. His other interests included cooking, growing plants, cultivating fish tanks, and flying kites. Even after suffering a stroke, David overcame disabilities, learned to walk, and provided talks and mentorship to young therapists at various colleges in the western New York area. He and Bonnie became advocates for prostate cancer and stroke awareness. He is survived by his wife of fifty-seven years Bonnie Reid Wiedemer, children Noelle (Kim Keil) Wiedemer, Mary-Courtney (John) Bevilacqua, Renee (Daniel) Pratt, and Karla (Ryan Hart) Wiedemer, and five grandchildren.



EMORY WILLIAMS, SR.

Emory Carroll Williams, Sr., 90, of Vail, Arizona, died September 29, 2024. He held I.B.M. number 51238 and had been a member since 1994. He belonged to the Order of Merlin (twenty-five years consecutive membership) and Rings 136 and 172



(Tucson, Arizona). Born in Deering, Missouri, he graduated from Caruthersville High School in 1953. After marrying Nathalia Davidson, the former high school sweethearts spent a short stint in Detroit, Michigan, before returning to Caruthersville. There, Emory owned the Kozy Korner and the Aqua Shop and worked for Colson Corporation. He entertained with magic and comedy in high

school and continued throughout his life. After moving to Tucson, Arizona, he and Nathalia opened Williams Magic and Novelties. He was a builder and inventor of magic effects. He was also an ordained minister of the Worldwide Church of God. Emory is survived by his wife Nathalia, son Emory (Claudia) Williams Jr. of Vail, Arizona, and nieces, nephews, and extended family.

When a Magic Friend Dies

Please take the time to send us a short note and copy of any obituary notice. Don't let a fellow magic lover slip away without notice. Send a short note and copy of any obituary notice to Editor or Headquarters Office. Addresses on page 4. Thanks.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WANT TO SUBMIT A TRICK OR A PARADE?

Email editor@magician.org. Parades should be between 8,000 and 10,000 words and include photographs or drawings so our artist has something to follow.

WANT TO SUBMIT A RING EVENT?

E-mail a Microsoft Word document and high-resolution jpegs (not embedded in the Word document) to Dr. Steven Schlanger at ringreports@magician.org. Note: Ring Events are articles about special activities conducted by your Ring, such as banquets, shows, or charity events.

WANT TO SUBMIT A RING REPORT?

E-mail a Microsoft Word document to Dr. Steven Schlanger at ringreports@magician.org. Note: Ring Reports are reports of the activities of your regular Ring meetings.

HANDY TIP: Look on page four of every issue to find contact information for officers of the I.B.M. and staff members of *The Linking Ring*.

Ring Reports

THE INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF MAGICIANS



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

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

Meets 1st Wed. of month, Dielman Recreation Center, 11400 Oldie Cabin Rd., Creve Coeur, MO 63141 / Web Site: www.IBMRing1.com

ALAN ZIBITS., Secretary / E-mail: Alan.a.zibits@boeing.com
532 Dartmouth Crossing, Wildwood, MO 63011

The August meeting was another Magic Open Mic Night. This is the third one the Ring has held this year. Members enjoy seeing their fellow magicians perform and learn from watching one another. It wasn't difficult to find members to fill the slate, as the Ring only has a limited amount of time to hold meetings at this venue. The night was advertised on Facebook and also on our website. It was amazing to see how many new faces were in the audience. The Ring is continually growing, and four new members joined that evening, one being the 2024 Miss Missouri for America Strong.

Sandy Weis was asked to emcee the event. The evening began with our President, Steve Queen, blowing bubbles. Amazingly, he was able to catch some of these bubbles. He also performed a card trick where he knew the cards being selected by his volunteers. Bob Danner performed for the first time this evening. He used a colored deck and had a prediction in an envelope which matched. He also had a jumbo card deck which he performed an effect with.

One of the Ring's newest members and also the youngest, Alexander Damman, performed for the first time. It was a colored chip effect themed as the *Wizard of Oz*. It's obvious that Alex will become a top magician. Steve Finkelstein is excellent with reading people's minds. He handed out cards to twenty members and had them count off. When they said their number, he knew what card they had picked. The audience was amazed!

Matthew Horowitz sure has energy and knows how to get the audience involved. He is an excellent card manipulator. Matthew has also grown magic-wise since he joined the Ring. The

Ring is encouraging the younger generation to become involved, and we are always looking for new ways to recruit them. The older members become mentors to the younger members, since a lot of the members have decades of experience.

D. Jay Lenz, the Ring's previous president, performed a card trick. He had two volunteers choose cards, and it looked like he wouldn't be able to tell them what card they picked. However, at the end, he did know the cards but in an interesting way. Laurence "Nothing Up My Sleeve" Levy is an excellent performer. The audience wasn't so sure about his "Bad Jokes" though, but they laughed. He used a colored mouth coil which got lots of laughs, especially from the new audience members. He also performed an ESP effect and also Hindu tongue weaving. It is obvious he practices a lot and is always looking for new jokes. Another member even brought him two new joke books so he can add new jokes to his ever-evolving performances.

Columbus Smith is the Ring's paranormal investigator. He actually investigates supernatural occurrences, but he also performs magic. He used cards with words on them and somehow shared his magical powers to enable one volunteer to know what card another volunteer had chosen. Silly Jilly, actually Jill Schmidt, shared a new effect she is using in her performances. The Ring members had to pretend they were children, since she is a children's performer. It wasn't difficult for most of us to pretend we were children, though. She used a little whoopee cushion which got a lot of laughs. Steve Steer performed a classic "Linking Rings" routine using eight shiny circles. This takes a lot of practice, and it is obvious that Steve has practiced this flawless routine for "years."

The final presenter for the evening was Timothy Shegitz. He is such a wonderful "storyteller," he sure knows how to captivate the audience. He had

a magic paper bag which mysteriously was able to change bottles and even make them disappear. Finally, the bag produced a glass of liquor. When the members thought the night was over, Jeff Lefton talked a little about his trip to London. He shared the process of becoming a member of the Magic Circle. He also was in Italy for six days to attend FISM and met up with two other members of Ring 1. It sounds like he had an amazing trip.

Thanks to Michael W. McClure and his wife for organizing, planning, bringing the equipment, setting up the room, bringing treats, etc. etc. The Ring really appreciates everything they do for the members. The Ring always welcomes visitors to its meetings and activities. Check the website for additional information regarding upcoming events.

Sandy Weis

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

Meets 7:30 pm 2nd Fri., Valley Christian Church, 7155 Glenwood Ave.,
Youngstown, OH

PETER LUCKE, Secretary

E-mail: IBMRing2Youngstown@me.com

The following Ring 2 members and friends were present at our August meeting: Fritz Coombs, Bob Gurdak, James and Eric Killmeyer, Jim Klayder, Peter Lucke, and Gary Morton. The theme of the evening was Silk Magic.

Bob Gurdak began the evening's magic with "Test With a Chest" and "Color Changing Silks" from Duane LaFlin. Bob displayed three white silks. In his effect, he changed the colors of the silks. Bob rolled up a sheet of paper into a tube, stuck a white silk in the end, and tapped on the tube with a red wand. When he blew in one end of the tube, a red silk emerged from the other end. He repeated this effect to produce a yellow silk and also a blue silk. For a final effect, Bob placed a white silk in the tube, tapped on the side with three wands, red, yellow, and blue. When he blew in the tube, a single silk emerged with all three colors.

Peter Lucke continued with "Picto Play!" from Paul Richards. Peter showed the audience a special set of cards. Each card had a picture on it and the name of the picture written underneath. He invited three audience members to assist him. The deck was then cut, and the cut was completed. Peter had each assistant pick off a small packet of cards and place it in his hand without revealing the bottom card. Peter then told each participant what was written on the bottom card. He was correct in all three cases.

James Killmeyer entertained us with "Ambitious Card" and "Card through Silk." He invited Fritz to assist him. James spread a deck

between his hands and asked Fritz to select a card; it was the 4C. The card was replaced in the deck. James then shuffled and cut the deck in various ways, saying that one card would come to the top. James revealed it to be the 4C. He again placed the card in the middle of the deck. Fritz tapped the top of the deck and James showed the top card; it was the KH. He then asked Fritz to tap the top again; this time the card was the 4C. James continued by inserting the 4C into the deck and wrapping the deck in a blue silk. He began shaking the silk and eventually out came the 4C.

Gary Morton began his effect and after some development decided it was not working correctly. He promised to repeat the effect at the next meeting.

Fritz Coombs's effect "Obedient Silks and Glass-Go" by Harold Rice. Fritz invited Eric and Bob to assist him. He showed us three colored silks, red, yellow, and blue. He asked Eric and Bob for their favorite colors; they chose yellow and red. So, Fritz used the blue silk for the effect. He asked Eric to tie the blue silk around the middle of two ropes. Fritz threaded the two ropes into a clear plastic tube so that the blue silk was centered inside the tube. Eric and Bob each took hold of the ends of the two ropes. Fritz asked them to each let go of one of their ropes, and he took the free ends of the ropes and tied them in a knot over the center of the tube. Bob and Eric again held on to the two ropes. Finally, Fritz asked them to pull on their ropes. Magically, the ropes came free of the tube, leaving the silk alone inside the tube.

Jim Klayder concluded with "Faro Friday" or "Four of a Kind" found with Faro shuffles. Jim asked Gary to choose four of a kind; he chose the fives. Jim removed the four fives from the deck. He then divided the deck into four separate piles. Each pile was placed above a five on the table. Gary was asked to assist by picking up about half of the first pile. Jim placed the five face down on top of the pile and took the top half from Gary. Gary picked up half of the second pile and placed it on the first pile. Jim placed the second five on top of the second pile. The process was repeated for the third and fourth piles. Finally, Jim placed the cards he held on top of the last pile. Jim gathered up the piles into a deck, cut the deck a couple of times, and followed with two Faro shuffles. The four fives were found on top of the deck. Jim continued with another effect in which he again located the fives by means of a series of Faro shuffles.

The evening concluded with a lengthy general discussion led by Jim Klayder. *Peter Lucke*

RING 5, DAYTON, OHIO – Dayton Magic Club

Meets 2nd Fri. each month at 7:30pm, Mighty Fortress Lutheran Church, Kettering, OH.

DAVE DAVIS, Ring Reporter / E-mail: daytonmagicring5@yahoo.com
Web site: www.sites.google.com/site/daytonmagicring5

The Dayton Magic Club recently hosted a spectacular meeting event, combining the August meeting with a Summer BBQ, an Open House, and a Magic Flea Market that drew a crowd of sixty-one members and guests. It was a night filled with great food, good company, and, of course, plenty of magic.

As the sun began to set, attendees mingled, and the aroma of a delicious BBQ filled the air. Members generously supplied a wide array of sides, desserts, and drinks, while the club provided classic hamburgers and hot dogs.

The evening kicked off with an incredibly brief club meeting, where the much-anticipated Joshua Jay lecture was officially announced. This exciting news set a great tone for the rest of the event. With the meeting wrapped up quickly, the food line was opened, and everyone enjoyed a hearty meal.

Following the feast, the magic began in earnest. Many members set up tables for a special Magic Flea Market, offering a treasure trove of gently used magic props and books. There was even a “for donation” table, giving everyone a chance to find a new trick or two. Over the next two and a half hours, the room buzzed with the sounds of magicians “sessioning,” sharing new ideas, perfecting sleights, and showing off their latest routines.

As the event wound down, the night concluded in classic Dayton Magic Club fashion. A dedicated group headed over to Archer’s Tavern for the traditional “DMC after hours.” The evening continued with more food, drinks, and lively conversation as the magicians recapped the night and shared their final thoughts and laughs. It was a perfect ending to a truly magical evening.

Michael Bayer

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.ibmring6.com

We decided to hold our annual auction night in August this year, and it was a cool way to spend a summer night – looking for bargains that we didn’t know that we needed.

Master magician and auctioneer Marc DeSouza helped to punch up sales with his deep background of the effects, books, and DVDs he presented. It’s always an education when Marc describes the items available.

There were classic effects and new DVDs available. Some of the classics: A Gen Grant Coin Tray, mini-Phantom Tube, Baker’s Diminishing Cards, and Rising Card and Wand trick. What looked like an innocent Egg Bag was actually a Gazzo Improved Egg Bag, with a set of special eggs. Several amazing leather wallets for Card in Wallet and Bill in Wallet (Terry Seabrook, original Mullica version) sold for bargain prices. A Joe Mogar Color Changing Knife Set was also up for bids. We bid on a twelve-inch set of magnetic key Linking Rings, as well as a set of Ninja Rings.

A rare Mis-made Flag set by Rice Silks went for a mere \$25. This set was in brand new condition, folded inside of the original envelope along with instructions.

Marc DeSouza is so generous with his time, and we were so lucky to have him preside tonight. The Club got a ten percent cut of the sales which had totaled \$739. It was a great time for all members and guests.

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

T.I.P. Lecture: Michael Varon with “The Magic and Theory of Dani DaOrtiz.” Michael played a video of Dani’s performance of “Ritual ACAAN” on *Penn & Teller: Fool Us* and explained not only the method (mainly a disguised handling of the Ireland Shuffle) but some of the psychological techniques Dani uses and teaches, such as “Here and Now,” “Closing Doors,” and “Blackout.” Dani has a three-hour explanation product available, but Michael’s notes will be available on the Georgia Magic Club Facebook page for club members.

Business Meeting: President Clark Kjolraug greeted twenty-six members and twelve (!) guests.

Stan Konter was awarded the Top Dog trophy at the S.A.M. Convention in Nashville, Eric Schuster was elected to the Board at the I.B.M. Convention in Houston, and Debbie Leifer was not at the GMC meeting because she was attending FISM in Italy. A few of the club members were able to observe and enjoy P.I.P. Ken Scott’s library show this summer. Upcoming conventions mentioned include Tarot Sessions with Gus Belgrave (July 26), MAGIC Live in Las Vegas (August 3-6), KIDabra in Atlanta (August 13-16), Atlanta Harvest of Magic (September 25-27 – reminder that Andi Gladwin will be doing a workshop), and TRICS in Charlotte (November 20-22, featuring Dani DaOrtiz). Murl Harmon reminded us that the

S.A.M. Assembly 30 meets on the second Saturday of each month at the American Legion Post #1 in Atlanta.

The Georgia Magic Book Club is wrapping up discussions of *Repertoire 2* by Asi Wind. Steve Langston asked for suggestions regarding the next book to read.

Walter Fields reported that the Project Magic participants are performing at both the Shepherd Center and the American Cancer Foundation Hope Lodge. Upcoming lectures are Scott Robinson, scheduled for Wednesday, August 27, and Joshua Jay on Sunday, October 26.

Secretary-Treasurer Bill Packard delivered the Theme Performance certificate for June to Phillip Mosness. Eric Schuster asked those who have not yet done so, to sign up for the GroupMe service to be able to receive last minute announcements (see link on the Georgia Magic Club Facebook page).

Performer for Membership: Justin So performed a multi-phase "Signed Ambitious Card" routine ending with the card folded up in the card box.

Theme Magic Performers: "National Tree Day" – Perform magic inspired by nature. (1) Ross "the Hat" DeMocko dealt six cards in a row, alternating face up and face down, and invited a spectator to follow the directions to reveal that the card landed on was the odd card (only red back). (2) Jack Schuster (Eric's son) solved a Rubik's Cube (each color representing something in Nature) behind his back, solved a cube to show a selected color on one side only (then finished the solve behind his back), and solved a cube mixed by multiple spectators blindfolded in forty-nine seconds. (3) Eric Schuster had three spectators cut into a pile of picture cards then psychically revealed each selection. (4.) Ravi Navare performed "Blizzard," where the mentally selected card was shown to be the only card in the deck with printing on it, all the others blank. (5) Steve Langston performed a "Chop Cup" routine with a paper cup and a rolled up (signed) dollar bill, then caused the bill to vanish and reappear inside the final lemon load. (6) Patrick Buchen invited young guest Gwen to mentally choose a numbered picture of a bug and pretend to be a tree, then determined the bug's identity by sensing its pheromones. (7) Dominic Pretera caused a picture of a ladybug from a packet of cards to physically appear on a spectator's palm ("Lucky Ladybug" from Deuce Gala). (8) Gus Belgrave performed a "Which Hand" effect several times with a borrowed sponge ball.

General Magic Performers: (1) Christophe Fouquet caused two signed cards placed under

and over a glass to switch places. (2) Murl Harmon was able to not only cut directly to a spectator-selected number of cards but also determine the total of their values. (3) Ryan Kessler caused two cards to transpose while under a spectator's hands.

The Wheel of Names Giveaway winners were Christophe Fouquet (a Carl Andrews book), Bill Packard (a Paul Daniels DVD), and David Fluker (Brian Daniel's "Knot a Card Trick").

The winner of the Coveted Royal Blue Pin for July's theme "National Tree Day" was Steve Langston. And congratulations also to Justin So for passing his audition! Next month's theme (August) is "National Vinyl Record Day" – Perform magic to music or magic inspired by music.

Bill Packard

RING 13, PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA – Tampa-Greenberg Ring

Meets 1st Thu., 7:30pm, Eat'n Park, 1250 Banksville Rd., Pittsburgh, PA
MARK ZAJICEK, Secretary / E-mail: mtz@sei.cmu.edu
Web site: www.ibmring13.org

In August, we returned to our former meeting location, the Eat'n Park restaurant on Banksville Road, following the closure of The Linden Grove, where we had been meeting since last year. Levi announced that we will consider other meeting locations in the coming months, and we will plan to produce a public magic show somewhere, sometime in November. Congratulations to Todd Hertzberg on his upcoming marriage. Congratulations to Don Greenberg and to Mark Zajicek, who each received their Order of Merlin Excalibur awards (50 consecutive years of membership) at the I.B.M. Convention in Houston; and congratulations, too, to Todd who attended the convention as a new Life Member! Lucy Hall introduced our performers with a suggested theme of "thimble magic."

Christopher Welch joined us virtually (via Zoom) as he presented his first performance for Ring membership. Christopher held up a deck of cards, and he tried to "subtly" influence three people as he asked them to choose a playing card color, a suit, and a value. Christopher fanned through the faces of his deck to find and remove that named card, then he showed that different people's names were written on the backs of all the cards. Christopher turned over the named card to show that it was the only card with his own name written across its back.

Joe Bedard presented his second performance for Ring membership, asking Ralph to pick a card and return it to the deck. Joe shuffled the deck, and then he attempted to cut to Ralph's card, dealing off the next five cards below the cut. Ralph confirmed that his chosen card was

among those five cards. Joe handed the packet of five cards to Ralph, then Joe made the chosen card disappear and return upside down in the middle of his deck.

Sam Shea presented his second performance for Ring membership, telling a humor-filled story of his Grandma Shea as he made a thimble disappear and reappear on his finger. Sam made that thimble multiply into three thimbles, then he made those thimbles grow in size to change into three cups, which he used in a “Cups and Balls” routine. Sam made the three balls vanish and reappear under the cups, finally disappearing and changing into a large spool of thread.

James Cooper presented his second performance for Ring membership as he produced a red silk, a white silk, and a blue silk from a cloth bag. James asked Cece to return the silks to the bag. Joe reached into the bag before Cece could return the blue silk, and James pulled out a single silk that looked like an American flag with red and white stripes but missing the blue union. James and Cece repeated the attempt, but this time the silk flag had blue and white stripes with stars on a red union. On their third attempt, adding a magic word and a magic gesture, Cece produced a standard American flag from the bag (“Mis-made Flag”).

Three Ring members competed in our second Magician of the Month Contest for 2025. Ralph Kelly asked Jeff to cut a deck of cards into three piles on the table. Ralph asked Jeff, James, and Levi to each look at and memorize the top card on one of the piles, and then each shuffle their pile. Ralph collected all the cards in the deck, and he successfully located each of their three selected cards.

Todd Hertzberg showed two cards on which were written the numbers “7” and “13.” Todd asked James to name one of those numbers, and James picked 13. Todd said that he was thinking of 7 instead, and he turned over the 13 card, which had “I was thinking of 7” written on its back. Todd said that he had done this trick twenty-seven times, and every time, the number was 7. To prove it, Todd turned over the 7 card, showing on its back was written the word “Right” with nothing underneath, followed by “Wrong” with 27 tally marks, to which Todd added yet another tally mark (Jon Allen’s “All or Nothing”).

Ted Knobloch set four wine glasses on the table, and he placed an ace inside each glass, followed by its three matching court cards (king, queen, and jack) behind each ace. Ted gave one glass to Alex, and Ted proposed a toast for Todd’s upcoming wedding. Ted and Alex clinked their glasses, then Ted removed the

cards from his glass, showing that his ace had disappeared. Ted repeated this with the two remaining glasses, showing that each of those aces had also vanished. Ted made the three missing aces reappear to join the ace in Alex’s glass.

Our panel of judges named Todd Hertzberg as our August Magician of the Month. Congratulations, Todd! *Mark Zajicek*

RING 19, MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA – Carl Jones Ring

Meets 2nd Mon. each month, 7:00 p.m., via Zoom and in person 2nd Sat. (location TBD)

ANDREW SELBITSCHKA, President / Web site: www.IBMRing19.com

This month, you get viewpoints from two Ring attendees! Enjoy! From Daniel Norat - As always, the club meeting started with performances. Paul “the Vintage Magician” Laidig started the meeting with a smooth rendition of “The Silk Cabby.” This was followed by Michael Graves performing the rendition of “Bane” by Jamie Daws. Michael turned the prediction trick into a full murder mystery through staging and an open prediction.

Magic Brad Gudim used a silk transposition to tell a story about the “Crimson Conjurer”. Fast Eddie Olson followed up with Sid Lorraine’s “Face Up Stunner.” Edward H. performed a novel open prediction based on black letter calligraphy.

The club welcomed back Gary McKibben. Gary did a Shell Game demonstration and talked about his experience busking in Seattle and the Twin Cities. Gary also gave a great tip of using a silverware basket as a base for a rugged servante.

Performances were rounded out by newcomer David Ronnevik who did a poker deal demonstration. Alex Madsen closed out with a deceptive second sight routine with cards.

The book report section of the meeting included conversations about *Magic for Dummies*, and *Sleights of Mind* by Stephen Macknik and Susana Martinez-Conde. AnnMarie Thomas brought up the research and writing of Alice Pailhès and Gustav Kuhn on the psychology of magic. Paul Laidig has been listening to communication skills teacher Vinh Giang.

Tyler Erickson gave a mini lecture on false dealing and dealing work. He noted that when doing a gambling demonstration, the dealing needs to follow the formal rules of the game (e.g. when flipping over the top card in a gambling setting, the card needs to flip from back to front). There are magic sleights that are easier but may not be appropriate because they handle the cards informally. Some tips for bottom deals

were to when possible, not work from a full deck. Also, false deals can have more punch when used for setup when they are not in focus. Lastly, be mindful of your thumb. Lay people use their thumbs when they deal, and having the thumb be too stiff is as much of an issue of it moving too much.

There are a lot of shows going on in Minnesota this month between the Renn Faire, County Fairs, the State Fair, and fringe festivals. In new news, Terry Rose in Duluth will have an ongoing show in Duluth starting in the fall.

Our Zoom meeting welcomed the usual gang of suspects. Rick Hinrichs started off the performance section of the meeting with his version of "Bill Through Bill". Rick's change of the trick uses a money band to replace one of the bills. We offered feedback regarding his change/adaptation to the trick and the biggest takeaway, from the group, was that the band offered more of a contrast for the penetration rather than the use of two bills. We felt that this added so much more to the trick.

This led to a discussion regarding the handling of props vs just holding objects. How you present or display items allows you to attach focus to them, rather than just holding something in your hand.

Michael Graves shared some further thoughts on the trick that he presented at the Saturday live meeting. The group provided some extra feedback.

Paul Laidig performed "Ring on String" and wanted our thoughts on the appropriate number of phases to perform. After some discussion, we arrived at the number three, the start of the trick, one bluff phase, and then a strong finish, allowing for a short, but sweet and smooth effect. One major point discussed is that no matter how you perform a trick, people will invent their own magic concept to explain how something is happening, no matter how far-fetched the explanation might be.

While we were on the subject of rings, strings, and ropes, we had to give kudos to the routine created by our own Bob Miller, "Relentless Ring & String."

Continuing on the ring/string theme, Tyler Erickson shared a quick trick involving a finger ring. Using the French Drop, he magically transports a ring, that has vanished from one hand and appearing back on his pinky of the original hand.

What, you ask, no card tricks? Michael Graves performed a shortened version of "Three Card Monte" with Fast Eddie Olson. Shortening the phases to five, made for a more concise trick. Tyler Erickson shared a non-commercial,

impromptu "Three Card Monte" which uses some touches from Fielding West, Ken Krenzel, Alex Elmsley, and a Vernon-Christ-Annemann Alignment Move thrown in, for good measure.

Dan Norat has been working on magic with thumb tips and wanted to discuss how to best manage this prop. We discussed several finesses and moves for using the TT including ditching, wand cover, steals and use of "non-conventional" fingers other than the thumb, as a convincer that you are not using a TT, specifically the Larry Jennings cleanup move.

Rick Hinrichs wanted some help with "Two in the Hand, One in the Pocket".

Tyler suggested making something large appear at the end instead of a total vanish. Tyler also recommended Jon Armstrong's book *How to Win*, for some thoughts on using the routine "In One," which is self-contained and needs no outside assistance.

We ended the meeting with a discussion of get-ready moves for "Rope Through Neck/Grandma's Necklace."

As always, all are welcome to join us for our magic meetings, whether in person or over Zoom. Please use the contact info above to find out more.

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

Meeting Location: Beacon Hill Diner (formerly John's Diner) 146 Sheraton Drive, New Cumberland, PA 17070-2440 In attendance were John Fortino, Erick Hershey, Richie Matthews, Rodney Ries, Jack Ritter, Dan Scully, Pinto Singh (Rod's son-in-law), Stephen B. Smith, and Michael Worsham.

Secretary's Report: Approval of various minutes. Dan motioned and Richie seconded. Minutes approval passed unanimously. Old Business, Jubilee Day is on.

Good of the Order: Al Bienstock is at his grandkid's graduation in Washington, DC. Vic is attending the Wilson lecture. Maria is unable to attend. Mike and Maryann are on a cruise. Frank is in Atlantic City. Secretary is on vacation. Michael Worsham performed at the 24 hours magic marathon at Mingus Magic. Wayne will be making a change in the format for next year. Kyle Purnell will be releasing a new piece soon if he hasn't yet. Josh Jay lectured at Kennedy Center last week. The show was card heavy and included Shadowgraphs. Michael Worsham mentioned that he is the Secretary of the Baltimore Ring 179 which now meets on the

same night as our meeting. He will alternate meeting months. Erick Hershey is now selling his marshmallow paddle trick.

We held a generic competition: Steve performed a “Follow the Leader Card Trick. Erick Hershey performed his “Passe Passe Bottles” of Root Beer. John Fortino performed a Rock, Paper, Scissors Prediction. Michael Worsham performed the “Red Herring Card Trick.” John Fortino won!

Rodney and Pinto did their wizardry to magically produce the new club banner for use at functions such as Jubilee Day. General Note added after meeting: The club did have a booth at Jubilee Day. We were there from the start of the festival at 10:00 a.m. to around 3:00 p.m. In attendance for the entire day were Al Bienstock, John Fortino, Vic Orriola, Jack Ritter, Dan Scully, Steve Smith, and Michael Worsham. We handed out flyers and entertained multiple passers-by.

Michael Reist

RING 21, HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA – Caryl Fleming

Meets 1st Thu. at Holy Virgin Mary Orthodox Cathedral auditorium, 650 Michelorena St., Los Angeles, CA 90026 / Web site: www.IBMRing21.org
GERRY SCHILLER, Secretary
P.O. Box 246, Newbury Park, CA 91319 / (805) 499-8921
E-mail: geraldschiller@gmail.com

As Hollywood’s Ring 21 summer kicks off, the club welcomes the July heat with a fantastic, fireworks worthy potluck and BBQ with our very own members taking up the mantle of chef masters. Everyone brought goodies to enjoy each other’s company and have a phenomenal meeting. I (Manny D’Mago) also had a few spectacular raffle prizes lined up with lots of new magic that is out and about in the community.

No performances from our members were lined up for this month’s meeting because we had a very special guest coming to our club: None other than the very incredible and always amazing Adam Wylie, who also blessed our evening with a lecture that can only be described as “Oscar worthy!” Pun intended since we are in Hollywood!

He demonstrated a few signature tricks he does at his gigs, gave some insight on performance, provided some tips on the business side of magic and even stayed to jam with members a little later than usual into the night. He also had his lecture notes for sale which were a hit with members. All in all, it was a definitely an evening to remember.

Stay tuned for our next meeting, which was delayed until late August because of Magic LIVE 2025 in Las Vegas, where we will have our second annual Ring 21’s Fool Us with Eric Fritz and Bob Weiss and we will also have a

vote for a change of the guard for our club’s board. Things will certainly be very interesting, considering lots of members attended the convention in Vegas this year and have lots to report.

Until next month, this is Manny D’Mago reporting live from the magic entertainment capital of the world, Ring 21, signing off!

Manny D’Mago

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
Web site: www.ibmring27.com

August 7th, 2025 - Lenny “Tricky TrainWreck” and Darlene Bertrand, Allen Boudreaux, Craig Boudreaux, Dr. Joe Dalgo, Jim Hussey, Herb Miller and guests Teddy Blanchard, and Sarah Noel attended.

We acknowledged the continued regular gigs of Michael Dardant, Joe Harrison, Dr. Joe Dalgo, Barry Fernelius, Winston Helling, Jr., Craig Boudreaux, and others. We also made note of the Trevor Duffy lecture later this month, as well as Dr. Joe Dalgo as one of the special guests for a show at The Howling Wolf.

Our two guests (Teddy Blanchard and Sarah Noel) were treated to some special “early entertainment” by Craig Boudreaux, Allen Boudreaux, Herb Miller, and Tricky Trainwreck with variety of effects including coins, cards, mentalism, needles and string. Among the many tricks were David Roth’s “Coins Across,” a ‘tasty’ card sandwich, mind reading using a Mnemonica Stack, needle and string thru eye, and Werner Miller’s “Thingumbub”.

The ever-clever Herb Miller presented a mysterious envelope and had us all break out our cell phone calculators to each create unique three-digit numbers. After a bunch of calculations, we all generated numbers that led to locating his predicted card. The result was both surprising and puzzling (Greg Rostami’s “Supercan”). Later Miller orated some trials and tribulations of one Soo Lee that elevated an already good card trick.

Allen Boudreaux removed Teddy Blanchard’s strength rendering him unable to tear a playing card in two. Allen taunted him showing how easy it really was. Then after restoring Blanchard’s strength, Teddy succeeded only to struggle unsuccessfully after Allen zapped him again. Boudreaux once again flaunted his power by tearing the stacked pieces even further and asking Teddy to try again only to be thwarted

until Allen again restored his strength (“TNT” by Nicholas Lawrence).

Jim Hussey ran a perplexing three card monte game in which the always clearly visible “money card” melted from one location to another right before our eyes (Larry Jennings’s “Close-up Illusion” via Michael Ammar).

Craig Boudreaux randomly selected a card from a shuffled deck of ESP cards and placed it in the box. After explaining some functionalities of ESP cards, Craig had Sarah deal the cards and stop “when it felt right”. Yep, its symbol matched the one in the box. Huh? (“Shape-up” from Max Maven’s *Video Mind*, vol. 2). Later Craig offered Sarah her choice of red or blue back cards. He took the other color and they each shuffled their cards, blindly chose one and put it among the other’s cards. This ended with their chosen cards matching while even though all the other cards were jokers.

Lenny “Tricky TrainWreck” Bertrand removed four cards from a shuffled deck to help him find Sarah Noel’s to be selected card. Sarah then reshuffled the deck before arriving at a card. While TrainWreck’s head was turned, Noel showed her card to the onlookers and returned to the deck. TrainWreck would ask Sarah four questions about her card. She could lie or tell the truth each time, but TrainWreck would rely only on his selected card’s responses. For the first three questions Bertrand’s cards would either agree or disagree with Noel’s answer. The fourth question was point blank, “Is this your card?” as Bertrand turned over his remaining card. Sarah’s card was actually in TrainWreck’s hand and not in the deck (a tweaked version of Aldo Colombini’s “Four-Cast”). Bertrand also deployed a four-card “Monte-ish” presentation that included surprising elements and an unforeseen color change (“Chop Shop” from *Lucky* by John Bannon) and presented Teddy with a birthday card for Sarah at the conclusion of Bannon’s “Perennial”.

Allen B. concluded the night with an amazing drawing prediction effect. I believe our guests (potential new magicians) were worn out, dazed, bewildered and inspired. *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

The meeting began shortly after 1 p.m. with a discussion of a Trevor Duffy lecture to be held on September 1st at 7 p.m. Location was to be determined and attendance cost \$20. The location of the October meeting was also discussed without a firm conclusion as the usual venues were not available.

Marty went on to report the results of the Ransom Estate auction. Collectively, the four Arkansas rings raised over \$5,000 with Ring 29’s share coming in at about \$1,800. He also addressed how other Rings managed their auctions and the disposition of unsold items. One such item was an appearing animal cage which went home with a Ring member for \$20. Marty continued to introduce Mark Mulkerin as the new web administrator and mentioned a tentative date for the December holiday party.

With the business concluded, Jim Henson stepped in and elicited an enthusiastic round of applause for Marty and his work on the auctions. Jim went on to generously raffle off books, DVDs, and props including a milk bottle trick which he demonstrated. Marty continued the giveaway with ten sealed boxes containing magic tricks, props, and DVDs.

It was then on to storytelling magic tricks with Marty beginning the show with a Sherlock Holmes themed prediction trick. Sid Salmans shared the story of “Professor Dibble Dabble” as he made a block of wood penetrate off a metal ring. Bob recounted a memory of his magic, quilting aunt who could restore thread that had been torn.

Derrick Rose continued the performances with a tale about how he first got into magic while making money multiply. Each retelling had him get younger and his audience larger. Dan Hecke continued with money magic as he transformed a two-dollar bill into two one-dollar bills then into a five-dollar bill in an effort to buy some much needed snacks.

Richard Knoll told a story about watching the night sky as a moon torn from a napkin transformed into a star. James Kinsey shared some “Linking Safety Pins” and Mark Mulkerin finished up with a story about separating red cards from black as a psychic test performed in college. Marty wrapped up with a few reminders and the meeting concluded.

Mark Mulkerin

RING 45, MIAMI, FLORIDA – Syd Bergson Ring

Meets 1st. Thu. each month, 7:30 p.m. South Miami/Coral Gables Elk’s Lodge, 6304 SW 78th St. South Miami, FL. Web site: Ring45.com
RON OLMSTED, Secretary / E-mail: ronsted@aol.com

On July 3, 2025, Miami I.B.M. Ring 45 was amazed, entertained and delighted with the presentation and lecture of the famed comic mentalist, Randy Goodman.

His first effect was to ask a spectator to use a box of crayons and color in a picture of a man using any colors he wished. The spectator colored in the vest, hat, stockings and trousers in various hues. Randy predicted the spectator’s selection of colors. To demonstrate his feat,

Randy showed various examples of the same drawing with the exact color combination the spectator had chosen. Randy even removed his own cloak to reveal that he was wearing the same outfit in the same colors that the spectator just colored in!

Next, Randy asked a spectator to play Tic-Tac-Toe with him. The ensuing three games all ended in ties. To everyone's amazement, the bottom of the wooden game board had the exact sequence of the last game movements engraved into wood.

Randy then performed his version of the famous magic squares. Unlike the original version, the spectators placed random numbers in any four of the sixteen squares on the chart. Amazingly, Randy was able to fill in the remaining twelve spaces so that everything in all directions was able to add up to the same number. Like a giant game of Sudoku. Incredible!

The performer then had a spectator pick a card and by answering a series of questions, correctly or incorrectly, Randy identified the correct selection. In a funny bit called "Bad News Psychic," a volunteer takes any number of cards from a deck several times and Randy consistently predicts the correct number of red and black cards in the volunteer's hand, while cracking jokes about the volunteer's future.

Everyone had a delightful time, and Randy sold many of his effects to the meeting attendees.

We at Ring 45 highly recommend Randy as a lecturer/performer. *Ron Olmsted*

RING 46, OKLAHOMA CITY – Seymour Davis Ring

Meets 1st Mon. of month, New Beginning Fellowship Church, 15601 S. Pennsylvania, OK
LEE WOODSIDE, Secretary
E-mail: WoodsideLee@hotmail.com
Ring Web site: www.okcmagic.org

Our August meeting was devoted entirely to our annual swap meet and appraisal auction. Lee Woodside was again our auctioneer, and a lot of cool magic props and books found new homes.

The appraisal auction format means that there are no minimum opening bids, which often slow down an auction. Instead, when the gavel falls, the seller has the option of actually selling the item or paying the high bidder fifty cents for "appraising" his item. Amazingly, no one opted to use this option. Every item was sold.

We were pleased that a boy with an interest in magic was in attendance along with his dad. One of our more generous members bid on several kid-friendly tricks and presented them to the young man to encourage his journey into the world of legerdemain. *Lee Woodside*

RING 50, WASHINGTON, D.C. – The National Capital Ring

Meets 1st Wed. 7:30 pm, Lyceum Museum, 201 S. Washington St. Alexandria, VA 22314 Web site: www.IBMRing50.org
MARC CARRION, President / E-mail: president@ibmring50.org
TODD EISENSTADT, Secretary / E-mail: toddeisensta@gmail.com

From top changes to center tears, Ring 50 turned inward at its August 6 meeting, with Vice President Mitch Praver leading the effort to recruit talented presenters within the group to present fifteen-minute "teach ins" on a range of subjects.

Presenters who rotated among groups of about a dozen members each to present, were: Alex Negri, who taught "How I Do the Top Change," Chris McCauley on "Techniques in Sponge Ball Magic," Larry Lipman, who presented "How to Customize Trix 4 Tricks," Geoff Weber, who explained "How to Obtain Pre-Show Information," and Augie Arnstein, whose offering was "Tools for the Mentalist."

Todd Eisenstadt

RING 58, KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE – Smoky Mountain Mystics

Meets 4th Thu. 6:45 pm each month, Messiah Lutheran Church, 6900 Kingston Pke, Knoxville, TN 37919
Web site: ibmring58.com
VICTOR AGREDA, Jr., President
(865) 223-1401 / e-mail: vagredajr@gmail.com

The theme for our July meeting was "Magic Gone Wrong" which gave us freedom to take risks and try new material without the fear of failure. If we messed up while performing, it was on theme for the evening.

Bill Sturgis opened our evening of performing by having Crickit (Rick Farewell) select a card from a deck of grocery ingredients. The selected food ended up being a perfect pair to the pear cards that Bill had set aside before the show.

Jack Wilson identified Nick Roberts' selected playing card. Using an iPad, he zoomed in on a photo of Stonehenge to reveal Houdini and Thurston standing at Stonehenge holding the card.

Sherman Wires performed a triple prediction where he correctly divined a playing card, number, and name all merely thought of by the audience.

I.B.M. Executive Photographer Michael Messing shared a couple mishaps that happened when he performed on cruise ships... a guillotine routine where the second gimmicked blade fell and was in view to the audience throughout the entire routine. While really embarrassing at the time, he can laugh about the experiences now. Michael also showed us his appearing cane routine.

Steve Jerden transformed Sherman's twenty-dollar bill into a one-dollar bill. Sherman was

relieved when Steve was able to restore the denomination of the bill.

Caden Jergen attempted to make a ring penetrate off of a rope but impressed us with a vanishing knot instead. Great recovery for a trick gone wrong.

Jim Stott, assisted by Sherman and Jack, performed a McCombal prediction which led everyone to believe he had messed up, but in fact blew us away.

Ed Ripley invited Kyle Copeland and Ray Adams to accompany him with a "Cards Across" routine (Morgan and West's "Thought of Cards Across").

Ray Adams impressed us with some coin manipulation as he encouraged us to make the "gone wrong" moments look right as he drops a coin and then uses the situation to his advantage to vanish the coin.

Nick Roberts predicted a selected card and then cut the jumbo prediction into thirds, restored it the wrong way, and then restoring the restoration... a twist on a commercial prop that many of us had never seen before.

Michael Priestap insisted we "cut him some slack" and encouraged us to "wait to see the end" of his cut and restored rope trick.

Tim Pressley was excited to share his latest prop purchase, a 3D printed genie tube shaped like a wooden barrel. He attempted to explain the difference between a barrel without a bottom and a bottomless barrel... one is always empty, while the other is never full... an endless rainbow streamer flowed from the tube.

Crickit, our guest for the evening, produced a "micro-wave" in his bare hands as a little hand popped out of his fist and waved at us.

Roy Shubert revealed a card, name, and country all selected by different audience members.

Bill Osborne shared a time that magic gone wrong made for a serendipitous moment in a show. A slowly deflating balloon sat on top of a square circle was made to look like it was sucked into the prop by the genie living inside.

Kyle Copeland reminisced about one of his first magic books, Dai Vernon's *Inner Secrets to Card Magic*. It was from this book he learned a clever card trick that he still uses to this day to recover when things go wrong in a show.

Timothy Pressley

RING 64, LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY – Okito/Lance Burton Ring

Meets 7:00pm various dates at Kosair Charities, 982 Eastern Blvd.,
Louisville, KY 40217

MICHAEL A. RAYMER, President

Web site: www.louisvillemagicclub.com

The Louisville Magic Club held its most recent meeting on Friday, July 25th at the

Holiday Inn Express Airport/Expo location in Louisville, Kentucky. There were thirty members and invited guests in attendance. The meeting was called to order by Bret Sohl subbing for Club President Dennis Alm who was away fulfilling another obligation.

The guest lecturer for the evening was Dan Stapleton. Dan has had a very interesting and wide-ranging career in magic starting from the time he learned his first trick ("String Thru Finger") at ten years of age taught to him by his grandfather who was not a magician before giving magic any serious considerations several years later. Dan has held many positions and different titles as a magician and as a demonstrator leading up to the present time now on the lecture circuit. Dan even had a brief stint as a stuntman. More on that later.

Dan's first real job was that as the magic demonstrator at the Mystery Fun House of Magic Shop which after time he became its owner. He was also the magic demonstrator at the Walt Disney World Magic Shops from 1973 to 1976. Moving onward, upward and seaward, Dan became the Cruise Director and Magical Coordinator for many cruise ships traveling around the globe from 1982 to 2005. He has also been the resident magician for the Marriott Hotel chain. And to "big top" it off, Dan was an illusionist for Ringling Brothers Circus World in Orlando, Florida. I would say that's quite a long and impressive list of magical accomplishments.

During the evening Dan thoroughly amazed and entertained us performing many of the tricks and effects he wowed the audiences with on the many cruise ships he performed for. Dan demonstrated and then explained each trick or effect in detail as to how the magic happened. Along those same lines, Dan would also offer several "tricks of the trade" tips, advice, suggestions and anecdotes about how to perform a trick, how to best interact with the volunteer if there is one and with the audience itself in order to get the best results for everyone involved. This all in keeping of becoming a better performer and magician. Tips included your appearance, costuming, patter and even the jokes or funny lines you use during your act. Dan is an excellent teacher and educator. I personally picked up a few valuable tips myself.

Among the many tricks Dan performed for us was "Impossible Bank Night," "Four Aces," "Road Trip," a trick taken from the pages of our very own David Garrard's book, *Out of My Hat*, which Dan provided. A very colorful and visual trick called "Rope & Silk Knots Off Rope" along with a thumb tip and saltshaker routine

were quite entertaining. A prediction trick involving the Gilbreath Principle and Zener Cards, you know them, the cards with the different symbols, star, triangle, square, wavy lines etc.

There were so many more tricks Dan performed, but probably the highlight (?) of the evening was Dan's story about his near-death experience as a stuntman. Dan was performing as an escape artist at a large amusement park one particular day where he faced certain death by being shackled to the tracks of a speeding rollercoaster. This was the same stunt Lance Burton performed in one of his TV Specials if you remember. Long story short, it seems that a cue to Dan wasn't sent by a member of the crew which drastically shortened the amount of time Dan needed to escape his bonds. Luckily, Dan managed to escape with a few minor injuries just mere split-seconds before the rollercoaster passed. Dan never attempted the stunt again.

This brought the evening to a close at which time Dan received a very generous and heartfelt round of applause and "Well Done!" from those in attendance. Thank you, Dan Stapleton, for a great lecture. It was certainly one of our best.

Carl Loud

RING 70, TACOMA, WASHINGTON – Great Virgil and Julie Ring

Meets 4th Sun., at LeMay Car Museum, 2702 E. D St., Tacoma, Fife, WA.
RICK ANDERSON, Ring Contact,
501 S. 43rd St., Tacoma, WA 98408 / (253) 473-5456
E-mail: rickandersonmagic@gmail.com

Our March 23rd, 2025 meeting was called to order by Ring President Rick Anderson. In attendance were Tony Smith, Fred Turner, David Peltó, Grayson Lockeby, John Villarreal, Tammy Summers, Tim Flynn, Adria Ehart, Michael Ehart, and Rick Anderson.

We had a couple opening discussions, starting off with the Moisture Festival that was beginning in Seattle; our members enjoyed seeing Lucy Darling's Chop Cup routine and crowd work, as well as Paul Draper. We also talked about Houdini, psychics, and the supernatural, sparked by a recent movie in which Houdini and seances were mentioned.

Tim Flynn showed his softened silver dollars, which can be slid past each other without making a sound, which works with older dollars, but not the modern Eisenhower ones.

Michael Ehart then showed a new deck of Batman cards, sparking a discussion of how well different cards work for different tricks. In this case, the cards are very unique but wouldn't work for most card tricks.

Adria Ehart attended Mystify, a magic convention for women, in Las Vegas, where she met

Lucy Darling, Alexandra Duvivier, and Connie Boyd. Talks included Past International President Shawn Farquhar, David Copperfield, and Lance Burton (by recording).

Several members looked forward to the Portland Magic Jam that was coming up in a couple weeks. The lineup of guests and events looks exciting!

The magician Arianna Black recently stayed with Tim Flynn, and they swapped many "war stories" about both magic and life in general. Tim recently did a kid's birthday party and delighted us with the dove pan routine he closed with, which produced a mini birthday cake. He talked about the importance of the little things, like showing up on time, sharing food with the partygoers, a good attitude, and staying after to do some tricks for kids who showed up late.

Finally, Michael shared his new Demi-Deck card case, a version of the Split Deck that Fred Turner made from Paul Harris' *Astonishment* books. We could examine a deck of cards split down the middle, then restored. *Tony Smith*

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

Our July meeting came to order with Business from Magic Valley Ranch happenings. The second of four auctions among the Arkansas Rings began at 2:15 and closed at 4:30. Much magic exchanged hands.

The August meeting was called to order by Vice President Jody Birchfield in the absence of President Larry Bean. Meeting was opened with discussion about the recent auctions and purchases made, and magic shows that were attended. A lecture by Josh Stacy was announced for the next Ring meeting.

We then went into performances and Show and Tell. Russell Turner started us off with his preschool show from this summer. Clyde Hayre shared some brief history of the Lincoln Canes and a leather Clinton briefcase, performed a two "Linking Rings" routine, and a Book Test using *The Linking Ring* magazine. He showed a Porper Box and performed an original routine predicting a chosen color on a cube. Rod Barrett performed Joe Mansfield's "27 Club" routine. Ron Ingram performed a Mental Rope routine and produced a ball of ice from thin air. V.P. Jody Birchfield shared some Show and Tell items from Daiso and did an "Easy Aces" routine.

At the closing of the meeting, many members retired to a local coffee shop to continue the camaraderie. *Ron Ingram*

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: pretty magical@gmail.com / Web site: www.ibmring81.com

Due to the large number of members who were going to be missing from the Sarasota area on our normal meeting night in August, we made the executive decision to cancel the meeting. We will be back in September with reports about Magic LIVE, several vacations, and maybe even one pertaining to a little police activity after a late-night gig in Indiana by a member... never a dull moment for magic!

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 June I.B.M. Neil Foster Ring 89 meeting was a smash hit! John Sherwood, Kevin Rosewood, Eric Sullivan (Trazdel), and a visiting guest, Rachel, were all in attendance!

Eric kicked off the meeting by introducing our guest to the meeting. Because of our new guest, we did a round of introductions and shared the history of the Ring.

When it was time for magic, Rachel started by sharing her experience at Tannen's Magic Camp and some of her favorite card routines.

John S. led a discussion about the double lift, top change, and the center tear. John had fantastic insights on when and how to implement each of these into a routine.

Kevin shared his work on the chop cup. He shared a routine he is working on with a surprise ending with three golf balls.

The next meeting will take place on August 11th at 7:00 p.m. at the American Museum of Magic in Marshall, Michigan. The theme is classics made new. 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

Vice President Charles Schroeder opened our August meeting. After a discussion of possible activities for the rest of the year, we started the performances. Our topic for the evening was After Dinner Magic.

Our young member, Nation Green, did a "Torn and Restored Napkin." Then "demonstrated" how it was done (but not really). He

then also restored the pieces of the original napkin. Tall Paul did "Coins Across" and a couple of other coin vanishes. Russ Romans mentioned origami, which is widely known, but there is also a Japanese art of paper tearing. He demonstrated this by tearing a napkin to make a flower and then restoring the torn napkin.

Barry Moffitt performed an interesting variant of the theme of a spike hidden under a bag. He displayed several bags, and a spectator selected one of them. The audience did not know what was in the bags. Each of the remaining bags were smashed proving there was nothing in them. Finally, the selected bag was shown to contain a raw egg. The egg was smashed inside a clear plastic bag to prove that it was real.

Secretary Bill Fienning presented a work in progress. He told the story of a very ill, rich old man who planned to disinherit his three sons in favor of an animal rescue shelter, giving them only a \$100 bill and their mother's necklace. His sons used a magical monkey's paw they had obtained from a bruja (witch-woman) to cure their father in exchange for giving them his money. The monkey's paw lifted itself from its box to shake the father's hand, sealing the deal. But because that was the last wish the paw could perform, the sons disrespected the magical paw by throwing it away when they left. As they were arguing, their car crashed, killing them, and the monkey's paw had turned the \$100 bill into a scrap of worthless newspaper. The moral being that you should respect these magical powers.

Bill Fienning

RING 93, DUBUQUE, IOWA – Tri-State Magic Club

3rd Sun., 2:00pm, Adam's Dance Connection, 900 Jackson, Dubuque, Iowa

JIM MCCREA, President, (309) 235-6215
E-mail: jrmpfc@gmail.com

During the meeting, Phyllis Fishnick performed "Professor's Nightmare" with jumbo cards. A very interesting effect with well-made jumbo cards that would play great for small stand-up shows.

Walking Magic Bob performed an effect called "Stretch" by Dan Hauss. To his surprise no club members had seen this before. One rubber band was intertwined through four fingers and another band on the other hand was able to penetrate and link through the intertwined band.

Mark Pepelea performed an effect called "Flipped Out" by Wayne Dobson.

Chris Westemeier performed "Mo' Monte" by Max Maven. He showed three blue backed blank playing cards, placing a color sticker on one to be the "money card." Chris then showed how the money card can appear anywhere in the

pack, bottom, top or middle. The money card is then shown to actually be red backed and finally the words "Pick this one" suddenly appear on the red back. Chris later showed "Crazy Signal" by Yasukazu Niishiro.

Adam Kieffer put his knowledge of cardistry to the test and performed a shortened of Paul Gertner's "Unshuffled." He began with a "shuffled" deck pulled from the tuck box. Adam then took a permanent marker and wrote some dits and dots on one side of the deck to form a code and with each perfect Faro shuffle the word unshuffled started to appear from the code, first, eight times, showing that the deck was indeed still shuffled. After the next shuffle, the words appeared four times, then two times, again showing that the deck was still shuffled but the cards started grouping together. After the last shuffle, UNSHUFFLED was perfectly written on the side of the deck, and the cards were shown to be in perfect unshuffled order. Adam had to execute six perfect Faro shuffles to perform this effect. For his second effect he performed two of the effects that were purchased from Jack's collection. The effect started with a multi-hinged box that was opened completely to show that it was empty. After closing the box, stirring it, and placing it back on the table, he opened the lid to the box and proceeded to pull a string of four silks knotted together out of it. Adam then grabbed a change bag and placed all four silks (red, yellow, green, and blue) into it. After having a spectator say their favorite magic phrase, he pulled one silk that had all four colors on it, out, and then showed that the four silks had disappeared.

Jim McCrea called up Phyllis and Chris. He asked both to think of a number between one and twenty-five, but to make sure it wasn't the same number, he asked Phyllis for an odd number and Chris for an even one. Phyllis said, 21, so Jim dutifully counted cards one-by-one from the top of the deck and handed her the twenty-first card. Reassembling the deck, he turned to Chris who said eight. So, Jim counted off seven cards and handed Chris the eighth one. Then Jim said he would try to find the matches of each card. That is, if Phyllis had a red five, he would find the other red five and if Chris had a black king, Jim would find its matching black king. With a flick of the wrist, that task was instantly accomplished. Jim announced that the name of the trick is "Fooler!" by Paul Gordon, which appeared in his One-Man Parade in the May issue of *The Linking Ring*.

Later in the month, Ring 93 performed for students at the East Dubuque Library in East Dubuque, Illinois. Phyllis Fishnick had the

honor of performing the opening trick using letters and then she performed the color changing plum. Chris Westemeier performed a stop light effect using a board with three spots. Mark Pepelea performed the very entertaining "Vanishing Bandana" effect. Walking Magic Bob performed his go to effect, the classic "Cut and Restored Rope" into a "Professor's Nightmare" routine. He told a cute story with the three different ropes representing polar bears trying to safely find their way home.

After the stand-up show, magicians taught some effects to those in attendance and performed some close-up effects. A great time was had by all the magicians, adults, and children.

Bob Beardsley

RING 94, HAGERSTOWN, MARYLAND – The King Ring

Meets 4th Weds. each month, 7:30 p.m., Williamsport Redman Tribe #84, 16129 Lappans Rd., Williamsport, MD

Web site: www.kingmagicring.com

CHARLES JAMES, President / E-mail: khandu1@aol.com

Ring 94 members and guests gathered on July 23rd in the Soda Shop at the home of member Jerry Mullenix. Located in Jerry's basement, the Soda Shop is an actual reproduction of a 1955 diner with original pieces, a snack bar and dining booths. It was a great place to start the new year and the Ring thanks Jerry for opening his home to us.

There was a brief meeting which included electing Jerry to serve as Sergeant-at-Arms (filling a recent vacancy) and welcoming a new Ring 94 member, Jason Wratchford. President Charles James conducted a swift meeting which included making plans for the coming year. The Ring revisited old themes and came up with a few new ones. Lecturers will be announced as they become available and booked. One new theme will be "Backwards Night". I am not sure how that will proceed but the magic and especially the meeting should be interesting – and fun to write about. Other themes include a dealer-demo night, auction, Grab Bag Night and more.

Members of the Ring have stepped up to perform at several Redmen's Club events (mainly for children). This is how we "pay our rent" for meeting space. Thank you to those who have volunteered. We are also looking to partner with the Redmen's Club for an upcoming fundraising event. Congratulations to Karen James who won the 50/50 drawing.

Following the meeting members shared magic. New member Jason Wratchford offered a card effect with Charlie James as the "volunteer from the audience" then shared information on where the effect could be found. Joe Cole performed the "Arrow Trick" with great patter and

a custom finale that fit in perfect with our meeting location. "Backstage with the Magician" was the choice of Jim Greer to share with members and guests. Host Jerry Mullenix closed out the evening with clear empty glasses and then a production of colorful items from inside those glasses.

Jim Greer was the participation prize winner. Congratulations to Jim and thank you to Jerry for hosting our Ring meeting. The August meeting will be Ring 94's Annual Family Picnic featuring outdoor magic and magic with food.

Karen James

RING 96, LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA – Merlin Eifert Ring

Meets 3rd Sat., 7:00 pm at the Seal Beach North Community Center,

3333 Saint Cloud Dr., Seal Beach, CA

Web site: www.Ring96.com

CLIFF GERSTMAN, Secretary / E-mail: Cliffg37@verizon.net

On Saturday August 16th, Taylor Hughes came to visit Ring 96. Taylor is well known far and wide as an excellent magician, an author and lecturer.

Taylor conducted our 6 p.m. pre-meeting workshop. He did a "memorized deck" routine and taught the moves that went into it. The first was Lennart Green's "Angle Separation." Next Taylor taught us a very simple locator card system. The trick ended with an incredibly simple way to separate the deck into the four suits, a crowd pleaser for a lay audience. Taylor ended the workshop by teaching us a routine you can do on a borrowed cell phone with no "apps" required at all.

Vice President Kevin Papke opened the meeting and soon introduced Taylor as our lecturer for the evening. The first thing Taylor did was tout the use of video in practicing and rehearsing.

Taylor asked everyone to think of a sport. He had a paper shopping bag on the table, and he called on a volunteer to name the sport. "Bowling" said the volunteer! Taylor made a face and asked, "Is that a sport?" He took the bag and pulled a tennis ball out of it. Then he lifted the bag and turned it over, and a few tennis balls rolled out. Finally, out came a bowling ball clattering loudly onto the floor. Taylor finished this routine was a discussion of pre-show work and forcing.

Taylor handed a spectator an airline sized bag of Cracker Jacks to hold on to. He found a volunteer wearing an engagement ring and called her to the front. Taylor borrowed the ring and placed it onto a large colored cloth. Although the ring could be felt wrapped in the cloth, it soon vanished. The bag of Cracker Jacks was opened and the prize inside was an orange

opaque capsule. The ring was in the capsule.

Taylor showed us how to use a black Covid face mask as an effective blindfold. This one will be sterile and fresh for a single user.

Time for a book test. Taylor had two books, a mystery novel and a dictionary. He rifled through the pages, stopping on command. He had three different volunteers remember the first word on the page they stopped at. He took a pad and a marker and wrote a word on the paper. It matched the first word chosen. The second word he wrote was "Airplane" which was wrong. Luckily there was a previously folded paper airplane nearby. Unfolding it revealed the correct word. He wrote again for the third word, but all he wrote was 13715. This left a lot of confused looks, until he shouted out, "The dictionary!" He went to page 137, and the page was missing. It had been torn out. The page was in a previously sealed envelope and the 15th word on the page matched.

Taylor brought out a quart sized jar full of jellybeans. He asked everyone to think about how many jellybeans might be in the jar. He passed a pad around and had three people write down their guess. He asked a fourth person to add the numbers and take an average. The number arrived at 1486. When he turned the jar around, an envelope was revealed. Inside was a piece of paper with the number on it. He also showed us his version of "Topsy Turvey Bottles."

Taylor talked about the value of storytelling. Always tell true stories and always make them meaningful to the trick you are going to do. He did "Gypsy Thread" while telling a story about his grandmother.

Taylor ended with an in-and-out shackle escape that ended with a watch steal. Another exciting evening at Ring 96. *Cliff Gerstman*

RING 102, SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA - The Maurice Rooklyn Ring

Meets 3rd Tues. of month at 7:30 p.m. at Northside Chatswood

Salvation Army Church Hall Cnr. Bertram and Johnson Street

Chatswood.

JACK SHARP, President / email: jack@sharpmagic.com.au

What a wonderful meeting we had in July. It was a lecture from Canad's Eric LeClerc who thoroughly entertained us from Go to Whoa. Eric was a bundle of energy and a very funny man. He started off his lecture by breathing in and out of a paper bag as if he was hyperventilating. He then blew into his thumb of the other hand and the bag still inflated; it then deflated as he sucked on his thumb. A very funny bit of business and very easy to do.

Eric then demonstrated his Spectra Pad. A spectator named any number from 1 to 50. Eric flicked through the pages of a spiral notepad

showing different desserts written on each page. Every page was numbered from one to fifty and sure enough, Eric revealed that he had predicted the dessert on that particular page (I can't tell you too much).

Eric then picked up a disposable razor and began shaving, when the razor suddenly became a book of matches, from which he tore a match and lit it.

Next, he poured a shot of vodka for one in the audience and one for himself. He made a special toast to Australian magician Amazing Jonathan (whom he admired), then sculled the whole bottle of vodka.

Then there was a brief sojourn into performing for children and Eric demonstrated a paddle he had made from Lego and made it change colour a few times.

After a short break, we reassembled, and Eric taught us his "Ambitious Card to Mouth," and a version of "8 Card Brainwave." He used a blind-fold which ended up turning into a piece of intimate apparel and then showed us his "Card to Spectator's Pocket," a fake wallet steal and his effect called "50 First Dates" where he shows a deck of cards and upon each is written something you might do on a first date, such as go to the movies, have a picnic etc. A lady chooses a card, but she has to promise to do whatever it says on the card. Due to a spoiler alert, I won't tell you what her card said, but you can find out if you buy the effect from Eric.

It was a very funny and entertaining lecture. If Eric is ever appearing at a magic club near you, don't miss him.

Peter Wood

RING 105, COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA – The Coe Norton Ring

Meets 2nd Thur. of the month 7:00 P.M. at Home of Tony Metze, 123 Holly Ridge Lane, West Columbia, SC
TONY METZE, Acting Secretary / Email: tonymetze@yahoo.com
Facebook: Columbia Magic Club IBM Ring 105
Website: www.IBMRing105.org

The July meeting of Ring 105 gathered at the home of Dr. Tony Metze. In attendance were Tony Meetze, Jay Altemus, Mike Kimble, Tony Campbell, Thomas Buckley, Ricker Soos, Russell Anderson, Scott Robinson, and Greg Edmonds.

After a brief discussion of magic conventions, the unofficial theme for the evening, "patriotic magic," was begun. Tony Metze performed an interesting "Card at any Number" variation, followed by a prediction using a variety of items in a decorative wooden "treasure chest" box, accomplished by the PATEO force. At Tony's request, several members offered presentation suggestions for the routine. Tony then performed a card routine in which the image of a blown kiss was transferred to a selected card (Tony's handling was not related

to the commercial version by the "Kissed" card effect, released in the 1980s).

Jay Altemus followed with a card effect with a comic patriotic bent (a red card, on a white background, from a blue deck). Thom Buckley shared a new metal cups and balls set he'd recently purchased and asked for performance recommendations. Tony Metze offered some, followed by a more in-depth demonstration by sleight master Scott Robinson. Greg Edmonds, with Scott, demonstrated his Slydini-inspired "standing lap vanish," which can be easily applied to a C&B routine.

Ring President Mike Kimble performed "Animal Prediction," a mentalism routine involving elongated cards containing images of multiple animals. By asking a few questions, Mike was able to reveal the previously unspoken selection each of three participants made moments before. I.B.M. Territorial Vice President Ricker Soos presented "All Things Patriotic," based on effects by Sammy Chiprut and Maria Ibanez, finishing with a large American flag "Blendo" routine.

Singer and Illusionist Russell Anderson followed with an intriguing idea in which he sought to capture the energy from his voice in a crystal goblet, then singing the same note an octave lower, using a larger stemmed glass. The energy was made visible by the agitation of a drinking straw placed in the glass itself. Russell recently opened a magic and musical theatre, called Fusion, in Elloree, South Carolina, and discussed upcoming plans, and asked for suggestions from Scott, who recently operated a successful magic performance venue in the Indian Land community of upstate South Carolina. Scott announced his plans to open a similar venue in Newberry, South Carolina, in the fall. The theatre will have a Victorian theme and will be located across the street from the town's historic opera house. Like his previous venue, the location will feature traveling performers, as well as the talents of Scott himself.

Greg Edmonds

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

The August I.B.M. 106 meeting exemplified what a club meeting should be. We had a nice turnout, great discussions, learned how to see through a piece of aluminum foil and entertaining magic! Stan Bladek presented Phil Schwartz with a refurbished folding magic table which he personalized for Phil. Michael Healy and Dan Sylvestri gave an in depth report of the FISM meeting in Italy as well as the Magic Live meeting in Las

Vegas this past July. It was mentioned that Craig Petty has two reviews on YouTube detailing the top tricks as well as the highs and lows of the FISM convention.

Mike Hammer was spoken of very highly in Vegas, The Sphere was mentioned as an unbelievable venue, and Chip Romero had a great display of Doug Henning memorabilia.

Mentalism was our theme for this summer meeting, and everyone contributed something different. Phil Schwartz started things off with “Menta Marvel,” a Tenyo trick involving a three-way prediction. Stan Bladec followed with his rendition of Harry Kellar’s “Emotion Box”. He revealed three items which resulted in deciphering the Disney movie *Toy Story*. His audience helper got a NJ scratch off lottery ticket for helping and it turned out to be a \$20 winner.

Michael Healy presented “No Comment” by Astor. A chosen card is found after the spectator freely eliminates piles of cards. No equivocation was utilized. He then followed up with “Acronyms” which is a great iPhone trick. By randomly clicking on Wikipedia links, the final reveal is the spectator’s name. Dan Sylvestri performed “Cocktail Cards” which utilized a Svengali-like deck. There was a great discussion about the possibilities on how to exhibit the final reveal.

Eddie Conrads demonstrated the make-up of a bottle to perform “Uncrushed” by Eric Ross. A crumpled up plastic water bottle repairs itself in the spectator’s hand. John Henderson taught us George Sands’ “Wichita Deal.” What an ingenious countdown prediction effect utilizing five cards and four spectators. He then brought last month’s *Linking Ring* trick to life, as a Si Stebbins set-up revealed a thought of card. He finished with Paul Draper’s “Freedom of Choice” trick. This is a clever five card matching effect in which the spectator calls the shots, but things work out in the magician’s favor.

Tim Fortune did the final effect by literally looking through a solid piece of aluminum foil. He had selected members of our group try it out. I must say I was astonished and had never known about this physical property in my six decades on earth. If you would like to know the secret, come on out to one of our meetings and share in the magic! *Stan Bladec*

RING 115, SINGAPORE – The Great Wong Ring

Meets 15th of each month, 7:00 pm, Function Room 2, #03-01, National Library Building, 100 Victoria Street, Singapore 188064. Website: ibm-ring115.org

JOHN TEO, President / Tel: +62504422, 97509017
10M Braddell Hill #01-49, Singapore 57931

I.B.M. Singapore Ring 115’s July meeting was held on Tuesday 15th July 2025, in Function Room 2, Level 3, of the National

Library building. Luke Tan and John Shutler were the hosts. Total attendance was forty-four, which was made up of thirty-seven members, two patrons, four guests and the legendary magician Bob Chua. The theme of the evening was “Bob Chua’s Lecture and Sharing By The Youths.” As usual it ended with five lucky draws.

Luke Tan opened with a warm welcome and announced a special treat of Bob Chua’s lecture. As there would be two performances by our youths before the lecture, Luke encouraged us to give feedback to them to help them improve on their magic.

Lim Shi Jie from Republic Polytechnique had a card merely thought of by a volunteer. He then magically dealt to the chosen card. Constructive feedback was that he was very skillful in handling the cards. However, he should work on engaging with his audience to make it more interesting for them.

Xuande Tan from St. Joseph’s College had a card (9H) chosen and replaced back into the deck. He split the deck in two and took five cards from the chosen half. The 9H appeared as the only face down card in the discarded packets and he was left with only four cards in his hand. In his next trick he cut the deck to the Ace of Hearts. He found the remaining aces after going through a routine of being unable to find them. Constructive feedback was he handled the cards very skillfully. He should look up to engage with the audience more, reveal the chosen card as face up in the face down deck, and build some drama when going through the phase of not finding the cards.

Bob Chua, an award-winner of close-up magic in Perth, Western Australia, performed and taught us his award-winning routines of several magical classics. “Professor’s Revenge” is his take on Professor’s Nightmare where three unequal ropes magically became equal and then blended into one rope. He showed us “Coins Across” from hand to hand, with the climatic appearance of a jumbo coin. In the “Three Shell Game,” a volunteer failed again and again to find the pea under one of three walnut shells. In the “Three Card Monte,” the volunteer could not locate the only queen from the two jokers, even though the corner of the queen was bent to indicate the target card. Bob continued with “Cannibal Cards,” where the four kings (cannibals) magically devoured three chosen cards.

After a 15-minute break, Bob Chua taught us a four kings to four aces transposition, production of a royal flush using black and red cards, “Dr. Daley’s Last Trick” and a prediction card magically became a volunteer’s signed

card. Bob closed with a “Chop Cup” routine using a sealed tin and Hershey’s Kiss chocolates.

Bob Chua had two items for sales. His own hand-crafted set of the Three Shell Game and a thumb-drive tutorial of his lecture.

Five lucky draws were conducted before closing the formal evening at 9:45 p.m. However, networking and exchange of tricks carried on vigorously long after the formal closure. *Kogi*

RING 116, WINDSOR, ONTARIO, CANADA – Windsor Magic Circle

Meets 2nd Wed. of the month at Windsor Family Credit Union.
ELIZABETH PROSSER, Secretary
prosserelizabeth@yahoo.com

Meeting Date: Thursday, July 10, 2025.
Attendance: Bill Dileva, Melissa Arditti, Brad Toulouse, Elizabeth Eirene, Tim Traynor, Tim Bailey, Helmut (Colm), Johnny Ould, Wilfred Gardner. Treasury update from Brad, club is in good standing. Windsor Museum Project: Final opportunity for anyone with past/present photos, props, promo material to donate (will be given back) items for the project, please contact Elizabeth asap. Appreciation letter read for Michel Lejeune’s performance at the Fish Fry, on behalf of Essex County District Masonic Association and Masons of the Essex County District. Tim Traynor, Librarian update: Online library is updated and fully accessible to all WMC members.

Blind Challenge: Guests Michael K. Potter (partner Faye Lynn) and Marc Rocheleau (partner Jan). Participants: Johnny Ould “Rope Off Block,” G.W Hunter’s “Puzzle Knot” (tying a knot in a rope without letting go of the ends), “Rope through Neck.” Improv conversation with a moose puppet. Tim Bailey “Freewill,” “Cheat to Win,” “Mind-Reading Lesson,” “Vanishing AirPods.”

Brad Toulouse “Torn and Restored Napkin.” Tim Traynor “Magical Triangle.” Bill Dileva “Anverdi Mental Die,” multiplying heart sponges, foot twisting illusion. Wilfred Gardner “Slop Shuffle.” *Eric Bedard*

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

The announced theme of our August meeting was magic with a plot based on gambling. Several members demonstrated their gambling-themed routines, as well as ideas about presentation of such routines.

Shawn Rivera started the performances with a

“Three Fly” routine using poker chips. John Hicks followed with a four-card monte routine, and Mike Wolgemuth performed a “Three Card Monte” with jumbo cards. Cliff Norris showed us some metallic objects that he used in place of cards for a monte routine. Shaun Rivera returned to perform a routine involving a simulated center deal. Stu Lewis demonstrated a couple of poker deals based on Texas Hold-em, which he had published in Tom Frame’s book on poker routines involving that form of poker.

Following these presentations, we moved to a general discussion of gambling motifs in magic. Jason Moore, who works as a dealer in a local casino, spoke about the necessity of separating his identity as a magician from his work at the casino, and he reminded the members not to mention his magic activities if they saw him at work. We then discussed some of the more common types of gambling-based magic, such as the “Jonah Card” and the “Endless Chain.” We also discussed the pitfall of such routines, such as making spectators feel bad when they kept losing to the magician. One member said that he reversed the routine so the spectator would always win. Another solution was to pit a married couple against each other so the wife could always win or giving the spectator several chips and reminding the audience that the spectator could not lose because he was playing with house money. Of course, we all agreed that we should never use our magic skills to cheat spectators out of their money.

After the break, President Kelly Rusk introduced a new topic, asking members to name the people who mentored them when they were beginning to learn the art of magic. Kelly led off by naming Len Sparagoski, whom he met when he first joined the magic club in Oklahoma City. Len, who led a remarkable life as a Holocaust survivor, chose Kelly, along with four others, to meet twice a month at his home. Stu Lewis mentioned Chuck Stanford (now deceased), a trade-show magician who was active in our Ring and taught a group of beginners. Shawn Rivera mentioned St. Louis magician Harry Monti. Larry Warshaw mentioned Langell, Alan Goodheart named our late Ring president L. C. Collier. And Tom Burgoon mentioned Bill Watson. In general, we discussed our obligation to help and encourage beginners develop into polished performers.

Tom Burgoon and Todd Lamanske then spoke about some humorous incidents where they got credit for accidents which worked out in their favor, such as having a selected card accidentally appear at the top of a deck without any action on the part of the magician. Finally, Bonita

Yoder performed a ventriloquism act she had been working on.

In short, it was an interesting meeting, because instead of focusing only on performances we had some detailed discussions of the ideas behind the magic, *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

Our most recent Ring 130 meeting took an unexpected turn but still delivered a memorable evening. Only five members were in attendance, Chris, Oliver, John, Dave, and Bill: making for a cozy and informal gathering. We had planned to screen *Lost in the Shuffle*, but due to a scheduling mishap, the wrong room was booked, and the video night didn't happen as planned.

Luckily, there was an abundance of pizza to go around, and the small group took full advantage of the relaxed setting.

What started as a setback turned into a fun and engaging evening filled with casual conversation, laughter, and storytelling. The group shared tales from past gigs, including unforgettable performances for big-name celebrities like Alice Cooper and Chuck Norris.

Although it wasn't the meeting we had planned, it turned into a nostalgic and enjoyable night that reminded us of the camaraderie that makes Ring 130 special. Sometimes the best magic happens off-script!

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@ibmring130.com for further details. *Chris Sharp*

RING 150, FT. LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA – Dr. Mark Horowitz Ring

Meets 4th Thur. in Tamarac, FL 7:30pm

JOHN PETRUZZI, Secretary (954) 721-3054

E-mail: johnpetruzzi@hotmail.com

On Wednesday, July 16th., Ring 150 held its monthly meeting. After a short business romp, we got down to some magic.

Mark Horowitz, our treasurer, reported on this year's FISM trials and tribulations. Apparently, it wasn't pretty. Mark also performed a card effect wherein one of several cards, having the same color backs, was selected and that card mysteriously changed with a different color back.

Ron Zimmer removed the cellophane from a pack of cards and pushed a ballpoint pen

through a hole in it but no one else could do it.

Bob Weinowitz showed four cards and two decorative covers and one-by-one the cards appeared between the covers.

Gary Rock had a one-hundred-dollar bill (yes, a real one) pad locked into a clear container. He displayed four keys. A spectator could use any or all four keys to try opening the lock to get the money but must offer one key to the magician. Guess what, the key offered was the one that opened the lock. The mage wins again.

Billy Byron performed the first trick he bought, "The Nest of Boxes." The containers were made of tin. The "twist" was using two sets. The first set had a note in it that said "see" the other box; wherein the second set was removed, and the signed coin was actually in it.

Dale Ledbetter, a new member, performed an outstanding version of "Any Card at Any Number" using the JOYAL Stack. Some of you may know that one, I sure as hell didn't. It's not an easy stack to remember.

Michael Easler reported on his recent visit to David Copperfield's Museum in Las Vegas. Mike said there were about two hundred people there. David himself greeted everyone. Unfortunately, you could not take any pictures unless you were standing in a particular spot, or you'll get kicked out. Mike also demonstrated, using a pack of cards, how card gamblers could shuffle a pack of cards and still be able to deal themselves the four aces or anything else.

Billy Byron

RING 153, BILLINGS, MONTANA – Billings Magic Society

Meets 2nd Tue., 7:00 pm, at Reflections, 1140 Sixteenth Street West, Suite 13, Billings, MT.

BRENT CROMLEY, President / E-mail: brent@cromley.net
(406) 208-4147

Our core group made up the full attendance at our July meeting, with Tony Shandy, Debbie Sherman, and Brent Cromley in attendance. Brent reported that he had been in recent contact with the couple of dozen magicians in Montana who are on his email list. There are about four or five magicians in the Bozeman area, about two hours away from Billings, and there are plans to consider a special meeting or event sometime in the Bozeman area.

Ring 153 is the only I.B.M. Ring in Montana, and in fact is the only one in this area of the country. James Jones leads an S.A.M. group headquartered in Butte that meets once a month online. Several of the state magicians try to attend both.

Tony and Brent, being two of the older I.B.M. members in the state, reminisced about the past, recalling the fact that there had once been an

I.B.M. Ring in Great Falls, and that the state had held I.B.M. Conventions there, in Billings and in Havre. The last one, held in Billings, was over fifty years ago.

But our meetings center more about magic than about history, and Tony began the evening's program with an extremely clever bill change. Not only did Tony change a one-dollar bill into a fiver in his "One To Five Transposition," he had prepared detailed instructions on how to perform the trick and gave one to Brent. Hopefully he'll keep some copies for distribution to others at future meetings.

Always wanting to experiment and practice new things, Brent had brought a trio of card tricks. The first, one of his own invention, was a simple thing based on a Si Stebbins stack. He would think of a card and somehow Tony and Debbie would stop dealing cards at that exact card. Brent followed that with a demonstration of Joe Barry's "LLL Force," so named by Barry because he felt it looked like something Lennart Green would come up with, hence "Looks Like Lenny."

Brent closed with another effect he had just learned from one of Dani DaOrtiz's several projects, this one called "Australian Chaos" from his *Borrowed Deck Project*. DaOrtiz is truly a genius when it comes to creating unbelievable card tricks with basically no intricate manipulation involved.

We have a lot of magicians in Montana, but we're spread out over many acres. In Billings we manage to keep an active Ring going and meeting in person monthly. We sometimes get visitors from within the state, but if you happen to be visiting the Big Sky Country sometime, give us a shout and perhaps we can meet up with you.

Brent Cromley

RING 158, GREENSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA— Wizards of the North

Meets 1st Sun 3:00 pm at Dino's Sports Lounge at 1020 Towne Sq. Dr., Greensburg, PA 15601

MARK DURIGON, President / email: mdur@comcast.net

Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/70055716443

Ring 158 met at 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, August 3, 2025, our second visit to our new venue. After a meal, the meeting was called to order by President Mark Durigon. Present also were Rick Bradley, Clint McMaster, Chuck Rygle, Rob Shook and Chuck Snyder.

Rick presented an effect where a spectator thinks of an animal on a card, and the magician draws a picture of the animal before the spectator even announces which animal he chose. Mark showed an effect taught by Mike Genovese in which eleven cards are mixed up in

various ways, and then the top card matches a prediction. It turns out that that top card is the only one with a true face, the others being blank. A Ted Lesley marked deck was shown, in which the markings are only on half of each card, so they have to be oriented appropriately. Mark also demonstrated "the amazing human calculator," an effect wherein five dice have a different three-digit number on each side. Spectators call out each number and the magician is able to instantly calculate the total (Heath Deciphering Dice). Mark also showed a Shogun Wallet and a Tenyo silk-through-phone effect. Chuck Rygle used a remote-controlled light bulb to select a card.

The meeting was then adjourned, and the next meeting will be on Sunday, September 7, with the theme "And the Academy Award goes to..." (your favorite trick of the past year).

Rob Shook

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 DALEY, President

E-mail: Tinybt1999@yahoo.com

President Steve Hinrichs started out the meeting by telling us about possible locations for the Tri State Magic Party hosted by Des Moines Justo Hijo Magic Club on Saturday May 16th, 2026. This is a concept Steve came up with almost two years ago to unify the Des Moines Ring 167 with other magic clubs in Omaha, NE and Kansas City, MO. Bringing all three clubs together once a year for a one-day "Magic Party" with all three clubs sharing in the day's events. A swap meet starts the day, followed by a pizza and pop lunch paid for by the hosting club, then an hour long "teach a trick" session with each club responsible for twenty-minutes presented to the group by each club's members. Steve suggests each club has four club members each teach a trick in a five-minute time limit. This way twelve tricks are taught and learned by all in one hour!

A break is followed by an hour-long Close-up Magic Show, again, each club is responsible for twenty minutes of entertainment, Steve suggests each club featuring four different club members from each club showcasing their talents. A dinner break (dinner on your own). Then the day's activities end with a public show. Each club provides twenty minutes of entertainment by four different club members. This allows each club to showcase twelve of their club members' talents during the day. The public show is open to the public with tickets sold at \$10 each. Four dollars from each ticket sold goes to the venue, and the remaining \$6 per ticket sold is split

between the three clubs (\$2 going to each club per ticket).

The 2025 Tri State Magic Party was a huge success hosted by the Omaha Club. Des Moines hosts 2026 and Kansas City will host in 2027. This is an exciting event our club members really enjoyed participating in this year in Omaha!

After club news was shared with the twenty club members in attendance, it was time for magic!

Marcus started off with the bullet trick with special guest Caleb James. Tricky Ricky then did a prediction card trick with Marcus. John Davis performed a legitimate real sandwich trick with peanut butter and jelly! Wow! Next to the stage Pat Driscoll with his floating silver ball! Tom Miller followed performing an amazing coin trick with a great story. George Noble then scared us with a nail-biting (but brilliant) smash and stab routine featuring Styrofoam cups and one long sharp nail! MagicJack, with his infectious personality, performed his great 41 Cents trick which he taught us earlier this year. He also taught us his version of the Magic Square. Jack is a born teacher and is always sharing cool magic tricks with us.

Our youngest member, Veggo, presented a copper/silver two-coin transposition. Veggo is just ten years old and performs as well as a seasoned pro working in Las Vegas. It was great! The Wizard of Waukee, Larry Reed, took to the stage with an oldie, but goodie, the "Broken and Restored Toothpick," truly a classic of magic (just like Larry.) He also shared several other interesting magic miracles from his box of tricks. Barb Funke is our resident professional ventriloquist. She demonstrated some of her voice-tossing skills. Gosh, she's talented! President Steve Hinrichs brought over Samantha Coady to invite two young busboys from the Felix and Oscar's Restaurant who was peeking through the curtains trying to see the magical marvels our amazing club members perform. "The Block Escape" trick fooled them badly. That darn Steve always amazing us!

We then celebrated club member Amanda Villainess' twenty-first birthday with a homemade birthday cake enjoyed by all. *Steve Daley*

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 opened the meeting with twenty-three people present. We had two visitors who were returning after being involved in this club years ago, Chuck Miselli and Mike Martin.

Club historian, Phil Schwartz, called his 113th Magic History Moment, "The Greatest Illusionist That You've Never Heard Of." It was the story of how George "Marquis" Kelly (1906-1980), reviewed by magicians and the entertainment media as the illusionist of his time (1920s through 1950s), ravaged his own success due to alcoholism. Marquis was a frequent no-show for his performances. Separately, Phil also showed a magician's scrapbook of letterheads collected between 1895 and 1910.

The monthly show opened with Dan Stapleton doing his version of a classy "Bank Night" effect from the September 2002 issue of *MAGIC* called "Playing for Keeps" by Bruce Bernstein, Barrie Richardson and Jim Steinmeyer. Five spectators are called up to "contribute" some paper money that is placed in a business envelope. Four other envelopes with fake money were distributed to the panel and one by one the envelopes were put in a paper shredder. By luck, or magic, the last envelope was opened, and it was the one with the real cash.

Dennis Phillips attempted an effect from Tony Griffith of England that is filled with audience interaction. The performer can know which unmarked cartoon drawing was selected by each of four spectators from a stack of sixteen.

Ari Rose called up a helper and had three bottle caps on the table and asked him to make a free choice and hide it on his person. The other two caps were hidden also. Ari was able to know where each of the caps was, and in the end, a freely chosen card was printed on the inside of one of the caps.

Mark Fitzgerald, our rubber band whiz, had the bands linking and unlinking and passing through each other. The act had real snap.

Vicente told an eerie story about death and used two coins, a copper and silver coin and one vanished with a chilling finish.

Steve Nelson closed out the show with a series of baffling card tricks. In one effect he kept shuffling the cards and the spectator always picked the same card. *Dennis Phillips*

RING 175, TAMPA, FLORIDA – Warren Hamilton Ring

Meets 2nd Tue., 7:00 pm, Tampa Gardens Sr. Living, 16702 N. Dale

Mabry, Tampa, FL 33618 / Website: <https://tampamagicclub.com>

TOM VORJOHAN, President

(865): 254-9254 / E-mail: TomVorjohan@gmail.com

The August meeting celebrated the "back-to-school" time of year with the theme of a Book Report – find something from a book (or DVD) that you can perform for the group.

Our President, Tom Vorjohan, kicked things off by announcing the lecture next month by Gustavo Raley, confirmed that we will be having

an auction in December, and our annual Tampa Bay Festival of Magic will be held Saturday, May 30 next year. Tom then shared his love of *Escaping Obscurity* that he just picked up at Magic LIVE from Mike Caveney; this huge book details the 1897-99 years of diary entries by Harry Houdini.

Our lifeblood and treasurer, Ken Spanola, shared his copy of *Artful Mentalism of Bob Cassidy* and disclosed that “The Telepathic Diary” effect explained was later released by Collector’s Workshop as their popular calendar card divination “Chronologue,” and he performed and explained it. Our jack-of-all-abilities and vice-president, Rudy Hernandez, had watched the Penguin Live Lecture of Jeff McBride to learn his “BEKOS” (Best Ever Knots Off Silk), and we agreed that it was a most excellent method he did to music including the comedy of having three holes in the silk at the end.

Referring to *Fred Moore’s Magic Business Lecture DVD*, Daniel P. (Fite) did his adaptation of “Money for Nothing” as he changed a five-dollar bill into four gold one-dollar coins and a one-dollar bill. Our multi-talented Geoff Williams went to his copy of the *Magic Hedonists’ Brainstorm in the Bahamas* to have a chosen card escape a plastic Ziplock bag and rise from the deck outside of the bag; a trick contributed by Daryl. Geoff also shared a couple other moves from the book that he is working with. Our returning guest, David Parker, got down on the floor to share two card effects from John Murray’s *Inside*, “Burt’s Nines” and “The Move.” He also showed a well-studied copy of Paul Cummins’ *From a Shuffled Deck* doing his hybrid version of a four aces effect.

Another returning guest, Nick Faz, discussed a bit about John Bannon’s 2023 *Barrage* which has eight effects; he then did the three-phase “Triplexity” and asked for input on the mentalism effect that he did very smoothly. Our retired professor, Joe Dobson, did two effects: first, a gorgeous instant transposition of two kings on the table and two fives in his hand. Then, from David Regal’s *Star Quality* book by Harry Lorayne, he did a color changing card effect called “Self-Evident.” Retired Hard Rock Casino dealer, Rick Casale, blew us away with a prediction effect where random two-digit numbers from various people ultimately matched the N.Y. Powerball lottery ticket in his pocket. Afterwards, he explained other effects possible with the Cosmos effect which were very impressive.

To end our performances, Tom Vorjohan shared a couple card effects from *Scarne on*

Card Tricks as well as his work that he has put in on Paul Vigil’s “Fast and Loose.” A great meeting for the fourteen of us who made it out for a magical evening.

Tom Vorjohan

RING 179, BALTIMORE, MARYLAND – George Dency Ring

Meets 3rd Tue., 7:30pm at Trinity Lutheran Church at 109 Main Street, Reisterstown, MD 21136

ANDY LONDON, President / Email: alondon@concast.net

The July 10, 2025 meeting was a joint meeting of I.B.M. Ring 179 and S.A.M. Assembly 6 held at our new monthly meeting location, the Chestnut Baptist Church in Timonium, MD. About twenty people attended. After the meeting door prizes were awarded.

Announcements: The annual Flea Market may be held at Gramercy Mansion. A new group, the Baltimore Magicians’ Alliance, is being created. On Nov. 10, 2025, Rich Block is giving a free lecture for the Columbia Conjurors.

Teach a Trick: Andy London started the meeting with a video of Amanda Nepo teaching a quick wine cork trick.

Performances: The meeting’s theme was 4th of July and birthdays. (1) Richard Kitterman performed a packet trick called “Dots Incredible.” Three cards with red dots, and three cards with blue dots, are mixed together, and then magically separate. (2) Keith Karas performed Chapeaugraphy accompanied with a story of Baltimore. (3) John Gazman performed a “Do As I Do” routine with two decks and a volunteer, which ended with a selected card being found. (4) Jared Raitzyk performed a card trick involving multiple steps and spellings, ending with the volunteer spelling down to their chosen card. (5) Eric Keenan performed a trick with a very long piece of white rope. Eric tied the rope into a chain of several interlocking circles of rope. He then made all of the rope circles magically separate into separate complete circles. (6) Howard Katz performed the tossed-out deck card trick. A deck is spread out and shuffled and then tied with a rubber band. Three audience members take a peek of different cards in the deck. Howard then named three cards out loud, and all three audience members’ cards were named. (7) Kenny Caplan performed a card trick, dealing a deck onto a table, and having two cards chosen. A volunteer puts marks on two cards. Kenny then shows that he had predicted both cards. (8) Rick Beatty performed an in the hand packet trick with four kings. (9) Jeff Eline performed a version of “Clippo” with a list of popular movies. However, in this version, the point where the volunteer said to stop was in between two different movies. Jeff acted confused about

the title of the resulting movie, which was the *Ugly Little Mermaid*. Jeff then revealed a prediction of a full color poster of a movie advertisement for the *Ugly Little Mermaid*. (10) Joe Harsanyi performed a coin trick. A coin magically changed forms, from a copper coin, to silver, and to a Chinese coin with a hole in the center. (11) Joe Pachino performed a matching card trick. A volunteer cuts a deck in about half. The volunteer picks a card from their half, and puts it on top of their half, face down. The halves of the deck are cut and switched. The volunteer looks in Joe's half of the deck for a card that is similar to their chosen card. Joe then picks from his half of the deck the mate to the volunteer's chosen card. (12) Michael Worsham used a Jeff McBride squeaker to perform "The Fly," where he follows the sound of a fly around the room, trying to catch the fly. He eventually catches the fly, and kills it with a cigarette lighter, as the fly "screams," but he is able to resuscitate the fly, which flies away. Then Michael performed Daryl's "Rainbow Ropes," tying red, white and blue ropes together accompanied by a story of different people coming together. (13) Dave Thomen performed a new time traveling themed trick that will be part of his upcoming show. Three volunteers separately picked an animal, a scientist, and a fruit. Dave then reveals a photo that correctly matches all three of their choices (a giraffe, Einstein, and a peach). *Michael Worsham*

RING 192, SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA – Victor Saint Leon Ring

Meets 2nd Weds., 7:00 p.m., at the Mission Oaks Community Center, 4701 Gibbon's Dr., Carmichael.
JEFFREY TINKER, Secretary / E-mail: jtinker53@yahoo.com
Web site: www.magic1.org/ibm192

Our August meeting theme was illusions, and we were not disappointed. First up was Bill Devon who gave a rendition of "Old McDonald's Farm" on his harmonica "playing card" and then made a water bottle glow with a mysterious purple light. Dale Lorzo showed us how you can appear to pierce a C-note, leaving it unharmed, and then produced a number of carrots for his rabbit Henry, but Henry was absent and so were the carrots when the bag was opened. Al Levasseur had some soap bubble fun, blowing them up and catching them, bouncing them on his hand, changing one to a solid ball, and doing a sort of Zombie routine with another.

Pepe Puglisi showed us an avocado, then unzipped it to reveal some money he found. Then he performed "Impossible Coincidence" (a card matching effect), and upon success, pulled a rolled applause sign from his jacket which retracted when he let go. David Wright

turned trash to treasure, making several pieces into coins and dropping them into his mini trash can, but when he poured them onto the table, they had returned to trash. Vikram made a "Square Circle" appear under a cloth, and produced a rainbow streamer, several silks, and a bottled water.

Ric Ewing had a lighted applause sign on a stand that seemed to have a mind of its own, borrowed a shoe and poured some Gatorade into it. He was supposed to put a small cup into it first but forgot. He attempted to dry it up and restore it in a machine he invented, but the machine burned the shoe up. He grabbed a box marked Lost and Found and went through several selections before finding the right shoe. It was fine and dry. The liquid was sent instead to the bulb that was inside the applause sign. Fine performances, all around. *Jeff Tinker*

RING 194, HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA – Space City Magic Club

Meets 1st. Thu., 7:00pm Madison Christian Church, Hughes Rd., Madison, AL
MATT GROWDEN, President
E-mail: Growdne@yahoo.com

Lecture August 7th, 2025: President Matt Growden came up with a way not to have a magic theme night. Have a lecture by Nick "Doc" Tweedy, magician and mentalist. Nick took a Thursday off from entertaining in the Rocket City, so he lectured Ring 194. This was Nick's first trip to Alabama, and he was pleasantly surprised that all Ring 194 members wore shoes. Nick presented his show, then showed the magic behind the effects. Amazing. Or madness. The Ring was fooled and excited to see how Nick did his magic.

Audience included President Matt Growden, V.P. Brett Boyer, Treasurer Dean Carter, Ring Reporter Patrick Brunson, Spiritual Advisor Jack Baldwin, Designated Driver for the Parkinson's Boys (Jack and Pat) Michael Brunson, Parking Lot Attendant Evan Tate, Ticket Taker Front Gate Kenneth Jordan, Star Maker Jared Cassidy, Grandfather Leader Bill Warren, Youth Leader K-9 Gavin Albright, Think Tank Ambassador George Patides, Twins with 41 Decks Payton and Russ Ward, Bomb Squad Commander Kevin O'Connell, Tooth Fairy Parade Representative District 9 Glenn Rudolph, and finally Ring 194 Fire Safety Inspector David Thompson. Two hours of pure fun. *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

Our August meeting was well attended with current members, a potential member, and three

international guests. We began with signing a Get-Well Card for one of our members and updates regarding the situation.

Jay led the business meeting. Special attention was given to the details of the upcoming shows by the Ring and some of the individual members' performances that are scheduled soon. While no theme was selected, or suggested, for September, Jay asked that at the October meeting, our focus at that meeting will be to bring lists of illusions, etc. that members have to help us to better plan for the upcoming Ring shows.

Following our business meeting, several of the members and guests performed. This particular evening had several effects that utilized a "Magic with School Supplies" theme. Dale Wheeler, Jay Foresta, Bill Stokes, Velma Kunze, Joe Hindman, and Nathan Ayers shared magic.

Dale began with a series of typical school-aged children's antics with crayons, glue sticks, bottles of glue, and a pencil. All of these helped to create the atmosphere of the classroom filled with children and the chaos that teachers endure. In his performance, we saw a variation of "Topsy Turvy." Dale inserted a bottle of glue in a construction paper tube and made it appear as if it had turned inside the tube. A very clever use of these theme-related props in a classic of magic.

Continuing with our school supply theme, Jay used a couple of standard composition notebooks to recreate a "Temple Screen" effect. The creativity was so inspiring to the audience that several asked to see the effect up close following his performance and offered suggestions on potential development and uses.

In line with school, Bill shared effects that he taught over the years in his magic camps. These extensively utilized school supplies. They were familiar, readily available, and cost-effective materials such as crayons, notepads, and coloring books. He performed the effects and then shared with the Ring some of the nuances and principles that would be demonstrated and taught in the classes. Three crayons were handed to a spectator, and he handed one back to Bill so as not to reveal the choice. Bill was then able to predict the crayon he was holding. Bill then went through a few moves and made the crayon disappear behind his ear. Rounding out the color theme, Bill did the "Magic Coloring Book" trick. He shared how the class makes their own coloring book.

Velma had some of us "walking down memory lane" to the performances of Jay Marshall. She gave each of us sections of a small newspaper/tabloid. She told a story with instructions on

how to tear the paper to create the necessary prop to complement the storyline. This particular story was a nautical one. Thanks for the memories, Velma.

The theme was used by two of our guest performers, Joe and Nathan. Joe began with a paper lunch bag, a pencil box, and a box of cards. In his performance, he asked Velma to select and sign a card. It was then placed inside the lunch bag and with a knife her card was revealed. This is a variation of Bill Abbott's, trick "Stabbed and Shot."

Joe used elements of Mark Mason's handling in his trick "Steely Dan." Rounding out our performances, Nathan had an "empty" box and from this, he produced a lunch kit, a pen, and coins. This effect was his own creation. Suggestions were offered upon request on further development of it.

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 living in our area and would like to come to a meeting, get in touch with us.

Charleen Stokes

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/27850309211/

The committee came up with a new format for some of the meetings. Each meeting would have a central theme and then, a chosen member would dedicate a few minutes to talk about his thoughts on magic and demonstrate some routines or ideas.

The first meeting in this format was led by Brian Rolé. The theme was an easy-to-carry all-purpose show. He advocated tricks that are easy to transport and that play big. He commenced with the "Losander Floating Bubble," which creates quite a spectacle without requiring much in weight and bulk. Then he performed and talked about a "Sympathetic Rubik's Cube" routine and followed this with a colour changing deck. He showed us his take on the classic "Cups and Balls" and the "Pen through Bill."

For his feature items, he chose "The Yarn," a Vernet version of the "Bill in Ball of Wool" and then spoke, without demonstrating it, "The Snowstorm in China" effect. He closed his presentation with a short endorsement of "Solo" a method for controlling the technical side of a performance.

After this, he created a kind of free raffle where he gave each one of the attendees a small magical gift. He did not end there, he contributed to the second part of the meeting, our

open session, by showing us a ring on rope routine called "Saw Ring Surprise" by Scott Alexander using the "Ring Handkerchief Vanish" by Mark Bennett.

Afred Mifsud followed with his prediction of a chosen guitar pick. Our President, Gwilym Bugeja, showed a magazine that transformed young celebrities to how they will look when much older. Then he went on to perform "This N That" by Paul Richards. Robert Ellul changed the colour of a silk and then displayed a simple straightforward version of the "Ambitious Card." Lorenzo Brincat changed the colour of a giant die multiple times and then split it magically into smaller multi-coloured dice. Our honorary President and I.B.M. Past International President, Vanni Pulé, created an unbelievable coincidence with Jörg Alexander's "Sympathetic Ten" and then closed the meeting by creating a variation of Richard Himber's "Slately Sensational".

The meeting after this included another highlight member. This time, it was none other than the previously mentioned, Vanni Pulé. He explained casually on some of his thoughts on performing magic and about not foisting it on others when it is not required. Among the tricks he showed us was his practical handling of the "Phantom Artist" for close-up and his signed folded card inside a fire wallet.

The theme of the meeting was informal restaurant magic when with friends and they ask us to perform. Brian Rolé had a card chosen mentally three times and found in a ribbon spread. Alfred released magically a nut and a die with a hole from a bolt, after having been sealed inside a tube. Gwilym Bugeja predicted the time on a watch and restored a torn piece of tissue paper. He also predicted an item from a digital menu. Christopher Gové changed the colour of a lighter as an opening to his close-up routine and then produced a simple lightweight table on which he performed the classic blank notes to bank notes. Bill Schweda managed to fool us when trying to keep our eyes on the ace.

For this meeting, we had two guests, one was Ed Johnson from the Netherlands who showed us some of his methods for controlling a card and the other was Callum from the U.K. who went through a very competent version of the "Three Fly."

Another meeting involving playing cards on stage had as its highlight Lorenzo Brincat. He spoke about tricks on stage with normal cards and highlighted the effectiveness of the cards across motif which he performs with sleight of hand. Then, as mechanical items go, he showed us his version of the torn and restored card in

sand frame. He also spoke highly about the strength of the card sword and the card in orange on stage and mentioned his impression of John Calvert performing the latter routine live. He also included as classics, the "Six Card Repeat" performed entertainingly and the "Card in Wallet." He finished by performing his variation of the "one and only" card where a mentally chosen card ends up being the only one marked with a big X in the deck.

There was quite a good number of visual card tricks at this meeting. Gwilym Bugeja paid a tribute to Wayne Dobson and his invisible card from an invisible purse. The original version of "B-Wave," "Giant Parade of the Kings," released many years ago by Supreme Magic company was Vanni Pulé's contribution together with a sliding jumbo card that represented Houdini trying to escape from a cell. Brian Rolé won in a just chance routine using purses and jumbo cards and a guest from the U.K., who comes to Malta quite often, Kyle Sarocen, created a prediction using multiples of nine. Kancho, another guest from Britain, transformed a blank card into a chosen card, did some balloon twisting and then "Twisted the Aces" in a grand finale, bring another successful meeting to an end.

Geoffrey Buhagiar

RING 219, LAFAYETTE, INDIANA – Bob Hurt/Ron London Ring

1st Thu., 7:00pm, Faith Community Center, Lafayette, IN
SCOTT STARKEY, President

Our evening was started by discussing our magical road trips. Scott reported on Caleb Wiles' amazing magic show at Gen Con, John shared about the wonderful shows and lectures at Abbott's Magic Get Together, and Benji shared about attending Brent Braun's shop and theater in New Albany, Indiana.

We then shared some amazing effects with one another. Scott scribbled down a premonition he had while driving over to the meeting. He then asked a volunteer to name a number. The premonition said, "Scott knew I would think of the number 47." Next, he had a coin signed by a volunteer. The volunteer squeezed the coin gently and bent it in their hand! Finally, Scott borrowed a bill and jammed a pen through it. He removed the pen and the banknote was unharmed. He wrapped the bill around the pen, and it visibly melted through it.

John continued the amazing feats by having a silk fly from across the room and into his awaiting hand. Next, he pulled out a lightbulb and screwed it into his hand and it lit up. He then twisted it into someone else's hand, and it lit up again!

Benji had a volunteer deal cards onto a jumbo

card. When the volunteer stopped, the card they stopped on matched the jumbo card!

Jon had a folder with a prediction in it. He had a bunch of cards with random four-digit combinations written on them. Three volunteers picked a card and then randomly provided a number to create four three-digit numbers. When totaled, they matched the prediction in the folder!

Robert had a pair of dice and showed us that the pips opposite of each other total seven, unless you magically move the pips! He had the pips switch places, switch dice, and eventually used the dice to count up from one to six.

Benji Milanowski

RING 236, CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS – Don & Dorothy Schultz Ring

Meets 3rd Wed., 7:00pm, (except Nov. and Dec.) at The Salvation Army, 502 N. Prospect, Champaign, IL 61820 (and Zoom).

KEN BARHAM, Secretary / E-mail: Kebram@aol.com

2318 Winchester Dr., Champaign, IL 61821 / (217) 841-5616

The meeting opened with discussion of the various online meetings and where/when to find them. CIMA Lecture: We will be hosting a lecture at the home of Chris and Julie Bontjes in Danville IL on Thursday September 4th at 7:00 p.m. The cost is \$25, and the presenter is Trevor Duffy. The 2026 I.B.M. convention will be in St. Louis, MO July 7-12 and the S.A.M. convention will be in Appleton, WI, July 1-4. That's a lot of great magic not too far from home.

Chris Bontjes presented a history of the Central IL Magic Get-Together that he received from Past International President Mike Stratman at the Louisville Convention. There was also discussion of Penguin's new *Ultimate Magic Crash Course* download, and the Justin Willman Magic Love show on Netflix. Thumbs up to both.

Eric Fang opened the magic with a video of his Fire Glove and a demonstration of "Entropy." Chris Bontjes showed us the S.A.M. Card Case and Clip; a Go Fund Me Houdini Deck he received and a Bicycle Prestige Deck. Ken Barham demonstrated "Rubber Delusion." Erik Fang took the stage again with his Pick Pocket routine and Poker Chip routine. Rob "The Professor" Higgins showed us his "Ring to Wallet." Chris Bontjes returned with "Sliced with a Twist," an old favorite with new patter. Dave Wernick told Rob about his "Night Out with the Girls" and Chris Bontjes closed us out by cutting to a predicted card.

The next meeting will be Wednesday August 20th at 7:00 p.m. at the Salvation Army in Champaign. Come early and meet us at the Manzella's Italian Patio. I try to be there around 5:00. The topic theme is strolling/walk-around outside magic. See ya at the meeting. *Ken Barham*

RING 250, FORT COLLINS, COLORADO – Presto-Digitators

Meets 2nd Sat. of month at 11:00 a.m. at Oregono's Restaurant, 4235 S. College Ave., Fort Collins, CO 80525

LEW WYMISSNER, President / Lewiswymisner@comcast.net

(970) 484-7014 / Web site: www.prestodigitators.com

The June meeting of the combined I.B.M. Ring 250/S.A.M. Assembly 292 began at Oregono's Restaurant back room in Fort Collins, Colorado with a quickly served lunch. Oregono's had been our new meeting place since our Greeley, Colorado venue shut down. The folks at Oregono's seem to enjoy hosting our meetings and we are pleased with this venue.

The June meeting Teach-in was done by Tim (TimFoolery) Pendergast, where he taught his routine for the "Multiplying Rabbits" sponge effect. Thanks to Mimi Hurtubis, everyone present received a set of this effect from the Ed (Mr. Magic) estate. Tim referenced that some "heavy" pros still perform this effect, including our good friends Bob Sheets and Eric Mead.

Open performances followed. Lloyd (Lloydini) Mobley performed his unique version of "ACAAN." Gary Hickox showed us an effect called "Dice Wave." Well done! Brian Hallisey performed the venerable card effect, "Cheek-to-Cheek." CJ Adams showed his "chops" with his rendition of a card effect called "Déjà Vu." Lew (Loudini) Wymisner showed a modified version of El Duco's "Coin in Watch" that utilized an Eddie Gibson Coin Unique Quarter.

The meeting ended with a give-away of more of Ed's magic from his estate. This combined with several months of magic given away to attendees from Lloyd Worley's estate ensured that some, if not all of these effects would continue to be practiced and even performed rather than be discarded.

The July meeting is a luncheon, again allowed a lot of comradery (schmoozing) during the repast. President Neil Holstein open the meeting with a discussion and with updates regarding items previously discussed as well as mentioning some upcoming magic shows in the area. Saturday, July 26, Lew (Loudni) Wymisner, Tim (TimFoolery) Pendergast, and Doug (Magic Zimm) Zimmerman will perform "Street Magic" shows at the Greeley Arts Festival in Lincoln Park, (downtown Greeley) from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. This will be Doug's first year performing at this event. Tim is a veteran here, and this will be Lew's 46th year.

The *Mysto Really Big Magic Show* (our friend Mysto the Magician) is scheduled at the Union Colony Civic Center in Greeley for September 27, at 7 p.m. Mysto (Mitch) is offering discounts

to area magicians. Neil spoke about a September "Field Trip" to Estes Park to Aiden Sinclair's

Underground at the Stanley Hotel for a lecture and performance by one of Aiden's visiting headliners. The club will pay for the lecture and for tickets to the show. Dan Fleshman will appear at our October meeting and give us his latest lecture. Something to look forward to, as Dan is a consummate professional (and he always bring homemade cookies).

This month's Teach-in was handled by Lew. He performed and explained an effect he first became familiar with by Nate Kranzo, that utilized two Mene Tekel decks. Lew's version he calls, "I knew you would say that" uses a different set of gimmicks.

Performances: Neil showed what diligent practice and time spent can achieve with his flawless performance of the "Cups and Balls." His sleights, wand-spin, etc., were flawless. Brian Hallisey gave a "works-in-progress" performance of Martin Lewis' "Sidewalk Shuffle." Doug performed "ESpecially Wild" from Lloyd Worley's collection. Cameo Heitzman announced some of her upcoming shows and presented "Letters" by Jerome Souloup, a prediction effect using Scrabble tiles. CJ Adams showed a card effect he called "Penelope Does It Herself." Lew performed a type of Spirit Slate effect that used a coffin instead of slates he procured from Nate Kranzo.

The meeting ended with more giveaways from Ed Hurtubis's collection. *Lou Wymisner*

RING 258, LEESBURG, FLORIDA – The "Magic Ian" Ring

4th Thu. at 7:00 pm, Perkins Restaurant, 27811 US Hwy 27, Leesburg, FL 34748

ROGER L. REID, Secretary / (321) 945-7500

E-mail: rogerreid1114@gmail.com / Website: www.Ring 258.com

President David Lyons opened the meeting precisely at 7:00 p.m. Under Good and Welfare both Jill Morgenstein and Coni Solomon are recovering from injuries and missing in action.

Under Old Business, the possible use of Hurricane Dockside restaurant as our meeting place was discussed again. It is more centrally located than our current meeting place. Andy Rohweder and wife Sharon visited recently and gave their approval. But... they want \$100 a month for the use of the room, or a guarantee of seventeen paying customers. This was tabled for the present, with the possibility of having our holiday party there in December.

Under New Business, new member Willem Riley was voted in unanimously. Willem is originally from Minnesota and is a beginner magician looking for encouragement.

Our August meeting theme is... "Thread".

(Not Rope, Not String, Thread!) Looking ahead in November we will have a lecture by Steve Hart.

The after-meeting magic was all about Thumb Tips. Each of the following effects used a Thumb Tip to accomplish the magic. Lyons was able to eat Skittles (candy) even though the package was still closed and caused a silk to change color by simply passing it through his hand. V.P. Andy Rohweder produced a yellow silk from the center of a larger green silk. He also demonstrated his D'lites and a color changing rose. David Ginsberg showed a large array of Thumb Tips and explained how to produce a live goldfish from his bare hands. He floated a rose in the air and played music from his fingers. Roger Reid borrowed a five-dollar bill. He folded it up and opened it again to find that the bill turned into a one-dollar bill! Regina Schiraldi closed the show with colored electric thumbs, a production of a long silk streamer from the bare hands and a Miser's Dream "gimmick".

We ended the meeting much earlier than usual due to the malfunctioning A/C in the private room we meet in. The temperature was somewhere near a butcher's meat locker!

Roger Reid

RING 273, CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA - Oliver Ring

Meets 3rd Thur., 7:30pm at the Burns Club

PETER FOSTER, Secretary

Email: pfooster@pcug.au

Hello all! Good meeting this month. There were five of us: Humphrey James, Richard Hunt, Chris Donohue, Simon Stacker and me.

I started off with a card trick, one I had learned at my very first club meeting back in 1990. A spectator shuffled the deck, then the magician removed one card. The cards were divided into two piles and one was cut to get a card, say the Jack of Clubs. Two other jacks were then located and then the prediction was shown; it was the last jack.

The theme for the evening was Magic With Small Objects, so I now did one that used a coin. A spectator attempted to predict the results of a coin toss while another spectator kept score. At the end the spectator scored five out of six. But then the scoresheet was turned over. On the back was a prediction of the final score, including which one the spectator missed. This was "Flip" by Wes Iseli.

Simon showed us another coin trick; one he had read in a magic book many years ago. It was a way of tossing a coin so that it did not actually spin, so that you could control which way it would land. The illusion that the was coin was spinning in the air was very good.

After this I got back to the card stuff. The magician made a prediction, removing three cards from the deck. The spectator then shuffled the deck and selected a card. The selection was turned face up to show a queen. The three predictions were the other three queens. The method involved some fairly big discrepancies, but it works. This was "Discrepancy City Prediction" by John Bannon.

Simon now did another card trick, but this counted as a small object as it was a mini version of sawing a woman in half. A deck of cards was placed into a plastic box. A dividing blade was inserted from above to cut the deck, then the two halves were clearly separated. Everything was put back and the cards removed, undamaged. Very nice. This was "Demi Deck" by Angelo Carbone.

Simon followed with one where a selected card was lost in the deck, then the spectator took the deck and, with the deck covered, took a card and inserted it face up into the deck. The deck was spread. The card next to the face up card was removed; it was the selection.

Chris now got us back to the small objects with two brass chips, one black and one white. The chips changed places, then they also changed colours. This was "Black and White Surprise" by Per Clausen.

Chris continued with a nut and bolt effect. A nut was screwed on to a bolt, which was then placed into a cylinder. Some appropriate gestures, and shaking, then the cylinder was opened and the contents tipped out, the nut was no longer on the bolt, and all could be examined.

Richard then sort of got us back to the "small objects" theme with a card trick that used two decks, one of them a miniature deck. This was "Do As I Do," a variation by John Carey.

I then did something a bit different, using letter cards and a list of words. The letter cards had multiple letters on each card and were used for "a game my mum used to play with me, to teach me new words". One person would choose a word from the list, then lay out the letter cards that made that word. The other person would then try to figure out the word. There were three phases of increasing difficulty, culminating in the letter cards being face down. But the magician was always successful in determining the word. An excellent effect. This was "Stegosaurus" by Phill Smith. Actually, my slightly extended version to allow for a bigger word list.

Simon finished with an interesting one that involved ten cards placed face up on the table. With the magician's back turned, a spectator would choose one of the cards. Then the magi-

cian would watch as another spectator tapped the cards one by one. The magician was able to identify the selection. The spectators figured that this used a stooge, although they couldn't figure out exactly how.

The next meeting will be on 21 Aug. The theme will be Wayne Dobson, in memory of his recent passing.

Peter Foster

RING 280, VALENCIA, CALIFORNIA – Mark Wilson Ring

Meets 2nd thu. of the month at 7:00 pm at the Newhall Boys & Girls Club 24909 Newhall Ave., Newhall, CA 91321

DAVE NORMAN, Secretary
E-mail: Davemagic@lagnor.com
Web site: www.ibring280.com

Members attending this evening's meeting: Joe Berman, Chris Canfield, Glenn Crites, Evelyn Ehler, Everett Gomez, David Norman, Clem Patafio, David Rabotnik, Jeff Weaker and D Hunter White. A shout out for David Rabotnik's magic show, *Conjuring for a Cure*, which is scheduled for October 26, 2025. David's non-profit organization Slow-Motion Magic raises Parkinson's Disease awareness.

Our meeting's theme was "Impromptu Magic" performed with common objects easily found wherever you have an audience, while dining at a restaurant, visiting a friend's home or any other location.

Joe Berman performed a mathematical prediction that only required a pen and paper. Jeff Weaker used quarters to illustrate a story about two pickpockets who each wagered a single quarter on a friendly wager. Jeff continued his routine by balancing a dollar bill with only the edge touching his finger. He concluded by telling us a story about looking at the moon and the stars as a child. As the story progressed, Jeff folded and tore a napkin into two pieces. He brought us a little of his childhood wonder when he revealed that the two pieces, torn from one napkin, produced a star and moon! Jeff did a memorable job of weaving an engaging story around these effects.

Chris Canfield performed an impromptu "Torn and Restored Napkin" trick with an unexpected kicker ending. Chris then performed a baffling bit of mentalism, the "Hoy Book Test" (David Hoy, *The Bold and Subtle Miracles of Dr. Faust*, 1975). D. Hunter White selected a card from a deck and handed the remaining cards to his volunteer. The volunteer dealt cards to the table, shuffled and continued to deal cards into a pile. About halfway through, they stopped and placed the remaining cards to the side, out of play. The volunteer then cut the packet, cutting to the match of the card D. Hunter had originally set aside. Dave Norman wowed us with rubber band magic. Glenn Crites had his volunteer

select one card and then return it to the deck and then select another card which was used to find the first. The volunteer cut the deck into two piles. From one packet the volunteer selected a card which Glenn slid back into the packet and set it aside. The volunteer then picked up the second packet and counted out a random number of cards and freely stopped at their choice. This second chosen card exactly matched the location of the first choice. (This effect was found on YouTube, "Card Magic Pro Oscar Owen.")

Evelyn Ehlers showed us a routine she has been crafting using the story of *Alice in Wonderland's* chapter on the celebration of un-birthdays at the Mad Hatter's tea party. She called upon Evaristo Gomez to choose three more volunteers. He decided where they would sit, in chair number one, two or three. Evaristo then selected which invitation, the blue, the yellow and the pink, were to be given to which guest. Evaristo changed his mind and switched two invitations. Evelyn then asked Evaristo to choose which teacup, again a blue, a yellow and a pink teacup. The teacups were miniature recreations from the Disneyland ride in homage to the animated Disney movie. Finally, Evelyn had Evaristo choose which guest would don hats standing for the "Mad Hatter," the "March Hare" and "Alice." The guests were then asked to open their invitations and read them aloud. Each invitation matched the seat number, the color teacup, and their character. Evelyn is a master at creating entertaining magic routines. Happy Conjuring!

Glenn Crites

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, John and Rhonda Donahue, Ronald and Angie Livingston, Danny Watson, Jimmy Roach, and Evan Dupree.

After dinner at some of the finest BBQ in middle Georgia, we began our August meeting with Danny Watson's riddle board with six on the average every month to challenge our brains. Once in a while he has to give us hints on to how to solve them.

Our discussion this month brought up by Evan Dupree is on the possible club magic show in the spring at some venue and he also mentioned a thought on some sort of after-school magic camp. More to come.

Our theme this month was magic from a book preferably the older the better. First up was Mike Fuller with a version of "Paper Balls in a

Hat" where he had two hats and the paper ball could travel between the two hats and even through the table and assemble under one of the hats. Looked good. He also did an effect he called "Afghan Bands" where he had newspaper rings glued together, approximately thirty-six inches long by two inches wide glued together at the ends to make one large ring of paper when split down the middle length-wise would end up in different shapes at the end depending if they were glued at the end straight or even twisted then glued. Looked great and amazing to boot. He also presented an effect with the help of Danny Watson where Danny picked a card, showed it around and then it was put back into the deck, shuffled and a paper plate was placed over a hat, then the deck of cards was dropped on to the paper plate and the selected card penetrated the paper plate and ended up in the hat. Nice effect.

Evan Dupree was up next where he presented his jumping rubber bands as he placed rubber bands on his fingers and they would jump from finger to finger, nicely done. Next with the help of Linda Fuller and Danny Watson, she picked a card, it was mixed in with some other cards on the table, and then Danny Watson tied a crystal on to Evan's finger and Evan hung the pendulum crystal over each card and when the crystal got hovered over the selected card it started wavering back and forth. Nicely done. He then followed up with an in the hand coin assembly where dollar sized flying eagles flew from one hand to the other. Looked great Evan.

Ron Livingston was up next with a version of the topsy turvy bill as when he folded the bill then opened it the bill would be in different positions each time. Then he folded it one last time and when he opened it again it had changed from a dollar bill to a twenty. Looked great Ron.

Up next was Danny Watson who placed a handkerchief on the table and put a coin on each corner and with two playing cards he started covering coins as they would jump from place to place finally resting all together under one card. Look good Danny.

John Donahue was up next where he took a handkerchief and tucked it into his hand and with a few magic words the handkerchief disappeared. He followed that up with a card trick where Danny Watson thought of an odd number and John dealt that many cards down on the table giving Danny his card at that number. John then grabbed up all the cards and asked Mike Fuller to think of an even number and John dealt down to that number and gave Mike his card at that number. Finally, John spread the cards out on the table and two cards were face up in the

packet with a red two matching the red two that Danny was holding and a black ace matching the black ace the Mike was holding. John then shuffled the cards and had Jimmy Roach, Angie Livingston and Linda Fuller think of a card. The cards were removed from the deck. The three cards were fanned towards Ron Livingston who thought of one of the cards. The three cards were put into John's pocket and with his mental prowess was able to remove the thought-of card. All looked great.

All performances were preceded or followed up by the books that they came from. A great night of effects and magic. September's theme will be magnetic magic. *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

June 24, 2025 was member performance night. First up was Can Tang with a routine themed around free will vs. destiny. Using four assistants and five chairs, each holding a sealed revelation, the seemingly free will choices of each volunteer was revealed to be predetermined. Each revelation was a perfect match to some unique characteristic of the individual who was seated in that chair. This performance was based on ideas from Jim Steinmeyer's "Choice and Unknown" effect with a kicker designed by Can Tang.

Next Neil Katz briefly borrowed a volunteer's phone. Placing it face down, the volunteer was asked to think of any major international city with an international airport. London, England was selected. A second volunteer selected a month and day to take a trip, November 5. The borrowed phone showed a photo baggage check from London. A small blank notepad contained one page with the name of actor Sam Rockwell. A google search for Sam Rockwell gave November 5th as his birthday! This digital magic trick was inspired by Jonathan Levitt using various electronic tools.

Scott O'Connell asked the audience for random card names. The "Ace of Spades" person came forward and the Bicycle card case with that partially printed card was shown. The volunteer chose another card from a spread of the deck. This Ten of Hearts was then revealed to have replaced the printed ace on that same card case.

Steve Longacre stepped onto the stage holding two wine corks, each cork with thumb and forefinger. The corks were mysteriously interlocked and unlocked while in full view.

Kevin Brown had a volunteer place his finger

ring in either of two small boxes. Several more identical boxes were added to the table and randomized by the volunteer. Brown, a.k.a. Profundo, applied his powers of divination eliminating all but the one box which contained the ring. Kevin next handed a deck of playing cards to a volunteer for a performance of "I Dream of Mind Reading" based on the work of Handsome Jack, a.k.a. John Lovick. Brown instructed the volunteer to mentally select any card. While Brown's back was turned various card deck instructions based on the mental selection were given. When the cards were returned, Brown correctly named the selected card. He next revealed the deck was an entirely blank face.

Richard Zucker first demonstrated his memorization of fifty-two numbers each written on a different card. He had three volunteers demonstrate their own similar powers by correctly naming either the number or associated card name.

Larry Campbell, Zeezo the Clown, performer, TV kid show host, and owner of multiple magic stores, produced an endless supply of magic from his pockets. Each demonstrating his ability to promote himself with various memorable giveaways containing contact information left with the spectator.

Alan Hanson emptied a bag of mini cellphones with emoji images on either face. Two assistants stacked the cellphones into a tower by matching emojis together. The completed stack showed the top and bottom emojis matching Hanson's prediction. This was replicated several times with different predicted outcomes each time. Hanson handmade the mini cellphones based on Michael Breggar's "Mixed Emojis" in May 2025 issue of *The Linking Ring*.

Brad Erickson returned to the stage with a parting gift. He invited six assistants to help him perform a trick using the magicians choice method to select a special person. This technique is called "Equivoque." *Alan W. Hanson*

RING 324, MIDDLETOWN, OHIO – Middletown Magic

Meets 1st. Fri. 7:00 pm, Tytus Avenue First Church of God, 3300 Tytus Ave., Middletown, Ohio 45042
LARRY HOLLINGER, Secretary
4515 Northglen Court, Englewood, OH 45322 / (937) 836-4359
E-mail: IBMRing324@aol.com

Provisional President Larry Taylor officially welcomed all nine of us. First, we welcomed guests Dave Earnhart and I. B. M. Territorial Vice President, Mike Bayer.

In our business section, we checked in on what other local Rings had planned. Ring 5 (Dayton) is having a Cookout and Swap Meet Friday August 8th. All Ring 324 members are invited. Mike reported that Ring 5 is growing

and told us of how they are reaching out to new faces. Ring 324's elected President has moved to Pennsylvania and the Ring discussed how to handle the vacancy. After much discussion and hearing a recommendation from the I. B. M.

Territorial Vice President, a motion was made and seconded to make Vice President Larry Taylor provisional president and install June Taylor as provisional vice president. We unanimously approved.

We plan on swapping coupons from our Entertainment Books next month. Also, we plan on having a Board meeting one half hour before next month's meeting. We took a quick break for refreshments brought by June and Larry Taylor. Thank you, June and Larry.

Time for magic! First was Larry Taylor with "Copper, Brass, Silver Coins" manipulation routine. Next was Mike Bayer with "Roll" with a blue deck of cards, One red card, one die, three volunteers and the correct prediction of die roll and selected card. Next from his emergency kit Mike pulled a three-pronged fishing hook with four strings. Only one string was attached to the hook. Three volunteers chose and pulled the loose strings while he had the hook in his mouth. This is "Hook" by Eric Ross.

Next, tRick Gaffney performed a trick he bought back in 1995 (thirty years ago!) for only \$2.50 at Walmart. With "The Ghost Deck" tRick was able to tell which card volunteer June Taylor thought of. Larry Taylor came back center stage with a deck of cards to perform three tricks for us: one "Pop Out Aces;" two "Spell Aces;" and three "Twist Aces". Dave Earnhart gave us a very smooth "Knots Off Rope" presentation. tRick Gaffney gave us a nice die manipulation routine called simply "Die".

Mike Bayer switched into story telling mode with the fun gangster loaded "The Road To Vegas". Mike Bayer also brought out his helper (cards) and confused us all as the prediction card on the table became the selected and signed card by June Taylor. This he called "Lee's Trick: The Queen Helpers". Larry Taylor finished off the magic section with three smooth card tricks.

So, if you are ever in Middletown, Ohio the first Friday of the month, please stop by and join us. From Ring 324 – The Friendliest Ring Around.

Larry Hollinger

RING 325, BRANSON, MISSOURI – The Tri-Lakes Tricksters

Meets 3rd Sat. of the month atl's Magic & Joke Shop, 6:00pm, 124
South Business 65, Branson, MO
DR. CHRISTOPHER BECK, President
E-mail: beckibmring325@gmail.com

Attendees: Jordan Stickley, Jim Holms, Thom Taylor, Gary and Mary Geise, Yak Williams,

Landon, Bo and Helena Greenway, Anthony Mullins, Jeffrey Pyzocha, Alex, Kirk and Brenda Damon.

At 6 p.m. President Jim Holmes called the meeting to order and indicated this is the last meeting Jordan will be with us as he and his family are moving to Japan on July 15. A cake and drinks will be available at the break so all can wish Jordan and his family a safe trip.

Michael Winston and wife Anna "Dangerous AGT," are performing shows on weekends then working corporate events during the week. There may be an opportunity in future to lecture for us depending on their fall schedule.

Our meeting September 20 at the Raza theater venue is set. Raza's show goes on at 2 p.m. and we are welcome to meet ahead of time in the Green Room. Our annual meeting October 18 will be at the Hamner's theater. At our July meeting Jeffery is to present the Teaching Moment. He will present rope ideas/training/illusions for us. He also has a Hula Hoop effect he would enjoy sharing.

Landon assisted Jim and said stop as the cards were riffled. The selected card had a corner torn off. The selected card was then held in a way that the missing corner was hidden. Eventually the torn part was discovered in the deck box.

Alex Damon was up first. He has been gathering up interesting glass bottles and created an effect around Water Magic. In 1691 it was thought that tea contained healing properties. Using his created glass contraption, he poured water into the top beaker. It flowed down through tubes passing through a tea bag and eventually ending in the lowest container as a lovely cup of tea. In 1692 the Salem Witch trials began and after that the "Water Magic Tea" was no longer available.

Landon Greenway was up next with his Devil's Eye/Lie Detector effect.

Jeffrey Pyzocha shared some of his favorite Tenyo effects and began by sharing a bit of Tenyo history. He has been collecting their effects for over 25 years and demonstrated a few.

Gary was up next with a "project in process" he is trying to put together. He started by grabbing the ends of the rope and twisting them into a knot that would hold a ring. The metal ring he tried first was too large and heavy. A smaller ring was tried, but still not what he was hoping to create.

Jordan Stickley next discussed creating something from nothing. He showed his hands empty (nothing) and then displayed some coins (something). He referenced the Gregory Wilson lecture as his inspiration.

Thom Taylor, a.k.a. Nicholas Nickelby, proceeded to demonstrate mind reading by sending

thoughts into the brains of his able assistants. He spread a deck out with his “marks-a-lot” writing implement. An X was marked on one card which was then mixed into the deck. When Mr. Nicholby asked, Lance chose the color red, Helena Greenway selected diamonds, and Belinda Damon said queen. When the deck was spread Gary was given the card with the X on the back, a 7 of Hearts. When turned over, the Queen of Diamonds also showed an X!

Next, he had Helena assist him with a board effect using cups and a mini baseball. Turning his back, he asked her to place the baseball under one of the cups. Turning around he eventually identified the correct cup under which she had placed the mini baseball. He next shared a stage-sized Tenyo effect with a board, a silk and a box. When the silk was removed from the box a bowl of candy was displayed and shared with the audience.

Jeffery closed the show with a card effect “A Dream of Aces.” Initially he pulled all four aces from the deck and displayed them on the table. He then merged them into the deck and proceeded to lay down four stacks of cards on the table, three cards were face down and top one an ace. After manipulating and turning the cards, they were restacked. Four cards were placed on the table upside down. When turned the four aces reappeared.

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

August 7, 2025, it was a good night for magic. The meeting started on time. Lester Mathis of Lake View, SC joined the Ring. Welcome Lester!

Our auction is November 16th. Magic at the Beach is coming up fast, September 11-13. Gene Voshell will give a talk on pieces from his collection August 28th at the Magic Loft. Then it was time for door prizes. After a short repast of sandwiches (thank you Paul) it was time for magic.

Paul McTaggart had two decks of cards and a necklace. Paul got the necklace and Lisa got one of the decks. She shuffled the cards and handed Paul half of the deck, looked at top card of her half and shuffled the cards. Paul took the second deck and the only face up card matched the one Lisa looked at.

Charles Graham showed a very nifty set of playing cards with caricatures of magicians on them.

Greg Holt performed “Red Hot Mama” and then taught Liam how to do the effect. I love this

trick. Next Greg had Lester deal cards into two piles and stop when he wanted, and turn over the top card of one of the piles. This card matched the one in Greg’s wallet.

Thaddeus Plezia performed “The Collector,” a great piece of magic with a Jack the Ripper patter. Bryan helped. It was spooky and fun to watch.

Lester Mathis had Billie, Jesse, and Lisa come up to help. Lester had them all go to a certain website, Lisa named a card, Billie named the position/number the card was on the list on the site, Lester counted that number of cards off a deck, and that card matched the selected card.

Liam Schuste did a good job with “Six Card Repeat.”

Van Brady showed a mixed deck of playing cards, Lisa picked a card which was placed under her hand and then named the card. Well done!

Bryan Wilson asked his helper, Lester, to cut off cards from a deck, show the bottom card and shuffle. Three extra cards went into a bag. Lisa had some cards, and Bryan went through her cards and found the chosen card. To finish, Bryan performed Dean Dill’s “Blizzard”. Another great trick.

Darrin Race asked Michael Bairefoot to name a number (36), and deal that number of cards to the table. Michael then dealt them into four piles and the kings ended up on top of each pile.

Jonathan Cox started off with “Card Warp,” yet another good trick. Then Lisa picked a card, the backs of the cards in the pack changed color from her card and then back again. To finish, Jon performed “Sneak a Peak.”

Ray Hardee showed a vertical row of kings, that went into a bag. Darrin pulled out one card from the bag. Ray had a set of duplicate kings and waved them over Darrin’s card and the matching card in Ray’s pack turned face up. Nice!

Dale Rabon performed “Fusion” and Rich Bloch’s “Grandma’s Recipe Cards.”

Michael Bairefoot shuffled a deck of cards and Lester, Charles, Jon, and Darrin each picked a card. The chosen cards turned face down in the deck and when the deck was spread on the table, the cards were separated into red and black.

Another fun evening of magic with good participation. Join us when you are at the beach, we’d love to see you.

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 August 14th at 7:30 p.m., Ring 359, The Jeff McBride Ring, met on Zoom. This

Ring began meeting on Zoom some time ago as the membership had shrunk due to the pandemic. Karl Johnson has taken on the role of president and facilitator and has invited magicians from all over to come and discuss and show of their magic.

Richard Zucker opened with an effect he had purchased from Astor at Magic Live. In this effect a deck of cards is presented, and a random card is picked and replaced in the deck. Through a series of eliminations, only one card is left, and it is the chosen card. At this point, Jeff McBride himself Zoomed in and showed us a very nice rubber band routine called "Stargazer" by Alan Wong. Neil Katz brought out a rubber band that had a more unusual shape.

Jeff demonstrated a couple of ways of producing mini rainbow streamer. Cliff shared a few stories from his past in doing his escape artist act.

We ended the evening with a discussion about Magic Live and other upcoming magic events and conventions. Karl Johnson would like to invite all I.B.M. members to join in for the Ring 359 September meeting. Ring 359 meets at 7:30 p.m. on the second Thursday of the month.

Cliff Gerstman

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 July meeting started off with President Daryl Rogers summarizing our board meeting notes and sharing thoughts on a Welcome Package for new members. In addition, he filled us in on the successful performances that five of the Ring 398 members (Daryl Rogers, Rick Morein, Tal Kuhn, Scott Hanneman and Kevin Koehne) participated in at a local festival.

Next, Marvin Roth had a delightful and insightful "front table" demonstration of a variety of servants; demonstrating their construction and use in magical effects.

The theme of the night was Visual Illusions. Daryl kicked the topic off with a variety of literal visual illusions - optical illusions - passing around a few interesting examples. He also demonstrated a Melissa and Doug toy Yhe Amazing Vanishing Wand based on the mirror box principle, plus a zig zag card illusion by Tenyo. Dr. Lynn Miner then performed a lovely classic linking routine, using small rings, with some original patter. Vice President Rick Morein came forward and gave a short lecture on the psychology of magic, performing a few classic routines to demonstrate the principles.

New member, Josh Eilers then performed a quick demonstration of "Perfect Oil and Water" and fooled a few of us with it. Next, Secretary Kevin Koehne performed a novel effect called "Level One," making a deck of cards vanish, leaving only the four aces. A discussion ensued about various similar gimmicks and uses for such gimmicks.

The always clever Marvin Roth followed up with a rhyming performance that described how he comes up with magic tricks, which included a lace through glass effect. The group talked about combining an interesting script with good magic.

Otis Day entertained us with a clever close-up illusion called "Overdraft," using credit cards as props to playful effect. He then shifted into "Key Master," a routine that calls for multiple participants, and thanks to the supportive Ring environment, he had the perfect space to workshop it. Moments like these highlight the value of being part of a Ring.

The final performer of the night was Tal Kuhn, performing "Double Cross," a modernization of the ashes on the hand trick, but done with a Sharpie.

And wrapping things up at the back table, Kevin Koehne shared a routine and offered insights from *A New Angle*, the latest release from Michael Feldman and Ryan Plunket. The book explores fresh approaches to the stripper deck.

Kevin Koehne

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The Linking Ring is always looking for new articles, including Parades with a theme, individual tricks, feature stories, biographies, historical essays, and other creative writing. If you want your work to reach as many people as possible, contact *The Linking Ring*. We have the largest circulation of any magic periodical in the world. Submit your articles or ideas to the Executive Editor. Address on page 4.

NEW APPLICATIONS AND REINSTATEMENTS

SEND DUES, CHANGE OF ADDRESS, AND APPLICATIONS TO:

I.B.M. HEADQUARTERS
13 POINT WEST BLVD.,
ST. CHARLES, MO 63301

OCTOBER 2025 57 NEW MEMBERS

HODGES, JAMES, Dothan, AL
BLATTY, MARK, Los Angeles, CA
PAMPENELLA, NICK, Los Angeles, CA
STIMATZE, JUSTIN, Covina, CA
VYAS, RAJIV, Los Angeles, CA
BERG, DAVID, Colorado Springs, CO
FAZ, NICHOLAS, Clearwater, FL
KAIMAN, DAVID, Gainesville, FL
HOLMES, STEVEN, Valdosta, GA
JOSLIN, DANIEL, Corners, GA
CHAMBERS, CARSON, Coeur D'Alene, ID
HOCH, IAN, Chicago, IL
BOOTH, RYLEE, Terre Haute, IN
MUNDELL, GARRETT, Terre Haute, IN
NICHTER, ANDY, Fort Wayne, IN
SPURGEON, BENJAMIN, Mount Vernon, IN
ZONDER, JORIE, Brownsburg, IN
GANZ, DON, Pepperell, MA
KNIGHT, JONAH, Leominster, MA
OATES, JACK, Brookline, MA
CLAYTON, ROBERT, Silver Spring, MD
KOPA, CORY, California, MD
OWEN, JESSE, Detroit, MI
DESROSIERS, KEVIN, Chesterfield, MO
TOMBAUGH, DOUG, Kansas City, MO
BRUNSON, GREGORY, Hastings, NE
HABIB, MUHAMMAD, Yonkers, NY
DECOSTER, MILES, Reading, PA
SCHUSTER, LIAM, Surfside Beach, SC
BRADFORD, JOSHUA, Pigeon Forge, TN
TALREJA, DEEPAK, Virginia Beach, VA
BEINLICH, FRANK, Buende, North-Rhine Westfalia,
Germany
BIEG, CARSTEN, Buende, North-Rhine Westfalia, Germany
BOHME, JOHANN MICHAEL, Buende, North-Rhine
Westfalia, Germany
BUDAMERT, ANDREAS, Buende, North-Rhine Westfalia,
Germany
DUMPELMANN, LUIS, Buende, North-Rhine Westfalia,
Germany
EHRlich, CHRIS, Buende, North-Rhine Westfalia, Germany
EHRlich, ANDREAS, Buende, North-Rhine Westfalia,
Germany

HEIDBREDE, MARCEL, Buende, North-Rhine Westfalia,
Germany
HEYER, ANDREAS, Buende, North-Rhine Westfalia, Germany
HIRSCH, LESLEY, Buende, North-Rhine Westfalia, Germany
JANSSEN, LISA-MARIE, Buende, North-Rhine Westfalia,
Germany
JUNGLING, NIKO, Buende, North-Rhine Westfalia, Germany
KLEFFMANN, MARCO, Buende, North-Rhine Westfalia,
Germany
LINDH, THEODOR LARS, Buende, North-Rhine Westfalia,
Germany
MEENTZEN, THIEMKE, Buende, North-Rhine Westfalia,
Germany
MULLER, KAI, Buende, North-Rhine Westfalia, Germany
REINELT, STEFANIE, Buende, North-Rhine Westfalia,
Germany
REINELT, MORITZ, Buende, North-Rhine Westfalia,
Germany
SCHMITT, PATRICK NIKLAS, Buende, North-Rhine
Westfalia, Germany
SCHUMANN, STEVEN, Buende, North-Rhine Westfalia,
Germany
SEIBERT, JOHANNA MARIA, Buende, North-Rhine
Westfalia, Germany
SEIDEL, CHRISTIAN, Buende, North-Rhine Westfalia,
Germany
TODTMANN, JANNIK, Buende, North-Rhine Westfalia,
Germany
VACKER, PASCAL, Buende, North-Rhine Westfalia, Germany
WEIERMANN, LEON, Buende, North-Rhine Westfalia,
Germany
WELLBROCK, ALINA, Buende, North-Rhine Westfalia,
Germany

7 REINSTATEMENTS

ARMSTRONG, JON, Burbank, CA
HENDERSON, WILL, Winter Garden, FL
LUNOR, LEX, Aurora, IL
HOOLE, RONALD, Brighton, MI
BARLOTTA, DENNIS, Mamaroneck, NY
MCGRATH, DENIS, Calgary, Canada
SUCKER, ANDREAS, Buende, North-Rhine Westfalia,
Germany



Answer to Pictures from the Past – from page 12

Long before he was known as the Silk King or Dr. Rice, Harold Randolph Rice was born in the village of Salineville, Ohio on May 22, 1912. Salineville is a little more than sixty miles southeast of Akron, Ohio. Even today, the population in Salineville is under two thousand residents. Back in the early 1900s, Harold, his parents Ira and Margaret, and his younger sister Bernice grew up in the quiet little village of Salineville with their friends and neighbors. His father worked at the Pennsylvania Railroad Company as a telegraph operator.

Harold became interested in magic in his youth. To make his show stand out, he would design and create his own silks for his magic show for his handkerchief act. He was an art major at the University of Cincinnati. He founded Silk King Studio in September 1929. In that same year, Harold joined the International Brotherhood of Magicians as member number 3491. He also joined the Society of American Magicians in 1934. In 1933, when he was twenty-one years old, Harold volunteered to teach a workshop class in commercial art and lettering for the unemployed at the University of Cincinnati. He took education seriously and wanted to learn not only how to be a better student, but also how to instruct others.

Along with his studies, Harold was performing at magic shops to help cover his college expenses. He mastered the method of dyeing silks and when other magicians saw the multi-color silks, they began asking him to make silks for them. In the 1930s, there were very few places you could locate quality magician silks. Most of the time, performers would go to department stores to purchase either colorful handkerchiefs or a ladies' scarf.

Magicians persuaded Harold to make a colored square of silk for them and became a magic dealer. His silks became known for their brilliant colors, durability, and workmanship. He founded Silk King Studio in September 1929. He and his wife Thelma marketed silks, silk magic, and a number of excellent beginner magic effects to the professional magician. In 1934, Harold noticed that inventors had difficulty protecting their rights after inventing or marketing new effects, so he proposed the formation of the Magic Dealers Association (MDA) to help.

It took twelve long years to finally confirm the MDA, but its success brought magic dealers and inventors closer together. Being a member of the MDA gave other dealers and customers a sense they were being served by a business who was looking out for their interests. Harold served as chairman of two I.B.M. Conventions in Cincinnati in 1940 and 1942, and served as the organization's International Secretary from 1940 to 1946.

In 1940, Harold made the finishing touches to his latest addition to the Silk King Studio line – a wonderful, brilliantly colorful butterfly silk. He told his dealers this was only the beginning. Whether the performer was looking for Rice's "Patriotic Silks" or "Transpo-Silk" or the new "Butterfly Blendo," they knew his silks were made with quality and excellent workmanship.

Harold was responsible for enhancing the I.B.M.'s membership pride by developing various pieces of jewelry like rings, pins, and watches, a practice that continues to this day. He also began to work on the content and art plates for his next idea, *Rice's Encyclopedia of Silk Magic Volume One*. The five-hundred page book contained more than ten chapters and over three hundred and fifty effects, with more than one thousand illustrations. At the time, no one



else had thought of doing something like this in such a grandiose fashion. He published *Rice's Encyclopedia of Silk Magic Volume Two* in 1953 followed by *Rice's Encyclopedia of Silk Magic Volume Three* in 1962. In 1973, Harold announced he was working on volume four of the series but it never came to fruition. In 1993, Mark Trimble produced *Encyclopedia of Silk Magic Volume Four* without the Rice name in the title.

From the 1950s through the 1970s, Harold and Thelma kept busy selling silks to magic shops, magicians, and theater companies. Once you saw these silks – their wonderful designs, brilliant colors, and assorted sizes – you had to include them in your performance. You would read about a performer presenting a silk effect in the newspaper and before the article concluded, the reviewer would inevitably describe the wonderful colors and designs of the silks produced. You knew if the silk had the logo “SKS” in one corner it was a Silk King Studio silk.

Harold would attend various magic conventions, stop by dealers, and hand deliver orders so the dealers would have the very best silk effects for their customers. In the early 1980s, Harold issued a forty-page index for all three volumes of *Encyclopedia of Silk Magic*, which he sold at the cost of only five dollars.

In the early 1980s, I was booked to perform on a number of cruise ships, including the Royal Viking Lines. One of my first performances was on the Captain's Night Show, which introduced each specialty act by having the performer present a sample of their show. My selection was a fast-paced production of silk streamers from a top hat and a dozen roses handed to selected passengers, after which I picked up the streamers from my table, walked forward, and produced an Abbott's Super Botania. After the show when I was packing up my equipment, a well-dressed man and woman approached me. He smiled and handed me a note introducing himself as Harold Rice and his wife Thelma. We shook hands and he handed me another note. It explained he had lost his voice just before embarking on the cruise. He wrote a few more notes letting me know he liked the presentation of “his” silk streamers and the other silks I used. His voice returned a few days later and we spent the remainder of the cruise talking and discussing magic of the past, the MDA, silk effects, and possibly creating a booklet with ideas for cruise ship performers. What a pleasure (and a delightful surprise) it was to meet both of them. Once my cruise contract with the Royal Viking Line ended, Harold and I remained in contact for the next few years.

Harold continued to attend and occasionally perform at magic conventions, including the 1986 SAM Convention in Louisville, Kentucky where his lecture on the care and use of silks was well received.

In the early months of 1987, Harold became ill and was admitted to the hospital. After all that could be done, he returned home where he passed away on July 10 at the age of seventy-five. During Harold's lifetime, he not only made it possible for magicians to be able to present excellent silk effects but also made several contributions to the educational field: founding the Philadelphia Art Alliance, as well as serving as president of the National Association of Schools of Design and as the vice president and program chairman of the Eastern Arts Association. He was also regional representative of the National Art Education Association, advisory art editor of the twenty-volume children's encyclopedia *The Book of Knowledge*, and was named art editor of the *College Blue Book*.

If you're considering performing a silk effect, you might consider browsing through any of the volumes of Harold's silk books. Visit Ask Alexander (www.askalexander.org), and don't forget to add a search for Harold Rice's long-running *Linking Ring* column “My Pet Effects.” You will find numerous ideas and useful effects. Should you be looking for Silk King Studio silks, visit www.SilkKingmagic.com to browse the current line of silks Harold and Thelma started selling many years ago. You'll find everything from twelve-inch silks to streamers to wonderful picture silks.

Gary R. Frank

Events – from page 29

management, and, most importantly, how to make magic play big, no matter the venue. His professional tips alone were worth the price of admission.

Dan's career is as impressive as his magic. In 1973, he began as a demonstrator at Merlin's Magic Shop in Fantasyland at Disney World's Magic Kingdom, later moving to the legendary House of Magic on Main Street. In 2005, he appeared on the cover of *The Linking Ring* magazine and earned the Best One-Man Parade Award. His lecture has been a hit at magic conventions in Ireland, as well as for audiences at both the Magic Circle in London and the Magic Castle in Hollywood.

For Ring 112, this evening wasn't just about great magic, it was about momentum. The club has found its rhythm again.

Jim Driscoll

A Magician's Speech – from page 71

knowledge. Robert Houdin (allegedly) said, "A magician is an actor playing the part of a magician." Furthermore, a magician is an actor with a speaking role. Smart magicians do not limit their schooling in drama to what can be learned from other magicians. Why should magicians limit their schooling in speech to what they can learn from magicians who chatter about patter?

George Hunter is a retired dean and distinguished professor from a divinity school. He completed four degrees, including a doctoral degree in speech from Northwestern University. He has written more than twenty books, many translated into other languages, including Armenian. He has been married for fifty years to Ella Fay – a retired, distinguished professor of psychiatric nursing. They have three grown kids and four grandkids. George is eighty-seven and still writes, speaks, performs mentalism, and pumps iron.

I.B.M. YOUTH TRIVIA CONTEST RULES

(Continued from page 37)

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 37.**

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF MAGICIANS

The Linking Ring



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ADVERTISING RATES AND SPECS

Deadlines are the 5th of the month, the month prior to publication date. (Example: an ad appearing in the December issue must be submitted by November 5.)

SIZE	New Ad	Standing Ad (Repeat from an ad on file)	If ad is NOT print ready digital file, add a 1 time per ad set up charge of...
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