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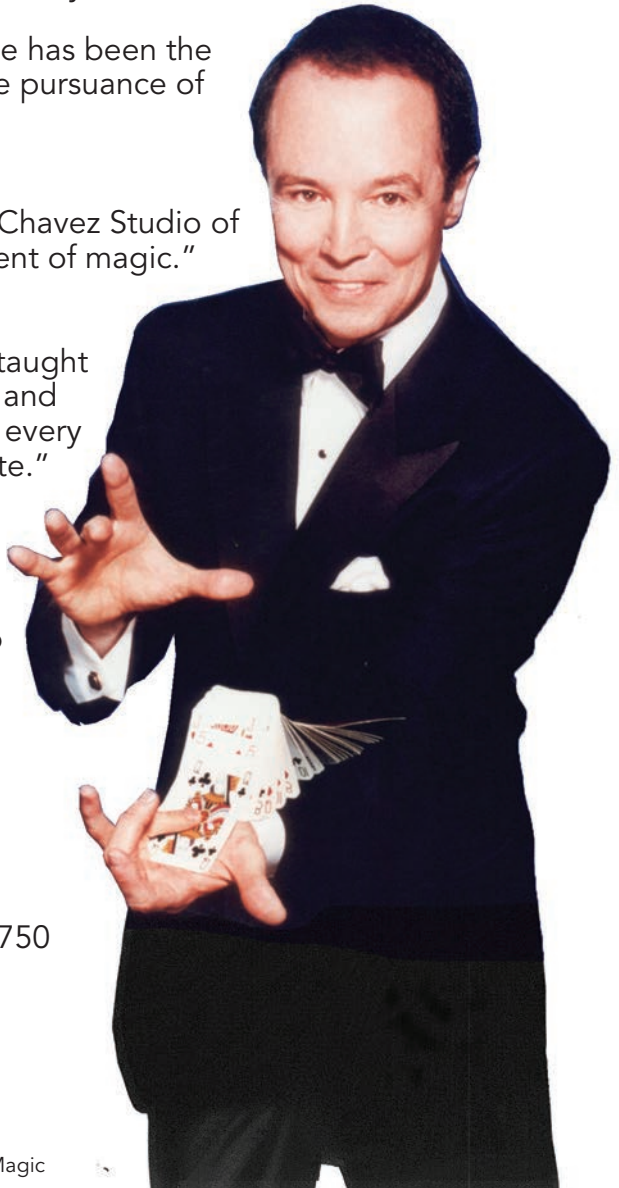
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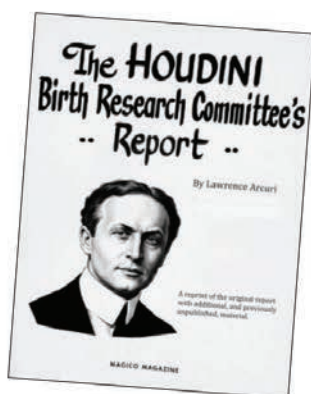
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Performers will appreciate **DALEY REVISITED**, featuring new dual enhanced convincing displays, and a solid psychological sell. As a bonus, Steve adds his Triumph-based lead-in, with an insane cutting sequence in the middle.

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

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Over the years, some I.B.M. members have allowed their active membership status to lapse because their dues were not paid. Provided that the lapse of membership is relatively short, not exceeding three years, the person may have his or her membership status *reinstated*, provided that a full payment is first made for all back dues owed. A reinstatement restores the original membership, as though the lapse never occurred, and the member's "continuous membership" span is not interrupted. Therefore, a reinstated member does not lose his or her "credits" toward induction into the Order of Merlin, which requires twenty-five or more years of continuous membership. Note, however, that only one such reinstatement may ever be considered for the purpose of adjusting a member's Order of Merlin eligibility.

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

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



From the Editor

SAMUEL PATRICK SMITH

Grandma and the Great Houdini. At birth, my chance for survival was dicey. I don't recall the event, but records show me weighing in at four pounds, six ounces. I was kept in an incubator for ten days, with my family anxiously peering in at me from time to time. To this day, heated breadbaskets make me nervous.

When I finally escaped, Grandma Smith came to our home to help care for me. Throughout my childhood and beyond, Grandma remained one of my biggest fans. I opened my first box of magic tricks from Douglas Magicland at her house, and she was always a willing spectator when I had something new to show.

Years passed. I grew up, went to college, and did what any sensible journalism graduate would do – I started performing magic shows for a living. Yet, Grandma still held me in high regard, and we remained close. Throughout her eighties and into her nineties, I called her frequently, wrote letters, and visited when I could make the five-hour drive.

The year I turned forty, the seasons of life made it necessary for Grandma to move to a nursing home just two miles from my house. Over the next seventeen months, I visited her almost every day. In years past, we had talked about family history and her life growing up in South Georgia. Now with almost daily visits, we covered a lot of ground. She rattled off recipes, told stories, and helped identify people in old pictures. With plenty of time on her hands, she remembered things to tell me and was often waiting with a new story or interesting piece of information when I arrived.

One day as we were talking about my interest in magic, she startled me with a thrilling revelation. "You know," she said,

"I saw Houdini escape from a box." This was one story I'd never heard before. My mind was instantly in a whirl. Where could she have seen him? When and where would Houdini have been appearing in Georgia?

Grandma continued. "They put him into a big box and then sealed it off – hammered it shut." I sat on the edge of my seat, riveted by her account.

"Then they wrapped chains all around the box and lowered it into the river." Which river? The only city near her would have been Savannah.



"Then, a little later" – Grandma chuckled in fond recollection – "his wet head popped up from the water, and he was waving at everybody."

Still sitting on the edge of my seat, enthralled by her story, I asked, "Where did you see him?"

"On television," she replied innocently. "They had a documentary about him a few years ago. It was interesting."

President's Page

JASON MICHAELS



I just returned home from the British Ring Convention in Buxton, United Kingdom. I was invited to perform, lecture, and attend this excellent convention by Moira Fletcher, the president of the British Ring.

This gathering of magicians was truly joyful. The attendees were friendly and outgoing, and I felt a familial warmth in the air. We often talk about how the annual I.B.M. Convention is our “family reunion.” I’m pleased to report that feeling of family is very strong in the British Ring, too.



British Ring President Moira Fletcher with International President Jason Michaels.

I have to admit, I was a tad nervous to perform for them since I had chosen my Renaissance-themed Cups and Balls act as part of my set for the convention’s Gala show. In it, I play the part of a Shakespearean mountebank – complete with British accent, of which I do not normally have!

The British audience must have found it endearing, because their response was very enthusiastic. I enjoyed speaking with so many magicians afterward who were kind with their compliments.

I also must report just how impressed I was by the Gala show. It was held at the Buxton Opera House, which is a beautiful

theatre. While I do not have official numbers, I believe the audience numbered somewhere around 600-700 people. That is an extraordinary turnout!

On the flight home, I thought about how the convention had brought their Ring together to celebrate magic and each other. It made me wonder how many Rings host a mini-convention or magic day annually to give their members something to be excited about and work together to produce.

While producing a full convention is a major undertaking, planning a magic day seems very doable. I love how undertaking an important project can bring everyone together. It also seems that the cost to produce a magic day should not be prohibitive if your members volunteer to help. Additionally, producing an annual magic day (or half day) would give your members something to look forward to. It would also give your Ring a reason to share magic with your local community. Not only would the public be interested in seeing a public show, but other nearby magicians who are not affiliated with your Ring would probably want to attend. After all, magicians love magic!

An alternative to producing a magic day would be to produce an annual magic show. If you have a strong stable of performers in your Ring, producing a public show is another excellent way to engage with the public and do the thing we love to do the most: perform magic for people!

I’d love to hear how your Ring is currently engaging with the public. Do you put on a magic day? Are you performing an annual magic show for the public? Sharing magic with your community spreads joy and amazement, and also helps introduce the idea of becoming a magician to the next generation – all worthy goals.



Pictures from the Past

THE LINKING RING

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THE
Linking Ring

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1949

ROBERT PARRISH

When Robert Parrish was twelve years old, he saw a performance by Gerald Heaney (1899–1974), who toured under the name “Heaney the Great,” in a show Bob never forgot. Heaney’s performance struck something in the young man that stayed with him throughout his life. Karl Fulves, the American author and editor of numerous publications, called him “one of the most originalminds in magic.” To learn more of the life and career of Bob Parrish, turn to page 144.

Magic Down Under Profiles of Prominent Australian Magicians

By Kevin Casaretto

Les Levante

Leslie George Cole, better known by his stage names “Levant,” “Levante,” and “The Great Levante,” was an Australian illusionist born on March 5, 1892 in Sydney, Australia. He is often considered one of the greatest magicians in the world’s history and has been described as Australia’s most famous magician.

Cole is credited as the creator of the “Impaling Illusion,” in which a performer appears to be impaled by a sword, pole, or other object. He was involved with magic as early as 1907, when he founded what is now the fourth oldest magic society in the world, the Australian Society of Magicians.

In 1927, Cole began a world tour that included the Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, Borneo, India, Russia, China, Japan and England. The tour lasted thirteen years. In 1939, the I.B.M. honored him as the “World’s Number One Magician.” He continued touring until 1954.

In recognition of his contributions to magic, the Academy of Magical Arts awarded him both the Performing Fellowship and the Masters Fellowship. Cole retired in 1977 and died on January 20, 1978.



HOUDINI'S OBSESSION

By Samuel Patrick Smith

The rags-to-riches story of Houdini has fascinated the public – and magicians – for a century since his death on October 31, 1926.

Houdini's dramatic success contrasted the struggles of his scholarly father, the rabbi of a Jewish congregation in Appleton, Wisconsin, who suffered years of poverty trying to provide for his family. Eventually, Rabbi Weiss moved to New York City, and with the help of his son Ehrich – the future Houdini – scraped together enough money to send for his wife and other children.



An iconic photo of Houdini in his library at 278 113th Street in New York City. The bookcases now reside in David Copperfield's International Museum and Library of the Conjuring Arts in Las Vegas, Nevada.



Perhaps Houdini was not the last magician to keep his new acquisitions a secret from his wife. He enlisted the help of his private librarian to smuggle new treasures into the house.

Poverty continued to haunt the Weiss family in New York, and the rabbi was forced to sell his small collection of books to survive. Perhaps this stinging moment in his father's life – parting with his precious library – came to Houdini's mind years later when he, as a struggling young magician, began selling his own books to make it through an economically bleak period.

Fast forward to 1904, and Houdini's financial success made him talk of retiring – yet he was only thirty years of age. His childhood and early days in show business had been filled with financial humiliation. When success came, it was massive. With money pouring in, he was generous with others; he was quick to help orphans and the elderly and to encourage struggling performers (except escape artists). At the same time, he knew how to spend money, as he amassed one of the greatest collections of magic books and memorabilia in the world.

When Houdini purchased a brownstone at 278 113th Street in New York City in 1904, he paid the staggering sum of twenty-

five thousand dollars. It sold in 2018 for 3.6 million dollars. The purchase of this home and the subsequent library and collection that filled it were more amazing than the feats of magic Houdini performed. Earning a thousand dollars a week – and later up to twenty-five hundred dollars a week – when most Americans were grossing twenty-five dollars a week or less, Houdini had the cash flow to support both his home and his passion as a collector of materials on magic, spiritualism, and the theater.

Houdini's new residence – which he referred to as “the finest private house that any magician has ever had the great fortune to possess” – would become the focal point for his mammoth acquisition of materials on magic and spiritualism, which later were left to the Library of Congress.

By the time Houdini hired seventy-five-year-old Alfred Becks to catalog his library in July 1920, Houdini's wife Bess was on the offensive against the expanding collection. To avoid being seen bringing in new acquisitions, Becks would secretly drop packages at the front entrance, then go downstairs and ring the basement bell. Bess would open the door, happy to see him empty-handed. After entering the house downstairs, Becks secretly retrieved the books he had deposited in the vestibule at the front entrance.

Because of the enormous number of items, with new treasures constantly arriving at the twelve-room, three-story home, the time required to organize the collection was considerable. Becks moved in with the Houdinis. The sheer quantity of material, plus Houdini's habit of rubber-stamping his name in rare books, proved exasperating for Becks. Yet he must have enjoyed the work; he continued the task until his death five years later.

Houdini kept Becks busy. Everywhere Houdini traveled, he visited used bookshops and sought out private collectors, such as Henry Evans Evanion, to purchase their collections in whole or in part. At home, he advertised in the newspaper. An

ad in the August 19, 1916 issue of the *New York Evening Post* plainly stated his position: "As I possess the largest collection (private or public) in the world of material regarding magic, magicians, books, scripts, programmes, letters, clippings, automata, am still looking for anything that would embellish my collection of the subject of magic or mysteries. Houdini, 394 E. 21 St., Brooklyn, N.Y." For months after his death, packages and crates of books he had purchased to expand his biblio-empire continued to arrive.

Whether he was buying a few books in an old bookshop or a complete collection of thousands of volumes, Houdini's acquisitive instinct went unchecked. In addition to works on magic and spiritualism, Houdini amassed a huge collection of books about the theater. Even his faithful librarian Becks failed to reckon the extent of Houdini's collecting mania. The aging Becks told Houdini about a rare set of books on the theater he hoped to acquire at auction for his own meager collection.

The intelligence was too much for Houdini; he became obsessed with acquiring

the books. Not wanting Becks to know he was bidding against him, Houdini secretly sent a representative to the auction to secure the books. The saddened Becks returned from the auction and told Houdini that he had been outbid. Houdini, ashamed, hid the books in his basement. However, as magic historian Milbourne Christopher pointed out in *Houdini: The Untold Story*, "...he was never remorseful enough to present the treasures to his disappointed librarian." Yet when Becks died and the hidden treasures were brought up from the basement, Houdini wept.

Houdini's flaws were not unique. He struggled with the same temptations that befall many collectors, large or small. By referring to acquisitions as if an entity ("the collection") is buying them, friendship and fairness can then take a backseat. In this frame of mind, Houdini could have secretly outbid his friend Becks because he wanted the books "for the library."

A second danger of collecting Houdini experienced was in developing a sense of ownership of the history of magic. With his huge library at his disposal, he wrote,



Houdini in his library. A glimpse of his bookcases may be seen in the far left. COURTESY OF THE MCCORD STEWART MUSEUM



Bundles of books, scrapbooks, posters, flyers, and memorabilia began filling up Houdini's home in Harlem.

The Unmasking of Robert-Houdin, a book defaming his childhood idol. Frequently, he signed copies with this inscription: "The first authentic history of magic ever published." While he may have felt that he had a proprietary right to assess magic and magicians based on the rare documents in his collection, later scholars proved that the book was laden with inaccuracies and half-truths.

In spite of his failings, Houdini found a great deal of joy not in simply amassing the collection but in sharing it with others. Because of his efforts, rare items pertaining to the history of magic which may have been lost or destroyed were preserved. The Library of Congress received his magic and spiritualism collections, a total of 10,355 books, magazines, scrapbooks, and pieces of ephemera.

Though Houdini's wife objected to his continual acquisitions ("Now that you have them, what are you doing to do with them?"), and he generally spent his income as he received it, Houdini did not leave her destitute. At Houdini's death, Bess received a double-indemnity settlement of \$50,000 from his life insurance policy – the equivalent of nearly one million dollars in 2026 – and his estate valued at more than nine million dollars in today's currency. Despite decades of substantial spending to build up his collection, in the end Houdini made sure that Bess would not go without.

~

This article has been adapted from the author's column, "Letters from the Past," published in the October 2007 issue of *The Linking Ring*.

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Fifty Years of Escapes, Ephemera, and Houdini Lore: Preserving a Rhode Island Connection

By Lon Cerel

October 2026 marks the one hundredth anniversary of Harry Houdini's passing, and a remarkable piece of magic heritage remains preserved right here in Rhode Island. This year also marks my fiftieth year as a full-time, Rhode Island-based professional magician and entertainer. For half a century, I have acted as a custodian of magic history, building a museum-grade archive of manacles, stage-used apparatus, rare correspondence, and ephemeral artifacts belonging to Harry Houdini and his brother, Theodore "Dash" Hardeen.

To mark this historic centennial, I am partnering with the Rhode Island Historical Society in Providence for a special evening public presentation. For the first time in fifty years, I will be publicly displaying and discussing primary source items from my collection.



Newspaper coverage of Cerel's 1976 Bicentennial aerial straitjacket escape on Providence's South Main Street.

A Personal Tribute: Providence, 1976

My relationship with Houdini's legacy is deeply intertwined with the social history of Providence itself. During the fiftieth anniversary of Houdini's death in October 1976, I performed a high-altitude, upside-down straitjacket escape suspended

high above the pavement on South Main Street, an event featured in *The Providence Journal*. That Bicentennial tribute escape took place less than a mile away from where Houdini gave his final Rhode Island performances at the Providence Opera House, setting the trajectory for my next five decades of performance and preservation.



Cerel performs his upside-down straitjacket escape above South Main Street during the 1976 Bicentennial tribute to Houdini.

The Providence Connection

To understand the deep local ties in my collection is to trace that 1926 Providence engagement. In the first week of October 1926, while Houdini was headlining at the Providence Opera House, his wife, Beatrice "Bess" Houdini, suffered a severe bout of food poisoning. Desperate for assistance, Houdini hired a private nurse, Sophie

Rosenblatt (who went by the professional name “Robart”), who arrived on October 4 to tend to Bess.

Nurse Rosenblatt’s role quickly expanded beyond the Rhode Island run. When the show moved to Albany, New York, tragedy struck on October 11. While Houdini was being locked into the stocks and hoisted upside down for the Chinese Water Torture Cell at the Capitol Theater, a cable lurch caused the heavy nickel-plated steel cover frame to shift and smash down. In Houdini’s own recorded words:

“I met with an accident with the Water Torture Cell last night. The cover snapped as we were drawing it up, and I have some sort of a fracture on the left leg. The left side of my body is somewhat weaker than the right ... If the blow had not broken the cover, I was informed by a doctor who was in the audience that it would have cut off my left ankle.”

The Road to Detroit

Because Houdini was in a heavy leg brace and Bess was still recovering, Nurse Rosenblatt remained with the tour to provide continuous medical care as the company pressed onward through Schenectady, Montreal, and Detroit. She gained an intimate, personal view into both their private lives and professional routines.



Sophie Rosenblatt gazes at a photograph of Harry Houdini, fifty years after caring for him in his final days.

In Montreal at the Princess Theatre, Rosenblatt was present when J. Gordon Whitehead struck the fatal blows to Houdini’s abdomen on October 22 while Houdini

was reclined on a dressing room couch, unable to brace himself due to his fractured ankle. She traveled with the company to Detroit’s Garrick Theatre, observing Houdini’s sheer willpower as his body failed him. Her account tragically noted that as Houdini sat in his dressing room putting on stage makeup for his final show, he was in such agony that he was unable to open his eyes. She remained at his bedside until his death on Halloween, October 31, 1926.

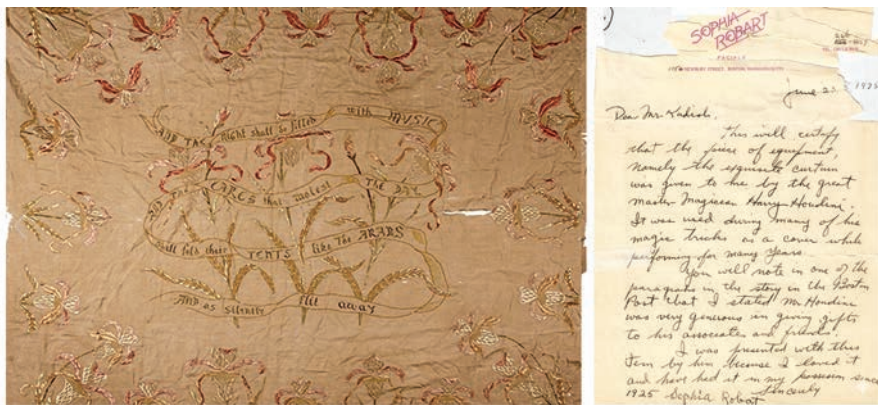
The Insurance Affidavit and the Gifted Tapestry

Following Houdini’s death, Bess faced a fierce legal battle with life insurance underwriters, who claimed, in an effort to avoid paying the accidental death claim, that Houdini had suffered from pre-existing appendicitis prior to Montreal.

Nurse Rosenblatt’s sworn affidavit on February 15, 1927 (stemming from her continuous monitoring of the household from Providence through Albany and beyond) proved pivotal. Her legal testimony established that Houdini was in sound health prior to the Montreal punches, securing the \$50,000 “Double Indemnity” payout that saved Bess from financial ruin.

In gratitude, the family presented Nurse Rosenblatt with a massive, ornate embroidered linen tapestry. Featuring pink and white irises on its border, it is embroidered with a line from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s “Day Is Done”: “And the night shall be filled with music ...”

I acquired this at auction, and it was accompanied by extensive documentation from the family of Sophie Rosenblatt attesting to her work for the Houdinis (including a copy of her sworn statement on February 15, 1927 regarding her time with the Houdinis and Houdini’s last days and death in Detroit), and a handwritten letter regarding the textile and her ownership of it (she describes it as a “curtain”), which stated that “the tapestry was used as a stage cover during many of Houdini’s magic tricks over the years.” Also included was a



(l to r): The embroidered linen tapestry, featuring pink and white irises and a line from Longfellow's "Day Is Done," gifted to Nurse Sophie Rosenblatt by the Houdini family. • Hand-written letter from Sophie Rosenblatt describing the tapestry and how she came to receive it.

photograph from 1977 showing Ms. Rosenblatt gazing at a photograph of Harry Houdini. The Potter Auction listing states that: "Beatrice Houdini was a talented seamstress and at least one other example of her elaborate embroidery has survived. This object was most likely an elaborate work by her hands, gifted to the nurse who was charged with her care, and then, who by her mere presence, also cared for Houdini in his last days in Montreal and Detroit before his untimely death due to peritonitis. A fascinating and unusual relic from Houdini's final years."

I recently met for lunch with Sophie's niece, Joan Silverman, who had preserved the tapestry for fifty years. Through her personal insights and provenance documents, this historic "curtain" entered my archive, completing a hundred-year circle that began right here in Providence.

Centennial Display and Primary Artifacts

The upcoming Rhode Island Historical Society presentation will feature primary source documentation and framed archival pieces, including:

The Beatrice Houdini Tapestry: The original embroidered stage-used linen curtain gifted to Nurse Sophie Rosenblatt, complete with family affidavits, sworn 1927 statements, and high-resolution photographs of Nurse Rosenblatt.

Stage-Used Restraints and Lineage:

Authentic handcuffs and leg irons owned by Harry Houdini, tracing an unbroken line of ownership from Houdini to his brother Hardeen, to Hardeen's successor Douglas Geoffrey, and into my archive.

Replica Daily Mirror Cuff: A hand-crafted representational replica of the famous 1904 *Daily Mirror* challenge cuff, used to demonstrate the engineering of his escapes.

The Weiss Family Silverware: An authentic, framed set of engraved silverware used by the Weiss family at their 278 West 113th Street townhouse in New York City. Houdini was known to say, "My Brain Is The Key That Sets Me Free!" On display is the silverware that fed Houdini's brain and body!

Chinese Water Torture Cell Scale Model: A detailed scale model of the signature illusion, illustrating the physical setup involved in the Albany accident.

Archival Ephemera and Press: Original 1926 Providence Opera House newspaper clippings, Albany accident coverage, and the 1976 *Providence Journal* feature detailing my fiftieth-anniversary aerial escape.

Preserving these items is about protecting the human stories behind the legend. Bringing together the Rosenblatt artifacts and Houdini's stage-used gear offers a tangible link to the quiet devotion that eased the final days of magic's greatest icon.



(1 to r): Handcuffs and leg irons owned by Harry Houdini. • Cerel's replica of the 1904 Daily Mirror challenge cuff, next to a photograph of Houdini. • The engraved silverware, on display, once set at the family table where Houdini said his mind was fed as much as his body. • A certificate of authenticity for the engraved silverware used by the Weiss family. • A scale model of Houdini's Chinese Water Torture Cell.



Letters from Theodore Hardeen to his successor.



Lon Cerel with Joan Silverman, niece of Sophie Rosenblatt.

Lon Cerel is approaching his fiftieth year as a full-time professional magician and entertainer. A Providence College graduate, he got his start opening for comedian Henny Youngman before pursuing a career spanning children's magic, balloon artistry, corporate and family entertainment, and, for the past fifteen years, mentalism for private and corporate audiences. He is a member of the Order of Merlin Excalibur and has served as artist-in-residence at a Rhode Island theatre for the past twelve years. Lon is also a lifelong collector and archivist of Houdini-related artifacts and history. Learn more at www.loncerel.com.

Marker for Houdini's First Suspended Straitjacket Escape Dedicated in Kansas City

By William Evans
Past International President

On Wednesday, September 9, 2026, I made a trip to Kansas City, Missouri, to attend the dedication of a marker celebrating Harry Houdini's first performance of the suspended straitjacket escape, which occurred on the corner of 10th and Main on September 8, 1915. The event was a joint effort by I.B.M. Ring 129 and SAM Assembly 738 and was sponsored by grants from the I.B.M.'s Endowment and Development Fund and the SAM's Endowment Fund.

The event kicked off that Wednesday at the Kansas City Public Library with a lecture by John Cox, one of the world's foremost Houdini experts. It was excellent and well received, with 174 people in attendance – mostly non-magicians. We were all amazed by the number of connections Houdini had with Kansas City.

The actual dedication ceremony took place on Friday, September 11, 2026 at 2 p.m. After Dennis Burk gave summary remarks, he introduced John Cox to the crowd of approximately 175 people. Jon explained that Houdini often performed publicity escapes to encourage people to attend his shows. He started by escaping from jail cells, but the problem was that there was no one to see it. Then he moved on to jumping off bridges while handcuffed into the rivers below. Although the public could see his bridge jumps, Houdini soon realized it was too dangerous and that one mistake would mean "good night." That gave him the idea for the suspended straitjacket escape, with the crowd able to see him in a safer environment.

For his first performance, five thousand people turned out to see him. Houdini was put into a straitjacket by two Kansas City police

officers, after which his feet were tied and he was hoisted 20 feet into the air, hanging upside down from the Kansas City post office building that stood at the spot in 1915. He freed himself from the straitjacket much to the delight of the crowd. The escape was a hit and Houdini now had a new outdoor stunt.

John says that Houdini performed the suspended straitjacket escape seventy-six times in different cities, but the first performance took place at 10th and Maine in Kansas City. Houdini called himself a "self-liberator," and the escape was meant to inspire the feeling in spectators that they, too, might possess a little "self-liberation."



Dennis Burks with the proclamation from the mayor of Kansas City, Missouri.

Ring 129 President Kelly Rusk then read a declaration from Quentin D. Lucas, the mayor of Kansas City, proclaiming September 2026 as Harry Houdini Month. The marker was then unveiled. David Sandy was introduced next, and he in turn introduced Lance Rich, who performed the suspended straitjacket escape live before the assembled crowd. David did an incredible job of hosting the escape and providing educational commentary. Once



(left to right): Historical marker on the site of Houdini's first public straitjacket escape. • Volunteers strap Lance Rich into a regulation straitjacket in preparation for his up-side-down escape in Kansas City. • A crowd gathers to watch Lance Rich's straitjacket escape.

Lance had been strapped into the straitjacket by two volunteers from the audience on that hot and humid day, he was hoisted by his feet into the air with a block and tackle suspended from a steel frame. Lance proceeded to escape from the straitjacket in a fantastic, professional, and very athletic performance.

It was a tremendous day. Thanks to I.B.M. Ring 129 and SAM Assembly 738 for their hard work in making all of this come together, and a special thanks to Dennis Burks for his over-the-top efforts.



Past International President Bill Evans with Houdini authority John Cox.



*Back row, from left: Shaun Rivera, Terry Mageissen, John Cox, Past International President David Sandy, Matt Gurley, Lance Rich, Janson Moore, Kelly Rusk, Dennis Burks, Guest, David David, Samuel Bricker, and Rod Sipe.
Front row, from left: Norbi Forero, Brad Lynn, Mike Wolgemuth, Cindy Wolgemuth, and Past International President Bill Evans.*

I.B.M. Honors Effective Ring Achievement Recipients

It may take a village to raise a child, but it takes many highly successful Ring organizations to make a Brotherhood. Through the recently installed Effective Ring Achievement Program, ten exemplary Rings (from as far away as Singapore) – large and small, young and old, some well-established and some in relative infancy – were officially recognized for their tremendous efforts, innovations, contributions, and accomplishments this past year. It all culminated in an impressive stage presentation at the opening

of our recent convention's Friday Night Gala, with more than 400 attendees in the audience. I.B.M. Past President Stephen Levine called members of each of the awarded Rings on stage to receive a well-deserved acknowledgement, a certificate of merit, and thunderous applause from an appreciative and attentive crowd.

The Effective Ring Achievement Program is not a competition – it has been created to honor noteworthy local Ring efforts. Much more significant than well-deserved



Representatives of several ERA-awarded Rings honored at the I.B.M. Convention 2026, joined by International Past

PHOTO BY I

recognition are the countless unique and innovative activities noteworthy Rings initiate throughout the year. Hopefully other organizations will follow their groundbreaking paths in the future. Successful organizations are always developing and learning from each other. Through a positive, continuous, and never-ending “road under construction,” an organization’s success, growth, and energized participation will inevitably follow. Within the awarded Rings, many activities were cited – too numerous to mention in a single magazine issue, but a few common threads seemed to surface repeatedly.

Always strong supporters of I.B.M. events, Ring 1 (St. Louis, Missouri) regularly hosts Open Mic Nights and competitions to promote the art, holds youth classes at every Ring meeting, and does significant volunteer work for hospitals and underprivileged children.

With a substantial growth in their organization’s membership, Ring 5 (Dayton, OH) actively recruits younger members via participation in STEM activities, hosts youth competitions, and maintains a presence at many local public festivals. They continue traditions with a formal induction of new members.

Enjoying a recent 29 percent membership increase in the year 2025, Ring 13 (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania) has posted over 130 consecutive *Linking Ring* reports as well as monthly Youth Trivia columns and has two members receiving Merlin Excalibur Awards for fifty-plus years of membership in the I.B.M. They’re currently heavily involved with planning a 100-year anniversary event in 2027.

Ring 21 (Hollywood, California) proudly hosts a very impressive and successful annual toy drive for their community, volun-



President Stephen Levine and International Treasurer Charles Arkin (fourth and fifth from left).

MICHAEL MESSING

tarily performing throughout the year for hospitals and homeless shelters, reaching out to over 160 people regularly with an exemplary and informative “FLASH” monthly newsletter.

Now one of the largest magic clubs in the United States, Ring 22 (Detroit, Michigan) has established a strong monthly meeting agenda which continues to attract attention within the entire magic community, recently hosting an extremely successful Michigan Magic Day Convention in 2025. Traditionally volunteering as performers at local public events, their membership actively participates and contributes to the I.B.M., with two I.B.M. Competition winners and several members belonging to the I.B.M. for more than thirty-five years.

With forty-six active members as well as 300 interested community members, Ring 96 (Long Beach, California) regularly hosts additional monthly sessions at local restaurants, often “busking” at nearby piers and pubs, assigning specific mentors for their fellow members, and several club members have been featured as “One Man Parade” contributors to *The Linking Ring*.

From as far away as Singapore, Ring 115 has enjoyed a very successful history of active participation in the world magic stage, previously earning recognition from the I.B.M. Education and Development Fund, actively working with other organizations to honor several Houdini celebrations, organizing overseas tours to visit other magic communities, producing several extended commemorative magazines, and welcomes AI technology to facilitate communications to its members.

Ring 194 (Huntsville, Alabama) regularly hosts public shows, a Kids Magic Camp, Trunk-or-Treat October events, several open houses for the community, maintains a DVD/book library for its members, and sends cards of encouragement to the I.B.M.’s Sick and Convalescent members. The organization proudly participates in the International Discover Magic confidence-building program for children and regularly obtains feedback via surveys from its membership.

Serving the Ann Arbor, Michigan area, Ring 210 has grown considerably in the recent past, hosting interesting monthly meetings, several open house sessions, two competitions, public parlor shows, and partners with the Plymouth Arts Council to present a week-long summer camp for kids. Each month they provide an extensive newsletter/magazine for their members and carefully track many important aspects of their club’s progress for future planning.

Working within the Green Bay/Appleton, Wisconsin area, Ring 398 hosts two meetings each month and uses a “Fail Forward Fast” philosophy – encouraging everyone at every level of magic to perform for fellow members at various activities. Members are provided with formal but constructive tips based on their meeting performances and the club is currently working on several Houdini celebrations for the public (including the *Masters of Illusion* TV show). They have been honored in the past with a New Ring Award from the I.B.M. Education and Development Fund and have been featured in several *Linking Ring* articles.

Everyone should be proud of their local Ring and every Ring should celebrate their unique ideas, approaches, and initiatives to strengthen their magic community. What’s going on with your Ring? What significant activities did your Ring implement and accomplish this past year? Perhaps your magic club should be honored in next year’s ERA Program. Participation is free and the submission process is easy to do via an online form which will be posted on the I.B.M. website in the near future. Stay tuned for further announcements.

Congratulations to our ERA Award recipients on behalf of the entire I.B.M. membership. Rings are the core of our success and we are all indebted to your club’s efforts. Thank you for effectively presenting the art of magic within communities everywhere!

Send comments or questions to:

Johnny New York,
Ring Relations Committee Chair
johsmi7646@gmail.com

Did You Know?

JOE HERNANDEZ



Bob Elliott

January 6, 1934 - December 7, 2010

The fact that I have just completed the translation of René Lavand's final book, *Vistazos* (Glimpses), enables me to happily recall that in the 1990s, New York magician Bob Elliott had invited me to go with him to pick up René at Kennedy Airport in New York City. Bob greeted René in his usual friendly and enthusiastic way, which at once made René feel as though he had come home after the long trip. The meeting was full of laughter, stories told in both Spanish and English, and a strong sense of mutual friendship that established the atmosphere for the remainder of René's visit.

While most people are familiar with well-known magicians such as Houdini or Copperfield, in New York City many magicians regard Bob Elliott – someone who liked to avoid the spotlight – as the true founder of their community.

With his wife Happy, Elliott spent many years quietly supporting magicians in the city. Although he worked full-time as a mining engineer, his greatest interest was helping others. Their home was a friendly place for magicians in New York and frequently hosted informal get-togethers, late-night jam sessions, and spontaneous performances. Magicians from all over the world would come by, knowing that they could rely on having a hot meal, a willing ear, and Bob's kind advice.

He made many significant contributions that influenced generations of local magicians. At Tannen's Magic Camp, Bob and Happy spent a lot of time and energy managing and supporting this well-known camp, helping many teenagers who eventually became professional magicians. Because of his patient teaching and his ability to encourage people, Bob became a favorite with the campers, some of whom have said he was the reason they remained committed to magic even after early disappointments.

Outside the camp, the Elliotts frequently arranged lecture tours, organized various events, and offered important advice to young magicians beginning their careers. Bob played a key role in bringing international stars to New York, giving the local magicians rare opportunities to learn from world-renowned masters.

Since the industry is highly competitive, Bob always invited artists to come and stay at his house, which served as a safe place for up-and-coming performers. He frequently provided struggling magicians and emerging talents with food, a place to stay, and advice, never expecting anything in return. Many people remember gathering late at the Elliott house, exchanging card tricks over coffee and forming long-lasting friendships in the snug living room. *(continued on page 42)*



Ring Events

THE INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF MAGICIANS

Ring 50 (Washington, D.C.) Celebrates Member Bob Patterson's Ninetieth Birthday

Ring 50's August meeting was dedicated to celebrating former I.B.M. President and Ring 50 member Bob Patterson's ninetieth birthday. Larry Lipman served as master of ceremonies and arranged a lineup of special guests to honor Bob with magical presentations and amazing stories of his life, career, and magical journey. Bob received video recorded birthday greetings from former I.B.M. Presidents Oscar Munoz, Shawn Farquhar, and Ken Scott, and from I.B.M. Vice President Jeff Sobel.

Unfortunately, because of illness, Bob was unable to attend, but the evening's events were generously videoed by Jimmy Minichello. Bob sent photos two days later showing him enjoying a piece of the birthday cake, wearing a balloon hat made by member Paul Belanger, and standing next to a poster signed by the meeting attendees.



Wearing a balloon hat made by Paul Belanger, Bob stands next to the poster signed by attendees at the meeting held in his honor. • Bob Patterson enjoys a piece of his birthday cake.

(PHOTOS COURTESY OF BOB PATTERSON)

Larry Lipman displayed a jumbo ninetieth birthday card for Bob that he had people sign at the recent I.B.M. Convention in St. Louis. The first person to sign the card was Lance Burton. Larry called on Augie Arnstein to read Bob's extensive and impressive biography.

Bob caught the magic bug at age twelve, and he won second place in his school talent show. He performed magic through college, where he earned a degree in electrical engineering. Bob joined the United States Air Force the day before he received his draft notice to serve in Vietnam. He received the Distinguished Flying Cross as a pilot, flying over 130 combat missions, and earned the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He retired after thirty years of service. He married his wife Nancy in 1959, and she helped him as an assistant with a floating act. They have two children and four grandchildren.

In 2005, Bob moved to the D.C. area, joined Ring 50, and quickly jumped into several leadership roles. He served as treasurer, editor of the Ring newsletter, and ran well-organized and efficient convention registration and check-in tables for the I.B.M. and Kaptal Kidvention. Ring 50 honored Bob with The Sabar Award in 2011 for his long-term dedication, leadership, and exceptional service to Ring 50 and the magical arts. Bob served as I.B.M. International President in 2017-2018.

To honor Bob, Augie performed a magical game-show-themed routine in which



(l to r): Event organizer and master of ceremonies Larry Lipman displays a ninetieth birthday card signed by attendees at the I.B.M. Convention. (PHOTO BY MIKE PECKHAM) • Augie Arnstein reads Bob's "short" biography. (PHOTO BY LARRY LIPMAN) • Arnold Fuoco joked about how many times Bob Patterson's picture appeared in *The Linking Ring*. (PHOTO BY LARRY LIPMAN) • Sam Brothers gets an assist from Joshua Young in performing Lennart Green's *Rain Man* shuffle. (PHOTO BY MITCH PRAVER) • Mike Peckham shows Danny Selnick and Scott Phillips the wonder of *Dean's Box*. (PHOTO BY MITCH PRAVER) • Dwight Redman tells the story of the little black dog. (PHOTO BY MITCH PRAVER) • Assisted by Danny Selnick, Drew Owen reveals a prize. (PHOTO BY LARRY LIPMAN) • Arnie Levin showed how Bob Patterson changed \$1 bills into \$5 bills to leave a tip. (PHOTO BY LARRY LIPMAN) • Ring 50 President Mitch Praver displays a Lifetime Achievement Award the Ring presented to Bob Patterson. (PHOTO BY LARRY LIPMAN) • Paul Belanger displays a ninetieth birthday balloon cake he made in Bob Patterson's honor. (PHOTO BY LARRY LIPMAN).

he called on three spectators to choose a place to vacation, a mode of travel, and an amount of money one would need for dinner. Augie asked, "Who is the world's best magician – performing now at Ring 50?" He humorously suggested the correct answer was himself. If someone answered correctly, they could choose one of three cards. Augie called on a spectator who chose a card. He first showed the unselected cards had nothing on them, but the selected card revealed his prediction that matched the vacation destination, mode of transportation, and the exact amount of money the spectator had chosen.

Arnold Fuoco took the stage and showed Bob how to save for his retirement. He displayed various magazine clippings that, with a quick flip, can become cold, hard cash. Arnold joked about how many times Bob's picture was in *The Link-*

ing Ring when Bob was the International President of I.B.M. "He must have set the record!"

Sam Brothers performed Lennart Green's "Rain Man," an impossible card shuffle routine. After the cards were shuffled, Sam correctly made four predictions about the allocation of the cards. Mike Peckham demonstrated the baffling *Dean's Box*. Dwight Redman told the story of the Kings and Queens with jumbo cards and then did a rising card trick. Drew Owen performed an impressive one-handed Pocket Nightmare reveal of a selected card.

Arnie Levin stepped up to give the official toast. He shared a true dining story about how Bob turned a bunch of one-dollar bills into five-dollar bills in order to leave a tip for the waitstaff. Then Arnie led the toast to Bob with a surprise twist – he

passed out real pieces of toasted bread for everyone to raise in Bob's honor. Before the official birthday cake was cut, Paul Belanger displayed a balloon art ninetieth-birthday

cake he made in Bob's honor. Ring 50 President Mitch Praver presented Bob with an I.B.M. Lifetime Achievement Award. Happy ninetieth birthday, Bob! *Gerald Curren*

Ring 93 (Dubuque, Iowa) Has an Official Club Song

The very talented Adam Kieffer opened the July meeting by singing our club song, "Believing in Magic," written by Rob Gomoll. Adam did attempt a few card effects, but then decided for this meeting he would stick to his singing, which by the way was great.

"Believing in Magic"

by Robert E. Gomoll

Do you believe in magic? Say you bought a new gaff... It didn't work, but you still got a laugh Because it's magic.

Learn all kinds of tricks. Defy the law of gravity or physics. You can join our club for brotherhood; It'll get you out of the house and do you some good! Because it's magic!

Make a card disappear. Pull out a coin from behind someone's ear. You can't believe a thing you see, But you can believe in Ring 93.

So come to a meeting and watch yourself grow. We meet every third Sunday in Adam's Dance Studio!

We believe in magic!

Walking Magic Bob did something very unusual for him, as he performed a pick a card trick. Using a method from the trick that fooled Shin Lim, he disguised it well and completely fooled nearly every club member. Later in the meeting he reviewed the simple handling of the trick that fooled Shin Lim. Bob then performed a color changing silk effect and demonstrated some basic handling of the dye tube.

Chris Westemeier showed the "Swords of Truth." Eight wooden swords were handed out, each sword had six numbers printed on them, each within either a square or a circle. Spectators were asked to pick one of the numbers on the sword they were holding, then tell Chris the shapes on the

sword, but lie about the shape around their number. Chris was able to tell each spectator what number they were thinking of. Based on a trick by Alex Elmsley. Chris next performed an "Omni Deck" routine. A card was selected from a deck, remembered, and placed back into the deck. The deck was placed sandwiched in the spectator's hand. Chris reached in between the spectator's hands, and after "accidentally" pulling out a joker, then pulled out the selected card. He then said he would make the deck disappear. When the spectator opened his hands, a clear block was there where the deck used to be.

Steve Cousino shared a simple card counting effect called "Piano Keys" where two sets of cards are counted out with an even-numbered amount of cards. One card is added to one of the sets, making it an odd-numbered set, and then the card magically moves to the other set, changing which set is odd and which is even. Steve then demonstrated a "you do as I do" card effect with two decks of cards. After shuffling, a spectator copied Steve's moves with the deck such that both Steve and the spectator selected a card from their respective decks, and both selected cards were revealed to be the same card!

On August 4, Walking Magic Bob, Mark Pepelea, Phyllis Fishnick, and Chris Westemeier traveled to Galena, Illinois for a club event at the Area Residential Center. Twenty students rotated through four different stations, learning basic effects with cards, coins, and rubber bands. At the end of the teaching sessions, each of the magicians performed one stand-up effect for the group. Mark performed a "Magic Dots" effect, Phyllis a "Rabbits and No Hats," Chris his world-famous "Wonder Rope," and

Walking Magic Bob closed the show with his “Cut and Restored Rope into Professor’s Nightmare.” The morning was concluded as Walking Magic Bob, Mark,

Phyllis, and Chris received a thunderous applause from the audience. A great time was had by all, and it was off to Gobbie’s Pizza for lunch.

Ring 250 (Ft. Collins, Colorado) Hosts Two Special Lectures

Bob “Walking Magic Bob” Beardsley
Ring 250’s June meeting began with updates regarding the upcoming July visit to Aiden Sinclair’s Underground at the Stanley Hotel in Estes Park, Colorado. This will be the second year of this excursion, where the club pays for the tickets to the magic show and for a lecture from the headliner, in this case Steve Valentine. The Teach-In: Lew (The Great Loudini) Wymisner demonstrated and discussed using a double-backed card to more easily perform a double lift. Various others discussed and performed their favorite card controls. During the performance part of the meeting, Brian Hallisey performed a Ring/Lock trick, CJ Adams showed an effect he called Gravity Clips with vacation postcards, and Lew showed a Card to Wallet without palming, using an Abbott’s Bendix Bombshell.

Ring 250’s July meeting followed the now-annual excursion to Estes Park, Colorado, to Aiden Sinclair’s Underground at

the Stanley Hotel to see Steve Valentine, who gave us a lecture and then his evening show. Nearly twenty folks attended this gala event. Discussion ensued regarding the highlights of the lecture and the show. Doug Zimmerman handled the Teach-In with an easy-to-do card trick. CJ Adams brought a friend of his to the meeting, Steve Himmel, who is the resident magician at Beer Park at the Paris Hotel in Las Vegas. He performs tableside every Friday and Saturday night. Steve discussed being a pro in Las Vegas and related some very interesting stories about this and the various venues where he does his close-up magic. He also gave us a quality sample of some of his pet effects. During the performance portion of the meeting, Neil Holstein showed us his “Chop Cup” routine, Rick Butler performed a mental effect he called the “WTYM Book Test,” Brian Hallisey did a card prediction he called “All 8s,” Lew Wymisner demonstrated two versions of “Mental Epic,” and Gary Hickox did a “Coin in Peppermint” effect.

Lew Wymisner



Steve Valentine.



Steve Himmel.

Ring 1221 (Youth Ring) Hosts Special Guest Meadow Perry

I.B.M. Ring 1221 held its eleventh meeting on August 11, 2026, welcoming seventeen members online from across Canada, India, and literally coast to coast across the United States. While we may be a small Ring, we are beautifully formed and proud to represent the future of the I.B.M., with members ranging in age from eleven (we made an exception for a few younger than our advertised twelve years!) through twenty-one.

The meeting began with members sharing news of their summer adventures and achievements. Several members attended major magic events, including Tannen's, SAM's, and the Lance Burton Teen Seminar held during this year's I.B.M. Annual Conference in St. Louis, Missouri. Members also shared highlights from their performances and competitions, including Jesse B. from Arizona competing in talent shows; Grason Lockerby and Milo Maverick Magic taking part in the Youth category of the I.B.M. Stage Competition; and Lincoln Stone winning the under-14 category at Tannen's. We also celebrated members' summer performances at libraries and holiday events, as well as Rachel Ling Gordon's visit to The Magic Circle.

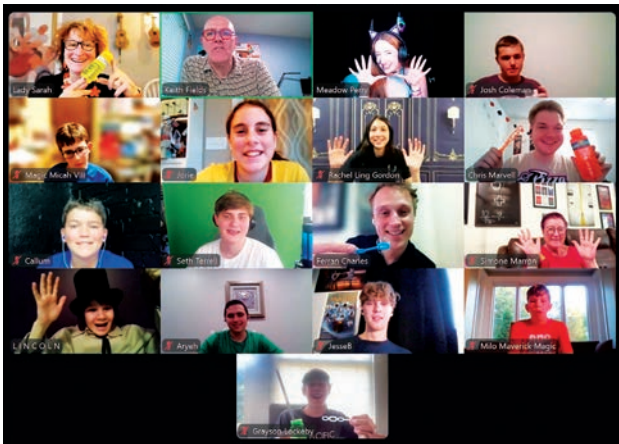
Following this celebration of members' accomplishments, we enjoyed a special guest session with Meadow Perry. Before

the meeting, Meadow provided a short preparation video explaining items members would need to bring along, including bubbles, rings, and shoelaces. This allowed everyone to participate as she taught several engaging routines, including an appearing coin from a bubble, a ring-on-lace effect, and a fun escape routine involving a shoelace.

Although Ring 1221 has been meeting for less than a year, we have already developed a strong and enthusiastic core membership. Members have enjoyed special guest lectures and instruction from Mr. Messado on his signature ring work, Erik Tait on card routines, and Dan Sperry, who shared stories, performance advice, and routines. Looking ahead, we are excited to welcome Shawn Farquhar as our October guest.

Our leadership team is jointly led by Chris Marvel, Ferran Charles, Geno Plego, Keith Fields, and Lady Sarah. We invite young magicians ages twelve to twenty-one to join us (with parents' consent) and become part of this growing international community. Ring 1221 meets online at 7:00 p.m. Eastern Time on the second Tuesday of each month, with an additional Saturday meeting date planned soon.

We look forward to welcoming the next generation of magicians into the I.B.M. family. *Lady Sarah and Keith Fields*



Ring 1221 screenshot Aug. 11, 2026: Members of Ring 1221 log in for their August meeting, held online for young magicians ages twelve to twenty-one.

Conjurer's Foolosophy

JOE HERNANDEZ



I've learned that if you attempt to carry out your performance quickly, you are likely to lose its spirit, since magic – just as philosophy – needs both heart and mind to be present. In practice, acting too quickly takes away the reflective space needed to work on the finer points, to notice minor flaws, and to let each action develop its meaning. The foolosopher-magician understands that mastery is not achieved through speed but rather by careful attention to each moment.

I've learned that you must train the magician's mind to long for simplicity, since it is within simplicity that genuine power resides. The foolosopher-magician aims for clarity by eliminating unnecessary complexity to bring out the essential nature. In the same way, the art of magic thrives when efficiency and elegance replace pointless intricacy; each action is a meditation on the essential.

I've learned that there are certain instances in which a story worth telling comes about, requiring not a flood of words but rather a careful arrangement of gesture and silence. Both the magician and the foolosopher-magician know that truth frequently makes itself known in the intervals between words, in the effect of a thoughtfully timed pause or an intentional movement.

I've learned that a conjurer is someone who turns the impossible into reality, thus blurring the boundary between deception and revelation. The foolosopher-magician is a paradox in that he is a sincere deceiver, believing in the ability of illusion to transform things, and he does not content himself with simply deceiving people but instead aims at inspiring wonder – offering the audience a sight of the world as it might be, not simply as it actually is.

I've learned that however brief it may be, each pause is in fact a kind of movement, a silent syllable in the language of magic. The foolosopher-magician knows that stillness is not emptiness but a kind of canvas on which meaning is painted and thus contributes to the rhythm and flow of the performance.

I've learned that even when it seems to be at rest, the magician's hands are engaged in a quiet dialogue with opportunity. The foolosopher-magician notes that underneath a state of quietness, hidden forces are always active, just as it is in the case of magic – stillness is nothing more than the mask that motion dons.

I've learned that the audience consists of people seeking knowledge, their eyes keen to see the impossible and grasp what lies beyond the ordinary veil. The foolosopher-magician realizes that each performance is an opportunity to examine the nature of reality and to value the beauty of uncertainty.

I've learned that it is more important to embody the art of performance than it is to turn magic into an art. The foolosopher-magician understands that technique by itself is empty; genuine mastery is achieved through presence, intention, and the courage to connect authentically with an audience.

(continued on page 47)

The Doomsday Experience: *Stories, Shadows, and Old Friends*

By Rolando Santos

Past International President

I.B.M. Medallion of Honor Recipient

In the Bizarre and Mystery Entertainment world, people talk about the Doomsday Gathering in Derby, England with a reverence, affection, and anticipation that is rarely felt for other kinds of magic conventions. It took me ten years to finally attend a Gathering last May. And now I understand why. I felt as if I'd arrived at a place I was always meant to find. You can sit with someone you've never met and quickly feel as if you've known them for years. Ideas rise like spirits; the supernatural and the strange are discussed, the way people talk about the weather, casually, without a second thought.

I met many of the people I've known online for more than twenty years. They were every bit as friendly, creative, gracious, and delightfully eccentric as I imagined. Doomsday draws some of the best-known names in British and American Bizarre Magick every year: Jim Crichtlow, Professor BC, Michael Diamond, Russell J. Hall, Richard Wiseman, Todd Landman, Mark Elsdon, and Roger Curzon, to name a few.

Many of those in the room were the people on whose shoulders we stand as bizarrists, and yet they were the warmest and friendliest of the bunch, the first to introduce themselves, as if I didn't already know exactly who they were. Roger Curzon is a good example.

Years ago, I reviewed a remarkable book for *The Linking Ring* by the legendary British magician Roger Curzon, a towering figure in European Bizarre Magick and one of the most respected creators in the field. The book, *Dark Matters*, was

one of several atmospheric and beautifully constructed works he contributed to the literature of the strange. I gave it a "Highly Recommended," but in preparing the review I needed a few clarifications, so I reached out to Roger directly. Those brief exchanges turned into a warm, years-long friendship carried entirely across the internet.



Rolando Santos and Roger Curzon meet for the first time with the book that led to a years-long friendship.

He walked straight up to me and said, "I've been wanting to meet you in person." Then, with the same quiet generosity that marks his work, he handed me a signed copy of his newest book, a gesture that meant more than he could know.

Those who weren't friends before quickly became friends. The conversations that wandered well past the witching hour were inspiring and sparked a creative surge I haven't felt in years. With single malt acting as a subtle accomplice, ideas rose like mischievous spirits eager to be heard.

I filled two dozen pages in my commonplace book with fresh techniques for aging props, writing scripts, and performance concepts. The experience was far more valuable than any trick I could have purchased. It showed me why this gathering means so much to people in Mystery Entertainment.

I also came away with a deeper appreciation for the subtle yet pronounced differences in presentation style between American and British bizarrists. There's a distinct tonal and theatrical aesthetic that separates the two, not in quality, but in philosophy. The British approach leans toward atmosphere and understatement, where the mystery unfolds like a whispered secret. The American style, by contrast, often carries a pulse of narrative drive and emotional immediacy, a kind of storytelling urgency born of showmanship instead of measured dramatic unfolding. Neither is better; they're simply different philosophies, each demanding its own kind of expertise.

The difference goes deeper than just theatrical presentation; it's structural, and it becomes unmistakable once you know to look for it. American routines tend to be effect forward: word, effect, word, effect, each beat landing its own astonishment.

British routines build to the payoff: an entire story unfolds, and the magic effect arrives toward the end, as the story's climax rather than a moment planted inside it.

Each approach has a trade-off. An American audience accustomed to a quick series of payoffs to keep their attention will get restless or lose interest if the story runs too long; holding that attention requires one kind of performance skill set. The British story-heavy style requires another skill set that is just as demanding.

That patience and intention carry over into the artifacts. The craftsmanship, the patina, the attention to detail: each piece feels less like a tool and more like a true relic, imbued with history and intention, reinforcing why, in Bizarre Magick, the

object is never just a prop; it's a vessel for meaning, a bridge between performer and participant.

Another part of the Doomsday Gathering mystique is its history, which traces back to the origins of the Bizarre Magick Movement in Europe.

The lineage of the Doomsday Gathering stretches back decades before Roni Shachnaey ever founded it. Charles Cameron, often called the Godfather of Bizarre Magick, was performing ghostly séances in character as Count Dracula at the Edinburgh Wax Museum in the 1980s, nearly a decade before Doomsday's first official event. Cameron and another pillar of Bizarre Magick, Karl Bartoni, held an earlier precursor in Edinburgh simply called The Gathering, the first stirrings of what Doomsday would eventually become, according to Nick Birch, the Doomsday Gathering's current curator.

Roni carried that lineage forward in 2010, founding the first official Doomsday Gathering at Sneaton Castle in Whitby.



Sneaton Castle in Whitby, England. (Courtesy: Sneaton Castle and St Hilda's Priory by Mike Kirby/Wikipedia Commons.)

Dracula fans will recognize the town as the place in the novel where the ship, *The Demeter*, runs aground and Dracula, in the form of a huge black hound or wolf, lands on English soil.

Some of the people who attended that first year told me about bonfire walks and late-night séances in the castle that were far too unsettling to be just performances.

One tradition that survived the move to Derby is the all-night, booze-induced “story development” sessions.

When Shachnaey died in 2017, Dan Baines of Lebanon Circle moved it to the Derby Conference Centre in Derby, known as “the most haunted city in England.” The centre has a hotel and pub on site, so the tradition never missed a beat. The gorgeous Art Deco building is a converted British Rail Training College. The main dealers’ room is large enough that, in its training-college days, students brought entire locomotive engines indoors for hands-on work.

The space is filled with booth after booth of handcrafted props, books, and genuine artifacts, the kind of dealers’ room that could only exist at an event built on this much history.

It’s like walking down Diagon Alley. Artificially aged and legitimately antique tarot decks. Keys pulled from actual churches and old buildings. Ritual bundles. Books that look as if they came from a forgotten museum, and in some cases, they did.

The items I saw in Derby were remarkable. Finely crafted props and restored antiques by internationally known creators like Lebanon Circle, Dark Artefacts, Chris Walton, Jaime Dawes, Joshua Johnson, and Simon Piercy, were stories waiting to be spun and emotions to be evoked.



Experts at the Craft table Price List. Simon Piercy lives up to the name of his company. I purchased several items that quickly made their way into my repertoire.

This year, workshops covered performance technique, metaphysical topics, prop making, sideshow performing, paranormal illusion, and theatrical presentation, led by Professor BC, Tiffany Allen, Michael Diamond, Dr. Richard Wiseman, and Anthony Heads.



Dr. Wiseman’s “Beyond the Veil” lecture touched on psychology, history, and things that go bump in the night and why we love them.

Dan Baines held a special workshop on new methods to age photos and paper. Using nothing more than paint from a hobby store, school paste, talcum powder, and a heat gun, he took a brand-new, 200-page book and made the cover and every page look, feel, and smell like a moldy fifty-year-old book. Total time: less than half an hour. It opened up a whole world for me.

One of the most popular events is called Critchlow’s Corner. It is an improv area in the pub, named for Jim Critchlow, creator of the Titanic White Star effect, where you can try out new ideas. To quote the Dooomsday Gathering website, “Pop your name on the chalkboard, ring the bell and let the magic and mayhem unfold.” And it does descend into mayhem, complete with cat-calls and good-natured hecklers that are better than any comedy show you’ll ever see. It’s all in good fun as the person on stage usually gives as good as he gets.

The weekend’s highlight is the Hex Factor Talent Competition that’s open to anyone who attends the gathering. Each artist is given a ten-minute slot to perform anything from traditional magic to sideshow feats. A panel of judges provides feedback,



Derby main lounge area.

but ultimately the audience decides the best act of the evening.



Hex Factor Judges: Reece Shearsmith, The Georgia Wonder, Tiffany Allen, and Professor BC. Courtesy: Nick Birch.

This year, the convention passed into the hands of Nick Birch of Dark Artefacts and Michael Diamond, an original attendee and seasoned bizarrist. In 2027, the convention will expand to three days and remain, in Birch's words, unapologetically dedicated to macabre magic, captivating storytelling, paranormal mysteries, and astonishing sideshow acts.

What sets Domsday apart isn't community or quality. American conventions have both in abundance. East Coast Spirit Sessions and Magistrorum are the two pre-eminent bizarre conventions in the United States; I routinely attend and lecture at both, and I highly recommend them.

What made Domsday unforgettable wasn't better magic. It was different magic, a presentational style built on patience, folklore, and atmosphere that you won't find in the United States.



Michael Diamond.

Without question, the weekend's setting is part of its attraction, set in the land that gave us Dracula, the world of Dickens's ghosts, and the greatest practitioner of the modern ghost story, M. R. James. James once wrote that a good ghost story should leave its readers "pleasantly uncomfortable when walking along a solitary road at nightfall, or sitting over a dying fire in the small hours." That feeling stayed with me throughout the weekend. As I left my first Domsday Gathering, I realized it endures; it haunts you, and you welcome the haunting.



From Our UK Correspondent

BRIAN LEAD

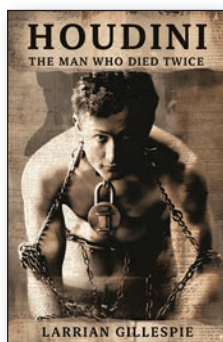
Time is a tricky, even magical, thing. Although constant, it can appear to slow down or speed up, depending upon individual circumstances. Furthermore, it can vary depending upon whereabouts on the globe you happen to be.

As an example, Chung Ling Soo (William Robinson) was fatally shot in London, on the stage of the Wood Green Empire, at about 10:45 on the evening of March 23, 1918, but he did not die until the early hours of the following morning. When I wrote a series of articles for *The Magic Circular* to coincide with the centenary of his passing, the date of death was inadvertently given on the magazine cover as the twenty-third, not the twenty-fourth. Ironically, because of the differing time zones, his death would still have been on the twenty-third in his home city of New York, which lags several hours behind the United Kingdom.



Billy Robinson, alias Chung Ling Soo.

There are, historically, examples of dates being manipulated for particular purposes. It is usually claimed, for example, that Shakespeare was born on April 23, 1564, and with impeccable, dramatic timing, that he died on his fifty-second birthday: April 23, 1616. The fact that April 23 is the day of St. George, Patron Saint of England, also makes it highly appropriate as a birth date; but we don't actually *know* when the bard was born. Church records in Stratford show that Shakespeare was baptised on April 26, and this usually took place two or three days after birth, owing to the high infant mortality rate in Elizabethan England – but we can't be sure.



Houdini: The Man Who Died Twice by Larrian Gillespie.

Returning to the world of magic and the uncertainty of dating, a fascinating new book on Houdini by former surgeon and forensic investigator Larrian Gillespie, MD, appropriately subtitled *The Man Who Died Twice*, reveals two conflicting death certificates, citing both October 30th and 31st. She speculates that if Houdini did die on the earlier day, his brother Hardeen – who had given other false details on the form to preserve the Houdini myth – may have convinced the doctors to revise the

date for the sake of his legacy, and so that millions would recognise his brother's death each Halloween!

Eddie Dawes dubbed Stanley Collins an "iconoclast" in the subtitle of his biography of the magician. Collins (1881–1966) certainly held strong views and spoke his mind. One of his famous "don'ts," with which I find it difficult to agree, was: "Don't think that puns are funny. They are not. Indeed, they are usually exceedingly irritating. An apt and dextrous play upon words may occasionally be excused, but the commonplace bad pun is an abomination, giving evidence of an inferior brain."



Stanley Collins.

Ironically, although he promoted individuality, Collins accompanied all of his published effects with a lengthy section of patter, presumably intending that this should be committed to memory and repeated verbatim. Much of this patter was densely populated with puns, if you follow the *OED* definition of "the humorous use of words of the same sound with different meanings." As an example, here is a segment taken from a Collins article titled "Brainy Patter," which appeared in *Will Goldston's Annual of Magic, 1915-16*: "I want to introduce to you one of my little tactics in the form of a tack trick. As doubtless you are aware, there are innumerable sorts of tacks. We have ordinary tin tacks, brass tacks, super tax, income tax, law tax,

and insurance tax. This, however, is just one of those ordinary tin tacks which, when used in conjunction with a hammer, is always the forerunner of violent language accompanied by threats on the life of whoever invented tacks."



Goldston annual.

Elsewhere in the same article we have: "May I introduce you to a little match trick. What a number of different matches there are: Lucifer matches, safety matches, cricket matches, and love matches. All of the matches I have here are exactly the same length – especially this one. To make the experiment more striking, I will cause a head to appear on one. Many people are under the impression that the end with the head on is the heavier, but they are wrong. That is the *lighter* end. Now for something match – er, much – different ..."

I rest my case.

As a footnote, one of the pet "don'ts" was: "Don't call your tricks 'experiments' – they should be beyond that before you face an audience." In light of this, it is surprising to discover that a third of the routines in his first book, *Original Magical Creations* (1915), are called "experiments" – a word he uses regularly in the text in place of "effects." Thus, we have *The*



(l to r): *Original Magical Creations* by Stanley Collins. • Collins postcard caricature.

Omega Ace Experiment, Le Dernier Cri Mutilated Card Experiment, A New Ropes and Rings Experiment, The Wooden Slab and Flying Card Experiment, and The Filtering Ink Experiment. To be fair, he does

conclude with a final “don’t”: “Don’t infer that I have been free from the transgressions that I am now condemning!”

Next month, I’ll tell you all about the upcoming convention of the British Ring.

DYK? – from page 29

Bob Elliott established a legacy by assisting others rather than seeking fame, and, as a result, many New York magicians gained the support and confidence they needed to succeed.

The list of magicians who have been mentored, assisted, or otherwise supported by Bob is comparable to a comprehensive reference work on magic. Many of the names on it – such as David Copperfield, Criss Angel, Daryl Martinez, Joe Devlin, Marc DeSouza, John Ferrentino, Paul Gertner, Bill Kalush, Jeff McBride, Michael Ammar, Tom Mullica, Rocco, David Roth, Darwin Ortiz, Richard Kaufman and a great many others – have all spoken of Bob’s kindness and generosity. He influenced some of the most well-known and successful magicians of the last century. I am grateful and humbled to have met him and to be his friend, and I am certain that his spirit of giving continues to live on in every magician he ever touched.

Joe Hernandez is the author of *Conjurer’s Wisdom* (Vol. 1 & 2), *Phonetastic, Magic Babylon, Houdini: The Ultimate Trivia Compendium, Houdini Reflections, The Foolosophy of Conjuring*, and the just-released *Frank Garcia: The Man with the Million-Dollar Hands*. Books can be purchased at www.booksbyjoe.com.

Magic and

Memories



Scraps from Gene Gordon

As you ought to know, Gene Gordon (I.B.M. No. 2) started the International Brotherhood of Magicians in 1922 along with his friend Len Vintus (I.B.M. No. 1). I think they drew straws to see who got the first two numbers, or Len just said, "I'll be No. 1, and you can be No. 2." Either way, here we are 104 years later, and the I.B.M. is still going strong.



Gene Gordon and Len Vintus.

Speaking of the number 104, Robert Orben told the story years ago of a man who took Professor Peabody's Little Liver Pills daily his entire life. When he died at the age of 104, his liver was still working, so they had to beat it to death with a stick! Now you see where this monthly column is going.

Back to Gene Gordon.

As you also might know, forty-six years ago in 1980, my wife Lynne and I edited and published *Gene Gordon's Magical Legacy*, a hardbound book written by Gene himself. The book was packed with magic history, great photos, and lots of good-to-

great magic tricks and routines. We printed nearly 2,200 copies of *GGML*, and it is now out of print. However, if you look around the internet, you can probably find a copy. I consider it a truly worthwhile read for any magician, stage or close-up, whatever your interest, and especially I.B.M. members.



*Front cover of
Gene Gordon's
Magical Legacy.*

In combing through some of Gene's papers, I have found some things we did and didn't use in *Magical Legacy* or the follow-up book, *Laughter Legacy*, which is still in print. So this month I want to share with you a potpourri from the I.B.M.'s founding member, Gordon Eugene Avery, aka Gene Gordon. I am sure you will find something here to make you think, make your audiences laugh, or at least make them scratch their heads.

Remember, *a groan is as good as a laugh to a deaf elephant*. That's what my grandfather always said. But Gene had another name for these mixed-up quips and jokes – a name that might have made a

good book title. He called this stuff *Lingo for Legerdemainiacs*.

Here we go.



Gene Gordon in his thirties.

Miscellaneous Lines for Whatever

- Sorry I'm so paranoid. Hey, I tried to join Paranoids Anonymous, but they wouldn't tell me where they meet.

- The last theater I played had a stag movie on the bill. I think the name of it was *Bambi*.

- The man who first said "A penny for your thoughts" obviously had never paid for psychoanalysis. (*Credit: George Hart*)

- The most fascinating thing about the automobile industry is how they find all those empty roads where they film commercials.

- If I have caused just one person to wipe away a tear of laughter, that is my reward. The rest goes to the government.

- The only people with whom you should try to get even are those who have helped you. (*Credit: Jack Herbert*)

- I could have been a magician. But the urge suddenly vanished.

- There must be something to acupuncture. After all, you never see a sick porcupine.

- Every twenty-four hours the world turns over on someone who was sitting on top of it. (*Credit: Hugh Allen*)

- Nature has a sense of humor. It lets housecleaning, gardening, and spring fever all come at the same time.

- Today's automobiles are supposed to be mechanically perfect, but it seems there are still a lot of jerks in them.

- This is a wonderful country. With taxes what they are, everybody can work for the government without having to pass the civil service exam.

- There are three signs that show the beginning of old age. The first is *loss of memory*. I forgot the other two.

- Go ahead and laugh today (tonight). Tomorrow you'll hate yourself for it.

- You can tell anyone from Norcross (name local town or rival town). I don't know why. Well, yes, I do, but I don't like to think about it.

- If your wife wants a pearl necklace, be a good sport. Give her a bushel of oysters and wish her luck.

- That tie I got for Christmas is in a clash by itself.



Gene with his little dog puppet.

Magic Lines and Quips

You may have to update these lines and jokes, but that's food for thought.

- If Thurston has said once that I was bound to be his successor, he's said it a hundred times. But he hasn't said it once yet!

- When I told that boy what was going to happen (in the trick routine), the look on his face is something that will haunt me the rest of my days.

- The only difference between me and Blackstone is that he gets \$100 for doing two tricks and I get \$5 for doing a hundred tricks.

- My Chinese magician friend, Hun Wun, sent me directions to this trick, but I couldn't read them. The only way I can read Chinese is when it's written in English.

- One end of my wand makes things appear, and the other end makes things disappear. *To kid:* I hope I don't have the wrong end pointed at you!

- I was talking to Houdini about this very trick before he died. That was the best time to talk to him.

- *Inviting audience helper onto the stage:* Come up the stairs as everyone stares.

- *To child:* Tell me what your name was. Okay, George, that's what your name was. What is it now?

- *To helper:* Do you have any idea where eggs come from? *Lean over as if to hear the answer, then shout as though helper said it:* A rooster?



Ed Harris drawing of
Gene's Wiz Quiz.

- You never saw Houdini do that trick, so why should I?

- Anybody can come out here on stage and do something and get paid for it. It's an art to come out and do *nothing* – and get paid for it. In fact, it's a gift.

- I can see a man sleeping out there in the audience. I don't mind him sleeping, but at least he could have said good night.

- *Troublesome kid in audience:* Isn't it a shame? For fifteen months he was crawling around the house, and nobody had the sense to step on him.

- My grandfather told me last week, "Be sure to tell the audience your magic is *not* done by supernatural means." And granddad ought to know. He's been dead twenty years. (Sounds like Robert Orben from 1940.)

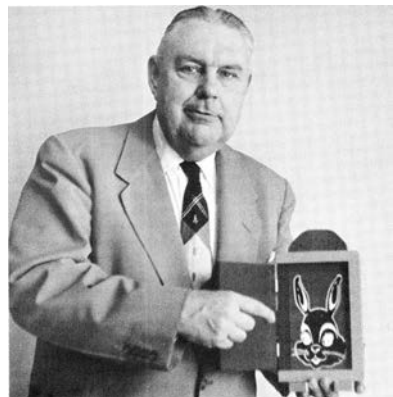
- *After a really good trick:* No such power should be in the hands of one person.

- When kids say they have seen that trick before, I say, "That's all right. I've seen kids before too." If they say they know how a trick is done, just reply, "I knew it first."

- You can explain this trick by *logic*. If it was so, it might be; and if it were so, it would be; but as it isn't, it ain't. That's the same logic used by Tweedledee in *Through the Looking-Glass*.

- *Say to a small boy you're inviting onto the stage:* Your wife won't mind you coming up to help me, will she?

- Outside of magic, the only other hobby I have is stretching out in a hammock and letting the birds watch me.



Gene with Fraidy Cat Rabbit.

- *To kid helper:* I hope I look as good as you do when I get to be your age.

- A hundred years from now, people will still be talking about this trick. It shows how dull life will be a hundred years from now.

- I performed this next stunt for four presidents of the United States at one time – at Mount Rushmore in South Dakota.

- Keep that card on your mind. If you lose your mind, you'll ruin everything!

- *Say to a child helper:* Do you understand what to do? Can I count on you? *Child says yes. Then tap your finger on the child's head, saying:* One, two, three, four. You said I could *count on you!*

- *To child helper:* You're a lucky boy. You're going to get to see the rest of the show without paying any more money.

- *To slow boy coming up to help:* I'll bet he could walk a mile and only move two feet.

- I did this trick in Egypt and had them rolling in the Nile. Some, however, didn't Cairo for it.

- *To helper:* You look like a kind person. I don't know what *kind*, but we'll soon find out!

- *Gene would often say to a little girl after she helped him in a trick routine:* Goodbye, Agnes (girl's name). It's been fun working together up here on the stage, and I guess you know that I haven't thought of another girl all the time you've been up here with me. You know, though, it's just one of those things – in a few days you will forget all about me. (*Said by an old man to a little girl, it sounds funny.*) Let's all give Agnes a nice round of applause as she goes back to sit down.

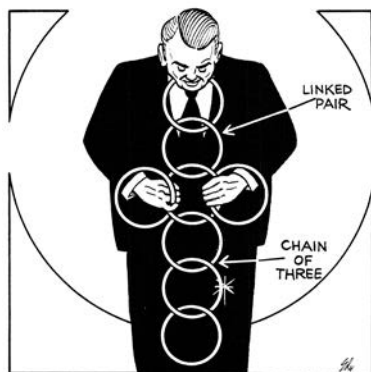
Magic Thoughts

Here are some thoughts from Gene's writing that you can ponder while doing your nails at the spa:

- *No magician* is ever as good as he thinks he is – or as bad as his enemies think he is.

- My father was a psychiatrist. So growing up, all I had to play with were mental blocks.

- If there were only two magicians in the world, and each one got at least one other person interested in magic – in less than thirty-five years we would have around two billion magicians. And that's a lot of thumbtips!



*Ed Harris drawing of
Gene's Linking Rings.*

- This trick takes a lot of practice. In fact, these cards spend at least three hours each day just practicing on each other.

- Ventriloquism is the art by which it is possible to speak through the ears without moving the left eyelid.

- You may or may not believe in predestination. But I think you will be interested in a strange experiment devised to show the extraordinary working of fate. Throughout the Far East, a belief in fate is all-powerful. After all, we are all *men of destiny* – destined to become or not become.

You should seriously think about that.

About Teachers

- Once you have passed the age of forty, with whom would you change places? I believe I would trade with a teacher.

- There is not a great deal of money in teaching, but there are many satisfactions.

- The way of the teacher is calm, being far from the maddening rush of business.

- For the teacher, every summer there is a long period of leisure, which the rich want and do not always attain.

- To the teacher it is given to see good results. Teachers put something of themselves into other heads and hearts, and in the fullness of time see a good harvest.

• Isn't that what we all want with our lives?



Artwork for Gene's Lying Saucers trick.

Thomas Alva Edison

Thomas Edison once made a statement that has always fascinated me. He said:

The chief function of the body is to carry the brain around."

True, the body will get old, but if the

brain is clear and in good working order – you will live a long life and stay young.

And Finally ...

My favorite school show story by Gene Gordon is this one, taken directly from *Magical Legacy*:

"How many of you kids have ever seen a flying saucer? Well, the other day I saw a *strange object* when I was driving along the highway. It was a long thing with flashing lights.

"When it stopped, a lot of cars pulled up near it to get a better look, I guess. Then a door opened and funny little people emerged from it.

"When I got closer, I saw it wasn't something from outer space – *it was just a school bus.*"

Lingo for Legerdemainiacs!

Conjurer's Foolosophy – from page 35

The foolosopher-magician uses gestures, patter, glimpses, and pauses as tools to influence people's perceptions and create a shared illusion. Even though each spectator's mind will interpret these things differently, they combine various perspectives into a unified, carefully arranged experience of wonder. This serves to remind us that reality is, in fact, a fabric made up of individual perception and collective belief.

Joe Hernandez is the author of *Conjurer's Wisdom* (Vol. 1 & 2), *Phonetastic, Magic Babylon, Houdini: The Ultimate Trivia Compendium, Houdini Reflections, The Foolosophy of Conjuring*, and the just-released *Frank Garcia: The Man with the Million-Dollar Hands*. Books can be purchased at www.booksbyjoe.com.

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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!



Marketing MAGIC

KENT CUMMINS

The 3 C's of Marketing

"Don't let your message be your best-kept secret!" – Carolyn Cummins

In August, I shared the 5 P's of Marketing, inspired by David Newman's book *Do It Marketing*. For September, it seemed logical to share the author's 5 Marketing Moves, which he preferred to the 5 P's. My daughter, Carolyn Cummins, has yet another framework, which she refers to as "The 3 C's of Marketing."

So, here we go again!

Brand Like a Human

"Brand Like a Human" is the title on the workbook provided by Carolyn Cummins at a Lunch, Learn, and Lead event at the Georgetown (Texas) Chamber of Commerce in June of 2026. The subtitle is "How to Build a Brand that Connects." And as entrepreneurial entertainers, don't we want (and need) to build brands that connect?

Carolyn's business is **Santosha Solutions**, and this is what the Chamber of Commerce said to promote her presentation:

"What if the reason your marketing isn't working has nothing to do with the platform, the algorithm, or how often you post?

"Many business owners are putting in the effort; they're showing up, creating content, trying to stay consistent, and still not seeing a clear return. Sometimes engagement is there, but it's not turning into inquiries or sales. Or maybe the message itself starts to feel unclear, making it harder to know what to say and how to say it."

The Three C's

Carolyn says that the Three C's are **Clar-**

ity, Consistency, and Connection. And her Daddy says that these are absolutely applicable to those of us who want to share our magic. It doesn't matter whether you are a hobbyist, a part-time pro, or a full-time professional magician. We need to understand and effectively implement these three factors in order to achieve our goals.

Clarity

Carolyn wants us to answer three basic questions to help implement clarity:

1. What do I do?
2. Who do I serve?
3. What makes me different?

Number One is easy, right? "I do magic tricks." "I twist balloons into interesting shapes." "I read people's minds!" "I use magic as a motivational speaker." You might also do juggling, ventriloquism, puppetry, clowning, face painting, and many other things.

But please don't do "magic for all occasions." That will ruin your answer to number three.

Number Two depends on your target audience. It might be families who have birthday parties. It might be schools or libraries. It might be Fortune 500 companies. It might even be other magicians. What audiences give you the most satisfaction?

Of course, you might serve different audiences at different times. This is important because you *can* be both a kids' birthday party magician *and* a corporate event magician. You just need to market to those two groups differently.



(l to r): David Copperfield. • David Blaine. • Doug Henning. • Harry Blackstone. • Lance Burton. • Mac King. • Max Maven. • Penn & Teller. • Siegfried & Roy. • Mark Wilson. • Puff the Magic Dragon,

Number Three seems harder for most of us. With one notable exception, we are not “a dragon who does magic!”

Let’s think of the most famous magicians of the past one hundred years: Harry Blackstone, Mark Wilson, Doug Henning, Lance Burton, Mac King, Max Maven, David Blaine, Penn & Teller, Siegfried & Roy, and David Copperfield. (Include Puff the Magic Dragon, if you must).

Each one of these performers is completely different from the others. They all do many of the same tricks, but with a personal style that we immediately recognize.

What do you do to make you different from the other magicians in your area?

What is your core message? It’s okay if you are just a magic show “for entertainment,” but I have found that people will pay more for a magic show “with a message.”

Carolyn explains, “Your core message is the thread connecting your brand clarity, your audience, and your content. It’s what you want your audience to remember. It is the essence of who you are, what you do, and why it matters.”

Carolyn provides four steps for defining your core message:

Step One: Define your Focus

- *What transformation or other experience do you create for your customer?*
- *What does their world look like for them after engaging with you?*
- *What do you want to be known for?*

Step Two: Write Your Core Message

Pick one feature of your product or service:

“I help my audience achieve this goal by sharing my magic!”

Step Three: Humanize It

Circle the words in your message that sound too “businessy” or self-serving, or generic. Replace them with real, conversational language your audience would use. Ask yourself:

- *Does this sound like something I’d say out loud?*

- *Does it make my audience feel seen or understood?*

- *Does it align with my brand tone and values?*

Review your message in your authentic voice and make changes as appropriate.

Step Four: Make it Stick

- *Where will this message live?*

- *How can you remember it through all of your content?*

- *What story, post, or example could bring this message to life?*

In the workbook, Carolyn offers more clarifying questions:

- *What problem do I solve?*

- *What is my promise to potential customers?*

- *What makes me unique?*

- *What education or certifications distinguish me from my competitors?*

- *What are my business offerings?*

- *What outcome can a customer expect when they work with me?*

- *What is the downside to not working with me?*

- *What do I want to be known for?*

Have you ever sat down to think about your answers to these questions? Neither have I!

But now that we have them right in front of us, maybe we can create more clarity.

Consistency

Am I showing up regularly in the right places?

Carolyn is a recognized expert on social media. I am not. I was already in my fifties before social media started to become a thing to which marketers paid attention. But one thing that I know (even if I learned it from my daughter) is that random posts on various social media sites are unlikely to help you achieve your goals.

What can you do consistently? Worry less about what people say is the right amount to post; focus more on what you can do with success. Carolyn teaches new clients to start

by posting 1x a week. This isn’t amazing but it is attainable. It matters more that you post good content than just throwing stuff up there. It also matters which platforms you choose.

As Carolyn teaches, you need to plan and implement a *cadence* so that your messages show up consistently and when people expect to see them. For example, you might make a “Magic Monday” post at 10 a.m. every week, talking about a different magic trick each week. Or you might have a “Tuesday’s Tip” about effectively using entertainment, on LinkedIn. I have this idea of showing a different juggling stunt every Friday on TikTok. But I am just thinking about it...not actually doing it.

Do you also have ideas that you are just thinking about, but not actually doing? There is a tendency for each of us to notice the latest marketing strategy and try it for a while. A short while. Then we give it up, because “It didn’t work.”

But it takes many “touches” before someone really notices something on social media...or any other form of media. You need to see more than one billboard, more than one magazine ad, more than one television commercial, and more than one post on Facebook.

Consistency is everything!

Connection

Does my content speak to the goals, strategies, and values of my ideal audience?

Once you have clarified your message and found platforms you need to be on and are posting consistently, then you need to connect (“engage”). Too often people just think posting is enough. It isn’t. You must actually use the platform. This means commenting on other people’s content, replying to comments on your content, and connecting with the people trying to connect with you. Social media is meant to be social.

Who am I trying to reach with my content?

If you are primarily performing gospel magic, your target audience will probably be Christian churches, schools, camps, and other gatherings where it is appropriate and welcomed to share your spiritual beliefs. But you might want to turn down an opportunity to

perform that show for the Jewish Community Center.

If you are primarily a silly clown who has fun with kids, you will no doubt be looking for kids' camps, schools, libraries, family festivals, and birthday parties. But you might want to think twice before accepting a gig at a corporate luncheon.

If you are an illusionist, you will be looking for venues with a large stage, theatrical lights and sound, and seating for a large audience. Don't book your show at the local library.

Target Audience

Carolyn's workbook offers suggestions based on B2B (Business to Business), B2C (Business to Consumer), and nonprofits. Most magicians operate businesses that sell to consumers (B2C), and although many of us experience the agony of not making a profit, few of us set up our magic business as public charities.

Often, people only think they are talking to potential customers. But as an example, a kids' birthday party magician's content doesn't interest me as a consumer. So if I keep seeing content that says "Book me!" I am going to keep scrolling. But if they also target advocates, then I might share the content with friends who have kids, or I might tag a friend who has kids.

Start with target audience, clarify your message to the audience, determine what platforms that audience is on, post on that platform consistently. Engage with the platform.

Here are a few points when considering B2C audiences:

- Buyers – Clients and Potential Clients
- Community Builders – Fans – Followers
- Advocates – Referral Partners – Vendors

When discussing B2B, many of the same points are relevant, but also includes peers and collaborators.

I find this one of particular interest, since much of my business has come from referrals from magic stores and other magicians.

When I think of connection, I also think of my relationship with other entertainers. I enjoy the magic club meetings, lectures, public magic shows, conventions, and informal opportunities to talk shop. Magic is a wonderful community.

Here are some questions to help you identify your target audience:

- *What social media and other marketing platforms are they using?*
- *What action do I want them to take when they engage with me?*
- *How can I adjust my words/phrases/tricks to resonate with my audience?*

Marketing Frameworks

We have studied the 5 P's, the 5 Moves, and the 3 C's. But if I was the one providing the C's, I might use Conjuring, Comedy, Cabaret Magic, Club Magic, Close-up Magic, Clowning, Coin Tricks and Card Tricks. (Aren't you glad I'm not the one creating marketing frameworks?)

Carolyn says: "There are a lot of frameworks out there. I advocate doing one framework. Frameworks are like recipes. You follow one recipe. Once you have followed a recipe and understand why each ingredient or step is important, then you can start testing new ideas or different strategies. But a buffet table of frameworks is not a good idea if you want a framework to work."

I don't think it really matters what framework you use to support your marketing efforts. What matters is that you do enough marketing to achieve your goals. If you are not getting all the shows you want or need, then you may be inspired to increase your marketing efforts.

But when you are getting all the gigs you want and everything seems great, you still need to do marketing. Bad times don't last, but neither do good times. You always need to be easily found by potential buyers. And if you are currently getting more shows than you can handle, raise your prices!

The Bottom Line

What frameworks and strategies have worked for you? Share your stories and ideas: kent@kentcummins.com.

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

Check out my latest book, *I Want to Be Like HOUDINI!*, at www.likehoudini.com.

Youth Trivia Contest



October's question: Here's an obscure question . . . *Who is reported to have been the first magician to fly to a magic convention?*

Answers must be postmarked by November 20, 2026.

July's question was: This well-known performer was nagged by his spouse – let's say he was *requested* by his spouse – to quit, or at least reduce, his inveterate and prodigious cigar-smoking habit, to no avail. *Who was this performer?*

A few of our Youth Members ventured to guess at the answer to this question, and unfortunately, none of those Youth Members guessed correctly. Here's what we were hoping you'd tell us.

When you think of the well-known magicians from the late 1800s through first part of the 1900s – the "Golden Age" of magic – a majority of the performers were male. Only a few of them had wives who were also well-known. Harry Houdini's wife, Bess and Servais LeRoy's wife, Talma come to mind. Chung Ling Soo's wife, Dot, who performed as Suee Seen is also on this list. But there does seem to be one wife whose name is slightly more familiar, and mentioned slightly more often. That would be the wife of "Herrmann the Great," Adelaide Herrmann.

Adelaide's husband, Alexander, was the third performer in the Herrmann dynasty of magicians. It began with his father, Samuel Herrmann, whose origins and vocation are somewhat uncertain, and occasionally contested by historians. He may have come from Germany; he may have come from some other eastern European country. He may have been a physician; he may have simply claimed to have been a physician. In any case, Samuel was a conjuror who performed for upper-crust and nobility, and developed

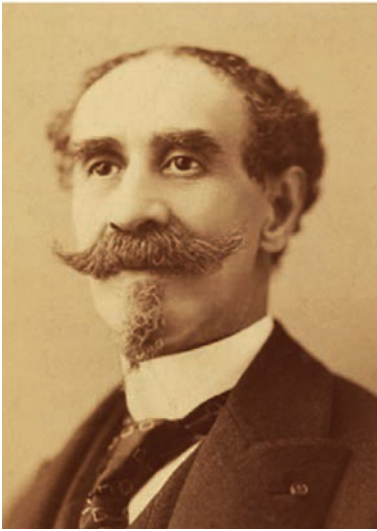
a positive reputation as an entertainer.

His first son, Compars (sometimes called Carl), came next in the Herrmann dynasty. As a young man, he helped with his father's performances, both on and off of the stage, and eventually learned enough to develop his own career as a magician. Along the way, he took his little brother under his wing. It's this younger brother, Alexander, and the younger brother's wife, Adelaide, who are the foci of the answer to this question.

By the time he was born, in 1844, Alexander had fifteen siblings. He was the last of the lot, but he became the most well-known conjuror of the whole family. By the time he reached his late teens, Alexander's sleight of hand skill was as good or better than that of his older brother.

After touring with Compars throughout Europe, Central America, and South America, Alexander left his older brother and moved to the United States. Billed as "Herrmann the Great," he eventually eclipsed the popularity of other magic headliners. After a few years, Alexander returned to performing in Europe, including a stretch of 1,000 nights at London's Egyptian Hall.

When he finished his run at Egyptian Hall, he returned to the United States. The trip across the Atlantic took several weeks, and on that ocean voyage Alexander Herrmann courted a young, London-born dancer named Adele Scarcez. (It was spelled "Scarsez" on her mother's gravestone.) By the time that the steam-powered ocean-liner reached New York City, Alexander Herrmann



Alexander Herrmann portrait.
(Courtesy of New York Public Library,
Billy Rose Theater Division.)



Adelaide Herrmann became adept at billiard ball manipulations, and was truly the “Queen of Magic” in her day.

(Courtesy of New York Public Library,
Billy Rose Theater Division.)



A segment of a “Herrmann the Great” poster by the Strobridge Lithograph Company.



One of Adelaide Herrmann’s lithograph posters by the Metropolitan Printing Company.

(Courtesy of New York Public Library, Billy Rose Theater Division.)

and Adel Scarcez were engaged, and in March of 1875, they were married.

Adele assumed Alexander’s last name of “Herrmann,” modified her first name to “Adelaide,” and became “Adelaide Herrmann.” Adelaide joined her husband’s stage

performances, and became an integral part of the Herrmann the Great show, touring alongside of him and performing on stage with him. Oddly, when she first joined the Herrmann the Great show, she was costumed in men’s clothing and was referred to as “Mr. Alexander.” Adelaide eventually shed the “Mr. Alexander” character and performed as herself in segments of magic, as a featured solo dancer, and as a performer of stunts on her “vélocipède” bicycle.

The husband-and-wife team of Alexander and Adelaide Herrmann performed together successfully for more than two decades. They traveled and performed throughout North America, South America, and Europe, and they wowed their audiences wherever they went.

As a very young man, Alexander developed a passion for cigars. This was more than an “interest.” He used them in his magic, making them appear, multiply, and vanish. He used them in impromptu practical jokes, producing them from clothing and from the beards of U.S. Presidents. But most noticeably, Alexander smoked them. A lot of them. His penchant for smoking cigars was such an ever-present part of his persona that a brand of cigars was created and named for him. The labels and the wooden cigar boxes featured his image, and the script “Herrmann” name.



The likeness of Alexander Herrmann on the label inside of a box of “Herrmann” cigars.
(Courtesy of David Haversat.)

His love of smoking cigars did not escape Adelaide. She repeatedly reminded him of his cardiac issues, and requested that he give up the cigars. She requested this a lot – gently, but over and over – to no avail.

Adelaide developed into an exceptionally skilled performer. Following Alexander’s unexpected death from a heart attack at age fifty-two, she discovered that the couple’s finances were not in good order – she was left nearly destitute. Out of necessity, she continued performing a version of the Herrmann the Great show, and became known as “The Queen of Magic.” Adelaide became an expert manipulator, and she carried on presenting the show for another three decades, in

various forms, and through many setbacks.

The Herrmann dynasty of magicians included full-time professional magicians as well as part-time and peripheral contributors. Although we cited Samuel as the first in the line, Alexander was reported to have mentioned a grandfather who “magished.” Of Samuel’s sixteen children, the first, Compars, and the last, Alexander are most well-known as conjurors. Samuel’s grandson, Leon, joined the show with Adelaide for a time following his uncle Alexander’s death. Another cousin on Adelaide’s side, Felix, acquired some of Alexander’s apparatus, changed his name to Herrmann, and started out on his own. There were several others who momentarily dipped their toes into the family biz, but these six performers are the ones who are most frequently mentioned.

You can find more about the life and magic of the Herrmann dynasty in books, including *The Annals of Conjuring* by Sidney W. Clarke, *The Silence of Chung Ling Soo* by Todd Karr, *Queen of Magic: The Wondrous, Unstoppable Adelaide Herrmann* by Margaret B. Steele, and *The Herrmann Chronicles* by James Hamilton. There’s also quite a lot of material in back issues of periodical publications like *Genii*, *MAGIC*, *The Magic Circular*, *M-U-M*, *The Sphinx*, and *The Linking Ring*.

Samuel Herrmann is believed to have died in 1868. Compars Herrmann died in 1887. Alexander Herrmann died in 1896. Leon Herrmann died in 1909. Adelaide Herrmann died in 1932. Felix Kretschmann Herrmann died in 1938.

If you mailed us an answer to this month’s question, but you didn’t send the *correct* answer, please ... *keep trying!* These questions can be obscure, and they aren’t intended to be quickly answered using Internet search engines like Google, or DuckDuckGo. Try bringing your copy of *The Linking Ring* to your local Ring meeting and ask the more experienced members to help you find the answer. Show the whole world how much you know, get your name printed in *The Linking Ring*, and win some cool stuff from one of our finest brick-and-mortar magic shops!

Attention, All Youth Members!

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

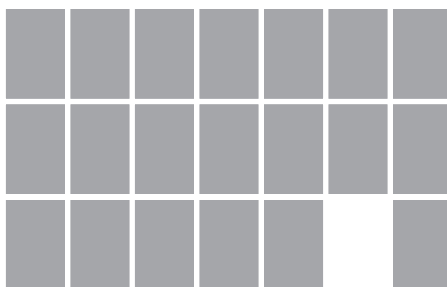
I.B.M. Youth Trivia Quiz
c/o Don Greenberg
4450 Peace Valley Road
New Waterford, Ohio 44445 USA

Make certain to include some good references. If we *do* use your question, we'll send you either a coupon for a half-liter of diesel fuel or a *really* cool magic book – our choice.

See if you can win! Follow the Contest Rules on page 143 and
mail your responses to the address above.

Answers must be postmarked by November 20, 2026.

Missing Linking Rings?



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

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



A Portrait of the Professional

DALE SALWAK

Universal Truths in the Arts

*Timeless concepts resonate deeply
with our shared humanity.*

– Anonymous

*All mature artists attempt to channel foundational, emotional,
and universal truths through the medium of their art.*

– Channing Pollock

“I’ve always been fascinated,” someone wrote, “by how a single painting or song or other creative performance can make someone across the world pause and whisper, ‘That’s it.’”

From Michelangelo to David Hockney, from Howard Thurston to David Copperfield, that feeling – “when art touches something primal, something true we all understand without words” – has been called “the invisible thread woven through humanity’s greatest creations.”

On a sunny June morning in 1974 I was first alerted in a serious way to this exciting principle when Channing Pollock pointed out to me, in private, that the most successful creators, including magicians, learn to connect with others by tapping into universal patterns of thoughts and feelings that cross cultural, language, and time boundaries. “Do so,” said Channing, “and you’ll not only find your audience but keep it.”

Something quickened within me that day. Later I realized that this is the same message of Jorge Luis Borges (whose short fiction or “magic realism” is a treasure trove of hints for routines just waiting to be discovered) in his essay “The Four Cycles” (“Los Cuatro Ciclos,” 1972).

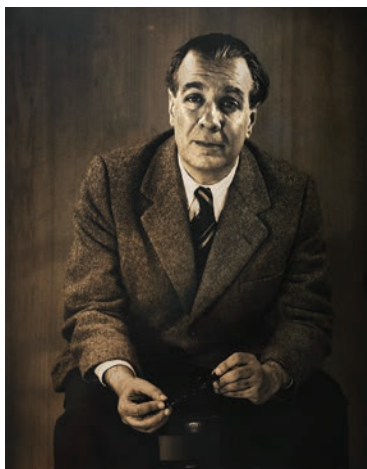
There he focuses on the inner emotional



Channing Pollock pointed out that the most successful creators, including magicians, learn to connect with others by tapping into universal patterns of thoughts and feelings.

states of the human condition and reveals that all literature, myths, and historical narratives reduce to just four fundamental types of stories: The Siege of a City, The Return Home, The Quest, and The Sacrifice. (Try to find an exception: I can’t.)

This is also the message of pianist Emmet Cohen’s brilliant album, *Universal Truths* (2026) – which honors jazz legends Miles Davis, John Coltrane, and Jimmy Heath.



Jorge Luis Borges reveals that all literature, myths, and historical narratives reduce to just four fundamental types of stories.

PHOTO BY GRETE STERN

“John Coltrane,” he explained in an interview, “would always talk about searching for a universal truth in his music. Everyone has something different, and I think that right there is the universal truth. It’s like that we all have some belief and some love and some care for something in the world. And music [like all the arts] is just the best tool we have to search deep within ourselves and pull that out.” (Try to find a contradiction: I can’t.)

This is also the message posted by the Shinshoji Zen Museum in Fukuyama, Hiroshima Prefecture: “Universal truth in art is a mirror. It reflects back parts of ourselves we struggle to name. When you stand before an abstract piece that unsettles you, you’re confronting something internal, not external. This vulnerability in the viewer is precisely what the artist invites. They say, ‘Here’s a piece of my truth. See what it touches in you.’” (Try to find an alternative: I can’t.)

Over and over again I have since discovered that successful artists from all genres and all eras keep conveying the same messages because our (and our audience’s) core desires, fears, and journeys remain the same.

Thus in chapter IX of his indispensable book, *Preface to Paradise Lost*, C. S. Lewis wrote with remarkable clarity and precision about literature’s “doctrine of the unchanging

human heart.” In magic, examples abound.

Magicians everywhere yearn to reach a level with their own work (whatever it might be) that is so clean, so unencumbered, so absent of any telltale “moves” as Cardini’s – who astonished and entertained and motivated with phenomenal card, cigarette, and billiard ball manipulations while his tipsy persona tried to keep control.

Magicians everywhere strive to create the make-believe as brilliantly conveyed by David Copperfield who seemingly walked through the Great Wall of China, created a snowstorm throughout the theater, or flew high into the air while carrying an audience member.

Magicians everywhere, with dreams of creating fantastic events in a normal world, are inspired to lift their own endeavors to a higher level after seeing Harry Blackstone, either Sr. or Jr., with their stunning Flower Garden, Dancing Handkerchief, and – my favorite three minutes in all of magic – the near-sacred Floating Light Bulb that breaks the fourth wall, floats out over the heads of the audience, and then glides back to the magician’s waiting hands.

Likewise among comedy magicians. Mac King in his brilliance learned with equal measures of humor and warmth to tap into fundamental human social anxieties – miscommunication and dealing with difficult people or situations. The late Carl Ballantine delved into the baffling human tendency to act contrary to our higher aspirations. The late Johnny Long of Sweden showed a man trying to white-knuckle his way to success with props that refused to obey.



Carl Ballantine delved into the baffling human tendency to act contrary to our higher aspirations.

Although I didn't realize it then, I now understand that what I felt as a seven-year-old seeing for the first time a magician at a birthday party appealed to a universal love for the make-believe, for enchantment, for wonder – feelings that have stayed with me and grown throughout my career. I really wonder how far I would have been able to take my own work and connection with the audience without these truths within me.

After his performance, while the other children dashed to the cake and ice cream table, I hovered around the magician, mesmerized by his props, asking questions, until he gave me my first magic trick – the Nickel to Dime (about which years later I joked, “In that instant I knew magic was the business I should get into.”).

Back home, after I had excitedly shared with my parents what I had seen, my father pulled from a shelf his copy of G. S. Ripley's *Magic for Boys* (1954, a title which now, of course, would have to be expanded), and that began to feed my appetite to learn more.



*Dale's first book on our art, G.S. Ripley's **Magic for Boys** (1954) fed his early appetite to learn more.*

One of the beauties of the book is that much of it describes effects without explaining in detail the method. Along with my mother at the breakfast table, therefore, we figured out how to make the Rice Bowls, the Phantom Tube, the Torn-and-Restored paper, and at ten I performed my first show: my parents hired me for my own birthday party (for which I received two dollars plus a twenty-five-cent tip).

But how do we tap into these universals? “Not by hiding behind your magic,” explained Channing, “but by using it to express what you believe, what you’re feeling at the time (such as love? fear? doubt? love? wonder?). Then you will make an emotional connection with your audience who have felt or

are feeling the same.”

Authenticity and honesty with ourselves: that’s the key. When we read the first page of a book, or listen to the first ten bars from a musician, or spend a minute before a painting, quickly many of us sense whether or not the artist is genuine, authentic, real.

Channing believed that the same is true for the magician. As soon as he or she walks onstage and begins to perform, the audience senses whether or not he is himself, is being truthful with them. (Interestingly, the first time Jay Marshall saw him perform, he recommended him to Mark Leddy, booker for *The Ed Sullivan Show*, as “the real thing.”)

Discovering all this doesn’t occur overnight, of course; sometimes it takes years. “Dig deep, be patient, be courageous,” I tell my students, “and on a gut-level a moment will come when you’ll just know” – somewhat akin to when a marriage-bound person asks, “How can I be certain that I have met the right person?” Or when a writer asks, “How do I know when the piece I am working on is correct, genuine, finished? The answer: “You’ll just know.”

So for the magician: After years of trial-and error, and ups and downs, suddenly we just know. At that moment we transcend time and culture to express our own universal truths through our art, we begin to live onstage as ourselves, and we truly connect with our audience as we perform not *at* them but *with* them.

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

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

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.



Inside the Wizard's Workshop

BILL WINTERS

Richard Hughes

In his book *Maximum Entertainment 2.0, Director's Notes for Magicians and Mentalists*, magician Ken Weber writes that it's time to throw away your Botania. That's like asking the citizens of Munchkinland to take a weed wacker to all the beautiful flowers in the village. I for one shudder at the idea, and so does Richard Hughes, the finest maker of feather flower effects in the world today.

Feather flowers have been part of the magic scene for more than one hundred and seventy years. Legendary creators in this field include Conradi, Willmann, Mephisto Huis, and Schlosser. Harry Blackstone Sr.'s Enchanted Garden enthralled audiences across the country. From the 1920s to the 1970s, Horace Marshall was the premier maker of feather flower effects, still highly sought after. Today, Richard continues Marshall's legacy under his own name, Hughes Magic.

A farm boy born in Northeastern Ohio, Richard was active in 4-H and developed a love of photography, winning several awards. He earned a degree in photo illustration from Kent State University. After graduation, he landed a part-time job as a sports photographer for a local newspaper. Richard also spent a few years working in water and wastewater treatment. By 1995, he tired of working in the muggle world and made the leap to full-time magic.

It's often said that success can be attributed to being in the right place at the right time, and that was certainly the case for Richard. His interest in magic went back to his childhood, where he developed a love of

stage props and the history of the Golden Age of magic. While attending university in 1972, he took a non-credit class in magic with Tom Craven and John Quine that reinforced his interest in magic. Shortly after, he had the good fortune of joining I.B.M. Ring 161, where Horace Marshall was an active member.

Horace was an old-school magician, not one to share his secrets with just anyone. While at Ring meetings, Richard would drop every name in Milbourne Christopher's "Panorama of Magic" he could remember. It turned out that Horace had either built for them or knew them personally. Fortunately for Richard, he and Mr. Marshall hit it off. Their friendship led Horace to teach Richard how to wind springs, which is critical for the smooth working of the Botania, as well as collaborate with him on "Delage's Fastest Trick." Meanwhile, Horace's wife Marie taught Richard the secret to making beautiful flowers from feathers.

Richard's time in the workshop with Horace was short lived: Horace passed away about a year after taking young Richard under his wing. Marie wanted to keep the business going and asked Richard – still in school – to stay on. He volunteered his time on Sundays to help her free of charge. Luckily for the magic community, Richard was a fast learner and understood Horace's thought process well enough to figure things out through trial and error, as Horace kept no notebooks that could be referred to later. Richard's efforts resulted in several improvements to a few of Horace's classics.



In 1985, Marie retired and Richard took over the company with an associate. The partnership did not last long and Richard moved forward with the business on his own. A few years later, having built a reputation for himself, he changed the name from Marshall Flowers to Hughes Magic.

Richard continued to support the magic community in other ways. For a couple of years, he worked as a stagehand for another magician, driving a truck and loading stage equipment at corporate events. He also served as stage manager for the Canton Battle of Magicians for twenty-five years, and as a member of the Abbott's Get-Together crew for close to forty years. One of

Richard's proudest moments at the Abbott's conventions was the opportunity to assist Harry Blackstone Jr. on several occasions. He says that Blackstone had an immeasurable influence on his magic life.

Richard spent another twelve years working as the archivist for Ken Klosterman's Salon de Magie and was responsible for updating and expanding Ken's collection database to contain more than two terabytes of information. Magic collectors and historians often seek out Richard, who has a photographic memory, when they need information about props and magicians of yesteryear.

Not one to stay behind the curtain,

Richard developed a flower and silk act he's performed at several regional and national conventions, filling the stages with vibrant colored florets. In 2021, Magic Collectors Expo attendees were treated to his wonderful lecture on the history of magic feather flowers. As he spoke of past creators who excelled in the manufacturing of feather flower effects, he created a flower from scratch, putting the final touches on it as he concluded the lecture.

Unlike magic builders who work in wood and metal, those who work in flower magic face considerably higher material costs due to the waste involved. There is also an overwhelming demand for the type of quality feathers used to create costumes for Las Vegas-style production numbers and the Rio de Janeiro Carnival. To make matters worse, Richard spends thousands of dollars buying bulk feathers, only to throw away 90 percent of them because they don't meet the high standards of Hughes Magic.

When it comes to mass production, builders find that once you have set up your production line and have the jigs in place for cutting and drilling, it's easier to make a dozen or more copies. Unfortunately, that doesn't really work when it comes to feather flower effects. For Richard, it's a labor of love; he estimates that he works for roughly 50 cents an hour. In addition to handcrafting each flower, he creates all the metal elements for his effects, including the countless springs needed for the Botania, the Fastest Trick in the World, and the watering can used in his Deluxe Goofus Plant. He makes bamboo mats and rolls metal tubes for bouquet products and still uses his aunt's 1930 sewing machine to manufacture cloth. Richard even creates tie-dyed and hand-painted silks.

According to Richard, the most difficult flower effect to make is the Automatic Blooming Bouquet. It took Horace a year to come up with a working model; Richard took two years to recreate it. Only he and Horace have ever made this version, which uses an internal spring mechanism to control the blooming action without touching

the bouquet. The mechanisms, which facilitate smooth motions, are located inside a handle no larger than a standard blooming bouquet.

Horace is known for building a legendary prop known as "Girl to Rosebush," based on an original Blackstone design. When Richard recreated it for Marc Gilday to use at a Blackstone Tribute during the I.B.M. Convention in Reno, Nevada, it took him almost a year to perfect the complex mechanism. Richard's version makes a few improvements on the original Schlosser and Blackstone designs. It is the only one he has ever made.

For the working professional, a quality product that can stand up to the wear and tear of hundreds – if not thousands – of shows is a must. That might explain why Richard's client list reads like a who's who of magic. When Harry Blackstone Jr. wanted to recreate his father's Enchanted Garden act, he turned to Hughes Magic to recreate it. It required thousands of flowers, all hand-turned by Richard, to include the featured effect, Lady to Botania. Other customers include Penn and Teller, Lance Burton, Jeff McBride, Geoff Durham, Piff the Magic Dragon, and Dale Salwak. Fantasio, famous for his canes and candles, stated that Richard made the most beautiful bouquets in the United States.

When he's not in his workshop or performing or lecturing, Richard enjoys spending time with his wife Kathleen, his son Alan (a union stagehand), and his grandchildren. He also spends time working as a judge at high school and college track-and-field competitions, specializing in the high jump and pole vault events. Due to a lack of skilled judges, Richard is in high demand and travels across the country to support athletes (and hopefully a few future Olympians).

Richard is a member of the I.B.M.'s Order of Merlin Excalibur (fifty or more years of continuous membership) and a lifetime member of SAM. He is included in the *Who's Who in Magic* and *Encyclopedia of Magicians*, and he has lectured at the Magic Castle as well as several regional, I.B.M., and SAM conventions.

Stephen Dean Kelley

June 9, 1948 – August 6, 2026

A Personal Remembrance

By Dale Salwak

Photos courtesy of Nancy, Karen, Kevin, and Sean Kelley

Along with friends and family members (to whom my heart goes out), I was privileged to attend on August 21 a memorial service for Steve Kelley, my oldest of friends through magic – confidante and soulmate, really – and among the most enlivening companions I have ever known.

The service was held at the Trinity Evangelical Free Church, South Bend, Indiana. Two weeks earlier he had transitioned suddenly and unexpectedly while attending Magic, Live in Las Vegas. He was a very young seventy-eight.

This was such a loss on so many levels, a difficult loss not just for me, of course, but for everyone who knew and loved him including, above all, his sister Karen; his wife of fifty-four years, Nancy; his sons Kevin and Sean; their wives, Leah and Alison; and five grandchildren.

In a beautifully delivered eulogy his sons concluded: “Many of you knew Dad as a kind and funny relative, friend or co-worker. We just wanted to share how he was also a great Dad. It will never be the same without him and we’ll miss him.”

Exceptionally well-read with one of the most capacious and retentive minds that I have ever encountered, he could converse in depth and with ease and fresh understanding on any subject – including mathematics and physics (his focus at the University of Colorado where he studied under J. Robert Oppenheimer’s



brother Frank), books (with which his basement, living room, and master bedroom are filled floor to ceiling), sports, pop culture, Broadway musicals, apologetics, computer science, politics (he was a longtime avid reader of William F. Buckley’s *National Review*), the Spanish language (self-taught), all things Disney and, of course, magic – about which he was a walking encyclopedia.

In every respect this modest Renaissance man of deep faith lived up to Aristotle’s promise in *The Rhetoric*: “All men [and women] by nature desire to know.” Our strong friendship, in fact, was one long conversation spanning sixty-four years, punctuated by laughter and optimism and founded upon shared interests and mutual respect and much fun. We used to half-joke that it’s good we were not neighbors; otherwise, we would never get any work done.

Steve was born to Clarence (“Whoop”) and Georgia (Jones) Kelley on June 9, 1948 and grew exceptionally close to his older brother David (who passed in 2023) and younger sister Karen. A solid student, he graduated from Penn High School, Mishawaka, in 1966 and then went on to the University of Colorado and graduated in 1970.

Sometime during his childhood years he developed, like many of us, a passion for the art of magic, later responded to an advertisement for my recently-formed Magic Club of America, joined (as I had) Magical

Youths International (MYI) – the leading teenage magic club at the time – and began to correspond with me.



Steve grew exceptionally close to his younger sister Karen, here shown ca. 1957.



Picture of Steve as a high school student, 1963-64.

Both of us liked to write as well as to receive letters (“What has the world lost in forgetting the art of letter-writing?” he asked recently). After a yearlong flurry of back-and-forth we finally met in 1963 – the year he joined the International Brotherhood of Magicians. During a hot and sticky summer weekend Steve arrived by bus at my hometown in W. Lafayette, Indiana, to attend together a one-day magic convention at Lafayette’s Columbian Park.

My memories from that day are vivid: the

dealer displays, the close-up performances of Chicago’s Jim Ryan and Johnny Platt; and onstage that night the commanding work of Dave Gaiser (last student of Benny Chavez), “Dorny” Dornfield, Jimmy Trimble – and the impeccable Neil Foster, who would later evolve into my mentor, my muse, and – as he became for many of his students – a second father.

Thinking back to that occasion, Neil wrote years later: “During the day out of the corner of my eye I remember well the two of you standing for hours at the Abbott booth as I demonstrated and sold. You were very polite.”

After the evening show Steve revealed to my astonishment that he was a student of the Chavez Studio of Magic’s home-study course. He showed me some exhibition card fans and billiard ball moves, and in an instant my life changed dramatically. A month later I, too, enrolled, and thus began a lifelong journey for which I owe Steve so much.



Steve relaxes with friends Dan Gardner (center) and Craig Johnson, 1962.

In 1964 we started attending the annual Abbott’s Magic Get-Together and, along with other magic friends, stayed at the Kelley’s summertime residence along Lake Michigan. His mother, sometimes father, with unfailing generosity would drive us early in the morning to Colon and pick us up closing time at 2:00 a.m. All of us were treated as if members of the family.

Over the years at every one of my sixteen performances on an Abbott show (the first in 1968; earlier as part of the Talent Scouts show, 1966), Steve was there, often with his parents,

in support. (“That’s my boy!” I remember Whoop exclaiming afterwards one year.)

It was an extraordinarily educational and entertaining time during which we watched and learned from and befriended the greats and near-greats – literally a who’s-who of a generation of magicians. During the 1970s in the fall or spring his parents loaned me a car whenever I was visiting so that I could drive the two hours from their home in South Bend to Colon and spend a few days with Neil and Jeanne.

In the meantime, in April 1962, one year after I had moved from Massachusetts to Indiana, the late Duane Gilliam and Bob Jones (along with Tom Creasy) and I had founded *Magic Carpet* as the official monthly journal of our Magic Club of America. Although Duane and Bob’s interest soon waned, Tom and I went on with the project, devoting weekends to producing over the next seven years eighty-eight issues.

Because I seemed to be having so much fun, Steve decided to do the same and founded the International Club of Magic and its journal, *Top Hat*, which surpassed in quality and content any of the other 132 (1,486 globally) teenage clubs/periodicals at the time. The publication ran from July 1963 through December 1965, when Steve signed an agreement to merge with MYI while retaining the name *Top Hat*.

“As you and I have reminisced,” Steve wrote evocatively in one of his last letters to me, “the joy of this experience in our lives probably can never occur again. We now live in an age of instant gratification, but I think that you would agree that there was something very special about waiting for the mail each day to see who would be sharing their thoughts with you. Emails will never replace letters in quality content. I often think that this early experience with correspondence paid some big dividends in our lives.”

Humming beneath the surface of his many interests and endeavors, however, was an ever-lasting love for and devotion to his wife and family about which his sons had much to share at the service.

Fond memories include Steve as their

soccer coach (for which he studied hard to understand the sport); as vacation planner; as leader of Trivial Pursuit when for the added challenge he would take the cards from several games and mix them all together in a garbage bag for a truly randomized set of questions; and as founder along with Karen of a computer consulting business called Kelley World (echoing Disney World) which was successful enough to provide a comfortable lifestyle for the family and from which he retired after fifty years. Steve knew who he was.



Steve and Nancy celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary in Sedona, Arizona, Oct. 2020.

As every one of my readers can confirm, how dismayingly surreal it seems to lose a special friend or a family member. I treasure my links to our unrecoverable past – his hundreds of letters and emails (many deeply personal), photographs, hour-long telephone calls, the days together – along with the certainty that in the “fullness of time” we will be reunited.

Because of him my circle of friends expanded to include Greg and Kathy Heeter

(who introduced him to his future wife), Craig (passed 2021) and Joy Johnson, the Rev. Steve and Jayna Beutler, Dan and Penny Gardner, and many others. Because of him I discovered at age sixteen the focus and direction for my own magical life. Because of him I will carry for the rest of my life a storehouse of good memories, including our last time together in 2025 at Magic Live and Abbott's Magic Get-Together – where I performed and, incredibly, received the Bill Baird/Neil Foster Award for Manipulation.

In the cover story for the November 1970 issue of *The New Tops*, he called me “a friend in every sense of the word.” Without hesitation I can say with gratitude the same of Steve Kelley. “Few people have friends from that early in life,” wrote Karen recently, “and can maintain that level of friendship, especially when they live far away.” That’s the power of our magical realm in the face of a difficult and dangerous world.

Survivors include his wife of fifty-four years, Nancy; his sister Karen of Boulder

Colorado (with whom for thirty years he loved to attend the University’s football games); sons Kevin (Leah) Kelley and their children Kathryn and Cora of Lombard, Illinois; and Sean (Alison) Kelley and their children, Ruby, Pearl and Finnegan of Naperville, Illinois. He was pre-deceased by his brother, David, who shared his love of Disney and passed at seventy-nine in 2023.



A younger Steve shares some quiet time with a very young Ryan Sabwak, 1988.



Steve and Nancy (center) unite with their family (front, left to right), Ruby, Pearl, Cora, Kathryn and (back) Alison, Finnegan, Sean, Kevin, Leah, September 2019.



I hope all of you are enjoying the magic of the fall season. Now is the time to reach out to libraries and schools about running an after-school magic program. This month, I'm sharing some math magic to show your group.

Calculator Fun

Write the prediction 73 on a piece of paper and lay the paper face down. Ask your friend to help. Say to them: *"On your calculator, type in any four-digit number, then type it in again. You now see your number two times on the screen, correct? Next, divide that number by 137 and divide the new sum by the original four-digit number."*

Amazing – their sum will always be 73.

Example: 76927692 divided by 137 = 561615 divided by 7692 = 73

Example: 34863486 divided by 137 = 254378 divided by 3486 = 73

For advanced students, force an ace, a three, and a seven (creating the random number 137). If you use this as a book test, you can now turn to page 73 and focus on the tenth word or line on that page. You could also bring a selected card to the tenth position down in the deck. Now add $7+3$ to get 10.

Number 9 Puzzle

Start with a four-digit number and enter it into your calculator. Now reverse the numbers and subtract the smallest from the largest. Next, add each number in your sum. If it's a two-digit number, add them together to get a single digit. Your answer will always be 9.

Example:

$$6845 - 5486 = 2259$$

$$2 + 2 + 5 + 9 = 18$$

$$1 + 8 = 9$$

This is a nice idea for a CAAN. Just note the ninth card from the top of the deck after it

was shuffled. Write it as your prediction and have some fun.

Think of a Number

Say to your helper: *"Please think of a number between 1 and 9. Then multiply that number by 9. Add the two digits together and then subtract 6 from the sum."*

Ask them to look at the new sum as a letter in the alphabet. A = 1, B = 2, C = 3, etc. Make it more random by rolling a loaded die or choosing a six from a deck.

Now ask them to think of a cold drink that starts with that letter. They will usually say Coke, and you can have a can of Coke in a bag as your prediction, showing them that you knew in advance what they were thinking.

Modus Operandi: $7 \times 9 = 63$; $6 + 3 = 9$. The number will always equal 9. Now, when they subtract 6 from 9, they get 3. The number 3 corresponds to C in the alphabet, and most people will think Coke when asked about a cold drink that starts with that letter. If you ask someone to think of a drink they may have for breakfast, they will choose coffee. When using the coffee idea, ask them to think of something that would go well with their drink, using the next letter in the alphabet, which would be D. Most people will think of a donut, and now you can take a cup of coffee and a donut out of your bag.

I started my AM Math = Magic show at schools with this. When you read these ideas, you might think, "Nobody can do math and make it entertaining." Try a few of them, and you will find people are amazed by numbers. They will also give you great credit for your math skills.

Camps and schools love it when you can show kids that MATH = FUN!

Enjoy and practice!

Bob Durante

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Polishing the Rings

SKIP WAY

Beyond the Spotlight

One potentially corrosive habit in recruiting organizational leadership is our tendency to assume that the most visible person in the room is automatically the best person to lead it. We magicians may be especially susceptible. After all, we spend a considerable amount of time in the spotlight.

An internationally known performer, popular lecturer, successful dealer, or familiar journal-cover personality may bring valuable experience, confidence, and credibility to a Ring. But accomplishment in magic does not automatically translate into effective organizational leadership.

I begin my research for these columns with one basic question: How can we make a good Ring a great Ring? Again and again, one quality rises toward the top: selfless leadership.

Exceptional Ring leaders tend to be relatively humble men and women who direct attention toward the Ring and its members rather than themselves. They don't need to be the VIP in every photograph or the hero of every story. Their satisfaction comes from seeing those around them and the organization succeed.

That doesn't mean good leaders lack ambition or ego. Leadership requires confidence, determination, and occasionally the hide of a rhinoceros. We need to determine where that ambition is directed: toward the leader or toward the Ring?

In *Good to Great*, author Jim Collins describes a five-level leadership hierarchy. Level 1 represents individual capability; Level 2, the ability to contribute as part of a

team; Level 3, managerial competence; and Level 4, effective leadership. Level 5 adds an unusual combination: personal humility and determined professional will.

Level 5 leaders may be extraordinarily ambitious. The difference is that their ambition is focused primarily on the organization rather than themselves. They redirect recognition toward others while retaining the determination necessary to make difficult decisions and produce lasting results. They are more interested in building foundations than monuments.

That idea applies remarkably well to Ring leadership. The best leaders think beyond their own term in office. They develop future leaders, strengthen systems, and leave behind an organization capable of succeeding without them. In many ways, the real test of a successful presidency begins after the president leaves office.

A leader who believes the Ring cannot function without him may have built an impressive presidency. He has not necessarily built an impressive Ring.

Great leaders surround themselves with clock builders rather than clock watchers. They develop capable successors and create systems that keep the organization ticking long after they surrender the gavel. Future members may never know who built that clock. That, dear friends, is the point.

High-profile leaders naturally attract attention like a flash pot in a darkened theater. They appear on magazine covers, headline conventions, lecture internationally, and command instant recognition when they enter a room.

None of those things disqualifies someone from exceptional leadership. Neither do they qualify someone for it.

Members quietly producing extraordinary results behind the scenes may be easy to overlook. This creates an interesting challenge for Ring nominating committees. Instead of automatically approaching the most visible, popular, or accomplished personality, perhaps we should pay more attention to members already demonstrating leadership without the title.

Who welcomes the visitor nobody else noticed? Who takes the novice aside and offers encouragement? Who volunteers for the unglamorous jobs? Who notices someone else's creativity without immediately steering the conversation back toward his own? Who solves problems without seeking public credit for solving them? Somewhere among these unpretentious members may be your next great president.

Strong leadership candidates often demonstrate an interesting combination of humility and tenacity. They are modest about personal recognition but remarkably stubborn about achieving good results for the organization. They accept responsibility when things go badly and share credit when things go well.

That combination is rarer than it sounds. Most of us have encountered the opposite leader: the glory-hogging headliner with a remarkably destructive credit-distribution system. Credit travels inward. Blame travels outward.

Level 5 leaders reverse the flow. Collins describes Level 5 leaders as looking in the mirror when examining poor results and through the window when success occurs: out toward the people, circumstances, and good fortune that helped produce it. Potential Level 5 leaders may already exist throughout our Rings. Sometimes we simply need to change the way we look for them.

We magicians, like everyone else, naturally place celebrities on pedestals. Familiarity and accomplishment create an aura of authority. We want to believe that someone exceptionally successful in one area must possess ex-

ceptional wisdom in several others.

Sometimes they do. Sometimes the fellow who wrote three books on a flawless bottom deal is simply the wrong person to chair the budget committee. Celebrity often makes it difficult to tell the difference.

A high-profile magician may certainly guide a Ring to tremendous success. The I.B.M. and its Rings have benefited from many talented, well-known performers and creators who also possessed the humility and organizational discipline necessary to lead effectively.

The distinction is simple: visibility may introduce us to a potential leader. It should not be how we measure one.

Better measures are what happens around that leader. Are other members developing? Is participation increasing? Are programs improving? Are newcomers being drawn into meaningful roles? And, perhaps most importantly, will the Ring be stronger when that leader eventually hands someone else the gavel?

Good leaders maintain organizations. Great leaders leave them stronger.

Perhaps that is where our search should begin. We need to look beyond the brightest spotlight for those Level 5 members quietly helping others succeed from the shadows. These dedicated leaders don't crave the journal cover or celebrity recognition. Their passion and great strength lie in their love for the art of magic and their desire to help it and the people around them grow.

Give these remarkable people encouragement, useful tools, and opportunities to lead, and we may discover that the next great Ring or I.B.M. leader has been standing right behind us all along.

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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Bob Malinchock

One-Man Parade



Written by Bob Malinchock • Edited by Lauren Jurgensen

Bob Malinchock has enjoyed the art of magic as a hobby since he was old enough to see his first trick in his immigrant grandfather's saloon, well over seventy years ago. Born and raised in a small Pennsylvania coal town with limited facilities, he managed to graduate from Penn State with bachelor's and master's degrees in engineering. He retired from Bell Atlantic after thirty-one years, then spent another seven years in consulting before retiring from that as well, and finally rounded out his career with ten more years supporting a local assisted living facility.

Bob is a longstanding member of the I.B.M. and SAM, and over the years has had the privilege of serving as secretary, treasurer, scribe, and newsletter author for several local magic clubs. He has called Virginia home for the last thirty-six years and shares his life there with his wonderful wife Karen, four grown children, and nine grandchildren. These days, he enjoys an active magical life.

This is Bob's third Parade for *The Linking Ring*, this time offering a variety of small miracles using items found at thrift stores.

Baba's Ghost Story

I don't remember where I got the old cheap plastic card box. Most likely it was from a magic kit found in a local thrift shop. In the process of disposing it, suddenly the idea of disposing a body came to mind and subsequently the following *bizarre* effect! With a little help from Ed Solomon's May 2007 *Linking Ring* column "The Coins of Molly Mack," I attempted my first venture into storytelling magic.

EFFECT: With an appropriate story, two coins vanish and a chosen card appears in an old plastic card box.

REQUIREMENTS: An old card box with flap. A short deck of cards (less than 52) to allow room for a folded sheet of paper in the box with the cards. A duplicate of one of the cards in the deck. Two silver half-dollars. A copy of an old photo showing a very elderly and very poor woman on an 8½ x 11 sheet of paper. A picture of the author, his father, and first landlady were used in this description (**Fig. 1**).

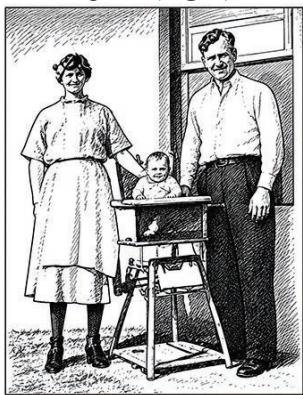


Fig. 1

SET-UP: Open card box and place duplicate card (assume Nine of Clubs for this explanation) on the left side facing down, and place the flap on it. Place the short deck of cards with the Nine of Clubs on top, face down on the right side of box.

Fold the picture into a size that fits the box and place on top of the deck with the fold towards the left. Close the box, folding left to right. Be sure to open later with the flap side on top (**Fig. 2 and 3**). I have

a small mark on one side of the box to indicate which side should be face up. Folded picture will help ensure the flap will stay on top or left side of box when opened. This helps keep the flap from falling into view.

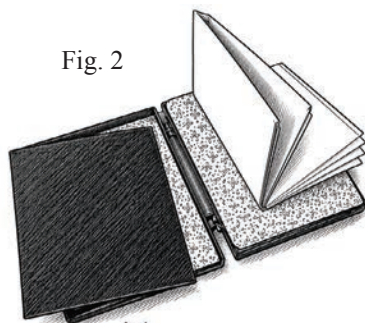


Fig. 2

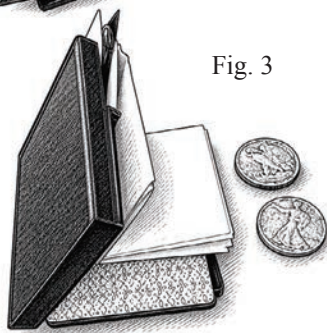


Fig. 3

Place two half-dollars in pocket or out of sight.

PERFORMANCE: Remark that you would like to tell a story. In fact it's a true story. And it all starts right here with this old plastic card box. Bring out card box, making sure the flap side is on top and open right to left. Holding the paper against the flap, open the box fully, exposing the paper on the left half (indirectly showing the left side of box as empty). Remove deck from right side. You may need to hold the box up with left hand holding the flap and paper together and dumping the deck into the open right hand. Place box, still open, on the table.

Square up the deck flashing the faces to indicate a mixture of cards. Place the deck face down on the table. Remove the folded paper.

Now to proceed with the story. Open the

folded paper and reveal the picture of a very old and obviously poor lady. For the purposes of this explanation I will use an old picture of my own that includes my Dad (Pete), old lady Borzok, and myself (in the highchair). I generally admit that it is me in the highchair and that the first place our family lived was in a garage owned by Mrs. Borzok. However, I quickly point out that the story is not about me, but really about the fate of Mrs. Borzok.

She was an immigrant from Russia. Her husband came over to America to work the coal mines. Her full name was Anastasia, but everyone called her Baba. Her husband died in a mine accident many years before, but she continued on. She was a kleptomaniac, always stealing. She would be seen at night, between 2 and 3 a.m. in the morning wandering through the town, picking up who knows what. At any rate, time did catch up with her and after not being seen for a few days, the local constable at the time checked up on her and found that she had died in the kitchen of her home.

Being rather poor, a pauper's funeral was arranged. She belonged to the Russian Orthodox Church located right across the railroad tracks which ran between the church and her house. The sexton at the time was old Jerimiah Dudash, and it is he who frequently told this story. He was summoned and found Baba in the kitchen, still sitting up on a chair at the kitchen table, eyes still open staring ahead, and apparently playing a game of solitaire when she passed away. In her right hand was a single playing card.

Invariably, Jerimiah would say as he told this story, someone would always want to know what card she was holding. So he would simply name a card, different almost every time. Jerimiah is not here, so what generally was done to complete the story was to have someone select a card from the deck. *Shuffle the cards, retaining the Nine of Clubs on top.* (I then generally just perform the Winnipeg False Cut as described in Frank Garcia's *Million Dollar*

Card Secrets which leaves the force card on top of the deck.) *Reveal it nonchalantly and leave it face up on the table.*

Satisfying the need to have a card named, Jerimiah proceeded to what he considered more important to his story – the coins. It was the local Russian custom at that time to place heavy silver coins on the eyes of the corpse, supposedly to keep the lids from snapping open at an inappropriate time. So he looked around the house and found two silver coins hidden away in a cupboard. *Reach into your pocket and produce the two half-dollars, and indicate that they were probably similar to these. Jingle the coins together frequently when handling them.* Jerimiah placed the coins on Baba's closed eyelids and was about to close the coffin, when at the last minute, he decided that the coins would do no good – there wasn't going to be any viewing, and she had probably stolen them anyway, so he took them and placed them in his pocket.

There wasn't much to a pauper's funeral and after burying her, Jerimiah headed home. However, he noted that the coins seemed to be jingling in his pocket. In fact, it seemed as though the jingling got louder as the day wore on. By the time he was home, he could have sworn that people in the town were staring at him as though they could hear the constant jingling of the coins in his pocket. When he arrived at his run-down shack of a house, he immediately found a small box, placed the coins in it and placed it on the mantle of his fireplace. *Put the two half-dollars into the right side of the card box and close it (Fig. 4).*

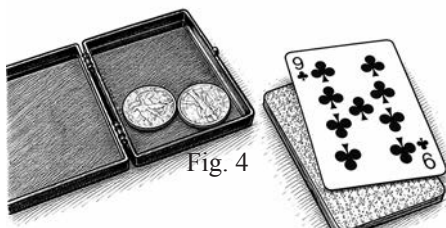


Fig. 4

Jerimiah was also poor as were most at that time, still suffering the effects of the

Depression. He built a fire in the fireplace, heated up some leftover soup from the previous day and with some stale bread and a little wine settled in for a chilly night. And chilly it got. The wind picked up, whistling through the cracks in his window and doors. But the fire felt good and Jeremiah began to doze off.

Bang! *Loudly slap hand onto the table!* All of a sudden, the door burst open and there stood a hazy figure that looked an awful lot like Baba. Both arms were outstretched, eyes wide open staring straight ahead. At first it was a whisper, then a bit clearer, a voice saying, “I want my money, I want my money.” Jeremiah sat in his chair frozen, unable to move. Then he heard the jingling of coins on the mantle. *Shake the card box at this time, back and forth.* The jingling got louder, the voice got louder. Soon the apparition began to move, glide across the room towards the box of jingling coins on the fireplace mantle. Arms outstretched, eyes wide open, staring straight ahead.

Soon the coins stop jingling, and the voice and vision disappeared! *Raise the box at a slight angle and slowly stop shaking. (Pause.)* Jeremiah stood there frozen for a good five minutes before he realized the door was still open! He closed the door, took the box down and slowly opened it. *Open the box slowly toward yourself not revealing the contents.* Remark that the coins were gone! However in their place was a playing card. *Now remove the face-up Nine of Clubs in the box with the back to the audience.* Could it possibly be the exact same card that Baba was holding in her hand, the night she died playing solitaire? *Carefully make sure the coins in the box behind the flap don't talk as you lay the box down.*

Pause and look at the deck exposed card on the table. Triumphant reveal the matching Nine of Clubs (Fig. 5).

Jeremiah told that story and swore it was true until the day he died. Needless to say, he never, ever took what was not his ... at least not from a coffin.

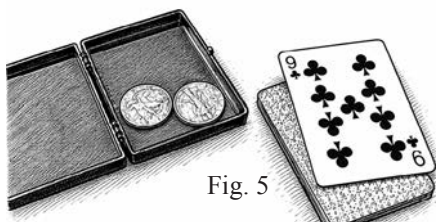


Fig. 5

END NOTES: The coins-on-eyes ritual was visualized on the *Game of Thrones* television series, and stems from an ancient Greek custom in which two coins are placed over a dead person's eyes before burial to keep the eyelids from opening as a result of decomposition or as some declare, a payment to a mythical figure named Charon. It was also believed that souls who did not fulfill Charon's payment were doomed to wander and come back from the dead to haunt the living.

An informal demonstration can be viewed at youtu.be/PbNIFE8Gf4o.

Canister Gems (Mental)

This effect started out as an example of the creative process in action. The seed for the idea came from a Dan Harlan video tape called *Impromptu Magic*. The trick was named *Then There Were Nine* and dealt with a simple book of paper matches. I thought the trick was too good to be relegated to paper matches and began to expand on the basic premise. The matches grew into pills, poker chips (can stick together), and then rocks (gems are more valuable). Finally, the predictive mindreading turned into a discovery of that which might be hidden, and then repeated.

EFFECT: A canister (pill bottle) filled with gems (small glass stones used for flower vases, found in thrift and craft stores) is shown. An unknown number of those gems are hidden in the closed hand of a helper. The mentalist successfully determines the correct number of hidden stones.

The performer begins by displaying the canister and the gems therein. Several are

removed and placed into the canister by the performer and a demonstration of how to openly count by ones or twos also shown. With his back turned, the magician has the helper remove ten or fewer gems and place them into the canister. The helper is then asked to count the number of gems left on the table (should be fewer than twenty), add the two digits together and then remove that number from the table, placing them into the canister as well. What remains on the table is then gathered and held in the closed hand. The magician then turns around and attempts to determine the number of gems in the closed fist of the helper. Experiencing some difficulty, one or more of the gems are removed from the fist of the helper and given to the magician. With some fiddling or listening, the magician announces the number of gems hidden in the fist. They are dropped singly onto the table as they are counted out and behold, the number is correct!

REQUIREMENTS: An opaque container and at least twenty to twenty-five gems or round stones that will not roll off the table like marbles (**Fig. 1**).



Fig. 1

WORKING AND PRESENTATION: In demonstrating how to handle the gems, remove four to five gems and drop them into the container. Leave them there (**Fig. 2**). What remains on the table should be about twenty gems. Removing less than ten guarantees a number in the teens will be left and ensures a two-digit total is counted. When the two digits are added together and that total removed, the number of

stones left on the table will always be nine. To vary the possibilities of answers and mislead those familiar with mathematical tossing nine tricks, requesting one or more to be removed from the hand to “help” in determining the answer is suggested. Simply subtract that number of gems removed from nine to determine the remaining number still hidden in the hand.

PATTER: *The following is the patter or presentation story as I perform this effect.* Most of you have heard of the story of Job in the Old Testament of the Bible. He was a good and very wealthy man who God allowed to be tormented beyond belief by Satan, the devil. But how many of you know about the mystery chapter in that book? It’s Chapter 28 and appears as a poem that is a mystery because it just doesn’t seem to fit within the narrative of the story. From the beginning, translators have had difficulty assigning it to a speaker within the story and even in a most recent analysis has been dropped from the book in its entirety!

So it is a mystery, but what does it say and why? That’s what we’re here to examine today with a small experiment. If you take the time to read the poem, it quickly becomes apparent that the author is looking for something that is very valuable and very well hidden. It seems it can’t be found here in the material world. The poem expresses this using a metaphor of a mine where one can find gold, jewels, copper, etc., hidden deep out of sight from all the world above, yet what is sought is even more valuable. It appears it cannot be found.

Let’s begin our experiment. Let’s begin our look for that invisible, non-material something right here hidden in plain sight. We have here an opaque canister filled with jewels – just pretending. *Dump them out.* They are very valuable, and we must be very careful how we handle them. For example, when we dump them into the canister, dump them all at once so no one can count them. *Grab three or four stones and drop them into the canister.* And when we do count them, count them like this so

everyone can see and count with you. *Count some of those on the table by ones or twos to demonstrate.*

Now I'm going to turn away so I can't see. Please follow my instructions carefully. Please grab a handful of gems from the table, but be sure it's fewer than ten so that we have enough to finish this experiment (**Fig.2**). Drop them as demonstrated into the canister. *Helper does so.*



Now please openly and silently count, as I had previously demonstrated, the number of gems remaining on the table. *Helper does so.* Are there more than ten gems left? *Hopefully a positive response.* Then the total is a two-digit number, correct? *Helper confirms.* We need to reduce that number, so add the two digits of the total calculated and remove that number from the table and drop them into the canister. *Helper does so.* Gather up all the remaining gems on the table and hide them in your closed fist. Keep them well hidden as I turn around.

This situation now resembles what we've heard from the Job poem. Like the miners, we know what was hidden underground and we know what is hidden in your closed fist, materially. You are holding gems or stones, but what is hidden is not material. In the poem it is revealed that what was hidden was not physical but invisible, of the unseen world. What in your hand is invisible, yet exists? In the poem it was called Wisdom. In your hand it is called – a number!

The Job poem does not tell how to find Wisdom, but perhaps we can obtain a hint

here with this experiment. Please remove one or a few more gems from your closed fist and hand them to me. *Helper does so. Magician fingers them and concentrates a bit, drops them into the canister, and announces a number – the number of stones remaining hidden in the fist.* Please slowly count out the number of gems in your hand, one at a time onto the table. *The number counted exactly matches the number announced by the performer!*

An informal demonstration can be seen at youtu.be/Uk2xEorTVic.

DOI Delivers

The idea for this effect came from the October 2013 *Linking Ring* column “Ways and Means” and a submission by Steve Schlanger called “Covert Travelers.” This version builds on his by introducing the word cards from the “In a Pickle” game mentioned elsewhere, adding two different revelation approaches and patter. The basic operando is fairly well known, as pointed out by Thomas Henry in several of his offerings to *The Linking Ring*.

EFFECT: Twenty-eight word cards are shown. Two are selected and clearly lost through deductive reasoning. They are subsequently discovered using the powers of observation and intuition.

REQUIREMENTS: Twenty-eight word cards from the “In a Pickle” game. Not just any cards, however. The cards are of two kinds, half have an “s” letter and sound and half have an “n” character and sound (**Fig. 1**).

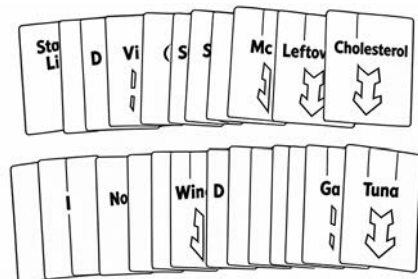


Fig. 1

SET-UP: The two halves are alternated into a single packet at the beginning. Two volunteers are needed to help.

PRESENTATION: I recently read a book on mental acuity, the ability to use our powers of deductive reasoning, observation, and plain old intuition. This effect focuses on all three conditions. Twenty-eight word cards are randomly exhibited showing how each is distinctively different. In the process, the magician notes the top and bottom cards. The packet is laid face down on the table. The magician remarks that he already knows what the top and bottom cards are (and can name them if he pleases). Since they are known by the performer peeking while showing the cards, he cuts the deck and also has the two spectators do likewise. Now, no one knows where the top and bottom cards are and no one knows what the new top two cards might be. The helper on left takes the top card and looks at and remembers it. The second helper on the right takes the next card and also makes note of it. The first helper on the left returns their card to the top of deck and then the second helper on the right returns their card on top of the tabled packet.

The deck is cut by either the performer or a helper. The magician states that he may not know exactly where each card is, but he knows they are next to each other in the pile. To ensure the separation of the two selected cards, the magi deals the packet into two piles. The two selected cards are now separated, one in each pile. Of course we don't know which card is in which pile, so one pile is dealt face up, one at a time, and the helpers are asked to note whether their card is in that pile. After dealing, one helper reveals that their card was in the deck. They are given the packet and asked to select five or six cards from the stack, but be sure to *include* their card. Those cards are laid out face up on the table. So far, we have been experiencing the power of deductive reasoning.

The performer announces that we will now test the powers of observation. The helper is told to say "That is *not* my card" as the magi points to each card, including their initially

selected card. The magician will carefully observe the helper as this is done. Cards are eliminated one by one until only one card remains and it is the initial selection!

The performer takes the second pile and slowly deals them one at a time in a face-up row. This time, he claims he will attempt to find the helper's card using the power of intuition. As he deals out the cards in the face-down packet he holds, he slows down and announces that the next card he turns will be the spectator's original chosen card. The spectators should all doubt he will because he has already laid out the selected card. However, he takes one card from the face-up cards and turns it face down. Of course it is the chosen card!

METHOD: The cards are of two kinds, half have an "s" character and sound and the other half have an "n" character and sound. These two halves are alternated into a single packet at the beginning. Cards can be cut as often as desired, not disturbing the alternating rotation. When the top card is taken on the left by the first helper and then returned first, it is now second from the top and the second selected card is returned and is now on top (i.e., their positions have been reversed).

N's	S's
Line	Test Tube
Nun	Vise
Vein	Hospital
Lint	Shovel
Alien	Moose
Dictionary	Leftovers
Window	Cholesterol
Neck	Statue of Liberty
Brain	Dumpster
Clown	Virus
Tuna	Chaos
Garden	Stocking
Needle	Spam
China	Shower

The cards are then dealt into two piles. When the cards are observed, during the process outlined in the **Presentation** section, the misplaced-sounding card letter

character is easily noted. One is revealed via observation and the other through the power of intuition.

END NOTES: If in the second revelation, the chosen card does not appear until the very end of the face-up display, the performer can simply gather the cards in a manner ensuring that the selected card is on top. He can then scatter all the cards face down on the table, noting where the top card now lays and revealing it by discarding all the other cards appropriately. An informal demonstration can be viewed at youtu.be/WLpFc0vkoHs.

Golf Ball Color Change

This move came about in trying to perform the Mohammed Bey “Egyptian Ball Mystery” in *Stars of Magic*. Having difficulty in using the recommended method to change a white ball into a red one, I developed the following method. Did you know one could get three used golf balls for one dollar? Add a little paint and they are just the right size.

I have intentionally broken the steps into individual sentences. I’ve always had difficulty finding the next sentence in a paragraph when I’m trying to learn a new move. I hope the following makes it a bit easier for you.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION:

Let’s use two balls, white and red, and change the white into the red.

The white is held in the left hand at the end of the thumb and first two fingers, the back of the hand towards the audience (Fig. 1).

The performer’s body is facing to the right at a 45-degree angle, left shoulder facing the audience.

The red ball is hidden in the right hand, in curled fourth and fifth fingers (Fig. 2).

The right hand comes up to take the white ball in its thumb and first two fingers in order to give it a toss in the air.

As the right palm opens behind the left hand to take the white ball with the thumb and first two fingers, the red ball is

transferred to the palm of the left hand where it is seized by the left fourth and fifth fingers (Fig. 3).

As the white ball in the left thumb and two fingers is openly taken by the right thumb and first two fingers, it’s tossed in the air, exhibiting an empty right palm in the process.

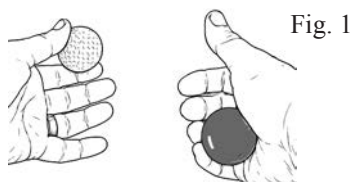


Fig. 1

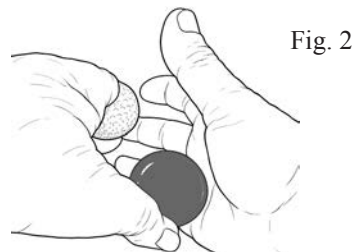


Fig. 2

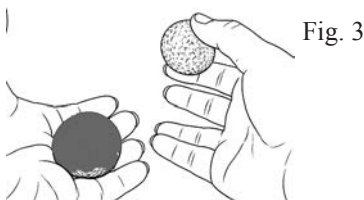


Fig. 3

The white ball is replaced into the left hand, again placing it between the left thumb and fingers (Fig. 4).



Fig. 4

It is critical to have the two balls held at a 45-degree slant in the left hand.

In this instance, the red ball is to the lower left, held in the palm by the third and fourth fingers of the left hand.

The white ball is up and to the right, held by the extended left thumb and first two fingers of the left (Fig. 5)

The right hand can be shown empty and

comes over to take the white ball again.

This time, the right hand approaches wide open with the right fingers pointing straight up, the thumb down and to the left behind the palm of the left hand.

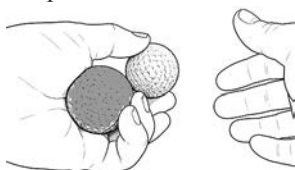


Fig. 5

This puts the right thumb directly in line with the hidden red ball that is down and to the left (**Fig. 6**).



Fig. 6

As soon as this is done, secretly the right thumb reaches behind the red ball hidden in the palm of the left hand (i.e., the thumb goes between the left palm and the red ball) (**Fig. 7**).



Fig. 7

It proceeds to pull the red ball into the right palm while the right hand is behind the left hand.

Note that the red ball has been transferred before the white ball has been covered by the right fingers.

The right fingers now begin to cover the white ball by curling the right fingers straight down and vertically.

As soon as the right fingers cover the white ball and the right fingers touch the top of the left hand, the white ball is allowed to fall into the empty left fist.

Immediately, the closing right fist twists

ninety degrees counterclockwise so that the back of the hand faces the audience and hides the red ball, now secreted in the right hand.

The right hand now moves up and away from the left hand.



Fig. 8



Fig. 9

The magician's eyes and head follow the right hand as the left hand, in a smaller motion, drops out of frame.

Slowly, the right hand reveals the red ball. The color has changed!

END NOTE: One might also consider changing a golf ball into a billiard ball.

An informal demonstration can be viewed at youtu.be/poa0t2Zh5Bw.

Locked-In

This is a variation of Larry Becker's effect "Ultimate Matrix" from his book *Mentalism for Magicians*. In the Alternate Routine included, a combination padlock is introduced. Finger rings are locked onto it, and with numbers randomly selected, the proper combination is determined magically. This version doesn't use the jumbo cards, envelopes, and the (sometimes apparent) number sequence of fifteen that he used. In the following version, the numbers appear more random when totaled. It also uses two sets of four numbers rather than two sets of three and includes two revelations if desired.

EFFECT: An open combination padlock is displayed. One or more rings

are placed on the hasp of the lock and locked shut. The correct combination is sought from randomly selected number cards provided by two helpers. It fails to open the lock but does serve as an “emergency” prediction. As a follow-up attempt, the cards are mixed again, a new total is achieved, and the correct combination of the padlock is achieved!

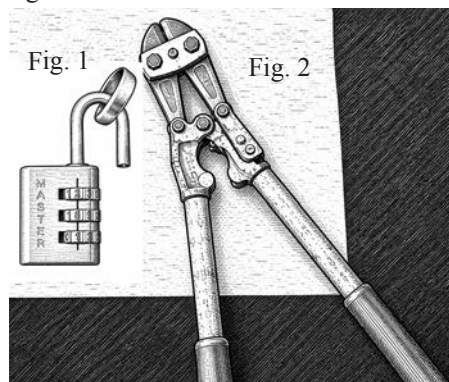
REQUIREMENTS: Combination (three-dial) padlock, deck of cards, a pad and marking pen, optional bolt cutter and calculator.

SET-UP: Place the eight pre-selected cards *in packet order* on the bottom of the deck (see method below). Mix in some tens and picture cards. Be sure the padlock combination is set for 182 and is open. A paper is preprinted to show, in large letters, that the number 236, “is *not* correct,” and “Try Again,” and an envelope is titled “For Emergency Only.”

WORKING AND PRESENTATION: A combination padlock is introduced. One or more rings are borrowed from the audience and placed on the hasp of the padlock and closed. The three number dials are revolved and the ring is thus locked shut (**Fig. 1**).

The magician notes that prior to the show, he had someone change the combination on the padlock to a randomly selected sequence of numbers. The helper confirms this was done. The performer then states that the new combination is now known only to that one person. The helper, however, does *not* confirm that this is the case. He doesn’t know the new combination. This is a problem! Now another spectator is offered the lock to try all one thousand possible combinations. Or, reaching into his briefcase, the mentalist removes a large bolt cutter, suggesting that possibly another solution is available (**Fig. 2**). The magician reveals he always carries them with him to handle these situations. Lots of byplay is possible here. But there is a third option. How do we open the lock? Three ways: 1) Go through one thousand combinations, 2)

Use the bolt cutter, or 3) Try the power of magic.



A deck of playing cards and an envelope are placed on the table. The envelope is not commented upon and the marked side is face down. Magician opens the deck of cards and removes a random series of eight single-digit number cards of mixed suits. The eight cards are split into two packets of four cards each.

The packet with the ace is *not* given to the first helper A, and the second packet with the ace is given to helper B on his right side. Each helper shuffles their cards. Starting with helper A, any card from his four-card packet is exposed. The performer writes it on the pad for all to see. Helper B selects any card from their four-card packet. Its number is recorded to the right of the first number. A second card and number are selected by helper A and it is noted on the pad below the previous A number. Helper B provides a second selection and it is recorded under their previous selection. Note that the chosen cards are eliminated from their packets as the numbers are given. The sequence is followed until we have two columns of four numbers each. The columns are then openly summed and the total is revealed to be 236. This also happens to *not* be the combination for the padlock!

Feigning tremendous disappointment, the mentalist looks at the envelope on the table and indicates as before that he always comes prepared. The “emergency” side of the envelope is displayed. Removing the

paper within, he displays the number 236 in large numbers – a prediction? First surprise!

Opening the remainder of the insert, he is told to “Try again!” The two packets of four cards each are handed to two other helpers on his left, hoping for better luck the second time. *Just keep in mind who gets which packet, for the order of number selection must be reversed.* The two packets are again shuffled and the process is repeated again, starting with the helper who received helper B’s packet. When the numbers are totaled this time, a completely different sum is revealed. The sum is now 182. Isn’t that interesting? The new number set is applied to the padlock and it opens, releasing all rings – the second and final surprise!

METHOD: Select any eight single-digit number cards from a deck. It is okay to include a duplicate or two. Also, try to include an ace. Separate the cards into two four-card sets. For this explanation, I’ve chosen the sets 1, 4, 5, 6 and 2, 4, 7, 9. The first set will always total 16 and the second will always total 22.

If the ace set goes first, the total will always be 182 and if the 2 set goes first, the total will always result in 236. Thus the order of card exposure will determine which complete answer will result.

END NOTE: Did I get the lock from a discount store? No, it was actually the bolt cutter, which has proven its worth for this effect.

An informal video can be viewed at youtu.be/DptUGYuSP70.

Madeline’s Puzzle Blocks

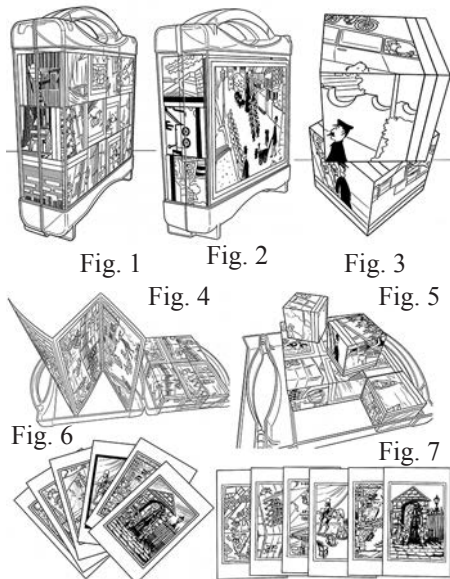
The idea for this effect came from Mulholland’s *Book of Magic*, called “Obedient Colors,” page 145. Although John used a set of nine colored blocks and a homemade double-doored box for them, I found a manufactured toy called Madeline’s Puzzle that worked just as well. The book description is very long and complicated. However, as the author states,

“It will be found that the trick is so effective that it is well worth the bother of making it.” Find the toy and it will be easier.

I also changed the force method to the Himber’s “Name Cards” force as found in *Tarbell Vol. 5*, page 91.

EFFECT: A child’s block puzzle is shown. The twelve blocks are removed from the case and replaced in a somewhat random manner. Since the pieces are blocks, six different pictures can be built from the set. Six cards are shown, and one is selected by an audience member. With a little magic, the puzzle is solved, exhibiting the correct picture!

REQUIREMENTS: A set of puzzle blocks in a two-sided clear box. Mine has Madeline, a children’s book character as the subject matter (**Figs.1-5**). An opaque silk large enough to cover the box. A glass to act as a stand for the chosen card and to hold the silk. A set of cards representing the six pictures (**Figs. 6-7**).

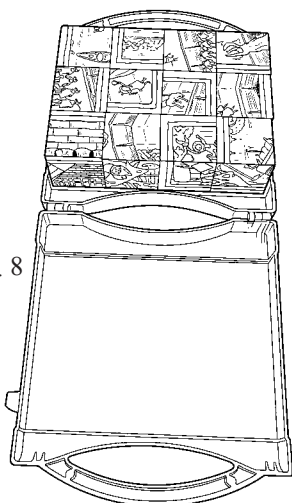


SET-UP: This describes the set-up of the blocks prior to presentation.

Box face down, handles toward audience. Formed picture is face down on the table.

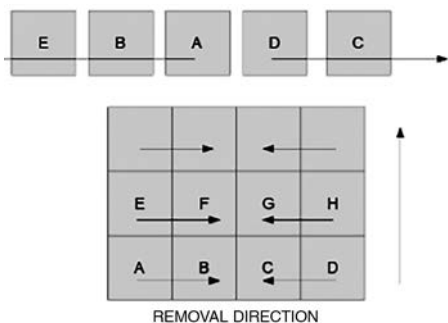
Open lid toward self (**Fig. 8**).

Fig. 8



Remove blocks from closest row to self. With both hands, remove blocks *out to in*. Place blocks on table in a single row, stretching left to right, but build the row from the middle outward to the ends.

Check: When finished, the blocks at the end of the display should have come from the two inner blocks of the row closest to the audience.



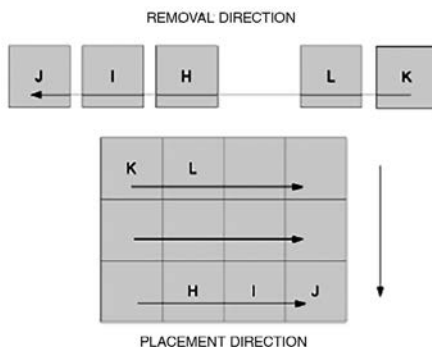
Now *replace* the blocks into the box. Pick up blocks singly, from the right end of the display row working to the left. Place them into the box in rows working *left to right*, starting at the far (audience) row first.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION:

A dark silk is placed into the glass and rests on the table alongside the six picture cards. A transparent box containing twelve cubes or blocks is shown on both sides, each depicting a set of jumbled blocks. The box

with handles, toward performer, is opened (Fig. 8).

BLOCK PLACEMENT TO CASE



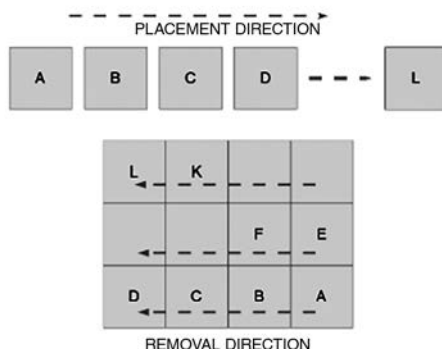
The blocks are removed and displayed in a row in front of the audience (see block handling above). The empty box is shown. The blocks are put back into the box and the box is closed (see block handling next page). Pick up the box and shake it, showing how little room there is for the blocks to move around. (Be careful not to show the bottom side of the box, for it now shows the forced picture.) Place the box handle, picture side down, toward the performer. Remove the silk from the glass and cover the box.

Introduce the six picture cards that match the six sides of the puzzle. Proceed to have a picture selected from the six duplicate cards, as noted in the picture selection below. Be sure to carefully note the picture selected, describing it in detail, for it is complex. Lean it against the glass to display the picture to be pursued.

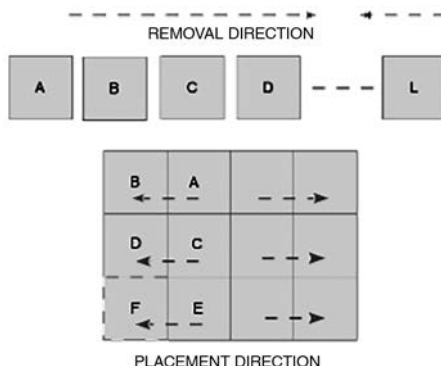
To produce the picture, pick up the box by the handle with the left hand *palm down*. As the box is picked up, at the same time pick up the silk with the right hand and swing the hand to the left. In performing this action, the box is turned around to palm-up position, putting the formed picture directly behind the silk.

Under cover of the silk, the box is shaken several times, peeked at under the silk, and finally revealed dramatically to match the chosen card picture. To close, the box is set on the table, opened, and the

BLOCK REMOVAL FROM CASE



BLOCK PLACEMENT TO CASE



blocks spilled onto the table dramatically to indicate that it is really the blocks making up the picture and not a fake picture of any kind!

BLOCK HANDLING METHOD DURING PERFORMANCE:

Box face down, handles toward audience. Formed picture is face down on the table.

Remove blocks from the box working right to left, the *near* row first.

But place on the table in the display, single row, left to right.

Remove the puzzle pictures from the box and lay them aside.

Proceed to picture selection, then replace blocks into the case.

When putting the blocks back into the box, use both hands at the same time.

Take blocks from the display row working from the ends toward the middle, i.e., *out to in*.

Place in the box starting in the row closest to audience.

Build the row in the box, working *in to out*.

PICTURE SELECTION METHOD:

Use the Himber Name Force Selection, as in *Tarbell* and as in my business card effect.

Six pictures laid in row, with force card second from left.

Have someone select the name of a person with six or fewer letters (cannot use a one-letter name).

Be sure to start the counting with the correct number of cards (e.g., if it's a four-letter name, eliminate the right two cards before starting to count).

For numbers 2, 3, 4, or 6, spell the name and eliminate card at last letter, counting left to right.

For number 5, count right to left.

Continue until only one card is left. It should be the force card.

END NOTES: Although the block handling seems complicated, if you try it once or twice, you will find that it is quite straightforward. I have also found that I can increase the randomness of how it looks by giving the six end blocks a quarter counterclockwise twist when inserting the single line of blocks into the box, when preparing the setup. In performing, a quarter clockwise turn of the six end blocks (when first removing the blocks from the container) will reset them. Please note that this occurs when setting up the single long lines of blocks. This was done for the video presentation.

This routine can be viewed at youtu.be/ajetx63dK9A. The set-up prior to presentation can be viewed at youtu.be/JcPYQYG6wTU.

Once Upon a Game

The idea for this effect came from *Psychic Stunt of the Month, January 1997* by Michael Daniels and was titled "Magic Square Dance." The principle was first

published by Martin Gardner in *Scientific American* (1966). See also Martin Gardner's *Martin Gardner Presents* (1993). Other variations have appeared elsewhere.

It's all about a game that can only be played once. Needs at least one player and a "gamemaster" (the magician). The player always wins!

EFFECT: A packet of numbered cards is shown and laid out in order to produce a 3 x 3 square.

A marker (such as a glass, small box, chess piece, etc.) is used to select one of the nine cards. It is placed on *any* card by the victim and then moved around the nine-card playing board. With each move, however, a card is removed from the board until ultimately only one card is left. It always proves to be the winning card!

REQUIREMENTS: Use cards from a popular game such as "Loaded Questions." There are always similar games available at thrift stores. Place 1 ½ x 2 ¾ inch blank stickers on the back of nine cards and use a permanent marker to number them 1 – 9. On the backs of the cards, which have party questions (four questions for the example we used), clearly note the following:

The plus or minus numbers as indicated above for all the cards excepting the five and six (Fig. 1).

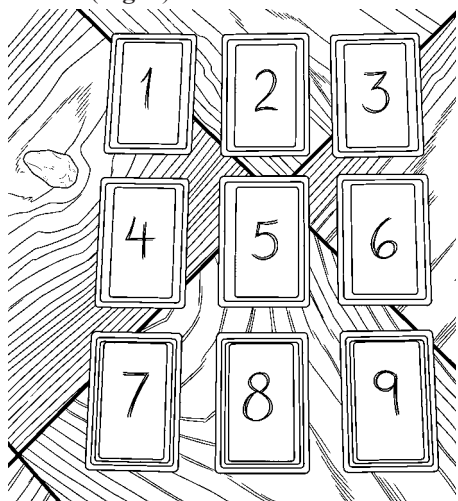
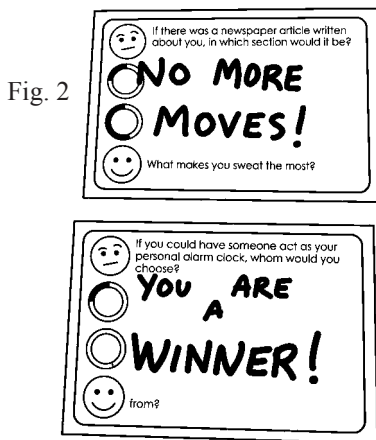


Fig. 1

On card number six, add a sticker and write "No More Cards!"

On card number five, add a sticker and write "You Are a WINNER!" (Fig. 2)



For memory purposes if desired, use a pencil to note the number of the next card to be removed. This can be hidden by the thumb if displaying the back of the card.

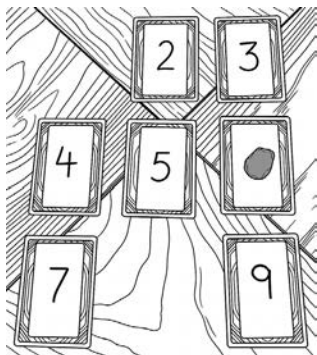
THE BASIC GAME: As indicated, the player places a marker on any card. It is now that the gamemaster defines how the game is to be played. The marker is moved by the player the number of times as indicated by the card covered. Moves can be made in any direction, vertical or horizontal, to any adjacent card. Diagonal moves are *not* allowed. Moves should be as unpredictable as possible, thus one could repeatedly move back over cards.

The player is given the opportunity to change their first placement if desired. Now the game begins. *The player moves the number of times as indicated by his first choice.*

The gamemaster removes the number 1 card. The victim is told that they will move the number of times indicated by the card they are on, unless changed by a plus or minus notation on the back of the card removed. The back of the number 1 card indicates a plus one or minus 1. Player can choose to either add 1 or subtract 1 from the number under his marker. They do and move the marker accordingly.

The number 8 card is now removed and the back of the card indicates a plus or minus 2. Player chooses which to use and moves accordingly (**Fig. 3**).

Fig. 3



The number 3 card is now removed and the back of the card indicates a plus or minus 1. Player chooses which to use and moves accordingly.

The number 2 card is now removed and the back of the card indicates a plus or minus 2. Player chooses which to use and moves accordingly.

The number 7 card is now removed and the back of the card indicates a plus or minus 1. Player chooses which to use and moves accordingly.

The number 4 card is now removed and the back of the card indicates a plus or minus 2. Player chooses which to use and moves accordingly.

The number 9 card is now removed and the back of the card indicates a plus or minus 1. Player chooses which to use and moves accordingly.

The number 6 card is now removed and the back of the card indicates that there are "No More Moves!" For the marker is now on the only card left, the number 5! The back of the 5 card reveals that the victim is actually the winner (and of course, never need play the game again).

THE PLAY FOR A GROUP: The gamemaster, after explaining the move rules and once the first move has been made, proceeds to remove the number 1 card. The back of the card is read and a party question is asked. There are four

categories of questions for the cards in this particular game: 1) Hypotheticals, 2) Anything Goes, 3) No-Brainers, 4) Personals. Select one and if the game is played again, another category can be chosen. The non-players judge their answer, voting with a thumbs up or down. The number the marker is on is adjusted accordingly. For example, if they were on number 4 and their answer was judged good, then +1 is added and they now move 5. If their answer was judged poor, then -1 is added and the move is now 3. This now defines the sequence to follow for the remainder of the game.

Regardless of the answer by the player, the card will indicate that the marker move is to be adjusted. Plus 1 or minus 1 will give the same result (a possibly humorous realization).

The judging of the answers with a thumbs up or down involves everyone and adds to the humor of the game. In spite of all the moves and choices, this game always ends well for the victim and the performer.

CARD REMOVAL SEQUENCE:

After a few trials, the card removal sequence can be easily memorized, i.e., 1, 8, 3, 2, 7, 4, 9, but to be sure, we have added the pencil crib on the cards.

An informal mock game can be viewed at youtu.be/5662c__egxw.

Simply Trivial

Thrift stores frequently have used board games, in particular the well-known Trivial Pursuit. There are, of course, many versions of the game including the original. The cards used are many and very complicated on both sides. It struck me one day that it might be a good idea to create a special deck if I combined two decks from two Trivial Pursuit board games. The following is the result.

EFFECT: A large box of Trivial Pursuit game cards is shown (**Fig. 1**). A group of cards, about the size of a regular deck of playing cards, is arbitrarily removed from the box. A card is selected by a spectator and a question also determined. The mentalist telepathically writes an answer on a hidden slate. The question is read out loud. The correct answer is revealed on the slate.

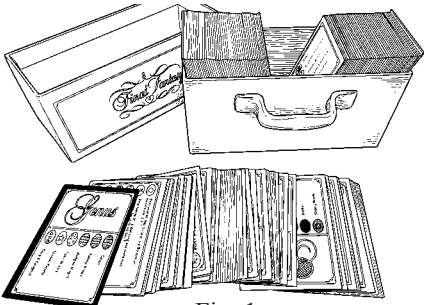


Fig. 1

REQUIREMENTS: Two like sets of the game Trivial Pursuit. A slate or pad to write on.

SET-UP: Pair all of the like cards from the two sets. Set up cards so that the cards' answer sides are facing each other in each pair. (If one were to look at the two cards in a "fan" display, they would look different because the questions would be visible on one and the answers would be visible on the other (**Fig. 2**). For example, if the card on top of the cut-to section is an answer side, then its duplicate was selected. If a question side is next, then the partner to the selected card is now on the bottom of the removed half. Complete the cut and turn the pack over and you'll be looking right at the answers to the questions on the selected card.

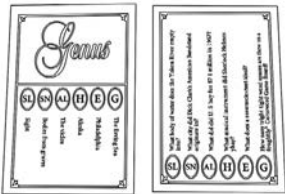


Fig. 2

WORKING AND PRESENTATION: The Trivial Pursuit game is introduced and

a short explanation of the game and cards is given. In particular, point out that the game has one thousand cards, each with six questions, one for each of six categories. Also, point out the categories and their colors. One of the two boxes of cards is opened and a stack (approximately the size of a regular deck of playing cards) is removed from any random location in the box. The cards are fanned, dribbled, or cut by a spectator and a card is selected. The card is given to the helper.

If the card now on top is an answer side facing up on the remaining stack, it is a duplicate of the chosen card. If a question side is revealed as the top card, turn the pack over as you return to the stage and the duplicate will now be on top.

Ask the helper to select one of the six categories and name it, then have two others note the question for that category. When the category is named, the mentalist must now get a glance at the duplicate card in his possession; in particular, the answer displayed for that question. This can be done in several ways. One way is to palm off the top card, turn around, and as the helper is sharing the question with others, simply look at it. Or, if one is uneasy about palming, simply stick a piece of double-sided tape at the base of the fingers of your hand and the top duplicate card will automatically stick to your palm. Better yet, the cards can simply be laid down behind the boxed cards in full view for the performer. How simple can it get?

Note the answer for the chosen topic. At this time the helpers are asked to concentrate and mentally repeat the question in their own minds as the mentalist concentrates. He thinks and writes the now-known answer on the slate or pad. Turn around if necessary and have the question read aloud. There can be some audience byplay here. In the end, the mentalist dramatically reveals the correct answer on the slate or pad.

METHOD: Cards are all duplicated and pre-arranged in pairs with the answer side of each card facing each other, so that no

matter what card is selected, the mentalist has an exact copy in his hands.

A video demo can be viewed at youtu.be/hCwSIIVL300.

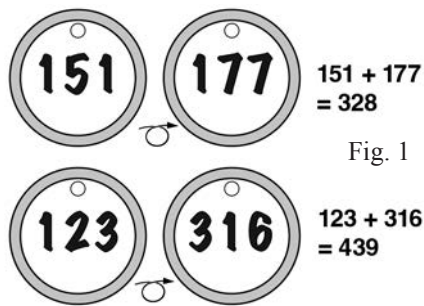
Symphony of Numbers

This effect’s method is based on a trick from *The Linking Ring* called “EZee Book Test,” Vol. 76, #1, Jan. 1996, page 81. This presentation, not a book test, is expanded to include three new revelations. A bag of excess tags was found – guess where?

EFFECT: A clear bag filled with standard round tags is exhibited. Three audience members each select a tag. Each tag has random digits marked on each side. All numbers are summed together and a single digit from the total is chosen. The mentalist uses telepathy to determine its value. Suspecting the tags, the effect is quickly repeated with completely different results. The remaining digits in the total are then clairvoyantly identified. In all-three dramatic surprises!

REQUIREMENTS: Round tags (at least thirty) about the size of a half-dollar. They usually have a hole with a string attached. Two identical clear plastic sandwich bags. A marking pen, large pad, or easel.

SET-UP: Two sets of fifteen tags are made. For one set, the total of the two numbers on each tag is 439, and the second set, the two numbers total 328. Each set is placed in a bag (**Fig. 1**). See Table for listing of numbers used in this description.



	Bag 1				Bag 2		
	Side				Side		
# Tags	A	B			A	B	
1	151	177	328		123	316	439
2	67	261	328		103	336	439
3	158	170	328		168	271	439
4	93	235	328		154	285	439
5	139	189	328		157	282	439
6	48	280	328		213	226	439
7	142	186	328		141	298	439
8	160	168	328		134	305	439
9	135	193	328		119	320	439
10	120	208	328		181	258	439
11	104	224	328		176	263	439
12	89	239	328		186	253	439
13	147	181	328		219	220	439
14	126	202	328		193	246	439
15	118	210	328		201	238	439

WORKING AND PRESENTATION:

The patter narrative was revealed to me as I experimented with various generative AI sources. As you will see, it is obviously not me, but interesting nonetheless coming from a less-than-human source.

My friends, join me on a journey beyond chance, a testament to the power of numbers. Intriguingly, the magician presents a clear bag filled with tags, drawing murmurs of curiosity from the audience. Tonight, we delve into the realm of numbers, where digits dance in the shadows and minds speak in silent whispers. Each of the tags in this bag has a number on each side, both of which are different.

Three volunteers are invited to help. The magician steps into the audience. *Dear brave souls, your help is needed to embrace this enigmatic dance of fate. From this seemingly ordinary bag, choose a tag, a conduit to the secrets swirling within. Remember, every number contains a hidden song.* As the volunteers select their tags, emphasize the randomness of the digits.

A fourth volunteer is invited to write the selected numbers on an easel or large pad. *Now, let these innocent markers of chance divulge their collective wisdom. One by one they will whisper their secrets, their digits forming a symphony of fate. Together, they hold the key to a mystery waiting to be unlocked.* A number is read by each of the three members and the numbers are written on the pad in view of the audience. Then the second number on

the opposite side of each tag is read and also written on the pad. The result is a column of six two- or three-digit numbers.

The magician moves away so that the pad cannot be seen by him and asks two audience members to add up the figures, and then silently compares their totals to ensure they are identical. (Everyone has a calculator on their smartphone.) One helper is asked to write the total on the pad for all but the mentalist to see.

The mentalist or magician then asks whether the total is a three or four-digit number. One spectator is then asked to circle one of the three digits. *Hear the echoes of chance reverberating through the sum, a single number poised to reveal itself. Whisper it gently, a secret shared between you and the unseen forces at play. Remember, in the chaos of numbers, a singular truth awaits.*

The remaining non-circled digits in the total are summed and announced to the magician. With dramatic flair, the chosen digit is unveiled, drawing gasps of astonishment. *Behold! The chosen one, plucked from the sea of possibilities! My mind, a mere channel, receiving the echoes of your collective choice.* The first miracle.

In the process of collecting the three chosen tags, the mentalist hears a whisper that the secret is in the tags. *But perhaps, you doubt the magic, suspecting trickery where none exists. Fear not, for doubt fuels the fire of truth. Let us repeat the dance, with new players, new numbers, and a fresh canvas of fate.*

The magician has three more tags removed from the bag. The effect is repeated with a completely different set of volunteers, ensuring the results are genuinely unpredictable. *Witness, once more, the symphony of numbers unfold, a chorus of chance guided by unseen hands. See the chosen digit emerge, the remaining secrets unravel, and let the songs of the numbers wash over you.* The preceding tasks are run through again, except this time there are four digits in the total and of course the total is entirely different! Second miracle.

But the surprises aren't over! *Yet, the story isn't over. The tags hold more whispers, secrets yearning to be heard. Trust, dear audience, as I delve deeper into this numerical tapestry, unearthing the remaining digits one by one. Witness the symphony complete, a portrait of fate painted in numbers.*

Reveal the remaining digits through a display of mental prowess, and announce the exact sum, leaving the audience speechless. Third miracle!

The final revelation lands with a resounding impact, leaving the audience bewildered and amazed. *Now, dear friends, you ask yourselves: was it mere coincidence, a twist of chance? Or a glimpse into the enigmatic realm where minds meet, numbers sing, and secrets are unveiled? The answer, like the whispers of the digits, remains for you to decide.*

METHOD: The tags for the first set are handed out first. The bag is returned to the briefcase. When the three tags are totaled for the first set, the total is 984 (the individual digits add up to 21). Thus when one of the three-digit totals is circled, all the magi need do is subtract the total of the non-circled numbers from 21 to determine which digit was circled. Of course, the magician already knows the total.

Acting like the effect is over, grab the second set bag from the case and collect the three tags distributed, but don't actually put them into the bag. Finger palm them instead. Pretend to hear someone claim the solution is all in the tags. Proceed to quickly perform the effect a second time. This time, however, the total is four digits (totaling 12) and completely different from the first demonstration. Now it's totally baffling.

Again, the circled digit is determined by subtracting the three-digit sum from 12 this time. Now expand on the revelations and using your best mental efforts reveal the final three digits and their proper sequence in the total sum. Of course you already know that the total is 1317.

END NOTES: An informal demonstration can be seen at youtu.be/nJIzmfXGNvA.

Word Shuffle

Spotting a used mechanical card shuffler in one of our local thrift stores, I was reminded of an effect in Larry Becker's *Mentalism for Magicians*, titled "Dynamation," page 49. In the effect, five cards are easily forced. It seemed simple enough, so I bought the thing, only to find it needed fixing and did not have the *tray* that Larry's effect described.

Not only was the shuffler fixed and an alternative to the tray problem devised, but an even more convincing result was created by pulling the forced cards from the center of the shuffled stack. The concluding discoveries within the deck is an adaption of Dai Vernon's Emerald Isle Aces found in an old issue of *Genii*, *The Conjuror's Magazine*.

EFFECT: A large number of Word cards are shuffled in a mechanical card shuffler. Three cards are randomly selected from the shuffled deck and mentally identified correctly.

REQUIREMENTS: A mechanical card shuffler with no tray. Cards from the family game called "In a Pickle" (Fig. 1). Each card in this game has a single word on it. Black acrylic paint, rubber cement, and a black permanent marker. An envelope with a card or note inside (if a prediction is used.)

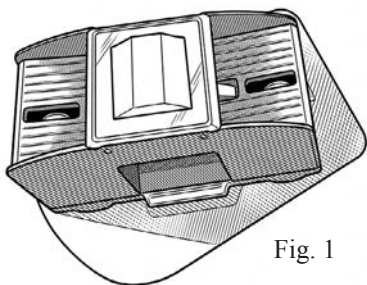


Fig. 1



SET-UP: Paint the face of one card with the black paint. Glue two cards face to face to make a double backer. Select three cards to force that are appropriate for the patter story. With the marker, carefully blacken the bottom edge of all five cards.

For this description, I selected the card with the word *Family* as the first (#1) card to be revealed, the word *Religion* as the second (#2) card to be revealed, and the word *Coffin* as the third (#3) card to be revealed.

Arrange the five cards in the following order, top down. (Fig. 2).

Blackened card with the black side up, back face down

#1 card face down

#3 card face down

Double backer

#2 card face up

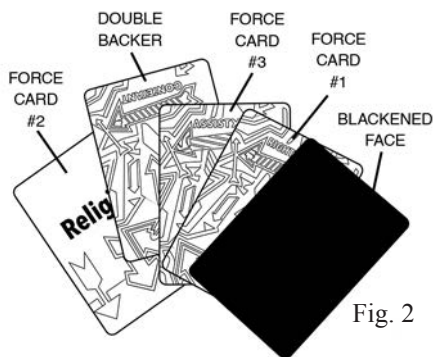


Fig. 2

Place the stack of five cards into the receiving chamber of the shuffler. The black art preparation should hide the stack from the audience perspective. If performed at a table the shuffler can be preset facing the audience. If a stage or parlor performance, the shuffler might need to be held in a manner that ensures the stack is hidden.

PERFORMANCE: Introduce the game and shuffler, noting that the game has well over three hundred different cards, no two of which are the same. Select a stack slightly larger than a normal deck and show how all cards are different and only contain a single word. Split the selection into two halves and place each face up in the shuffler and shuffle, noting

that by being face up the different cards can be glimpsed (**Fig. 3**). Remove the shuffled stack of all the cards, including the five-card stack and hold in the left hand face down. The five-card stack is now on top of the deck and the black edging toward the performer.

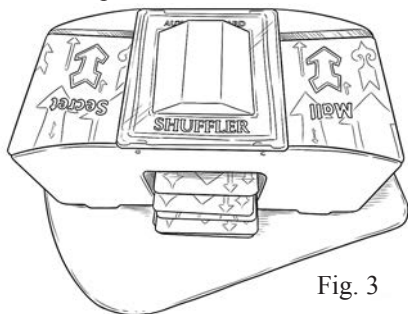


Fig. 3

The performer notes that the cards should now be fairly well shuffled. However, we'll take it one step further and make three random selections from the inner deck. With the left hand, thumb riffle the upper-left corner about a third of the way down and flip the upper third of the cards face up on top of the deck. Spread the top face-up cards until a face-down card is seen. Remove those cards and note that we could have stopped at any of those cards. Place them aside, face up. Deal the top face-down card on the deck in the left hand to an audience member on the left. Request that they closely look at the word on that card and lock it tightly in their mind.

Performer states that we'll now find another random card in the middle of the deck. Again, the deck is riffled by the left thumb about a third of the way down the deck. These cards are flipped face up, shown and placed on the previously tabled face-up cards. The top face-down card in the left hand is dealt off and placed in front of the spectator on the right. He is instructed to not look at the card and, in fact, should cover the card so that no one

knows the word on the card.

Once again, a third card is randomly selected in the same manner as the first two (thank you, Dai Vernon). This card is left on the table for the performer. An envelope that has been in sight throughout the effect is placed under the card. All other cards can now be removed from the scene.

The performer is now in a position to discern the three cards in turn as dramatically as possible. I'll leave it up to the reader to determine the patter and story appropriately, based on the three force cards selected.

For me, I pretend to read the mind of the first helper, the first dealing with people (family). The second card is revealed using clairvoyance, and touches on the idea of the supernatural (religion). For the third, I reveal it as a demonstration of precognition or to magicians as a prediction. The envelope is opened and a card reading *Your last card will be "coffin"* (**Fig. 4**).

Fig. 4



END NOTES: This can be done using a regular deck of cards, but I think it is more effective using the word cards. Not only because there are so many, but also because it removes the stigma of the magician typically manipulating the playing cards or using marked cards.

For an informal demonstration, visit youtu.be/kE8oyt9kaLE.

Send comments and appreciations to:

Bob Malinchock
bobjustbob1116@gmail.com



The Card Corner

MIKE POWERS

This month's effect comes from my good friend Gene Gordon. Gene is an experienced performer from the Denver, Colorado area. He works both corporate gigs as well as at restaurants. He has also worked as a demonstrator at Zeezo's Magic Shop in Denver. Gene's work has been featured in the July 2015 and December 2017 editions of "Card Corner." This month Gene repurposes the Down/Under deal as a Lie Detector. You can see a video performance at www.mallofmagic.com/cardcorner.

Simple Lie!

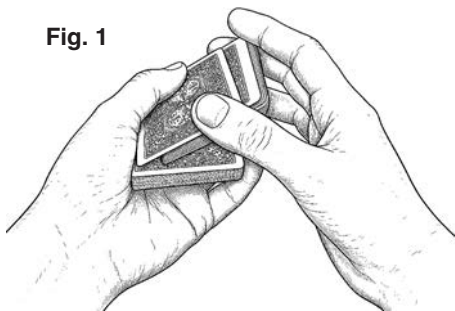
By Gene Gordon

EFFECT: The magician asks, "Who here is the best liar?" The audience laughs and then they point at each other, or at him! He then has a spectator select a card and replace it freely in the pack. After shuffling the pack, the magician removes four random cards from the face-up pack and proceeds to use them as a mini-makeshift "lie detector." After several questions and eliminations, the magician is down to one card. The spectators are sure the magician is not going to "suss out" if they were lying. However, the lie detector has done its job by finding their card. But the surprise that follows this revelation is the big magical moment in this routine.

SET-UP: You will need to either cull the four queens to the top of the deck or position them there prior to beginning the routine.

PROCEDURE: Give the deck a shuffle that preserves the four queens on top. Now take the upper half of the deck in the right hand, ready for an overhand shuffle (**Fig. 1**). Run the first four cards (queens) from the right hand portion onto those in the left hand as you grab a break over the first queen peeled. Shuffle off normally.

Fig. 1



Now, **Riffle Force*** to the break. Offer the choice of either the top card of the left hand's group, or the bottom card of the right hand's group (**Fig. 2**).

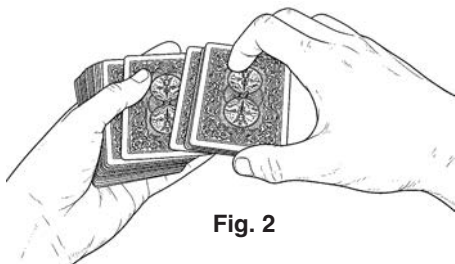


Fig. 2

This choice makes the force seem less contrived. Give the spectator the card she chooses. Now, spread both packets a bit as

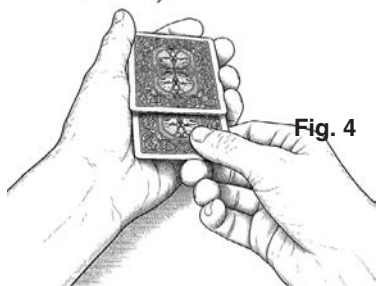
you place the right hand's cards onto the left hand's group. Keep track of where the three remaining queens are. If the spectator took the top card of the left hand's group, then the bottom three cards of the right hand's group are the other three queens. If she took the bottom card of the right hand's group, then the top card of the left hand's group is a queen and the other two are at the bottom of the right hand's group.

You must break the spread so that you can grab a break above the three queens as you square the deck. Now cut at the break, bringing the three queens to the top. Finally obtain a **TILT*** break under the top three cards (**Fig. 3**). Place the spectator's card face down into the **TILT*** break (**Fig. 4**). Finally, square up the deck. (Alternately you could use a **Bluff Pass*** to position the selection fourth from the top, under the other three queens.)

Fig. 3



Fig. 4



If you grab a break under the top four cards by pulling up slightly on the selection, you can use Marlo's **Book Break Jog Turnover*** to end with a face-up deck with a left fourth finger break over the bottom four cards. You'll find a video tutorial on this move at www.mallofmagic.com/the-moves and also for any move tagged with *. The password to access the videos is **marlo7d**. If that move seems daunting, an-

other way to get to the same place, i.e., a face-up deck with a left fourth finger break over the bottom four cards (four queens), is described here:

Turn the deck face up in left hand dealing position and spread the cards so only you see the faces. You're going to upjog four random cards for slightly more than half their length. One of them should be a *jack or king of the same suit as the selection*. So, as you spread and begin to upjog cards, you need to peek the fourth card from the bottom. That's the selection. Let's say it's the Queen of Spades (QS). Upjog three random cards as well as the jack or king of spades. Let's assume it's the Jack of Spades (JS). Continue spreading until you're near the bottom of the deck. Square up the card, leaving the four cards still outjogged but catch a left fourth finger break over the selection, fourth from the bottom.

STATUS CHECK: In either scenario you have a break over the bottom four cards in a face-up deck with four outjogged cards (**Fig. 5**). You will now use the **Vernon Strip-Out Addition*** to switch the four queens for the four X cards.

Fig. 5



VERNON STRIP-OUT ADDITION*:

Note that moves tagged with * have video instruction at www.mallofmagic.com/the-moves. I recommend that you watch the tutorial on this move. The handling shown there is slightly different than used in this written description:

Use the right second finger to rotate the four outjogged cards counterclockwise a bit ending as in **Figure 6**. Spread the outjogged cards a bit. Now take the deck in the right hand as the right thumb takes over the break at the inner short edge. The right

second finger contacts the deck near its outer right corner (**Fig. 7**). Lift everything above the break slightly. The left fourth finger holds the four queens in position in the left hand as the left hand rotates just a bit counterclockwise. When the four queens in the left hand line up with the outjogged cards, move the left hand outward to the point where the queens are more or less directly under the outjogged cards. The left fingers reach around and grasp the outjogged cards (**Fig. 8**). Hold all eight cards in position as the right hand pulls the deck free at the inner end. The goal is to make the spectators believe that you merely stripped out the four outjogged cards. They must be unaware of the existence of the queens. You are holding eight cards as four, so angle the front edge down a bit so that the extra thickness isn't noticed. Square up the eight cards using the left fingers and thumb. The goal now is to reposition the eight-card block to face up on top of the face-down deck. Here's one way to accomplish this:

Move the deck over the eight-card packet as you rotate the left hand so that gravity causes the packet to begin to turn over (**Fig. 9**). Place the deck onto the packet so that the packet is injogged about a half inch. Now flip everything over so that the deck is face down with the packet of eight cards face up. Immediately push the packet flush with the deck using the right thumb, as the left fourth finger picks up a break under the packet. The rest of the handling is easy.

Spread the top three cards to the right. The faces of the four cards show. Say, "I think one of these is your card or at least is very similar to your card." Here the fact that you contrived to have the jack or king of the same suit as the selection among the four cards allows the spectator to think that you believe that the jack is the selection since it's "close" to being a queen. In our example, the QS is the selection. So, you'd have the JS or KS in the group of four cards.

You are holding a break under five cards with three cards spread to the right. You'll



Fig. 6



Fig. 7



Fig. 8



Fig. 9

now use the **Zarrow Block Addition*** to make it appear that you have turned the top four face-up cards over to face down. Actually, you'll turn over eight cards, bringing the four queens to the top of the face-down deck. The spectators will believe that the top four cards are the four X cards they saw on top of the deck.

All you have to do is reach deeper into the deck with the right fingers allowing them to move under the five cards that are square with the deck. Once you have con-

trol of all eight cards, move the group to the right until the left long edge is nearly at the right edge of the deck. Now flip everything over. It will appear that you merely flipped the four X cards to face down. Immediately spread the top four cards. Take the four, still face down, with the right hand, fingers underneath, thumb on top. Table the deck off to the side. It's time for the "lie detector" phase.

THE LIE DETECTOR: Say, "These cards will act as a teeny tiny lie detector. I'm going to ask you some questions about your selection. You can either lie or tell the truth. It's up to you. But the lie detector will know and will tell me when you lie. Let's try it out. Here's the first question: 'Is your card red or black?' Remember you can lie or tell the truth."

Since you know the identity of the selection, you will always know when the spectator is lying. Let's say the spectator says, "Red" which would be a lie since the selection is the QS. You'll use a "duck then down" dealing sequence to eliminate three of the Queens, one by one, ending with the selection (QS).

Holding the packet of four in the left hand, move the top card to the bottom as you say, "reject." Deal the next card to the table as you say, "keep." Repeat until you have a single card in the left hand with three on the table. Toss the single card to the side as you say, "The lie detector has eliminated a card." Since you know the selection, you'll always know if the spectator lies or tells the truth. Have fun with that information.

Now pick up the three cards and say, "Next question. Since we know your card was black, was it a spade or a club?" Let's say the spectator says, "spade" which is true. Repeat the sorting sequence by putting the top card to the bottom as you say, "discard." After two "keeps" you'll have a single card in the left hand. Table it with the first reject as you say, "Two down, two to go. By the way, the lie detector tells me that you told the truth. Your card is a spade. Final question – is your card a picture card or a spot card?" Whatever the answer, pick

up the two "keep" cards. Move the top card to the bottom as you say, "reject." Now toss the remaining card to the table as you say, "keep." This card will be the selection, the QS. Toss the other card on top of the previous two rejects. These are the other three queens for the kicker ending.

You can now look at the single card (QS) and say, "This card is black. Yours is black too, right?" You'll get an affirmative answer. Continue, "This card is a spade. Your card is a spade too, right?" Again, you'll get a "yes." Finally say, "And this card is a picture card. Your card is a picture card, right?" Another "yes." Here's where the inclusion of the JS or KS among the lie detector cards comes into play. They're aware of that card's presence in the group of four. Say, "Tell the truth now. Which picture card did you have, the jack, the queen or the king?" They'll say, "Queen." Look down at the card and say, "Not the jack?" This creates the impression that you were only close with the jack and missed the actual card. Act a bit confused and then let the card fall face up and say, "Looks like the lie detector got the job done!"

The trick appears to be over since you have found the selection. It's time to use the kicker as follows: Pick up the three "rejects" and deal them next to the QS in a spread as you say, "The lie detector brought along all her sisters so she wouldn't be lonely." Boom!

FINAL THOUGHTS: Ultimately, the handling needed here is this: Force a queen. Switch the four queens for four in-different cards, one of which matches the suit of the selection. Play the Under/Down lie detector game which finds the selection. Reveal the kicker ending. All the work is just setting up for the kicker, four queens, ending.

A recommended alternative to the **Ver-non Strip-Out Addition*** as a switch, is J.K. Hartman's **Secret Subtraction Move***. Watch the tutorial on this move. It's a bit more direct and very deceptive.

Mike Powers

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Cork Out of a Bottle

BET: Push a tight-fitting cork inside a bottle through the neck. Challenge someone to remove the cork without breaking the bottle. This is an oldie, but a goody. It seems impossible!

SECRET: To pull it off, simply take a handkerchief or a thin cloth napkin and push one end of it into the same bottle. Shake the bottle until the cork falls on top of the napkin (**Fig. 1**). Now pull out the napkin slowly from the bottle and the cork will come out as well (**Fig. 2**). Typically, the napkin and cork become snug in the neck of bottle and require a good tug to free them.

Fig. 1

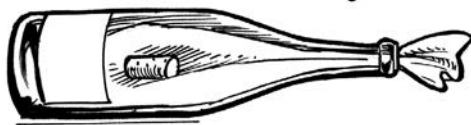
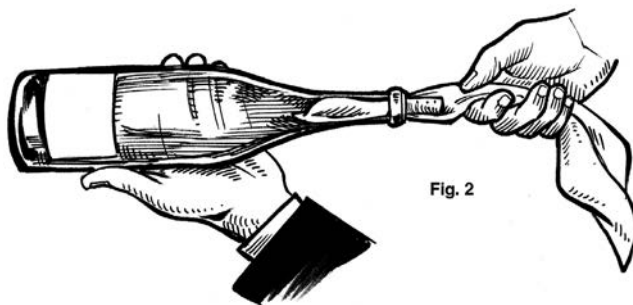


Fig. 2



The latest twist that I've seen on this classic is done with a plastic bag instead of a napkin. You'll want to use a disposable plastic bag, like the ones used in supermarkets for bagging groceries. This time, to free the cork from inside of the bottle you'll begin by inserting the end of the plastic bag through the neck. Insert about three-fourths of the bag inside the bottle. Turn the bottle upside down and blow up the bag. Twist the end of the bag closed to trap the air inside. Slowly pull your plastic balloon from within the bottle and the cork will follow.

My parents have always encouraged me to play with plastic bags. When I was little they would also tell me, "Never take a ride from a stranger, unless they try to give you some candy!"



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



Auto-magic

MICHAEL BREGGAR

Bob Farmer has been a gift to the magic world. His ideas and creations, and his clever writing and teachings, are nonpareil. He has recently put out a set of Farmerized tarot cards with an accompanying 370-plus page PDF called *Tarot ex Machina*. I personally think it should be in every magician's bag-o'-tricks. Seventy-six distinctive effects and routines are taught, the vast majority of them being sleight lite. All are meticulously structured in a manner that provides for fantastic – and fantastically deceiving – presentations. In all, it's an Auto-Magic dream and costs only \$55! This is a marvelous value, one that will keep you intrigued and your audiences mystified for a long time. You can find it at www.lybrary.com/tarot-ex-machina-p-927734.html.

Now, on to the show.

As I have mentioned many times in this column, it is difficult to find good coin tricks that do not involve fancy sleights, difficult moves, or expensive coin gaffs. But this month I've got a terrific one for you! It's a quick bit of magic that would work well leading into other coin tricks for a sweet routine, or as a stand-alone bit of mystery.

"Going Through the Change"

EFFECT: The magician sits at a table with their audience and opens the presentation by discussing their hobby of collecting interesting coins from around the world. They remove a simple paper napkin, which is folded in half, from their pocket. Placing it on the table, they unfold it to reveal a dark copper-colored English penny. They pick up the penny and pass it

around to various audience members for inspection.

"This is an old English penny. It isn't used anymore, having been taken out of circulation in the United Kingdom in August 1971 when the British switched to a decimal system of currency. I still think it is an awesome-looking coin! Not particularly valuable because there were so many minted at the time, but worth at least fifty times its value!"

With that intro, the magician takes the coin in their fingertips and places it back on the napkin, rubbing it gently as if to polish it a bit. They refold the napkin in half toward the audience and rub the coin through the napkin, polishing the reverse side, while saying *"It may not have any value anymore to the Brits, but I like it. It is the underdog of coins! And in a way, it's my lucky coin. But if I ever need a real coin that is still in United States circulation, I merely need to snap my fingers."*

You snap your fingers, then unfold the napkin. The tarnished old English penny has miraculously changed into a shiny US half-dollar coin! You now pass both coin and napkin to the audience to inspect.

Coin-gratulations

This routine is based on an item published in the "Introductory" issue of *The New Jinx*, Bill Madsen's 1960s revival of Annemann's classic magic magazine. There are two issue number 1s, and this idea came from sort of a "pre-issue" to the official issue 1 in May 1962. Confusing? I guess you had to be there. Richard Kaufman (and company) re-released the magazine's entire great run (1962 – 1968) of *The*

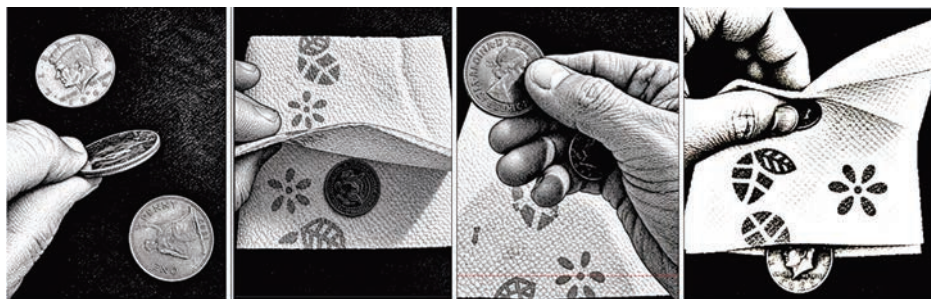


Fig. 1

Fig. 2

Fig. 3

Fig. 4

New Jinx in an oversized hardcover format. If you can find this volume, *get it!* There are *tons* of gems inside. Thanks go out to Richard for his kind permission to update and teach this cool trick from Bill Madsen!

REQUIREMENTS: You will need a few items for this trick. It does require a gaffed coin, but not an expensive one! You'll need a "Copper/Silver Coin" (C/S Coin) with an English penny on one side and a half-dollar coin on the other. You will also need a matching-style normal penny, a normal half-dollar (**Fig. 1**), and a paper napkin! These napkins are about 6- or 7-inches square as packaged. Unfolded, they are about a foot square. You will also need to be seated when you perform this effect.

SET-UP: Take the real half-dollar and insert it under the first two layers of the napkin (**Fig 2**). Place the normal penny on the top sheet of the napkin. The penny is placed directly over the spot where the half-dollar lives two layers down. Gently fold the napkin in half and place it in a pocket. In that same pocket, place the C/S Coin. You are now set to go.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION: As you begin your intro, reach into your pocket and palm the C/S Coin. Then, clamping your thumb, and fingers against the coins in the napkin, remove the napkin, and place it on the table. Unfold it to reveal the English penny, then hand the penny out for audience review. The napkin should be in its as-packaged, unfolded position. Ensure that the folded side is facing the audi-

ence and the loose edges are facing you. The hidden half-dollar rests under the top two layers of the napkin.

As your audience checks out the penny, you can "straighten" the napkin by moving it about a little. Meanwhile, you want to get the hidden coin toward the middle and about an inch or so from the edges near you. All of this is easy to do while holding the C/S Coin in finger-palm position (really, just try it!). The palmed coin should have the half-dollar side facing outwards. If it is not, casually reverse it while everyone is looking at the penny. Take it back at the fingertips of the hand holding the palmed coin. The illustration here explains all (**Fig. 3**).

Now comes a cool, simple, but very effective coin-switch move. Casually turn your right hand (with the coins) palm up and let the penny drop into your palm. Aim this drop so the coin lands toward the base of the index finger and thumb – in other words, a tiny bit away from the C/S Coin. Use your thumb to help pull the coin down and hold it in place as you quickly turn the hand palm down, letting the C/S fall onto the napkin. Because of its original orientation, it should fall penny-side up. Your *left* fingers slide the C/S Coin as if you are trying to buff the bottom-side of the coin. In the end, you will have moved the C/S directly on top of the hidden half-dollar. All attention will be on your bluff-buffing, so just casually drop your right hand to your lap, leaving the normal penny there.

As you discuss the now-defunct British

coin, place the index and second fingers of both hands over the visible penny (the C/S Coin), and your thumbs *under the layer of napkin hiding the half*. Holding coin(s) and napkin layers like this, fold what you are holding *toward* the audience. Then, “buff” the coin through the napkin. What it looks like to your captive guests is that you have merely folded the napkin in half, thus flipping the penny over and massaging its obverse side.

Now it’s magic time! After a few moments, snap your fingers. Your right hand then unfolds the napkin toward you and reveals the shiny half-dollar. You say, “*Well, I couldn’t exactly use a British penny here either!*” Your left fingers grasp the top of the napkin and the C/S Coin (now half-dollar side up) and lift the napkin and coin above the table. The napkin, of course, hides the C/S Coin,

but no one notices it as the *real* half clinks down to the table from its hiding spot (**Fig. 4**). This is a beautiful switch!

Your right hand picks up the half and hands it out for examination. As the spectators look at it, your right hand now *snaps* the napkin from the left hand, *leaving the C/S Coin hidden in the left!* You casually move your left hand to your lap and leave the coin there or keep it finger-palmed and ditch it when you have a chance.

These actions are really very easy to accomplish, however they do require some practice to make the whole sequence look smooth, easy, and natural. Take your time learning this routine – it is a surprising gasper!

Coin me an email at mbreggar-magic@gmail.com.

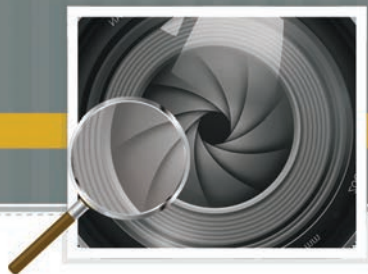
Submitting Ring Events

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

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

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

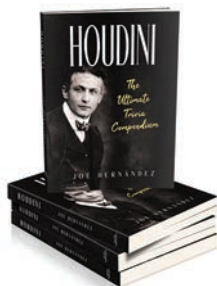
Please note: Write-ups of your monthly Ring meetings are considered Ring Reports and should also be e-mailed to Lauren Jurgensen at RingReports@magician.org.



Books

Houdini: The Ultimate Trivia Compendium

Joe Hernandez. Available from booksbyjoe.com. Hardcover and softcover, 359 pages. \$34.99, softcover; \$49.99, hardcover; \$95, limited edition.



Linking Ring columnist Joe Hernandez has written a book that earns its title. *Houdini: The Ultimate Trivia Compendium* is an extensive collection of trivia, obscure facts, and anecdotes about Harry Houdini, gathered from sources most working magicians would never have the time or access to track down themselves. The text is paired with scans of press clippings and promotional pieces that most of us have never seen.

Hernandez, an accomplished performer and lifelong student of Houdini history, wrote the book to commemorate the one-hundred fiftieth anniversary of Houdini's birth, and it shows. This isn't a casual gathering of facts; it's the work of someone who has spent years chasing down the obscure and the overlooked.

The book includes 208 photos and scans, and a surprising number will be new even to readers who've spent years with Houdini material. One example is a photo-

graph of all four Houdini brothers together. Most people know Theo, who performed as Hardeen. Fewer know Leopold, Bill, and Nat, or their sister Gladys. Seeing them together clarifies the family that shaped Houdini and the machine that ran alongside him. Theo built his own career as Hardeen, Bill served as Houdini's business manager and promoter, and the rest played roles the standard biographies rarely mention. Hernandez brings them into view in a way that feels overdue.

The book also contains old newspaper clippings and promotional pieces; proof, in newsprint, of how hard Houdini worked the sell. One reads, "The Weird, Mystifying and Inexplicable Harry Houdini, Positively the only conjurer in the world who strips naked." That's the era in one line. Houdini understood promotion as thoroughly as he understood escapes, and these clippings prove it through their tone, the exaggeration, the confidence that built the legend before he was a household name.

The trivia format is the right choice for this much material. Short, focused entries let you move through several quickly, linger on one that catches you, or dip in and out without losing the thread. You never feel like you're pushing through a book. You feel like you're exploring it.

The book moves in roughly chronological order, which helps you track where you are even without a table of contents. A table of contents page would be a hard thing to build for material like this anyway. You're reading through hundreds of individual facts, not chapters, so it makes sense that Hernandez skips it. What I did find myself wanting, somewhere in the back of the book, was a source list so I could trace

a fact to the newspaper, archive, or collection it came from. A book this full of obscure material makes you want to keep digging, and right now there's nowhere to dig from.

What the book does especially well is leave Houdini's contradictions alone. There is no forced verdict, no false tidiness. The stories about him rarely agree with each other, and that's part of the mystique. Separating fact from fiction was often the point, not an accident. Promotion, rumor, and selective truth-telling were part of the job in Houdini's day. Not everything here is showman's exaggeration. Some of it reflects his own recorded views on race and religion, and Hernandez doesn't edit those out. Hernandez lets those contradictions sit in full view rather than forcing a resolution, and the result is a clearer sense of how the legend was sculpted claim by claim, counterclaim by counterclaim.

Hernandez also includes several essays that argue a case rather than simply adding more facts to the pile. "The Mystery of Houdini's Death" is a careful piece of work. There is no sensationalism, just what the available evidence suggests, what remains unresolved, and how competing accounts have shaped the story over time. It is paired with a striking and sobering photograph of Houdini's body in a crate arriving in New York from Detroit.

Most Houdini books, such as Kenneth Silverman's *Houdini!!! The Career of Ehrich Weiss*, William Kalush and Larry Sloman's *The Secret Life of Houdini*, and Adam Begley's *Houdini*, are biographies with detailed attributions built to carry you through his life as one continuous story. *Houdini: The Ultimate Trivia Compendium* is not trying to compete in that arena. It is closer to the kind of material a biographer would mine in the research phase of a project. It is composed of scattered, granular pieces, arranged chronologically but never forced into a single throughline. The trivia entries ask nothing of you. There's no argument to follow, no thread to hold onto. You can connect the dots or not. You can

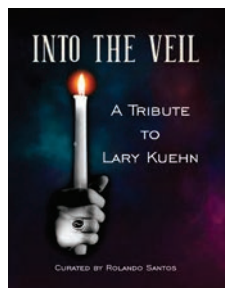
skip sections without losing a storyline. It is a jumping-off point for readers who enjoy going down rabbit holes.

Joe Hernandez has now written fifteen books, ranging from magic and mentalism to Houdini history and performance technique. Hernandez has earned his reputation as a walking encyclopedia of Houdini knowledge and one of the most prolific writers in our community. This compendium shows the depth of that expertise. For working magicians, Houdini students, and researchers, this is the kind of book that becomes a standard and one you will keep close because you know you'll need it.

Highly recommended. *Rolando Santos*

Into the Veil: A Tribute to Larry Kuehn

Text by Rolando Santos, Commentaries by Michele Kuehn. Available from Lulu.com. Hardbound, 332 pages. \$100.



You might think *Into the Veil* is a magic book. You'd be both right and wrong. There are plenty of tricks, more than you'll find in many conventional magic books. But *Into the Veil* is much more than a collection of effects. It is an important piece of the history of bizarre magic and mentalism, filled with handwritten correspondence, letters, photographs, illustrations, and reproductions of material that documents the people and publications that helped shape the genre.

You'll find correspondence between some of the founders and leading practitioners of bizarre magic, letters that were mailed to members of the community, and glimpses of the transition from handwritten correspondence to typewritten letters, email, email groups, and eventually online

forums. At the same time, this is unmistakably a work of love—a love letter from Rolando Santos to his friend Lary Kuehn and, by extension, to the community that surrounded them.

When you read that last part, you might ask: Who is Rolando Santos? (Hint: He served as I.B.M. International President in 2011-2012.) And who was Lary Kuehn? (If you know the bizarre-magic community, you'll recognize names such as T. Everett Bookings III and Traveler.) You might also wonder why anyone would spend \$100 on a 332-page book. If you already know the answer to those questions, you've probably stopped reading and ordered your copy.

What's Inside? Let's start with a quick look at what you'll find in this three-pound tome. Scattered throughout the book are forty-five complete presentations involving bizarre magic, mentalism, and magic. Contributors include Tony Andruzzi, Brother Shadow, Mark Edward, Kotah, Ed Solomon, Terry Tyson, Jim Magus, Rob Orander, and many others. There are stories from Kuehn's wife and friends, correspondence between Kuehn and several of the contributors, photographs, illustrations, and—perhaps most importantly—reproductions of actual letters and documents. Many pages are reproductions of correspondence in the contributors' own handwriting or on the original typewritten pages.

If you're like me, the names of some of these publications will bring back memories: Shadow Digest, Devil of a Bar and Grill, EG (Electronic Grymoire), The Shadow Network, Oracle, and others. For those of us who were around during those years, the letters can be even more evocative than the effects. They put faces, personalities, and voices behind names that may have occupied a place in our libraries for decades. Most of the effects include the contributor's complete presentation and patter. Some of the methods may seem familiar, or even deceptively simple, but that isn't really the point. The stories, presentations, and historical context surrounding the effects are what make this collection special.

One particularly fascinating section of approximately twenty pages is the correspondence between Lary Kuehn and Joseph Fraser that led to the creation of *The Bigger Book of Boo*. Some of the correspondence is typed, some is handwritten, and some is accompanied by photographs. The section concludes with reproduced pages from Fraser's *Dead Ringer*, including hand-drawn illustrations and photographs taken from the original material.

This is exactly the kind of magic history that could easily have disappeared. Instead, it has been preserved here for us to read, examine, and enjoy. And that may ultimately be the greatest value of *Into the Veil*. It isn't merely telling us about the history of bizarre magic. It is preserving pieces of that history that otherwise might have been lost.

There's Plenty of Magic, Too. If you're primarily interested in performing material, *Into the Veil* won't disappoint. You could probably construct two evening-length shows and a respectable walk-around set from the material contained in these pages. There is plenty here to perform for both lay audiences and magicians. But even if you never perform a single effect from the book, the history and memories will keep you occupied for a long time.

Just before the Bonus section are thirteen pages written by Kuehn's wife, Shelly Kuehn. This provides a personal glimpse of the man behind the magic, the person many of us knew primarily through his work in bizarre magic and the community surrounding it. Family photographs and personal details make this section particularly meaningful.

And Then There's the Bonus. The final thirty pages are simply titled "Bonus."

And that's exactly what they are. Out of deference to Rolando, and especially to those who purchase the book, I'm going to resist the temptation to describe what's there. Discovering it for yourself is part of the pleasure of owning *Into the Veil*.

There is considerably more content that I haven't mentioned here. That's intentional.

This is a discovery book as much as it is a remembrance book. You discover the man who was Lary Kuehn. You discover his influence and leadership within the bizarre magic community. You discover people, publications, correspondence, ideas, and pieces of magic that may have slipped from your memory. Putting all of that into this review would take away some of the joy of discovering it yourself.

A Personal Note: I know how much the book affected me. I couldn't read it all in one sitting. It took me about a week. Sometimes I'd read a section and simply sit there remembering those times. Other times, I'd find myself getting emotional because some of the people whose words appear in these pages are no longer with us. And more often than not, I'd find myself heading to my library or searching old hard drives, looking for a reference I'd forgotten about or wondering why I had stopped performing a particular routine. I found surprises on almost every page. I suspect many of you will, too.

Rolando Santos obviously didn't set out to write another magic book, and he didn't.

He created something considerably more personal: a loving tribute to an admired friend and colleague, and a remarkable preservation of a community and a period in magic that deserves to be remembered. For those interested in bizarre magic, mentalism, or the history of our art, *Into the Veil* is much more than a \$100 book of tricks. It is a piece of magic history. I am very glad Rolando Santos took the time, effort, and love to preserve it, and I am equally glad that he decided to share it with the rest of us.

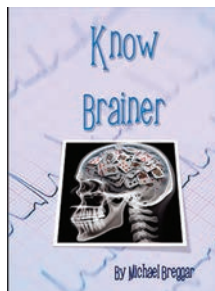
Highly recommended. *Fred Rosenbaum*

Know Brainer

Mike Breggar. Available from Your Favorite Dealer. Dealers contact www.murphysmagicsupply.com. Hardcover, 469 pages. \$65.

Michael Breggar's *Know Brainer* is going to be the sleeper book of the year: 469 pages of parlor, close-up, and strolling humor-based mentalism that will glide under the radar, mostly because many ma-

gicians don't quite understand mentalism, much less mentalism designed to be intentionally humorous. Magicians who do pick it up, at what is frankly a bargain price, will find a treasure trove of proven material and techniques.



The Linking Ring readers will know Breggar from his AutoMagic column, which has run for fifteen years. That same voice – clever, practical, and just a little mischievous – runs through *Know Brainer* with its thirty-seven fully scripted routines and twelve to fifteen fully explained moves and techniques.

This is a book built on the premise that humor in mentalism isn't about telling jokes like a stand-up comedian; it's about listening to the audience and what Breggar calls planned spontaneity. Bits and gags are embedded in the script waiting for the audience to hand you the right moment. As someone who is, by my own admission, comedically challenged, this book opened a whole new lane for me. I can't tell a joke to save my soul, but I can absolutely respond to an audience, and Breggar shows how to turn that into gold.

The first two effects in the book, "You're Better at This Than I Am" and "Un-Scene," are among my favorites not just because they're strong, but because they're accessible. Anyone can jump straight into this style of mentalism using self-working methods that let you focus entirely on the spectators and create what Breggar calls "fun and mind-blowing effects that still leave the audience perplexed after the laughter dies down."

In "You're Better at This Than I Am,"

several audience members can be involved; in fact, Breggar says the more the merrier because it opens the door to more opportunities for humor and makes the effect feel even more impossible. From a large manila envelope, the performer removes a stack of sealed #4 yellow envelopes, explaining that each one contains a different playing card. Six to ten people are brought up, each grabbing a few envelopes and mixing them as chaotically as possible: the first built-in opportunity for one-liners. The envelopes are randomly swapped, and then each person freely selects one and tosses the rest onto the table or, even better, over their shoulder to the floor. The performer then announces that he'll use a "series of scientifically designed questions" to determine who has the strongest psychic abilities. The questions, of course, were far from scientific. They are, for lack of a better description, on the wall and goofy. One I came up with when I tried this effect was, "If a chimichanga could changa, how many chimis could a chimichanga changa?" You simply play off their reactions, eliminating people until only one remains. Inside the large envelope is a jumbo card that matches the card in the final spectator's envelope.

"Un-Scene" is similar in concept but uses only five spectators and a set of twenty-five laminated cards, each depicting a different scene, such as pizzerias, fireplaces, and rivers. Cards are eliminated, reactions are played for humor, and the performer ultimately divines, in classic Breggar fashion, which card belongs to each spectator. It keeps all the humorous touches of Breggar's style, yet it's as close to traditional mentalism as it gets, which is why it's been one of his closing effects for years.

Breggar's philosophy is inspired by Groucho Marx's old TV quiz show *You Bet Your Life*. It was eight minutes of a quiz and twenty minutes of Groucho having fun with the contestants. That formula stuck with Breggar, so he surrounded himself with his own "Marcs Brothers": Marc Salem, Marc DeSouza, Marc Paul, and

Mark Strivings, all pillars of creativity. Their advice, experience, and touches are hidden among the entire book.

The material in *Know Brainer* is a buffet of ideas and props: dice, cards, coins, ropes, lottery tickets, fishbowls, and even Legos. They're all used to produce that "no way he could have known that" reaction that mentalists chase. And yet every routine is wrapped in Breggar's signature blend of wit, warmth, and rock-solid, audience-tested construction.

Mike sets the tone early with Mark Strivings's gloriously over-the-top introduction, "The Dr. Hugo Z. Heckenbush Memorial Introductory Psycho-X-Ray Lecture," a title that tells you everything about the playful spirit of the pages ahead. And it doesn't stop there. The book is filled with pun-driven chapter heads and effect names that made me grin every time I turned a page: the old "Flip-Flop Card Plop Scheme," "It Phigures" (a math trick), "Mortar-fied" (yes, it uses bricks), and "Egghead" (which, naturally, uses eggs). I found myself looking forward to each new title just to see what direction Breggar's brain would zig next.

The title *Know Brainer* comes from Breggar's signature fifteen- to twenty-minute comedy Q&A mentalism routine, fully explained in the book and absolutely worth the price of admission. It's not something you'll pull off without a lot of rehearsal and confidence. But most of the material is well within reach of the average magician. I flipped to five random sections and found effect after effect that's practical, workable, and instantly adoptable.

A few additional tricks were standouts for me. "Martian Rummy" or "YIPCLOD in Martian" is Breggar's playful spin on the classic ESP prediction using Space Alien cards. And then there's "What's in My Pants," which is exactly as ridiculous and comical as the title suggests. The premise: The performer is forever leaving things in his pants, such as keys, money, and foil wrappers. Candy wrappers; that is. Out comes a clothesline strung with

brightly colored pants and matching clothespins. Spectators eliminate pins one by one, and they get to keep what's in the pockets. At the end, only a single pair remains...the one nobody wanted, and it has a pocket full of money. It's quirky, visual, and pure Breggar. No pointed jokes. Not spectator embarrassing gags. Just puns, humor, and playful, personal, and engaging entertainment. The spectators are the foil for the humor, and then leave perplexed by the impossibility of the magic.

As Marc DeSouza puts it, humor disarms, opens doors, and makes the impossible feel even more impossible. Is comedy mentalism even a thing? Marc DeSouza thinks so: "People like to laugh. Disarming humor creates richly textured performances and, not incidentally, better bookings. In other words: Funny is Money."

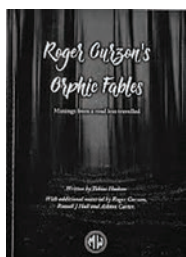
You know it's a good book when you find yourself laughing as you read it, not because it's a joke book (it isn't), but because Breggar's voice is so clear and he is willing to poke fun at the tropes of mentalism. One of my favorite lines is his observation that most serious mentalists look like they're constipated, that strained grimace they make when they're "reading your thoughts."

Know Brainer is a philosophy, a toolkit, and a reminder that mentalism doesn't have to be grim, brooding, or performed with the emotional range of a tax audit. It can be warm, playful, surprising, and, yes, funny.

Highly recommended. *Rolando Santos*

Orphic Fables: Musing from the Road Less Traveled

Written by Tobias Hudson with additional material by Roger Curzon, Russell J. Hall, and Ashton Carter. Available from www.magic2go.com/products/roger-curzons-orphic-fables, Softcover, \$42.



Roger Curzon is a bona fide, internationally respected master of card magic. But it's his ability to turn a phrase with eerie precision that makes him legendary in the realm of British Bizarre and Mystery Entertainment. I reviewed his book, *Dark Matters: The Arcane Thaumaturgy of Doctor Jacob Tordoff*, in 2017. I was struck (enthralled, really) by his ability to write as if he were uncovering something rather than inventing it. His stories feel discovered, not crafted, and plausible enough to leave you unsettled or at least pondering the possibility of the supernatural.

That same quality runs through the fourteen stories in *Orphic Fables*. "Orphic," in Curzon's words, implies mystical hidden knowledge and the soul's journey. As he says, these are "stories rescued from the deep underworlds of myth and mystery." Presented as a mix of fact and fiction, with a deft touch of local history, they carry the kind of weight that makes you wonder if perhaps we should leave a light on at night, check the locks, and keep the holy water nearby. And just when you think he's taking the obvious road, Curzon pivots and offers an unexpected perspective on an old trope, turning familiarity into something fresh, entertaining, and unsettling.

A case in point is "The Witch Bottle." At first, it hints at a sinister, ghostly presence, the kind of cursed object you expect to bring ruin on a household. But Curzon reverses the expectation. The small bottle isn't the source of the trouble at all, but rather it's what was keeping darker forces at bay. The result, however, is no less chilling. The family is still driven from their home by a malevolent entity, only not because of the bottle, but because its protection was lost.

"Haunted Borley Rectory" is another old trope for bizarrists, often paired with that well-known object, the haunted key. Curzon revisits it through the eyes of his old foil, Doctor Jacob Tordoff from *Dark Matters*. What lifts this tale above a simple retread is the writing. Tordoff is described as a man "whose eyes betray the wild and

haunted aspect of someone who has looked into places more rational souls would avoid or deny.” The narrator begins his account with a small ritual of its own, “I unscrewed the cap of his personal bottle of 18-year-old Triple Cask Macallan and poured three fingers into his crystal Lalique nosing and tasting glass.” Tordoff then places a small box on the table. “Did I perceive a slight tremor,” the narrator wonders, “as I picked up the glass and gave an appreciative whiff?” With shaking fingers, Tordoff undoes the knot. One of the hardest things to do with a haunted key is to justify it, yet here the flaw disappears, hidden in the brilliant setup and writing.

Well-crafted aura effects are hard to find. For years, Curzon’s own “Chromancy,” first published in *Sublimations* (2006), was the go-to effect for many bizarrists, me included. He later revisited it in Steve Drury’s *Liber Mentis* with “Chromancy II.” In this updated version, it is the spectator who determines which color card resonates most with them. Curzon included it in *Orphic Fables* because he considered it a significant improvement over the original. Here, the spectator making the choice validates the performance, turning what could have been a simple color revelation into something that feels personal, uncanny, and far more convincing.

While all the material is outstanding, there is one more effect I want to single out: “Accursed Soil,” which uses the wicker man prop. For a street reporter who has covered scenes of violence of all kinds, I am surprisingly squeamish when it comes to needles. And even though the pinhead of the wicker man prop never penetrates the skin, it still makes me shudder. Curzon anticipates this reaction and has a clever no-stick method that preserves the effect’s impact without having to use the usual method. In addition, Curzon and Ashton Carter’s “Thoughts on Séance Work” is mandatory reading for anyone who performs in that territory.

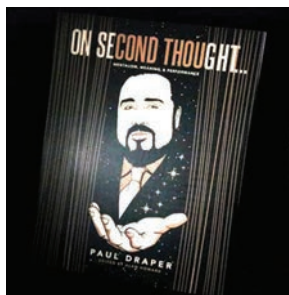
I could have easily written a page or more on every one of the effects in *Orphic*

Fables. The collection belongs on every bizarre and storytelling performer’s bookshelf, to be reread and reabsorbed, appreciated each time anew. Curzon’s gift is not simply in the methods, but in the way he reshapes familiar ground into something unexpected, unsettling, and theatrically convincing. *Orphic Fables* proves that even the oldest tropes can be made new again when handled with imagination and care.

Highly recommended. *Rolando Santos*

On Second Thought: Mentalism, Meaning, and Performance

Paul Draper (edited by Alan Howard). Available by contacting Paul@pauldraper.com, Hardcover with dust jacket, 306 pages. \$95.



In late January, I started hearing about a book that mentalist and keynote speaker Paul Draper was writing based on eight years of his stellar *M-U-M* column, “On Second Thought.” It seemed everyone from mainstream magicians to mentalists and bizarrists was eagerly waiting for it. Anticipation grew so much that expectations became almost impossibly unrealistic. And then the book arrived.

As a journalist, wordsmith, and magician who uses a lot of mentalism and storytelling, I appreciate *On Second Thought* on multiple levels. The book is aesthetically pleasing, a hefty hardback with a dust cover. The design, layout, and photography all reflect care and attention to detail. The content inside was even more impressive.

The original column was created, as Draper describes it, this way: “Each month I sat down and asked myself: What have I learned? What moved me forward? What idea from the past have I improved? How

can I make what I'm doing better? The key was to be honest and share actionable ideas—things I wish I could have learned from someone else's journey instead of the hard way."

The result is so much more than just a series of columns in book form. It's a curated archive of growth, insight, mistakes, triumphs, and steady improvement. It's a real-time roadmap for success in magic entertainment, public speaking, workshops, corporate engagements, and in life. That mindset of honest reflection, constant refinement, and sharing what actually helps is the backbone of the book. On page 2, Draper lays out four pillars that shape everything that follows: Be the person who fulfills a client's need, Improve your act every time you perform, Improve the world around you, and Define your target audience, not as a one-time marketing step, but as something you consciously revisit before every lecture, speech, or show. That audience-first philosophy shows up again and again in the material he pulls from other performers. Asked about mixing magic and mentalism, legendary British magician Paul Daniels told Draper, "Do whatever the audience likes ... we are entertainers first ... let the audience decide what works ... not other magicians." It's the same principle from a different angle; Draper isn't just collecting tricks from famous names; he's collecting the philosophy behind why those names succeeded.

Open the book anywhere, and you'll strike gold. Draper doesn't just teach methods; he teaches meaning. He explains why effects work, how routines breathe, and what makes an audience lean in. He writes with humanity, vulnerability, and a deep understanding of how people think. He encourages performers to mirror the habits, speech, and mannerisms of their audience not as a trick, but as a gesture of respect and connection. He reminds us that even at the highest levels of success, we still make mistakes no one else sees, and we learn from them at any age.

The range of material Draper includes is

remarkable. There's a complete children's Christmas show, with scripts for a Two in the Hand, One in the Pocket routine, "Cookies and Milk" based on "Overstuffed" by Bizarro, "AmazeCups" by Danny Orleans, and "Cookie Bite" by Eric Ross. There's also a complete Christmas show for adults. You'll find insights on Dai Vernon, routines from Eugene Burger, and even the complete script and workings of one of the late Mark Edward's finest séance pieces, "The Lost Girl from Killarney Wood," along with murder-mystery show effects.

On page 217, Draper walks through the entire creative process from the first spark of inspiration to a finished, audience-ready effect using his "Rainbow Reading" effect as the example. I've used that routine, which uses color rocks, for a multiple-out prediction for years. Its simple method, colorful props, and built-in customization have always made it a reliable piece with especially strong spectator engagement.

There's a section on using synchronicity and well-known coincidences as a basis for séance scripts. For example, Draper discusses scripting a séance show around the coincidences between the assassinations of US presidents Abraham Lincoln and John F. Kennedy. His "PATEO Force" routine with tarot cards is another gem and something most magicians can add to their shows immediately without having to lean too much into the bizarre magic arena.

Draper told me one of his favorite sections includes "The Secret of Magic," found on page 180, which is fitting because it is where he distills an entire performing philosophy into a single, concise essay without losing depth or heart. Pages like 1 ("Success"), 278 ("Don't Make the Same Mistakes I Made"), and 224 ("The Best Advice") do the same work throughout the book of taking hard-won lessons and making them immediately usable.

In more than twenty-five years of reviewing books, I've rarely seen one that addresses every aspect of performance, business, scripting, and professional development as

completely as this one. If there's a caveat, it's that the book's 300-page scope means it rewards slow reading. This is not something you will get through in one or two days. Treat it as a reference you return to, not a book you finish and shelve. That said, once in a decade, a book appears that becomes a cornerstone for magicians: one that reframes the conversation about performance, business, and audience connection. *On Second Thought* is one of those rare books. This is a book that will be valuable to mainstream magicians, mentalists, bizarrists, kids' performers, public speakers, and corporate entertainers.

The term "must have" gets thrown around too often, but here it fits. I don't have any second thoughts whatsoever about recommending this book.

Highly recommended. *Rolando Santos*

Step Into The Bizarre

Jamie Daws. Available from jamiedaws.co.uk/store. Softcover, 73 pages. £25. (Includes a free app for one of the effects.)



I can vouch for every effect in *Step Into The Bizarre*. Every single one. I've either performed it myself, watched it happen in front of me, or been the person brought on-stage to experience it up close. When you've stood that close to the moment of impact, you get a real sense of what works and what doesn't. And in *Step Into The Bizarre*, the material works.

Jamie Daws, one of the UK's well-known close-up magicians and a mainstay in Alakazam videos, decided to add another dimension to his work by stepping into the bizarre. The result is a tight, focused book; there's more usable material

here than in books twice the length. It's lean in the best way. It doesn't have any filler, just solid material that shows what happens when a close-up worker brings his thinking into a darker corner of magic.

The book opens with "Scared," a completely impromptu Haunted Deck effect that introduced me to Daws twenty years ago. He was sixteen at the time, and I reviewed the DVD he released. It was his first publication and earned a "Highly recommended" rating. Here's part of what I wrote back then, "Once in a great while I get something to review that I just can't wait to go out and perform. Which is a bit of a problem at 3 in the morning at 30 thousand feet over the Pacific on a flight to Chile." Airlines still handed out playing cards back then. I asked the flight attendant for a deck and ad-libbed a story based on the old *Twilight Zone* episode about a gremlin chewing on a propeller, the spirits that inhabit planes during layovers. They are seldom seen but flying with us all the same. The deck she'd handed me split cleanly in half, revealing a joker. She screamed. Woke up half the cabin.

"Scared" teaches you to animate a deck so it cuts to a specific card with no threads, no magnets, no prior setup. It uses any card, a stack of business cards, or even tarot cards, gimmicked on the fly so the deck pivots and splits in half. It's a wonderful supernatural moment that lends itself to stories about telekinesis, alternate universes, or whatever fits the room. Bizarrists will want this one for tarot work especially. It takes a little practice to get the pivot feel right, but once you have it, you can even hand the trigger to a spectator's finger. I've used this effect all over the world and it still delivers that same eerie, impossible punch.

I finally met Daws this year at a couple of conventions and asked him why he decided to step into the bizarre after years in mainstream magic. He told me, "At one time magicians played with the unfathomable, building reputations on the mystical. Look at the old posters withimps and

devils perched on the shoulders of magic's greatest names. We stopped framing up the bold, the wicked, and the bizarre. I want to leave a legacy that says, in part, I helped keep bizarre alive and thriving for another generation."

The effects in *Step Into The Bizarre* will certainly help cement that legacy. "Tossed Out Death" has an off-the-wall and humorous premise that plays far better than you'd expect. Daws tells the audience he has a unique ability and can determine a person's cause of death by smell. "I get called in by the coroner and take a sniff." Delivered in his dry British accent, that line gets a laugh every time I've seen him do it. The routine is a variation on the Tossed Out Deck using toe tags. A bunch of toe tags are tossed out. Several spectators look at the packet, remember the cause of death, and remain standing, and Daws uses his "nose" to identify both the cause of death and which spectator chose it. The write-up can't fully capture how much fun you can have with an audience here. In performance, it's loose, funny, and surprisingly strong.

"Check Out" is a variation of Michael Murray's "Between the Lines." A spectator chooses his own adventure trip, not realizing that he ends up at the famously haunted Stanley Hotel in Colorado, where Stephen King stayed and drew inspiration for his novel *The Shining*.

One of my other favorites is "Chased," which is essentially Andy Nyman's "Killer Elite Pro" reimagined with old photos, a ring, and a pendulum. It's the perfect closer for a series of pendulum tests at Halloween parties, and it works just as well as an everyday carry. I usually have a pendulum with me, or I can make one on the spot with a string and a rock. The photos and ring fit easily in a pocket. That's all you need for a light (or very dark) fifteen minutes of bizarre entertainment.

Make sure you spend time with an effect called "Forever App." It's a free download that lets you present a star sign (horoscope) revelation combined with a personality test. It's simple, direct, and plays bigger than you'd expect.

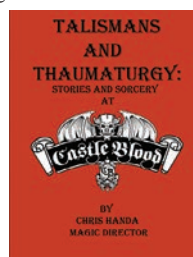
I could write several paragraphs on each effect in the book. They're all that good. But the centerpiece is Daws's signature "PK Touches" routine. It's spectacular when seen in person, and unforgettable if you're lucky enough to be brought onstage to experience it yourself. This routine has been a mainstay of Daws's repertoire for more than ten years. He goes into detail on every part of the three-phase performance including the script, the physical taps, the finger taps, even the nose taps. There are several versions of "PK Touches" on the market, but Daws's write-up is the most complete and easy-to-understand compilation of theory and practical tips I've seen. It's clear he's lived with this routine a long time, and he teaches it with that same depth.

Step Into The Bizarre isn't just another collection of dark-themed magic. It's Jamie Daws staking out a corner of the art and tending it with real care. If his goal is to keep bizarre magic alive for another generation, this book does more than its share of the work. If I had to buy only one bizarre-themed book this year, this would be the one. Seventy-three pages of practical, fun, doable scares, mystery, and eeriness, all delivered by someone who clearly loves this branch of magic and knows how to make it work in the real world.

Highly recommended. *Rolando Santos*

Talismans and Thaumaturgy: Stories and Sorcery at Castle Blood

Chris Handa. Available on Amazon.com. Hardcover, 113 pages. \$70.



For over thirty years, Castle Blood in Western Pennsylvania has been one of the premier theatrical haunt-attractions in the United States. Forget the Halloween-time,

jump-scare, blood-and-gore operations built to hustle you through before the fog machine runs out of juice. This one operates year-round as a fully interactive experience that draws you in rather than pushing you along to the next fright.

Castle Blood is built on engagement. You walk through thirteen rooms in a gothic mansion and meet costumed characters who give you clues, puzzles, and small tasks to complete. Your job is to locate one of three talismans without losing your beads of protection. Atmosphere carries the night more than scares do, and you'll encounter cobwebbed hallways, candlelit rooms, eccentric vampires, and a steady undercurrent of spooky humor. You talk to characters, collect tokens, solve simple challenges, and move deeper into the story rather than getting chased or shouted at. The whole experience feels like stepping into an *Addams Family* tale: part haunted house, part scavenger hunt, and part interactive play. It's family-friendly, clever rather than frightening, and built for people who enjoy Halloween mood, gothic décor, and playful storytelling.

The storytelling almost always rests on classic or well-known magic effects that have been repurposed, dressed up, or reimagined to fit the Castle's lore, which is exactly why this book belongs on a magician's shelf and not just a haunt enthusiast's. You don't need to have set foot in Castle Blood to use what's here. *Talismans and Thaumaturgy* brings all aspects into the light, including character development, psychology, marketing techniques, and the magic secrets woven into each room. The material is explained in a way that gives you a clear sense of how these characters function and why they resonate.

In essence, each room or character is anchored in a magic effect. Prof. Scrye, the in-castle persona of the book's author, Chris Handa, usually greets guests and presents them with several Skeleton Keys to begin the adventure. This is where the real world begins to slip away, as the meaning of the key turning by itself is

folded into Castle Blood's mythology. One or more spectators are given the chance to experience the key's behavior in their own hand, and when it turns, the adventure begins. There is more to this than a simple Haunted Key effect. The book explains the type of key, how to use it, and offers tips, history, and citations so you can pursue your own research if you choose.

"Your Future or At Least the Next Thirty Minutes or So" is based on the Balducci Cut Deeper Force performed with tarot cards. It's used to explain the ground rules of the Beads of Protection, the Talismans, and how you'll make your way through the evening via a tarot reading. "Meet Ash, The Anywhere Séance Piece," is one of my favorites because the premise is as clever as the reworking of the old Ash to Palm effect. Another standout is "Let Me Give You a Calling Card," where the host's bloody palmprint appears on a piece of paper the guest can keep. The best part is that there are no smelly or harsh chemicals that can burn a person's hand or damage their clothes.

Beyond the thirty individual effects, the book offers a concise and practical list of what is required to create a successful theatrical haunted experience. Everything is covered from how a performer must fully embrace a character to resetting each room in the Castle so the next group gets the same level of entertainment.

Part of the experience is the use of stage illusions reimagined to fit the theme of a given year. The book illustrates this structure well with its account of the 2010 season, when the theme was "Beware the Moon" and dealt with lycanthropy. The section on off-season shows provides fresh ways to think about special events during the rest of the year, such as "St. Bat-rick's Day," "Halfway to Halloween," "Summerween," "Spooky Little Cryptmas," and, of course, Valentine's Day featuring a zombie bride. There is also a section on no-scare matinees for kids.

I had a chance to spend time with Prof. Scrye at a recent East Coast Spirit Convention.

His knowledge of mainstream magic, magic history, and technique is deep and well-respected. But what struck me most was the way he instantly saw a prop or a traditional trick through the lens of Halloween and Castle Blood. He has a well-honed storytelling instinct, and all of it is on display in *Talismans and Thaumaturgy*.

What *Talismans and Thaumaturgy* ultimately offers is a look into Frankenstein's laboratory complete with Igor. It shows how characters are built, how rooms are shaped, and how classic magic is bent just

enough to feel like it belongs in a gothic mansion at the edge of town. Call it a handbook, a history, and a nod to 1940s horror movies rolled into one with an invitation to think more deeply about why certain effects work when wrapped in story instead of gore and screams. From bizarrists who favor character and lore to mainstream magicians seeking a Halloween edge, *Talismans and Thaumaturgy* delivers the sort of refined eeriness that would make Vincent Price raise an approving eyebrow.

Highly recommended. *Rolando Santos*

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Broken Wand

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



MICHAEL DURANT

Michael B. Durant, 75, of Fort Wayne, Indiana, died July 22, 2026, at home. He held I.B.M. number 52947 and had been a member since 1996. He belonged to Ring 221 (Fort Wayne, Indiana). He was a 1969 graduate of Lawrence High School in Indianapolis, and he received his bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from Purdue University in 1975. He followed that with post-graduate work at Purdue toward a master's degree. He began his career at Essex Controls and later worked at Navistar in Fort Wayne, eventually becoming the director of information services for Fort Wayne Plastics. Michael spent thirty-five years working part time in sales for Belmont Liquors, with a specialty in wines. He also taught wine-tasting classes at Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne. Prior to his retirement in 2013, he helped open the Belmont Liquors store on Illinois Road in Fort Wayne and served as its assistant manager. Michael had many interests outside of work and was instrumental in the gaming world, building and testing modules and platforms the games ran on, most notably Dungeons and Dragons. Developers would send new games to him for testing. He was one of the founders of NIGA (Northeast Indiana Gaming Association) and PentaCon gaming convention in Fort Wayne. He also was an early part of the internationally known Gen Con convention, the largest gaming convention in North America. While in college, Michael became interested in radio and



had his own campus radio program. He was a volunteer for NPR at WBNI radio in Fort Wayne and hosted a late-night jazz program. He would later host *The World of Blues* internet radio program from his home. He was a dedicated and busy magician for more than four decades, spending part of that time working with his colleague Lana. He served as master of ceremonies at various magic conventions while also participating in events at the Magic Castle in Los Angeles. Michael participated in several productions by the theatre department at Purdue Lafayette, as well as volunteered backstage at numerous productions at Fort Wayne Civic Theatre with his wife. He also acted locally in a few productions for Fortney Enterprises. He danced with the Fort Wayne Dance Collective. Having been a Boy Scout in his youth, Michael became involved in scouting with his sons, acting as an assistant scout leader. He was instrumental in the founding of the Explorer program for scouts in Fort Wayne and loved caving, rock climbing, camping, and hiking. He enjoyed volunteering at the Historic Old Fort, where he played the character "Dr. Wells" for several years. He was also a participant in the "Save the Old Fort" project when it was in jeopardy of being dismantled. He is survived by his wife of forty-five years, Nan O'Connell; a daughter, Lee (Bill) Hanford of Fort Wayne; two sons, Geoff (Denise) Durant of Fort Wayne and Jon (Andie) Durant of Fishers, Indiana; five grandchildren; six great-grandchildren; sisters Susan (Joe) Tomaino of Fort Myers, Florida and Nancy (Paul) Williamson of Austin, Texas; and several nieces and nephews.

CARL LOUD

Carl Loud, 77, of Louisville, Kentucky, died August 24, 2026. He held I.B.M. number 64800, had been a member since 2004, and belonged to the Louisville Magic Club Ring 64 (Louisville, Kentucky). He died with his girlfriend, Robin, in a motorcycle crash. Carl was a member of the United States Navy, where he attained the rank of master chief. Afterward, he worked at Robley Rex VA Medical Center in Louisville, Kentucky, from which he later retired. For many years, he entertained fans attending Louisville Bats baseball games as “Dancing Carl.” When the music began, Carl would climb to the top of the dugout and dance the Tootsie Roll. He was also very active with Kosair Shriners, where his love of dancing and performing continued. It was at one of the Shrine’s Tuesday dance events that he met Robin. As secretary of the Louisville Magic Club, he regularly volunteered for close-up and walk-around performances. He also helped recruit fellow club members whenever magicians were needed for community events. Although Carl concentrated primarily on close-up magic, he and past Louisville Magic Club president Jim Harris presented a parlor show together at the University of Louisville.



LEN SWINYER

Dr. Leonard “Len” Swinyer, 85, of Holaday, Utah, died April 18, 2026. He held I.B.M. number 48140 and had been a member since 1992. He was a member of the Order of Merlin (twenty-five years of continuous membership) and Ring 193 (Salt Lake City, Utah). Ring 193 was renamed after Len and his wife Thalia, who hosted Ring meetings in their home for years. Len was also a member of



the Society of American Magicians. He earned his medical degree from the University of Vermont, after which he completed an internship and residency in internal medicine and pathology at the University of Utah School of Medicine. He served in the United States Navy as a lieutenant commander and chief of pathology at Quantico Naval Hospital during the Vietnam War before completing a three-year dermatology residency at Oregon Health Sciences University in Portland. He was board-certified in dermatology and dermatopathology. Len established a private dermatology practice in 1973 in Salt Lake City, Utah. In 1978, he and Thalia co-founded the Dermatology Research Center, which conducted more than 400 clinical trials under his leadership as principal investigator – a body of work spanning more than four decades before his retirement in December 2018. He also founded the Intermountain Dermatology Society, Utah Society of Dermatology Medicine and Surgery, and the National Dermatology Photo Society. Len received numerous prestigious honors throughout his career, including the National Practitioner of the Year Award from the Dermatology Foundation, the Golden Triangle Award, and a Presidential Citation from the American Academy of Dermatology, recognizing his extraordinary efforts in public education and his lifelong commitment to reducing the mortality and incidence of skin cancer. Beyond medicine, Len had a deep and abiding love of the American West, and Utah held a special place in his heart. He enjoyed spending time outdoors, camping, boating, traveling, golfing, and spending time at his cabin with his family. Captivated by the craft since age eleven, he also belonged to the Society of American Magicians. He is survived by his wife Thalia, an RN who worked faithfully by his side for forty years of their sixty-year marriage, daughter Laura (Billy) Riley, son Michael (Lisa) Swinyer, PA-C; four grandchildren, three great-grandsons, his sister Elaine, and extended family.

Ring Reports

THE INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF MAGICIANS



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

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

Meets 1st Wed. of month, Parkway United Church of Christ 2841
N. Ballas Road, St. Louis, MO 63131 / Web Site: www.IBMRingOne.com
SANDY WEIS., Treasurer and Scribe / E-mail: ibmringone@gmail.com
1755 Elkins Drive, St. Louis, MO 63136

Ring 1 is saddened to report the loss of one of our most steadfast pillars, Steve Zuehlke, a past president and longtime Board Director whose dedication shaped generations of St. Louis magicians. His legacy lives on in every member he inspired and every moment of wonder he helped bring to the St. Louis magic community.

July 18 marked a historic moment for Ring 1 as the club proudly presented its first-ever July Jubilee of Magic: A Children's Magic Show, coordinated by Michael McClure. The event was an overwhelming success, drawing nearly 150 excited adults and children to an afternoon filled with laughter and wonder. Families poured through the doors as they opened at 1:00 pm, greeted immediately by lively pre-show magic from our featured performers and past president D. Jay.

Ring 1 extends heartfelt gratitude to Chad Jacobs (Chef Bananas), Christian Misner (Christian the Magician), and Jill Schmidt (Silly Jilly) for generously donating their time and talent. These three performers are widely regarded as among the very best children's entertainers in the St. Louis region, and their energy set the tone for a joyful, unforgettable afternoon. Our First Lady, Jen Queen, offered her services as emcee for the event. The show kept the audience laughing and fully engaged. Afterward, the performers continued spreading smiles by selling fun items, twisting balloons, and meeting families. The success of this inaugural July Jubilee has inspired Ring 1 to make this a cherished annual tradition.

Just two days later, Ring 1 welcomed the 97th International Brotherhood of Magicians Convention, held from July 22 through 25.

Select members were chosen and proudly served as official Ring 1 Ambassadors, helping greet attendees from around the world and serve as the convention's concierge. Those who represented Ring 1 included Lana Mae Sikes, Timothy Shegitz, Jill Schmidt, Jen and Steve Queen, Christian Misner, Susan and Mike McClure and their son Michael, Chuck Levy, D. Jay, Jeff Lefton, Minerva, James Hodge, Jeff Halcomb, Kai and Elyssa Gansner, Steve Finkelstein, Kevin Desrosiers, Bob Danner, and Sandy Weis.

To commemorate Ring 1's Centenary year, the club offered a special marked and stacked deck of playing cards, gifted to every convention registrant. The deck quickly became one of the most talked-about items of the week. Jonathan Levit even created a magical effect using the deck and featured it prominently in his lecture. Magic legends such as Lance Burton and Andi Gladwin expressed their admiration as well regarding its clever design and mechanics. Anyone wishing to purchase this limited-edition deck may contact Mike McClure, the designer and producer of the deck.

The convention's lecture series opened with an "Early Bird Lecture" by Christian Misner, whose enthusiasm and creativity set a vibrant tone for the days ahead. On Wednesday, a special panel highlighted former St. Louis Ring 1 magicians: Jonathan Levit, Chris Korn, Andrew Goldenhersh, and Trudy Monti, with Shep Hyken serving as host. The Close-Up and Stage Competitions brought additional excitement, especially with Ring 1's own Milo and Maverick Chancellor, sons of David and Jamie, competing in the youth stage division. Their polished performance earned them first place — a proud moment for their family and for Ring 1.

Ring 1 also received several honors during the convention. The club was awarded a Presidential Award from outgoing International

President Stephen Levine, recognizing Ring 1's 100 years of service to the magic community. Additionally, Ring 1 became one of the first recipients of the newly established ERA Award (Effective Ring Achievement Award), acknowledging the club's remarkable growth and impact over the past three years.

Missouri State Senator Adam Schnelting, son-in-law of Susan and Michael McClure, secured both a Governor's Proclamation and a Missouri Senate Resolution honoring the I.B.M. for its cultural contributions and dedication to the arts. Another highlight came during the annual meeting, where Michael McClure, previously named Territorial Vice President of Missouri, was elevated to serve as the International Officer overseeing all TVPs worldwide. Ring 1 congratulates Michael on this distinguished achievement.

On August 5, Ring 1 hosted its first Grand Conjuring Parlor/Stage Contest, with Sandy Weis serving as master of ceremonies. The lineup featured Steve Finkelstein, Jeff Halcomb, Robert Danner, Steve Queen, James Higround, Josh Weidner, Seth Terrell, Kevin Desrosiers, Minerva, Timothy Shegitz, and Keith Smith, with each bringing a unique style and personality to the stage. After an evening of diverse and entertaining performances, the winners were announced: first place, Josh Weidner; second place, Tim Shegitz; and third place, Keith Smith. Special thanks go to judges Chad Jacobs, Jeff Lefton, Steve Buesking, and Ken Domash for their thoughtful evaluations, and to Michael and Susan McClure, who served as event chairmen and coordinators.

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

At our August meeting, the following members were present: Fritz Coombs, Bob Gurdak, James and Eric Killmeyer, Jim Klayder, Peter Lucke, and Gary Morton. The theme of the evening was "Levitation Magic."

Fritz Coombs opened the evening's magic with The Read Words by Colin Elazer. He invited Bob to assist him. Fritz displayed a pack of red-backed cards, and on each card were five words, four of which were written in black ink and one written in red ink. He set out packets of cards on the table and asked Bob to select a card from the first packet. Fritz asked Bob to read aloud the five words. Fritz attempted to guess which word was in red from Bob's intonation as he read the words. The process was repeated for

the various packets; Fritz was successful for several cards.

Jim Klayder continued with his variation on Carpenter Coins. Jim introduced three coins: a silver dollar, an Asian brass coin, and a British copper penny. Jim took the silver coin and placed it in his pocket. But when Jim opened his hand, there were still three coins: silver, Asian, and copper. He repeated the process again with the silver coin to his pocket. Jim wondered if it could be done with one of the other coins, say the copper coin. So he placed the copper coin in his pocket, and when he opened his hand all three coins were present. Jim then repeated the effect by pocketing the Asian coin, and upon opening his hand all three coins were visible. To conclude, Jim again put the silver coin in his pocket, but this time when he opened his hand all the coins had vanished.

James Killmeyer entertained us with a Levitating Card effect. He began by showing us his card deck. He said it wasn't a full deck, so he proceeded to magically pluck cards out of the air to complete it. James then asked Bob to come up and select a card from the deck; it was the Four of Diamonds. The Four of Diamonds was replaced somewhere in the middle of the deck. James then gave the deck a little shuffle, and the Four of Diamonds levitated to the top of the deck. James reinserted the card into the deck, gave the deck a magic tap, and the Four of Diamonds levitated to the top again. He asked Bob to insert the card into the deck, and again it levitated to the top. Finally, James gave the deck a fancy shuffle, and then slowly the Four of Diamonds began to levitate out of the deck.

Bob Gurdak followed with Floating Bill from Joker Magic. Bob began by placing a \$5 bill on the table along with a comb. He commented that this effect relied on static electricity. If he rubbed the comb on his hair, it would become statically charged. So he rubbed the comb in what hair he had left and used it to charge the \$5 bill in his hand. The bill began to levitate above his hand. Bob took a pen and passed it under the levitating bill to show it had genuinely levitated. He concluded by discharging the comb on the table and then touching the bill with the comb. The discharged bill then went down in his hand.

Gary Morton concluded the evening's magic with Any Card to Wallet from Collector's Workshop. Gary began by showing a box of cards. He handed the box to James and asked James to take out the cards, fan them out, and mentally select and remember one of the cards. James was then instructed to cut the deck and replace it in the box. Gary took the box and placed it on the table. He took out his wallet and

held it above the box. He said the card would levitate invisibly from the box and into his wallet. Gary opened his wallet, showing a playing card and several credit cards. He asked James if the card was one of the credit cards; James said no, it was the Seven of Clubs. Gary passed the card box back to James and asked him to count out the cards and stop when he arrived at the Seven of Clubs. James counted out fifty-one cards, and there was no Seven of Clubs. Gary opened the wallet, and the card inside was the Seven of Clubs. *Peter Lücke*

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

July 2026: Marc DeSousa gave us a preview of the upcoming MAES Convention being held in Cherry Hill, New Jersey, on September 9, 10, and 11. New acts and magic lectures are continually being added. It is a great local convention that welcomes all magic lovers, with evening shows open to the public in addition to close-up and stage magic lectures. Oh, and dealers. Lots of dealers. And an auction.

New Ring 6 member Ken Baker, who also works as Santa for Lancaster amusement park at Dutch Wonderland, then took to the podium to give us an amazing class, lecture, and overview of how he uses AI to enhance his magic business in a huge variety of ways. Ken has been using AI and ChatGPT for several years and demonstrated how he builds the components for his success. Even those of us who are not skillful in using technology learned how it can help to create websites, posters for public shows, and even original music with custom lyrics for routines and magic songs. ChatGPT and an AI song generator are his two main tools. He began his talk shortly after our 7 pm starting time, and it was 8:30 before I even glanced at my watch! He gave so much information that the time flew by. And he was not finished! After a short break, Ken shared his expertise for over another hour. He explained that one of the things he does for every client is to send a questionnaire, and he can create a custom song that he uses during a show and also sends an MP3 copy to the client. Birthday parents love to play the songs with their children's name, over and over.

Our wheels were turning at the potential uses of these tools that most of us had only heard of before tonight.

Ken also sent a link so that everyone in attendance had access to the PowerPoints and ideas that he shared with us. Thank you, Ken, for a

great night of magic knowledge.

August 2026: The month of August is often a slow time for magic — parties and library shows are ending — but Ring 6 had a meeting that blew the doors off with a whole lot of magic. Our theme was “Teach a Trick,” and it was done in a way that allowed everyone to learn some great magic. First, five magicians performed a trick or short routine and then explained it. Off to a great start. Then we broke into three separate areas inside the Community Arts Center where these magicians held teaching sessions so that everyone could concentrate on an area of interest.

Reba Strong began with a very visual card effect where she shuffled a deck of cards, then laid out four rows of cards. After a countdown based on randomly selected cards, she turned over the top cards of the rows and showed that they were all four Aces! Tom Ewing followed with a “Pick a Card” trick. He had a volunteer select a card and place it back into the deck. Tom shuffled and cut the deck, then spread it on a table. Using only mental powers, he pointed to one card after another but could not find the card — until he turned over his hand and the selected card was on the back of his hand! Tom then showed all of the subtleties for this clean piece of impromptu magic.

Marc DeSousa had two effects to teach. First, he performed his Chop Cup with a Waffle House coffee cup. A small baseball kept appearing under the cup until he turned the baseball into a full-size tennis ball. After applause, Marc lifted the cup and showed a lemon! A classic, with a full explanation. Marc then shared his story and handling of Professor's Nightmare. So clean, and a real fooler! He taught several methods for doing the count that shows the three ropes all becoming the same size, and different ways to finish the routine. This piece of magic stuns lay audiences. Marc explained bits of business for selecting the type of rope to use and how to prepare the ropes for multiple performances.

Bill McElvenney uses rope instead of a scarf to teach “Rope Through Arm.” He has a helper from the audience tie part of the knot around his arm and hold his hands in a way that makes the penetration spectacular. Last up, Mark Walsh shared several routines with coins that vanished and traveled invisibly across a tabletop into his other hand. This “Coins Across” uses several sleights, and Mark carefully taught the moves needed — including using a wristwatch as a servant for a vanish and reappearance. Mark said that he prefers to use silver dollars, but also practices with US quarters so he is ready to perform with borrowed coins.

For the next hour, the thirty magicians present broke up into one of three “session” rooms to learn the magic that most interested them. It was almost like a small magic convention with the amount of magic and fun that we all had. *David 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

TIP (To Improve Performance) Lecture: “Fooling Around with M&M’s,” by Matt Baker. Matt played the video from his performance of “The M&M Trick” on Penn & Teller’s *Fool Us* (Season 10): www.youtube.com/watch?v=hOCt8ewYhZk and offered a Q&A about his experience. We learned:

Matt submitted three demo videos before he was selected to participate. The method was revealed to Michael Close prior to taping. The producers edited his script somewhat. Penn & Teller took twenty minutes to discuss the method, while Matt chatted with host Brooke Burke (heavily edited for broadcast). The producers didn’t change any of his props. In preparation, Matt secured coaching from Brent Braun. At the taping, Mike Close was sick, so there were no backstage judges. The publicity presented some new opportunities for Matt, but not much. The pay was \$1,000 (plus airfare), but that didn’t cover the costs of R&D and other expenses involved. Matt experimented with several other methods before deciding on the one he used. Matt slipped in a minor fake “flash” gesture to possibly throw the duo off the real method. Matt provided a PDF of the actual method at the Georgia Magic Club Facebook page (members only!).

Business Meeting

President Clark Kjørlaug welcomed thirty-four attendees, including two on Zoom and two guests.

Upcoming conventions mentioned: SAM in Appleton, Wisconsin (7/1–4); I.B.M. in St. Louis, Missouri (7/22–25); Mike Dunagan and Eric Schuster said the list of performers is available at magician.org and there are still openings for attendees); Magic Live in Las Vegas, Nevada (8/2–5); KIDabra in Atlanta (8/12–15); Be Magic in New Albany, Indiana (8/20–22, no dealers); TRICS in Charlotte, North Carolina (11/19–21); Atlanta Harvest of Magic (3/18–20); and Bluff City Conclave in Memphis, Tennessee (4/16–17).

Eric Schuster reported that the Georgia Magic Book Club will be studying *Magic in Mind* by Joshua Jay (a free 553-page download from Vanishing Inc.), with the first Zoom meeting scheduled for July 8.

Walter Fields and Darryl Berman reported on Project Magic. More magicians are invited to participate at Hope Lodge.

Steve Goldstein reported that there was a Magic Meetup on June 7 (emphasis on fire tricks) and the next meetup is tentatively scheduled for July 26.

Lecture Chair Debbie Leifer announced a magic lecture by Larry El Mago scheduled for July 7 and a reminder of Jamie Williams on August 10.

Wayne Carter and Mike Dunagan celebrate their birthdays in June. Also, David Ginn, who just turned eighty.

Theme Performers: “The Magic of Television” – Perform a piece of magic inspired by a TV show. MC’d by Vice President Zach Ivins.

Eric Schuster displayed four cards with pictures of TV “bad guys” and a spectator predicted who would be the survivor from a shoot-out at a Texas Hold’em Poker game, played out by the spectator shuffling and dealing to create a winning hand, with a final reveal of the successful prediction.

With the theme of a television commercial, Kevin Cooke produced a deck of cards from an iPad “TV,” then had a spectator hide four “fleas” (face-up Aces) among twelve face-down cards representing a rug. After a series of shuffles and deals directed by the spectator, the cards were magically arranged so that only the “fleas” remained face up, allowing them to be “squished” and removed.

Gary Poleynard used Superman X-ray glasses to identify several top cards of a shuffled deck sealed in a tin box, then had a spectator use the glasses to identify one as well.

Mike Dunagan sent a spectator from Reality into the Twilight Zone by folding and reversing a large card stock around a cut-out door while the spectator held it “locked.”

David Fluker used his hands as a Star Trek Transporter to vanish a ring from a finger of one hand and reappear on a finger of his other hand.

Ross Democko, with a Twilight Zone intro, used a Tiny Plunger to cut to a specified number of cards, and even had a spectator do it and find his own selected card as well.

Wayne Carter performed a Silver/Copper Transposition between a zippered bag and his hand, in the style of a Houdini Metamorphosis performance on *Masters of Illusion*.

Lynn Fox, referencing David Copperfield’s Wall of China special, performed Block Off Rope.

Darryl Berman had a spectator select a card from a shuffled deck, then dealt the remaining

cards into three piles. After he and two spectators each dealt a random number of cards from the piles, the top card of each pile proved to be the other three cards of a four-of-a-kind, matching the spectator's selection.

General Magic Performer: Matt Baker performed a double ACAAN with a single deck using a "You Do As I Do" presentation, in which both the magician and a spectator correctly named each other's selected card and the position where it would be found in the deck.

Zach Ivins presented giveaways from the Wheel of Names: Ruben Fernandez (Terry Wenham's *Elegant and Other Things of Beauty* and a deck of cards), Ross Democko (*Expert Card Technique*, Tarot cards, and a deck of cards), Mike Varon (David Ginn's *Colorful Magic* and another book), and Lynn Fox (David Ginn's *Children Laugh Louder* and two other books).

Winner of the Coveted Royal Pin for Theme Magic was Mike Dunagan. Next month's theme (July) is "Storytelling Sorcery" – Perform a piece of magic that features a story.

William Packard

RING 10, INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA – Gene Keeney Ring

Meets 3rd Monday of each month at Wile Hall, Methodist Hosp.

CHRIS HENDERSON, Secretary

E-mail: chrishenderson@earthlink.net

Ring 10 (The Gene Keeney Ring in Indianapolis) had their July meeting on Monday, July 6. Chris Allen and Steve Spence opened the meeting with a list of upcoming lectures, conventions, and performance opportunities. The Ring also discussed plans in the works for strengthening our relationship with other magic clubs in the region and the magic community. The Ring also announced the grand opening of a new brick-and-mortar magic shop in Columbus, Indiana — The Ickle Pickle Magic Shop. We also talked about the Magic Open Mic night hosted by the Midwest Magic Circuit. Finally, we produced a list of magic themes for the upcoming year's meetings.

The theme for our meeting was "Magic with Everyday Objects." Eleven magicians performed.

Jack Weigle began with a clever Bank Night routine using mint tins instead of envelopes. Taylor Martin was next and shared an original take on the classic Pom-Pom trick by putting on a baby's bib and fully embracing the character of a toddler playing with the Pom-Poms like a baby toy.

After that, Theresa Minor performed three routines including some work with rubber bands, multiplying owls, and an original packet trick using cards printed with animals. Roger

Alting next started with a prediction trick where he had a spectator choose a cookie from several options. He showed the correct prediction by revealing a stack of Oreos under a cup. He then used the Oreos to visibly penetrate through a glass.

Chris Henderson then amazed the group with a great presentation of Dr. Bill's Impossible Stop Trick. A spectator dealt down cards from a shuffled deck until they wanted to stop. The card was then flipped over and shown to perfectly match the prediction set aside in plain sight all along.

Chase Skiles then treated us to a mini-lecture on a principle he has been perfecting for a year and a half. He calls it his "Random Object Penetration Experiment." He demonstrated random everyday objects passing through each other in a style much like "Crazy Man's Handcuffs." Instead of rubber bands he used lighters, corks, Q-tips, and coins.

Matthew Newman was next to perform. He gave a new meaning to the jumping rubber bands using pink and blue hair ties and telling a story of how he expects his daughter and newborn son to be best pals. Daniel Dow shared a similar story by performing a version of Losander's Floating Bubble and Bubble Zombie. This fit his theme of playing with bubbles with his kids in the backyard during the summer.

Mike Root then showed a clever three-phased rubber band routine with each effect building on the last. Roger Alting then wowed us with an encore routine of an examinable finger-thumb tie chain escape. Finally, Chris Allen closed the magic out with Craig Petty's Evoke deck of motivational poster cards. This was a meaningful two-phased routine — "Out of This World," followed up by a spectator-chosen Oil and Water.

Mike Root

RING 13, PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA – Tampa-Greenberg Ring

Meets 1st Thu., 7:30pm, Dee Jay's BBQ Ribs and Grille, 1155 Washington Pike, Bridgeville, PA

MARK ZAJICEK, Secretary / E-mail: ibmring13@gmail.com

Web site: www.ibmring13.org

During the second half of July, our Ring President Joshua Messado, Don Greenberg, Todd Hertzberg, Jeff Vanderhoff, and Mark Zajicek attended the I.B.M. Convention in St. Louis, where they represented our Ring to receive an Effective Ring Achievement Award on July 24 from I.B.M. Past International President Stephen Levine. Jeff also was inducted into the Order of Merlin — congratulations, Jeff! It was a great convention, and we look forward to next year's I.B.M. Convention in Las

Vegas! That same evening back here in Pittsburgh, Levi, Ralph Kelly, and James Cooper performed a magic show on behalf of our Ring on July 24 during the Bridgeville 125th Anniversary celebration event.

In August, our Ring Vice President Ralph Kelly served multiple roles as he both presided over our monthly meeting and also captured notes for this report while our Ring president and Ring secretary were stranded fighting airline flight delays and cancellations as they attempted to return from Magic Live earlier that day. Thank you to Ralph, and thank you also to past Ring president Levi for recording our business meeting. We discussed plans for hosting potential lectures by Eric Jones in October and Chris Randall in January. Bill Cooper's Ring membership application was approved — welcome, Bill! The previous day, on August 5, members of Ring 13, SAM Assembly 18, SAM Assembly 157, and other local magicians had gathered to conduct a Broken Wand Ceremony for former long-time Ring member Edward “Eddie Ace” Pacacha, who passed away on July 22 at the age of ninety-one. Eddie was known around the world for his hand-carved sponge rabbits and sponge sculptures.

Lucy Hall emceed the evening's performance with a suggested theme of “birthday party magic.” Ralph provided the following brief recap of our August performers: Jeff Vanderhoff performed Jeff Hobson's “Balloon Doggie Bag.” James Cooper performed a Two-Headed Prediction. Bill Cooper performed an effect with a Rubik's Cube. Chris Handa performed a magic book trick. Bill Stokes performed a very nice genii prediction. Former Ring member Joe Hindman (visiting from Japan) did a very nice cut-and-restored rope effect. Tracey Hinsch performed a dollar bill serial number prediction. Tony Brahler performed a dice stack coincidence trick. Todd Hertzberg closed with a one-eyed jack location trick.

Our judges selected Joe Hindman as our honorary August Magician of the Month. Congratulations, Joe!

Mark Zajicek

RING 15, FORT WORTH, TEXAS – Ren Clark Ring

Meets 1st Thu. each month, 7:00pm at 4055 International Plaza, Ft. Worth, TX 76109

GEOFFREY GRIMES, Secretary / ggrimes@aol.com

Facebook: Fort Worth Magicians Club

Bill Irwin, club president, welcomed an assembly of more than twenty club members and five new applicants who were ready to perform their membership qualifying acts.

Program Chair Will Baffle announced that plans are progressing for the public show on

September 12 at the historic Fort Worth Rose Marine Theater. Our third annual show helps to fund new facilities for the iconic site.

Sergeant-at-Arms Russell Shead began the evening with delightful magic. He distributed two Rubik's Cubes to club members, one of which, mixed up at first, he placed in a paper sack and, within seconds only, retrieved it solved! As a kicker, he produced an open wine glass brimming with “champagne” (which he drank!). He then asked Keith Rust to select a number and a card. Russell produced the named card from his wallet!

For his next effect, Russell performed “Trilogy Extreme,” a fascinating prediction series. He passed out a number of sealed “Bank Night” envelopes. On his stand he placed a small white board. Those with envelopes wrote numbers selected between 1–52. On the board were “17,” “36,” and “J-D.” Russell collected the sealed pay envelopes on which were written the same figures. “J-D.” With something just short of a stiletto retrieved from somewhere (?), he opened the envelopes to reveal the predicted elements!

For his final piece, Russell handed Elena Ponsler a Rubik's Cube for mixing. Upon its return, he showed that all six sides of his own cube matched hers exactly, a tribute to the creativity of Henry Harrius's “Venom Cubes”!

Will introduced visitors: David Beason, a member of London's Magic Circle, and a visitor from the Dallas Magic Club. Doc Grimes introduced the Cornejo family — Miguel Sr., Maria, Max, and Miguel Jr.

As his qualifying act, Max performed a coin transposition routine with four coins, passing one at a time from one hand to another invisibly — cleanly done!

Next, Miguel Jr. presented a four-Ace routine, with selected Aces floating up and down throughout the pack. As a kicker, all four Aces turned into Kings, which then turned to Tens. Whoa!

Miguel Sr. and Maria then stepped forward to share their act. Maria monitored the shuffling, revealing one card — the Ace of Hearts — which she returned to the deck, and the deck into its box. From a paper sack, Miguel produced an empty Coke bottle which he covered with a black foulard. Standing back, he took the full deck and threw the cards against the covered bottle. When he retrieved the bottle, the Ace of Hearts was inside. Russell Shead escorted the family out while the club voted unanimously for the family's membership.

David Beason then rose to perform his qualifying act. He introduced a formerly familiar

object — a full newspaper! Tearing it into shreds, he rolled it into a ball, squared it up, and revealed the same full newspaper, crisply restored. Another unanimous vote secured our fifth new member of the club in one evening! Are we great or what!

Reports followed. Matthew Welsby reviewed Magic Live, followed by Bill Irwin who shared highlights from the I.B.M.'s 100th anniversary convention. The evening highlights featured two programs: "Showmanship" and "Houdini in Cow Town and the KKK."

Michael Stein shared a mini-lecture on "Showmanship," addressing why showmanship is important. With the help of Will Baffle, Michael demonstrated how a pedestrian (make that "boring") card routine can be transformed into a thing of delight, joy, and wonder. With Michael's prompting, attendees identified several principles of effective magical showmanship.

The club's quintessential historian, Ash Adams, presented a talk on "The History of Houdini's Final Appearance in 'Cow Town' and Fort Worth's Ku Klux Klan." Having performed twice earlier in Fort Worth in 1916, during which he performed the Water Torture Cell, Houdini's last appearance in Fort Worth was at a 1924 Ku Klux Klan event. "Mr. Fort Worth," creator of the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, Amon Carter produced Houdini's shows, promoting them with three challenges in newspaper editions before the shows, designed to enhance ticket sales. In 1924 the Klan — one of the largest in the country — held a huge public barbecue on the banks of the Trinity River, featuring thousands of pounds of brisket, pork, and chicken, followed by an afternoon "KKK Kiddie Kamp." Klan leadership had invited "Houdini: The Man of Mystery" to perform that evening after the barbecue in its newly dedicated auditorium, which he did before hundreds of attendees. As a sidebar, later that same year the auditorium blew up (literally!). The KKK then constructed a 4,000-seat auditorium but soon sold it. Today, its infamous shell is being renovated into a new public arena that will serve an all-inclusive North Texas clientele. In 2012, the Fort Worth Magicians Club hosted the official Houdini Séance at the Masonic Temple.

Geoffrey Grimes

RING 19, MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA – Carl Jones Ring

Meets 2nd Mon. each month, 7:00 p.m., via Zoom and in person 2nd Sat. (location GameZenter, Roseville, MN)

ANDREW SELBITSCHKA, President / Web site: www.IBMRing19.com

Our August in-person meeting provided a lot of variety and some new faces. The following rundown was provided by Daniel Norat.

Paul Laidig, "The Vintage Magician," did not let recovering from an abdominal aneurysm repair stop him from attending and doing the first trick! He performed David Parr's "Poison & Politics," a poisonous roulette routine.

Charles Wakefield did a series of tricks with floating, dancing, multiplying canes. The crowd offered feedback and suggested the use of black fishing line instead of reflective clear line.

Rick Hinrichs performed a series of packet tricks including a Paul Gordon-inspired transposition and Dr. Daley's Last Trick.

Will Earley followed with a fabulous penetration of a wooden block, continuing work he showed at the online meeting in July.

Will also shared that he attended the I.B.M. National Convention and was inspired by the jam sessions performed there. He used those sessions as inspiration for a bizarre magic presentation of torn and restored cigarette paper.

David Hansen sought feedback on his thought-reading trick "The Club." David got bonked on the head with a (squishy) club every time he got a prediction wrong, but he did find the card!

Visiting magician Hugh Turley from Washington, DC, performed Senator Crandall's 6 Card Repeat.

Andrew Miller brought another roulette routine: John Allen's "Pen Game."

Charles Wakefield returned with a doll-sized floating suspension, similar to a mini Blaney Chair Levitation. The crowd was stunned that his ring only made one pass!

Steven Olson performed an impromptu routine of finding a thought-of card.

Special guest Jordon Rooks, in town for the MN Fringe Festival, performed PK touches. He provided some insight into the festival process, which is explained further below.

People are reading and provided book reports to the group. Will Earley gave an early review of *The Power of Magical Women* by Connie Boyd, which he picked up at the I.B.M. National Convention. Tyler Erickson suggested two books based on conversations and what we were all reading: *Brain Food* by David Parr, a good read to inspire magicians to create, and *Conover* by Tim Conover and Eric Mead. Tyler's opinion of Tim Conover's work has two recurring themes: an almost evangelical energy of excitement, and a consistent use of dual reality.

Hugh Turley taught a self-working numerical card force during the Teach a Trick section of the meeting.

Jordon Rooks provided an opportunity for us to interview him and ask questions about why he was in the Twin Cities. Jordon is a magician

and teacher at the McBride Magic and Mystery School. He was in town for the Minnesota Fringe Festival with his show "A Magician." He has been performing at festivals for many years, and this was his 114th Fringe Festival! He performs at eight to eleven festivals a year. Some of the most interesting Fringes include Fiji, Tokyo, and Edinburgh. He was leaving immediately from Minnesota for the Edmonton Fringe.

So you might ask: what is Fringe? A Fringe Festival is a performance art festival of experimental theater where anything goes. Fringes have the advantage of renting a venue while being able to market to a built-in audience. There are risks, including additional costs, varied quality of site staff (audio and light techs can be anywhere from pros to volunteers), and artists get a portion of the tickets (typically) with no guarantee of attendance or minimum payment. This can be an issue for shows with larger casts.

His show "A Magician" is, Jordon explained, an experimental show. He has previously done gimmicked themed magic shows (e.g., Harry Potter, etc.) but true theater should evoke emotion. "A Magician" is marketed as a magic show but it is a story about the performers themselves. Aside from performing, Jordon has a lot of experience as a consultant, including work with David Copperfield and Criss Angel. Jordon says that his specialty is suggesting "a million bad ideas" on the path to a good one, leading from an idea to a methodology, providing a balance between a perfect idea and overengineering. It is important to have a team that includes outside consultants, especially those with outside views. He provided some valuable tips for those performers interested in Fringe productions and has written a book, *How to Succeed in Fringe Theater*, on the subject. The book contains valuable tips and insights. Jordon is an advocate of naps.

We welcomed guest Robin "Robina" Byers to our Zoom meeting. Robin is very active in the magic community and joined us from San Antonio. She also wowed us with some magic from her Enchanted Garden.

Rick Hinrichs started off the Zoom meeting with his improvements on "Wonderland Bill." He has been working on modifications that just keep making the trick better and better. He finished with a Floating Pen Illusion and Pen Through Rubber Band.

David Hansen shared a rubber band on cup illusion.

Will Earley continues to work on his block penetration trick that he performed at the in-person meeting, and Paul Laidig wanted to discuss

his "Poison & Politics" routine, based on David Parr's "Dinner with the Borgias." We discussed Parr's book *Brain Food* and Henning Nelms' book *Magic and Showmanship*, and how each author discusses their thoughts on the elements of suspense vs. surprise. We spoke about how to properly construct performances to achieve the desired result of surprise or suspense. It is important to know the difference between standard vs. magic surprises.

Will Earley is also working on a ghost coin routine and asked for ideas. David Hansen is also working on a routine featuring the bagless egg bag and using ball and loop tricks. This led to a discussion of Cellini's book *The Royal Touch* and his handlings of the trick.

We ended the meeting with a mini-lecture and teach-a-trick from Tyler Erickson regarding false deck shuffles, both tabled and in the hands. We touched on nuances and techniques for retaining full or partial stock, including jog shuffles and punctuated shuffles, using pauses to give the impression of a normal shuffle. A wonderful end to a great evening of magic.

Jennifer Graham

RING 20, HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA – Eddie Clever Keystone Ring

Meets 2nd Thur., at 6:00pm (order off the menu), meeting 7:00pm at John's Diner 146 Sheraton Dr., New Cumberland, PA 17070

MARK KROTULSKI, Secretary
E-mail: eddieclever20@gmail.com

This month's meeting was held at the Mingus Magic Shop, 528 Lancaster Avenue, Reading, PA 19611. The regular meeting opened at 6:30 p.m. EDT. In attendance were members Al Bienstock, Mike "Podini" Gelehrter, Dave McDade, Vic Orriola, Jack Ritter, Dan Scully, Steve Smith, and Mark Zagursky. Also in attendance were visitors Ryan Adamowicz, Rob Ash, River Barry, Joel Delgado, Ed Schmitt, Wayne Shifflett, and Justin Vogel.

The president greeted the members and guests. Secretary's Report: Vic motioned to approve the previous meeting's minutes. Podini seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Treasurer's Report: The CD matures on June 14. We are going to cash it out, put a portion into our checking account to fund activities, and put the rest into a new CD.

Old Business: None. New Business: The Board voted to make Wayne Shifflett an honorary member of our club. Dave McDade needs to have his email address added to our mailing list. His address is davidamcdade@gmail.com.

Podini asks if we are artists or entertainers, and wants us to ponder that. Podini moved to send get-well cards to the people listed in the sick and convalescing section of *The Linking Ring*. Al seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Podini

will head this up. He will purchase cards, bring them to meetings for us to sign, and send them. The club will reimburse his expenses. The plan is to send cards to each person on a one-time basis.

The club would like to hold a community outreach show at the Mechanicsburg Simpson Public Library in October to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the death of Houdini. Podini motioned in favor of this. Vic seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Podini raised the possibility of holding a community outreach show at the Kitchen Kettle Village in Lancaster. We will take this up in the future.

Good of the Order: Walter McGurn has asked if there are any members near Blue Mountain Commons on Linglestown Road, presumably asking for a ride to club functions. The members have his contact information if they wish to help.

John Fortino had a gig tonight at the Paxtang Lions Club, hence his absence. They were feeding him. He expects to attend our next meeting in July. Evan Katz says “hi” to the club members and friends. He is currently in the hospital, so we wish him the best. Michael Worsham is attending the I.B.M. Ring 179 meeting. He plans to attend one of our meetings sometime this summer. Our Secretary, Michael Reist, is out of town performing library shows, hence his absence. On June 12, Vic will be attending the premiere of Andi Gladwin’s new documentary entitled “Stealing Magic.” It will be playing from 8:00–9:30 p.m. at the US Navy Memorial Burke Theater in Washington, DC. Our visitor, River Barry, will be opening a new magic shop in Dillsburg. More information will be sent out closer to the opening.

Dan motioned to adjourn. Vic seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Podini performed three pieces entitled Gypsy Cubes, Math Trick, and Kings and Queens. *Michael L. Reist*

RING 21, HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA – Caryl Fleming

Meets 1st Thu. at Holy Virgin Mary Orthodox Cathedral auditorium, 650 Micholorena St., Los Angeles, CA 90026 / Web site: www.IBMRing21.org
MANNY D'MAGO, Secretary
P.O. Box 340841, Arleta, CA 91334 / (424)653-7614
E-mail: mannydmago@gmail.com

July: As Hollywood’s Ring 21 summer continues, the club is bringing the fire with a whimsically phenomenal lecturer and a July 4th picnic, totally worth its weight in firework power! We hosted none other than the incredibly awesome Rob Zabrecky.

Our meeting started with our President, Bob Weiss, making announcements about the club’s future endeavors and latest developments, as

well as next month’s meeting details, which will take place a little later in August 2026 due to many members — including myself — attending Magic Live 2026 in Las Vegas. Lots of new members were introduced to the club as the word is getting out that Ring 21 is truly always a red-carpet event whenever we hold meetings.

Rob Zabrecky has starred in several popular television shows such as CSI: NY and GLOW, and also has to his credit a supporting role in a Ryan Gosling film called “Lost River.” In 2019, Zabrecky and his wife Tommi created a comedy series called “The Other Side with Zabrecky,” where Rob would invite guests into his home to participate in a séance to contact a departed spirit of their choice.

Since 2010, Rob Zabrecky has performed as a spirit medium at the Magic Castle in Hollywood in the Houdini Séance Room, where he presents a Victorian-inspired séance for both members of the Academy of Magical Arts and their guests. He has also performed for the magician competition show *Fool Us* with Penn & Teller, where Penn Jillette commented that Zabrecky may be the first mentalist doing a mentalist act that was sincerely funny and sincerely good.

Rob Zabrecky has received close to seven awards from the Academy of Magical Arts, including Close Up Performer, which is his most recent award.

Besides realizing he’s an absolute legend, Ring 21 was truly excited to host one of magic’s very best performers to lecture.

His lecture started with Rob becoming comfortable by taking off his shoes and tossing them somewhere on stage. He then began his performance with a little cup and one ball. The ball mysteriously kept disappearing and reappearing where one thought it wasn’t. It was an utter masterclass of performance and sleight of hand. Truly epic!

After that amazing feat, he blessed us by performing and teaching his *Fool Us* act which, if you haven’t seen it already, is a masterpiece of entertainment and mentalism. He had four spectators draw random drawings and one by one revealed which drawing belonged to which spectator — except for the last, which Rob actually duplicated, solidifying his mentalist act with supreme theatrical authority.

He then moved on to one of his great magic releases called “Another World,” which uses portraits of Harry Houdini and his wife Bess. It is a take on the classic card trick “Out of This World” and was truly amazing to watch him perform it for us, which also doubled as a demo. I was extra excited because I (Manny D’Mago)

was chomping at the bit to be first to acquire the parlor version of this trick. Truly fantastical!

The evening's lecture concluded with Rob presenting his A, B, Z's of magic, emphasizing his skills in helping magicians become better performers through character development and presentation. Given his experience in television, music, and magic, Rob Zabrecky was best suited to give his insight into the world of acting the part. He went through almost all of his essay and the information was priceless!

This was a lecture to remember, to say the least. Stay tuned for our next meeting in August, which will be another one for the history books in Hollywood, delayed until late August because of Magic Live 2026 in Las Vegas. August's meeting will feature our third annual Ring 21 "Fool Us," with myself, Manny D'Mago, and Gerry Schiller as hosts. We will also be having 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 last year and will have lots to report.

Manny D'Mago

RING 23, CLEVELAND, OHIO – Blackstone Ring/ Cleveland Magician's Club

Meets 1st Wed., (occasional changes); 7:00 p.m. at Pleasant Hills United Methodist Church 13200 Bagley Rd., Cleveland, OH 44130 / www.ring23.org

DAVID NEUMAN, President / E-mail: neumand77@gmail.com

Where did the summer go? Between hot days, magic shows, and magic conventions, everyone in this Ring has stayed busy! The week-delayed August 12 meeting was well attended (30+) and busy. Announcements noted upcoming lectures with Jamie Williams, Nathan Kranzo, Randy Goodman, and Kevin Kelly. Two will be on meeting nights and those will be free to paid members. Sad news came that Michael Mirth (aka Paul Burdick), who was a previous member of Ring 23, passed away in LA. Michael went out to Los Angeles to pursue his craft and perform professionally, with close ties to the Magic Castle. He was a student of Jeff McBride and Kenton Knepper. Two upcoming magic shows were announced, both on August 29: Whiz Bang with Bryan Gerber, and Magic in the Museum at the Averbook Magic Art Museum and Library with Tim Hill! Also, the touring "Magician's Table" show produced by Thomas Greenwood-Mears and Iain Sharkey at the Cleveland Playhouse Square will feature both Bryan Gerber and Tim Hill from the end of August through mid-October. We also talked about the excellent conventions recently, including the I.B.M. in St. Louis, Missouri; the SAM in Appleton, Wisconsin; Abbott's in Colon, Michigan; and Magic Live in Las Vegas,

Nevada. Several members attended and enjoyed these!

The program began with Chris Budyka starting a series called "The Secret Key." Here he shared his act and methodology for a beautiful ring and rope routine. Chris has worked hard on this and perfected fascinating moves where a solid six-inch ring melts on and off a rope to musical accompaniment in various fashions. Everyone learned something new.

The next portion of the evening focused on mentalism with billets and envelopes. Our new member, Clair Blanca, performed a "blind" drawing detection by feel of a spectator's artwork on small unaltered blank pieces of paper. Niel Rozum performed a fun prediction effect involving three spectators who seemingly had control of each choosing one of three colored envelopes. Until the last envelope retained by the magician through their selections is read, it seemed like a joke; however, the last prediction perfectly predicted the full outcome of who selected what color envelope. Michael Whitkofski performed an entertaining magic square effect using a thought-of number, written and placed in a small wallet. He constructed a nice souvenir magic square for the spectator to take home. Jim Hathy performed an amusing "out to lunch" effect where a signed pitcher of beer changes to an empty one. Billy Harrington divined a written thought-of word on a billet that appeared totally hands-off and without any peek method! Sergio Castro performed a clever "in the hands" Mental Epic, divining a place, person, and card color.

The final program was a workshop on card magic. Bryan Gerber taught his variation of "Color Monte" adapted to standard cards, with suggestions to make it better. His take on the sliding push-off double lift move that is standard for this trick looks more natural than what is typically described. He also gave everyone some cards to work with. Nick Einhorn demonstrated three methods for doing a "Triumph" effect in progressive stages of difficulty: first with a slop shuffle; then in the hands, utilizing a half pass; and lastly the traditional Vernon "Stars of Magic" effect with a deceptive deck-stripping technique implemented under the cover of squaring the cards. Lastly, Sergio Castro shared a nice deck-switching technique based on Daniel Madison's deck shell. He showed us the gimmick and referenced where to look it up. Sergio also performed and taught a Eugene Burger "Out of This World" effect that was wonderful and very deceptive. This can be found on an L&L video.

After the workshop, everyone said their

adieux and headed home for the comfort of their AC and a well-deserved rest after a very entertaining evening.

Dr. Bruce J. Averbook

RING 26, NEW YORK, NEW YORK – Harry Roz-On Ring

Meets Last Fri. each month at 7:00pm at The Mountain House Gallery,
702 9th Avenue (corner of West 48 Street) New York, NY 10019

CARRINGTON "ACE" GREENFADER, President

E-mail: carrington.greenfader@gmail.com / Website: www.80-20.org/meeting

"This Is the Worst Trick That I Ever Bought" was the theme for our June 2026 Bornstein/Clement Lab. Adrien Pierard, who was the evening's host, opened with a floating deck of cards. As mysterious as it seemed, he revealed that it was done with the help of a suction cup attached with a T-tip. When bought, he was disappointed with what he thought. Past president Frank Reyes demonstrated his early disappointment in the purchase of "Bewildered." A fishing line attached to a fishing weight was the secret to this penetration of a ribbon through a ring. Back up was Adrien with a vanish of a coin where the gimmick was his tie. With a built-in servant, the tie facilitated the ditching of the coin. Frank again presented another of his "disappointments" — the vanishing of four half dollars, only to appear on a plastic frame with the use of a black cloth. We ended the session with impromptu performances by various members in attendance. Jack Diamond entertained with a card effect. Adrien brought out a small plastic colored cups and balls set and also did a card effect. Guy Crawl also entertained with a card effect. But the real end was the appearance of a birthday cake for our dear Second Vice President, Tommy Burnett. It was a magical surprise for him.

June 26, 2026, was our last meeting of the season and brought our annual June Social. To make it a special evening, we had soft drinks and pizza for those in attendance. The evening's entertainment was also special, with three performers that MC and past president Frank Reyes conjured up just for this evening. We did have a special guest who joined us: none other than Mal Cross. For those not in the know, Mal is known for combining visual magic with comedy. He is a premier close-up and strolling magician. First up was Chris Baxter, who combined contact juggling and regular juggling with some impressive magic effects. Chris performed Professor's Nightmare, jumping colored knots from one rope to another, Linking Rings, and contact juggling of a crystal ball. Next up was member Dave Cremin. One of Dave's occupations is as a bartender. Dave made special arrangements to be with us since his busy night is Friday, which is when we meet. Dave demon-

strated why he is such a sought-after bartender by performing effects that entertain the patrons. Dave entertained us with Mac Millian Aces, Jumping Aces, Card Not Your Card, and Insurance Policy. Closing was Carl Albright, aka "El Fako" — though he was not his alter ego this evening. He opened by bringing out a box from which he pulled three large cages with doves in them. He then produced a side table and a top hat. Carl then went into a multiplying balls routine and beautiful card routines. This was a nice way to end the season.

"Each One, Teach One" was the theme for our July summer Bornstein/Clement Lab. Small turnout, but it was still a fun-filled evening. Robert Wallner opened the evening with battling pens — a pen in each hand battled to a weird ending. Rob then followed up with a vanishing card to wallet using a Hember-style wallet based on a Craig Petty idea. He finally ended by trying to perform a torn and discarded paper before being subdued. Past president Frank Reyes performed a silk through arm effect and the Panama Rope trick from Tarbell. Jack Diamond performed a card effect called "Your Card Reversed." Finally, Sterling Lee performed Mission Impossible using cards, a card effect with the lesson "what happens in Vegas..." and other wonderful card effects. Contributions and ideas were shared by President "Ace" Greenfader and James O'Brien. Thanks to all who attended. Go to our Facebook page, IBM Ring 26, for more photos.

Frank Reyes

RING 32, ALLENTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA – Allentown Society of Magicians, Inc.

Meets 2nd Mon. of the month, at 7:00 p.m., at Hops Restaurant, 1945 W. Columbia Ave., Allentown, PA.

Web site: www.ring32.rhometpage.com.

JOE KEPPEL, President

Our August Ring 32 meeting was well attended and included two former members. Our business meeting included another thank-you to Bruce Ward and Kim for hosting a wonderful July picnic. The weather was perfect and the food and laughs were exceptional. New business included a possible Ring 32 magic show in October.

One of the highlights of the evening was a rundown of Magic Live in Las Vegas. George Reiger talked about the many shows and magicians. George also brought back all kinds of magic purchased from some of the many dealers. Tom Yurasits also attended as both a dealer and spectator. Tom and George had many great stories of the events and hotel experiences.

The theme for the evening was Halloween magic, and there was plenty of it. Yours truly, Al Grout, started the magic with a card trick that

included the spelling of Halloween and ended with a torn and restored card. Bruce Ward did a card prediction using a story of Thurston's last will and testament. Very clever. Don Severn did a nice routine with a change bag and silks with body parts of Frankenstein. The body parts changed into one large silk with a complete Frankenstein — a great Halloween trick. George Reiger demonstrated some of his purchases from Magic Live, including some incredible electronic magic. Magic is always evolving. Joe Keppel did a nice Halloween trick with an empty bag and large mummy and sarcophagus cards. Joe also did several card tricks later in the evening. His card skills are endless. Jeremy Rivers, a great close-up artist and former member who is always welcome, dazzled us with some unique card magic with many twists and turns. Tom Yurasits showed us a clever wallet trick producing and vanishing one, two, five, and fifty dollar bills. Tom also did a die box routine that was different from the standard die box routine and very effective.

All in all, a great evening of fun, laughs, and magic. *Al Grout*

RING 36, FLINT, MICHIGAN – The Conjuror's Club

meets 4th thu. of the month January – October, and the 3rd thu. of the month for November and December. Currently meeting at Sam's Restaurant on Grand Blanc Road at 6:00 p.m. in the private room.

DOUG DERN, Secretary • E-mail: law4less@aol.com

The Conjurors Club, Ring 36, Flint, Michigan, is holding meetings on the fourth Thursday of the month January through October, and on the third Thursday of the month for November and December. Currently meeting at Sam's Restaurant on Grand Blanc Road at 6 pm in the private room.

Ring 36 held its annual picnic early in the month of July. What a shindig it turned out to be. The local magicians from Ring 36 turned out to support the event. We had a near 100% turnout. Everybody came except for Kevin and Carl. They missed one of the best picnics ever. Big shout-out to Randy and Paula Berg for hosting this year's event. It was well attended by guests from all over. Quite the crowd of laymen came out to get a taste of delicious food and fine magic. The Ring secretary really sold the show with his amazing showstoppers. Ring Vice President Dennis Kingsley was MC for the day and floored everybody with his jokes. Dennis is primarily a card man, so he was only the MC. Ring 36 President and Michigan Hall of Fame magician Randy Berg also performed a few showstoppers. Treasurer Chris Harper performed the opening act to get everybody in the mood. Chris was in the giving mood that day.

The finale would be the Amazing Mike doing the Magician's Insurance Policy. Then we all sat around and talked about the people that didn't come and the people from the Detroit Ring.

Our regular monthly meeting was held on July 23, 2026, at the usual location. The meeting was conducted by Territorial Vice President Chris Harper. We had our usual Dick Woton auction and our door prize drawing. Then President and Michigan Hall of Fame magician Randy Berg told wonderful stories of his adventure to the SAM Convention. Randy sure can spin a tale. Sounds like he had a great time and made a lot of new friends in the magical community. After that, Randy did Magic 101 and taught a cool card trick out of Roberto Giobbi's *Card College Light*. We had a pretty decent business meeting and got a lot discussed and made some plans for the rest of the year. Things are happening at Ring 36 in Flint. Club Vice President Dennis Kingsley wrapped up the meeting with a discussion on the rollover force from Mark Wilson's *Course in Magic*. Then Dennis adjourned the meeting and we all sat around doing card tricks. *Doug Dern, Esq.*

RING 39, HOUSTON, TX – Scott Hollingsworth Ring

www.houstonmagic.com

GENE PROTAS/President

JUDY HOLLINGSWORTH, Secretary / Treasurer

E-mail: judy4birds@yahoo.com

July: The July meeting began with a hot dog feast and a variety of desserts, thanks to the generous efforts of Marti Stein.

Johan McElroy began the evening with a lecture on the history of Magic Island and Scott Hollingsworth. While the fate of Magic Island for the future is unknown, its history, from its opening in 1983 to its closure in 2008 due mainly to Hurricane Ike, was most interesting. Photos were also shared, reminding those who went or worked there of the uniqueness that this place held.

Scott Hollingsworth was a major player in Magic Island's history as Entertainment Director during its run. Scott's background is very interesting as well, and he has made numerous contributions to magic. Not only has Scott held the position of president of all three Houston magic clubs, but he is also the recipient of numerous magic awards over the years.

For those wishing for a more in-depth view into Magic Island, A Guided Tour of Houston's Magic Island with Scott Hollingsworth can be found on YouTube at www.youtube.com/watch?v=JupOr0DENgM

Thanks, Johan, for sharing this topic of interest to us all.

Gene Protas called the meeting to order at

8:10 p.m. The minutes from the previous meeting were unanimously approved as published after a motion by Jamie Salinas and a second by Michael Thomas. Dick Olson presented the treasurer's report in Judy Hollingsworth's absence. There was no unfinished or new business. The meeting was adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

Tom Bradley, Johan McElroy, Marti Stein, Greg Conner, Alex Rangel, and Gene Protas performed themed magic pertaining to food. The three ribbon winners were Alex Rangel, Marti Stein, and Greg Conner.

August: The August magic meeting was well-attended, despite many members being in Las Vegas for Magic Live. Alex Rangel started things off with a teaching session on using artificial intelligence to improve your magic. His program, entitled "ChatGPT and Your Magic," gave excellent insight into what this tool is all about and how he is currently using it.

The business meeting was called to order at 7:37 by Vice President Johan McElroy. Published minutes of the previous meeting were approved after a motion by Michael Thomas and a second by Scott Hollingsworth. Treasurer Judy Hollingsworth gave the treasurer's report; there were no questions. There was no unfinished business or new business. The meeting was adjourned at 7:38 – somewhat of a record!

The subject du jour for Open Mic was Money Magic. Performers Nihal Weerasinghe, John McElroy, Tom Bradley, Randy Stulken, Greg Connor, Michael Thomas, Marti Stein, Alex Rangel, David Prouty, and David McKnight presented a variety of routines using cash, coins, and foreign money. David Prouty, Nihal Weerasinghe, and David McKnight took home ribbons for their performances. Thanks to all who participated
*Judy Hollingsworth,
with thanks to Miles Root*

RING 46, OKLAHOMA CITY – Seymour Davis Ring

Meets 1st Mon. of month, New Beginning Fellowship Church, 15601 S. Pennsylvania, OKC
LEE WOODSIDE, Secretary
E-mail: WoodsideLee@hotmail.com
Ring Web site: www.okcmagic.org

Our July Ice Cream Social had a good turnout of magicians, but very few plus-ones. The Ring provided everything for banana splits, root beer floats, or just a selection of several delicious ice creams. It was a great chance to cool off on a hot summer day and talk magic.

Kevin Brasier's daughters Kallie and Mollie threw him a surprise birthday party at Jonathon's Magic Theatre in South OKC. Several magicians were in attendance in addition to Kevin's family and non-magic friends. Kallie and Mollie went all out in providing deli-

cious food and drinks. Several magicians provided entertainment, including Michael "One-Man Circus" King, Jonathon Gerald Pansze, and Lee Woodside. Kevin Brasier closed the show with his own magic after the other performers had finished.

Our August meeting was our annual flea market and auction. The problem was that a number of magicians brought money to spend on magic props and books, but only two brought anything to sell. The first item up for auction was a set of Adam's Linking Rings that had originally been sold at Disney World and were rescued from an estate sale by Rick Martin. Auctioneer Lee Woodside managed to get the bidding up to \$5.00 before the gavel dropped. Vice President Justin Teeman had brought a number of books and lecture notes, and these were sold after some frenzied bidding. It was our shortest auction in the history of Ring 46. *Lee Woodside*

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
SHERMAN WIRES, President
(865) 679-3704 / e-mail: shermerlin24@gmail.com

July: While a handful of our members represented Ring 58 at the St. Louis I.B.M. Convention, the rest of us enjoyed an outstanding lecture from Tommy Johns, a celebrated children's and family entertainer from Georgia.

Tommy pulled back the curtain to share his philosophy and experience on both teaching magic and teaching with magic. We explored the differences between magic workshops, classes, and camps, and discussed how to build routines that educate and entertain at the same time.

One statement in particular stood out: "If you've got their attention, don't waste it." It's a simple thought with profound implications. As magicians, we occupy a unique position where an audience willingly gives us their complete attention — something that is increasingly rare in today's distracted world. Rather than using that attention solely to fool or amuse, Tommy challenged us to recognize it as an opportunity to inspire, encourage, teach, and leave audiences with something meaningful long after the applause has faded. *Timothy Pressley*

RING 74, SYRACUSE, NEW YORK – Harris A. Solomon Ring

Zoom meetings on the 2nd Tue at 7:00 p.m. In-person meetings on 3rd Tue at The Spaghetti Warehouse in Syracuse, please contact:
KEN FREHM, President / E-mail: kfhrehm@gmail.com
JOEY HOFFMAN, Secretary / E-mail: joeydemonmagic@gmail.com

There were eight members in attendance for this month's in-person meeting. We also held a

beautiful Broken Wand Ceremony for our former Vice President and friend, David MacBlane. His sister, Elise, came from Elmira to be with us.

Travis started off the magic portion of our evening by giving everyone four cards. We shuffled them, cut them, and then tore them in half. We mixed up our pieces and even exchanged some with each other. Everyone was told to put one piece into their pockets, and Travis had us eliminate the remaining cards. When we were all left with one piece, it matched the other half in our pockets.

James Turner did some really smooth coin work for us. He had three coins in his hand. He would take one and close the hand, then place the coin into his pocket. When he opened his hand, there were three coins again. He did this over and over, and when he went to do it for the last time, there were tons of coins in his hand!

David Kilpatrick did some nice visual effects for us. He had a red and blue silk that, when twirled around, melded together into a single silk. David also took a Rubik's Cube and a small platform. He held the platform flat and dropped the cube onto it. All of a sudden, the cube changed into a ball.

Mike Stanley performed a Magic Coloring Book effect with a Harry Potter coloring book. He showed us a book filled with blank pages and had us say a spell from Harry Potter. Now the book had its lines filled in and was ready to be used. With another spell, the book was completely done and colored in. For the last spell, we erased all the ink so we could start over.

I performed a card routine where I tell the story of a card cheat from the 1800s. The cards are shuffled and cut, and four five-card poker hands are dealt out. One gets a full house, one has four Queens, one has four Kings, and the winning hand has four Aces.

Ken Frehm had us select two cards out of a deck, a Four and a Seven, and placed them on the table with a Joker. He explained that whatever the difference between the number thirteen and our cards were, that's how many cards we would use to bury our cards in the deck. He grabbed nine cards and placed the Four on top face up, and did the same for the Seven. We were able to choose any value for the Joker, and we chose eleven, so he placed two cards down, then the Joker. The cards were squared up and spread out. Ken grabbed the face-up cards as well as the card next to them. When he turned them over, each one was an Ace. We added up the value of our two cards and the Joker, and the last Ace was twenty-second from the top! The deck was then spread face up, and every card was blank!

As it stands, the date for our Zoom meetings will be the second Tuesday of the month, and our in-person meetings will be the third Tuesday of the month. The address for the Eastwood American Legion is 3701 James Street, Syracuse, 13206. Both meetings start at 7, so try to sign on or get there a little before. Interested? Email *kfrehm@gmail.com and a link will be sent.

Joey Hoffman

RING 81, SARASOTA, FLORIDA – Inez Kitchen Blackstone

Meets 1st Thu., 6:00 p.m. "Social Gathering," 7:00 p.m. start time.

Trinity United Methodist Church in Haley Hall, 4150 South Shade Ave., Sarasota, FL

STAR NEWMAN, President / (651) 491-1050

E-MAIL: prettymagical@gmail.com

Web site: www.ibmring81.com

It was another great night for Ring 81, as twelve members gathered in August with many preparing to showcase some magic. It was an opportunity to display a personal style, try new material, or dust off a classic — we were open to anything.

Gary Roberts kicked off the magic employing the audience's theatrical skills with David Parr's Cue Test. Wic Cooney had everyone screaming "That's amazing!" while performing Bill Abbott's Five Card Opener in conjunction with his Cardboard Box. Leaving the cards at home, Ed del Castillo used six pieces of silver for his performance of Daryl's Cross of India.

Visiting us from Englewood, Mike Sears performed David Williamson's Three Card Trick with assistance from Sean Cullen — Mike exhibited some fine card-locating talent. With his back turned, our money man Dan Walsh (treasurer) identified when Jack Walters was holding the orange ball in a collection of white balls during The Oddest Ball. The alarm sounding after the orange ball was lifted had nothing to do with it. Well played, Dan!

Continuing the skillset with cards, Howard Cohen had a chosen card match the prediction card found in the card box; he tipped the method by showing his admiration for double-stick tape. Dick Stevens shared one of his electronic gadgets as he found a chosen card by zapping Mike Sears with the identity of the card. Gene Alcorn wrapped up the performances with two coins becoming one. Sean Cullen hosted another teach-a-trick segment, sharing one of his favorite mind-reading pieces he learned from Max Maven himself.

Nine members shared their magic, and the evening finished with fellowship, perusing some magic for sale that Gary Roberts brought from a past member, and enjoying tasty treats provided by Wic Cooney. Ring 81 has a growing passion for magic!

Ed delCastillo

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

July's meeting of the local magi was a walk through 1955 at the home of Jerry Mullenix. Jerry's basement is decorated to the era of a 1950s soda shop, complete with realistic ice cream, sandwiches, and sodas. There is also a life-sized Elvis ready for selfies.

Joe Cole started us off with Obie O'Brien's "Kolossal Kolored Kards." Joe began by showing everyone that he had four jumbo blue-backed cards. They were all Five of Diamonds. When one was turned over they were all shown to be facing the same way. Finally, all the backs were shown to be four different bold colors.

Next at the shop was its owner and operator, Jerry Mullenix himself. Jerry quickly produced a jumbo card fan. He followed that with a Larry Nye classic called "Cut-a-Card." A prediction was made. Then a folded length of paper picturing multiple playing card backs was shown as the spectator was asked to cut through a card of his choice. The fold was then opened to reveal which card was chosen by the cut. It matched the prediction.

Johnny-O! (John Swomley) began his portion of the night by tossing a knot in a rope. Then he performed a George Sands rope trick called "Bachelor's Thread-A-Needle." John showed a length of rope and wrapped it around his fingers forming a loop. His claim was that he is able to thread the needle so fast that the eye cannot follow. Backing up his claim, the loop was threaded many times, each more difficult than the last, until a knotted end was used to show how impossible it really was. John then attempted a water suspension. After about four attempts, it worked. So glad that Jerry was on standby with a towel. It was all in good fun.

Another special part of our evening was rekindling an old friendship with a past member of twenty years ago, Marty Bales. Marty displayed his expertise with a silk. He showed us the proper way to wrap a silk so that it would unravel cleanly during its production. As part of this mini-lecture, Marty taught us the magical properties of the square knot. Once it was "upset," the knot would appear to disappear.

Johnny O

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

Before the July meeting of Ring 96 began, a most interesting workshop was conducted by

Kevin Papke, our club Vice President. This workshop, like others Kevin hosts, was well attended.

The focus tonight was Shawn Farquhar's "Special Delivery." The effect is an envelope that folds and unfolds. This special envelope allows a small item, coin or card, to be placed inside the envelope; the envelope then completely unfolds to show it empty. Fold the envelope back up and the card or coin can be seen being poured out of the "empty" envelope.

Kevin clearly demonstrated the handling of the folding and unfolding. Each workshop member was given material to construct an envelope, which included patterns, scissors, and heavy scrapbook paper. Kevin moved among us to ensure we got it put together correctly. Everyone was able to leave the table with a new magical instrument. All we now needed to do was practice, which Kevin could not do for us.

President George Reis opened the meeting. He quickly brought us up to date on the various activities the Ring has been involved with and encouraged all of us to consider participating. George mentioned that the Ring won a highly valued Achievement Award from I.B.M. Headquarters — the first ever award our Ring has had the honor of winning. George reported that Dan Habel was the winner in the contest of which members were credited for bringing the most guests to our last close-up event.

George let us know we were now going to hear from three members who would speak to the topic of Music in Magic. All three speakers have used music in their performances over the years at Ring 96, and each has won honors in stage magic or close-up events.

Brad Erickson opened the discussion of how music positively impacts performance. Brad spent a significant amount of time explaining the hardware and the various quality of speakers, microphones, control switches, and other related items. He demonstrated how music can be found and the use of a phone or laptop when performing. Brad then did a delightful performance of silks turning into a full bouquet, conducted to music. It was clear music did enhance the magic.

Jon Strum focused his presentation on how music can be used effectively for close-up magic. Jon's music equipment was compact, which was important for close-up work at a table. The speaker was small but certainly loud enough to be heard at the back of the room. He told us music can improve an opener as well as a closer, and encouraged us to consider adding it at a reasonable cost. The speaker he used cost about \$80. The issue of copyright music was

discussed, and if we were to use it for public events, we should make sure there are no violations of the law. He did suggest using AI music, which is 100% legal. We got a full understanding of what music can do for close-up.

Alan Hanson began by performing Miser's Dream, and the music heard during the entire performance was a waltz. It was a dramatic way to make the coin magic even more stunning. Alan then spoke about the use of an iPhone to control the music and JBL speakers for sound quality. The balance of his talk was a scholarly and well-researched discussion of the various copyright laws. He explained what those warnings are all about on DVDs and even court decisions regarding violations of copyright material. Alan's demonstration of music and magic was convincing.

The Ring is indeed fortunate to have three magicians who showed and perhaps convinced us to use music with our magic. Another exciting night at Ring 96. *Dan Habel*

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@jacksharpmagic.com.au

John Kanawati hosted tonight's meeting with the topic Subtleties and Convincers. A rather unusual title, but it was a very interesting and fruitful meeting.

Before the meeting proper, we started off with an interactive improv game. We went around the circle saying one word. The word must have no relation at all to the word the person next to you said (e.g., if the person before you said "flower" you cannot say anything like "leaf" or "garden" or "tree"). If you did, then you were out. We discovered how pedantic some of us can be.

Then the main part of the meeting began. John Kanawati made a number of good points about subtleties and convincers. They are used to make the magic stronger and avoid suspicion. They may look casual or unimportant, or may not even be noticed, but they are very intentional on the magician's part. They stop the audience from thinking about the method. They can be verbal or physical.

John then performed a lovely routine of Ten Cards to Pocket, which utilized a number of false counts and palming. John explained how his counts and palming are disguised by numerous subtleties and convincers so as not to arouse suspicion in the minds of the spectators.

He then presented a rope routine in the style of Professor's Nightmare and Fibre Optics. John

had some great moves designed to throw the spectators off the scent and make it look like real magic.

After that, other members performed some routines. Christiaan Jacobs appeared on stage as his clown character. He was a mime and did a version of Paul Harris' "Twilight," where a coin's reflection is shown in a small mirror and when the mirror is moved, the reflection has become a real coin. As a clown, Christiaan did some business with a rose, then used the rose as a magic wand.

Phuoc Can Hua then showed us a packet of very big cards. They were cut numerous times and then divided into two piles. Members of the audience determined whether to take a card from the left or the right pile, about six in all. The chosen cards were placed in a stand. Then a prediction was opened which correctly prophesied the number of red cards in the pile and then the number of clubs in the remainder. Phuoc disclosed that having very big cards was an excuse for not shuffling them.

Jack Sharp then pointed out that adult audiences are often polite and will not tell you if you "flash" something, whereas children will call out the slightest thing they may suspect you of, whether it is true or not. He then presented an effect using an Invisible Deck which utilized a very clever subtlety and convincer that amazed many of the members. With respect to Jack, he did not want his routine to be exposed, but it shows how, when done well, even a commonly known prop can fool even those in the know.

Peter Wood discussed how he has presented the Invisible Deck when he emcees weddings. He tells the crowd that he had a dream that he was here, and they were all here, and they chose a playing card. He then asks each table for some information about the card — one table calls out the color, the next table calls out the suit, the next table decides court card or spot card, until half a dozen tables have all contributed to the description of the card. The actual card is then revealed face down in the deck, which has been in view the whole time.

Jack showed another version of the Invisible Deck where two imaginary packs of cards are borrowed from the audience. They materialize in a box with the usual results.

Anthony Dillon had a blue-backed chosen card turn into a red-backed one, thanks to the "Great Zoltan."

A visitor to the meeting was a young fellow named Andrew Smart. He showed us a chosen card to any number called routine that he had been working on. Thanks, Andrew. We hope you keep coming to the club to share your magical journey with us.

John Kanawati then finished the evening by displaying a clever Linking Ring switch so that the key ring can apparently be handed out to a spectator, and then did a wonderful routine taking a bunch of cotton reels (some red cotton, some white cotton) from inside a set of Gozinta Boxes. No matter how he switched the boxes, the cotton reels always ended up on the same side. He then concluded the routine by putting the outer box inside the inner box, per Gozinta.

It was a very enjoyable meeting with some good magic and lots of learning. Thank you, John Kanawati, for putting so much time and thought into the preparation. *Peter Wood*

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 – The Great Wong Ring July 2026 Monthly Magic Report: This evening of Comedy Magic was hosted by Joseph Then, with three guests and twenty-eight members present. Our I.B.M. Ring 115 family welcomed a new member, Teo Yi Xiang, who had passed his induction test and received a magic wand from President John Teo in an induction ceremony.

President John Teo invited two volunteers to use their cooperation and imagination in a game called “What the Butler Saw.” The first said he saw a pretty lady while the second said it was a chicken. John then asked them to look through a giant black peephole with their imagination. The first one said he saw a pretty lady. The second, however, said he saw darkness, to which John quipped that the lights were switched off, tickling the audience. The two volunteers then selected a card each — the Four of Diamonds and the Three of Spades, respectively. John then presented his predictions of their cards: the Five of Diamonds and the Two of Spades. Each card was off by one, so he made the red card lose a Diamond by having a Diamond physically fly over to the black card, transforming into a Spade simultaneously. The final outcome: an exact match with both volunteers’ chosen cards!

Uncle Jimbo poked his magic wand into a bunch of cards and it strangely found his volunteer’s card. He then clumsily tied an invisible thread to a few random points and said he could make the same card float — and he did, to the audience’s amusement!

Wee Kien Ming presented a Wild Card routine using eight emoji cards with the same image: a sad emoji. Turning four cards face down and four face up, he transformed a face-

down card into a happy emoji card. Claiming it can be infectious, he proceeded to use this card to transform the remaining three face-down cards into happy emoji cards too. He continued his magical infection of the face-up cards so that eventually all eight cards were happy emoji cards. With that, he urged all to share the infectious joy of magic.

Vicente Tiu solved a complex Rubik’s Cube physically, which took a few minutes, and then — in an instant — magically!

Eisen Lee made three coins vanish one by one from the tabletop and then reappear amazingly inside a closed purse.

Dave Karyadi got a volunteer to choose one of two envelopes he presented, but somehow mentally influenced him to choose the one without \$50. He then made a sponge ball jump from one closed fist into another and multiplied sponge balls within a closed fist. He sprung another surprise as he produced a volunteer’s selected card, randomly inserted into a deck, within a sealed bag.

Joel Lim claimed his ring was magical and would find its way back to his finger. He made his ring permeate through a velvet cord and outside of it, then returned it to hanging on the cord. With the ends of the long cord held by two volunteers, he then made the ring vanish from the cord, to reappear back on his finger.

Joseph Then presented three sets of four cards, each comprising three blank cards and an Ace. He then transformed each of the Aces into a blank card. Flipping over four face-down cards set aside earlier, he revealed that the four Aces had gathered in one place. He then transformed the four Aces into blank cards and unexpectedly reproduced the four Aces as colorful collages on a single card.

After the break, Joseph Then introduced his AI puppet named Android and had a “conversation” with it. He then shared several techniques and tips taken from the book *Seriously Silly* on how to add comedy to magic in a show, meeting, or conversation. He also shared tips on how he created or adapted existing jokes for use in his own shows.

Aman Alhamid shared his personal experiences in stand-up comedy clubs and tips on applying comedy during corporate magic shows. He performed several magic effects to show how he injected comedy into the magic. He highly recommended the following two books: *Finding the Funny* by Ryan Pilling and *Be More Funny* by Christopher Barnes, for those who wish to know more about this topic.

Following an evening of insightful and humorous sharings and comical performances,

which had the audience amused and laughing throughout, the meeting drew to a close with a monthly lucky draw and sales of magic items.

Low Hwee Lang

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

Per an innovation which President Kelly Rusk added to our meetings this year, our August meeting began with a performance before we got down to business. Harry Schumann, who performs comedy magic under the name “Harry Schudini,” entertained us with an act based on various productions and ending with a microphone that he floated as a “zombie.”

We began the business portion of the meeting by welcoming a new member, Steve Hammers, who had been away from magic for several years, in part due to his then soon-to-be ex-wife having destroyed his magic equipment and library. Now that he is planning to retire at the end of the year, he wants to start over in magic.

A number of members attended the I.B.M. Convention in St. Louis and reported on their experiences. Phil Franklin praised the shows. He and Kelly Rusk discussed some other aspects of the convention. The biggest downer for Kelly was that two of the lectures focused on routines that required the use of expensive props, making them irrelevant for most attendees. He also felt that the close-up performances were too focused on cards.

Bonita Yoder described a vent convention that she had attended, which included appearances by a number of superstars in that art. Keith Leff described how a routine he performed for the camera appeared on “World News Tonight” as part of their coverage of the World Cup practice facilities in our area.

We then moved on to our performance segment, for which we had been challenged to perform a trick where at least part of the magic took place in a spectator’s hands. Harry Schumann performed a routine during which the spectator dropped a coin on the selected card. Phil Franklin asked spectators to select cards from a group of seven, showing that he had correctly predicted the number of black and red cards that would be chosen. Keith Leff performed a coins-across routine.

Kelly Rusk then led a discussion of when certain routines might be inappropriate for some audiences, using examples of the macabre routines of David Stone, which he showed us on screen. (Most agreed that given the context of

Stone’s routines, they were acceptable.) We also discussed danger routines which would not be appropriate.

Finally we moved on to the “Show Us the Magic” segment, where members were invited to perform whatever they had been working on. Harry Schumann returned to do a Blendo routine where colored cloths blended into an American flag. Steve Steiner then showed us a similar routine, using a change bag. Stu Lewis performed Simon Aronson’s “Prior Commitment,” during which two spectators cut cards leaving the selected cards in predicted positions in the deck. (Another member had performed a similar trick a few months ago, which likely was based on the Aronson routine.)

Last month we hosted a lecture by Michael Eaton. The lecture was divided into two parts. First, he performed and then taught the coin routines which are central to his restaurant act. The second part focused on how to promote oneself as a performer, including the way to introduce oneself to a prospective employer, such as a restaurant, while also developing larger and more lucrative one-time performances. While this might not be relevant to most of those in attendance, whose ambitions are more modest, it was interesting to hear how he built up his business.

Stu Lewis

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

Ring 153, July meeting: We were back to our normal meeting location in July, thanks to Tony Shandy’s sister, who owns a hair styling shop in a convenient location in the middle of town. Although we’ve discussed alternate sites, no decision on that has been made.

It was, however, an unusually small turnout, with just Tony, Debbie Sherman, and Brent Cromley able to make the meeting. Several members have active performance schedules that prevent them from attending each meeting, and we’re always looking for ways to increase attendance and involvement. We have placed flyers in all the magic books at the local library, and occasionally someone notices those and contacts us.

Brent and Tony talked about past shows they have done during the long time that both have been involved in magic and been members of the International Brotherhood of Magicians. Tony, who has recently primarily performed for family groups, is increasing his activity and now regularly performing in various small towns around Billings at senior citizen lunches. The

local organization, Allies in Aging, besides being the agency conducting Meals on Wheels locally, provides on-site lunches to a half dozen or more locations throughout Yellowstone County.

And then it was time for magic. It was an all-cards night, as Tony started off with an effect he called "Prediction," something he had obtained from Penguin Magic and seen Nick Locapo perform. Very mysteriously, Tony was able to predict which card had been thought of by Debbie.

Brent wanted to try a new effect called "Numerical Series" that he's been learning from a video of Dani DaOrtiz. Although Brent wanted to use four spectators, he only had two, and the result was less than successful. Brent vowed to practice it more and bring it to a future meeting. Not deterred, however, Brent followed that with an Ace collector trick, "Surprise Finish," from Frank Garcia's *Stars of Magic* collection, and closed with Harry Lorayne's "Ultra Location Prediction."

So, while few in numbers locally, the state and our Ring enjoy a good supply of active magicians spread throughout the Big Sky State. If your travels bring you our way, be sure to give us a shout.

Brent Cromley

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

July 2026: Our July meeting was devoted entirely to a lecture by international mega-illusionist Franz Harary. President David Freeman had Phil Schwartz, our resident historian, do the introduction. We had close to sixty attendees — a packed house.

Franz's lecture was a delightful freestyle question-and-answer session full of ideas on the creation and execution of grand illusions, as well as strategies on developing one's own unique character and rapport with the audience. He gave valuable advice on building career success. Franz's lecture was more of a "coffee with the star" than a standard magic lecture. He was likable and approachable. In a typical lecture to magicians, methods are explained in detail. Franz did not go that far into specific secrets, but he gave enough hints so that those in the audience who are familiar with illusions could say to themselves, "I get it." It was a terrific deep dive into his career and thinking.

He played three promotional videos showing different aspects of his career: Franz the producer of mega stadium shows, Franz's own illusion shows with his creations and him performing, and finally some of the architectural magic

attractions he created in Asia. He then showed his own private "disaster" video of just what can go wrong with a mega outdoor stadium show. One must not forget that wind, rain, and electrical power outages can shut down any outdoor show.

He answered questions such as where he gets the money to build his props. He said the client pays, and often the client has no use for the prop after the show run, so he gets to put it in his warehouse to be repurposed.

He said that he began magic as a teenager in Michigan and made his first illusions out of cardboard boxes and duct tape. He got his start in producing when he found out the name of the lawyer working for Michael Jackson after Jackson's hair was burned during a commercial shoot. He called Jackson's lawyer and went through several people, all the time improving his sales pitch, until he got to the people who made the decisions. He was hired and then worked for Michael Jackson for many years. Other big names followed.

His advice is that every performer needs to know who they are. "If you don't know who you are, then the audience can't know." His exercise was to name three people whose feeling and impact are what you want to project. You can project any personality. Never copy a trick or a performer, but you can be influenced by the feeling they project to an audience. He had great disdain for several illusionists who copied his creations and keeps a lawyer on retainer to fight the copycats.

He was asked about magic on TV and he said, "AI has negated everything!" Magic on TV is no longer believable because everyone knows about AI. The future of magic is live, either close-up or on stage.

When asked about opening a magic attraction in Orlando, he said that he owns a house there and has run the numbers many times, but it never made sense due to the major attractions that get most of the entertainment dollars and the fact that ticket agencies take such a high percentage of sales money that the margins for a return on investment have been insufficient.

He concluded by receiving a standing ovation and giving everyone a free T-shirt that his roadies wear with his show logo!

Dennis Phillips

RING 172, TUCSON, ARIZONA – The Joe DuPerre Ring

Meets 3rd Mon., 6:30 p.m., Barro's Pizza, 410 N. Wilmont Rd. in Tucson

FRANK PROCHASKA, Ring Contact

ibmring172@gmail.com

Ring 172: Seven people attended our July 2026 meeting, held the same week as the I.B.M. Convention. Attendees included Steve E., Lamont M., Michael C., Curtis M., Mitchell L., David S., and Chuck K.

The Tucson Ring is an informal group. We don't have a business meeting in a traditional sense, and we spend the evening sessioning, demonstrating effects we've been working on, asking questions and advice from the group, and talking about magic over pizza. There is no set end time or target end time for the meetings, and people filter in and out as they are able.

In the July meeting, the group sessioned throughout the evening. Chuck brought a reel he had purchased from Michael Ammar, and there was a discussion of ways to prepare and use the reel. Michael Crownhart offered several suggestions that were very helpful to those of us who had never used a reel.

Lamont performed an impossible location that was very fooling. He employed several subtleties that were quite ingenious. He entitled the trick "A Very Fair Trick." He also performed a prediction effect of Daryl's with a Cards Across premise. Steve demonstrated a couple of versions of the pass and a couple of different methods for performing the spelling trick. Mitch demonstrated a version of the Biddle trick.

The next meeting will be Monday, August 17, 2026, at our normal place and time.

Frank Prochaska

RING 175, TAMPA, FLORIDA – Warren Hamilton Ring

Meets 2nd Tue., 7:00 pm, Grace Lutheran Church, 3714 W. Linebaugh Ave., Tampa, FL 33618 / Website: <https://tampamagicclub.com>
KEN SPANOLA, President
(813) 249-7325 / E-mail: KSpanola@gmail.com

There's been lots of travel for our members this past month, and Rob Albergo made it to St. Louis for the I.B.M. Convention for Ring 175! He shared that the talent and contests were incredible! Sadly, one of our members, Nick Faz, is picking up roots and moving to Colorado with his wife at the end of August — good luck, Nick!

Our August theme was Zoom Magic — or magic you can do over the phone. Opening the fun, our resident tech/app lover Rick Casale tried to combine three apps (Realist, Inject, and Enhanced Inject) to get a freaky Google search to show up on each of our fourteen individual phones simultaneously. Geoff Williams did Adrian Lacroix's Virtual Triumph with each of us using four Aces and sixteen random cards — and after much shuffling, inverting, and mixing, the Aces were all turned in the opposite direction from the other cards.

Daniel P. (Fite) left the room to do one phone effect from the Phonetastic book, attempting to identify the chosen card. Continuing with the phone, Rudy Hernandez did Paul Vigil's phone effect to correctly identify the chosen card, and he continued with three penetrations of ropes

passing through his neck and body. Fresh back from Magic Live, Tom Vorjohan shared three effects: Penguin's Pen thru Coin by Michael Ammar, the "random card generator" he bought from Plainsight, and a Raj Madhok effect running a finger up a spectator's arm.

Matt Williamson delighted the group with a card revelation that he shared — sort of. Rob Albergo reported on the I.B.M. Convention, shared how thin his new Galaxy phone is, and played a magic video he does for people. Later he showed a great Zoom effect using any object in a spectator's hand — being able to correctly guess if it's in the right or left hand while on the phone or Zoom. Peter Diamond combined two effects for Zoom, using the Digital Force Bag app along with having the exact change in his pocket matching the number of the item selected. To conclude, Rudy had Tom Vorjohan read Steinmeyer's "Your Friends in Oz" so everyone ended up with the same Oz character they were thinking of. A great meeting! *Tom Vorjohan*

RING 179, BALTIMORE, MARYLAND – George Dency Ring

Meets 2nd. Thu., 7:30pm at Chestnut Ridge Church, 1010 Saters Lane, Timonium, MD 21093

ANDY LONDON, President / Email: alondon@concast.net

The Baltimore Magicians Alliance (BMA), consisting of I.B.M. Ring 179 and SAM Assembly 6, met July 9, 2026, at Chestnut Ridge Baptist Church in Timonium, Maryland. One guest was welcomed, along with the sixteen members attending.

Ring 179 President Andy London announced that the August 13 meeting will feature a spooky magic theme, replacing the originally planned September program. Instead, Nathan Kranzo will present a lecture on September 10, 2026. SAM Assembly 6 and I.B.M. Ring 179 members may attend for \$10; guests are welcome for \$20. November's annual contest will be renamed the Jeff Eline Originality Contest in honor of our colleague, who passed away in March 2026 (see his Broken Wand in the May 2026 *M-U-M* issue).

Ring President Andy London received recognition for his fifty years of membership, earning a standing ovation from everyone present. Ring 179 VP Dave Thomen, who is also the SAM Assembly 6 President, surprised attendees with three awards he brought back from the national SAM Convention in Appleton, Wisconsin. In addition to another Dean's List Award, Kellar-Thurston Assembly 6 received the Thurston Award for the highest membership growth this past year, which benefits both Assembly 6 and the BMA.

Member performances:

Noah Dankner, Harry Damareck, and Joe Pachino featured a new format inspired by a recent visit Dave Thomen made to Assembly 110 in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. At the previous month's meeting, each performer randomly selected a playing card containing a trick description. At this meeting, they presented a routine that matched the description, while members tried to guess the theme printed on the selected card.

Rick Beatty demonstrated a sideshow gag skewer that seemed to pierce his tongue!

Mary Pomykala, performing in character as Becky from Tennessee, presented a story about helping her lad tie a knot in a man's tie using one hand.

Jay and Melissa Silverman performed an act they will present this month at the National Down Syndrome Convention talent show using a silk cabby.

Rich Kitterman performed a four-silk blendo from Ken Scott.

Mike Stringer performed "Quick Count" from J.K. Hartman's *Card Craft*.

Eric Keenan presented "Bankable" by Eric Stevens.

Bryan Nguyen shared his opening act of card flourishes and sleights as a regular headliner at Poe's Magic Theater in Baltimore.

Mark Wolfire and Dave Thomen concluded the performances with a presentation from *Tarbell*, Volume 4. Mark demonstrated the use of slates while telling a story about his work in astronomy, including a ghostly sighting within the department that studied the solar system. The mysterious message that appeared on the slate was "Pluto" — the lost planet no longer officially designated as a planet today. Dave presented his six-ring Linking Ring routine, including ideas he exchanged with Chris Capehart during his May 2026 lecture visit, and concepts Jonathan Neal shared in his Linking Ring lecture at the national SAM Convention.

The meeting concluded with door prizes donated by Andy London from a recent acquisition of magic props, and everyone went home with a new trick.

Michael Worsham

RING 193, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH – Len and Thalia Swinyer Ring

Meets 1st Tue., 7:00 pm, at the Swinyer residence, 4970 Waimea Way, Holladay, UT.

MONT DUTSON, President / E-mail: montd84@comcast.net

Web site: www.utahmagic.org

July: Ring 193 met in the magician's theater at the Swinyers' home on July 7, 2026, for our monthly meeting. It was graciously hosted by Thalia Swinyer (with canine assistance by Magic and Link). Fourteen people attended.

Len Swinyer "Dermo the Great"'s Broken

Wand is in a shadow box mounted on the wall in the theater room. It looks great! Thanks, Rudy!

There are still a few issues with the MailChimp emails. After much time spent with MailChimp tech support, we will be transitioning to an Outlook-based email list, but this may take a little time. Look for further communication.

Ring 193 dues of \$25 are due (April to April), if not already paid. These dues help with guest lectures. Paid members receive a discount for guest lectures, participation in the monthly magic giveaway drawings, and the opportunity to perform at the annual Christmas party to win prizes and prestige.

The Barry Mitchell lecture has been confirmed for September 1. Mark it on your calendars! A great opportunity to learn from a great magician. Discount for Ring 193 members who have paid their dues!

Paul Draper's book *On Second Thought* is now available from multiple vendors. Thanks to those who have already purchased it!

An informal magic social is held on Wednesday nights at 7 pm at Hatch Family Chocolates, 376 East 8th Ave, SLC, 84103 (just east of the LDS hospital). Doug Ryder was there last week.

The San Diego Magic Shop is closing. Any instructions for tricks purchased from them must be downloaded by July 15, after which they will no longer be available.

Eric has set up a private Facebook group for Ring members (UTAH IBM RING193). Anyone can be a member of the general Facebook group (Utah IBM RING193).

For sale: see Facebook for school assembly show packages for sale by Mont.

No meeting will be held in August. The annual Swap and Sell will be held Saturday, August 15, 4–6 pm.

The September suggested theme is "Finales" (tricks to close with) since summer is ending.

Do you have things to add to future meeting agendas or minutes? Email Carl at cbyrduet@gmail.com.

Some excellent magic was performed tonight.

Dale, assisted by Kaye, had a deck of cards that contained a duplicate card. He put the card into his wallet. Kaye dealt the deck face up and stopped where she wanted. The duplicate card, Four of Clubs, was in his wallet.

Chuck was dressed very stylishly. He performed a rubber band trick assisted by Thalia, where a rubber band turned into two. He also did a patriotic trick with red, white, and blue silks that turned into an American flag that was not quite right (colors mixed up) two times, and correct the third time.

Darren performed a card trick. He received an email from David Regal in April 2024 asking permission to use one of Darren's tricks. Chuck assisted. Two decks, one red and one blue. Chuck chose red. The Jokers were removed. Chuck, behind his back, pulled a card out of the middle, placed it on top, flipped it face up, and cut the deck once. They were fanned on the table. A blue card was in the middle. The blue deck was fanned and a red card was in the middle.

Thalia picked Javier, who picked Charles, who picked Nathan. They all turned around, then individually chose and looked at a card no one else saw. They all picked a different card. A card was ripped up, and each player's card was a part of that card.

Grave Robber compared magic to music. A red silk was put into his fist. It turned into a white egg. The egg was then broken into a glass.

Mont is a fan of monster movies. He had a silk on the table covering King Kong. He told the story of Kong's capture and transportation through SLC. Kong escaped and ran amok through the communities. The neighbors cut off his head and put it in a bag to display. A boy replaced the head with a balloon with a face drawn on it. The neighbors shot the balloon and the ugliest monster of all time was revealed (a picture of Mont).

Rudy did a trick he got at last month's raffle. Nathan assisted. Rudy had Nathan look at the fanned deck and remember a card. Rudy then read Nathan's mind — red or black, suit, value. Rudy then cut the deck to Nathan's card, Eight of Diamonds. A 52-to-1 deck was used.

Javier was assisted by Dan. Dan picked a card (Two of Hearts), signed it, and put it in the deck. The King of Hearts was chosen, flicked, and two hearts came out. Dan's signed card was then found zipped in a wallet.

The meeting was adjourned and the monthly raffle was held. Each month a drawing is held for magic (some big, some small), many new or unused in their original packaging, for attending Ring 193 members who have paid this year's dues. Once again everyone went home with great items! Thank you, Thalia, for the wonderful donations!

Rudy Chacon

RING 194, HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA – Space City Magic Club

Meets 1st. Thu., 7:00pm Madison Christian Church, Hughes Rd.,
Madison, AL

BRETT BOYER, President

E-mail: bboyermagic@gmail.com / Facebook: Huntsville Magic Club

Ring 194 recently was awarded I.B.M.'s Effective Ring Achievement Award (ERA) from this past year's activities, and we are off to a

great start this month for next year!

Several members were involved in a local Discover Magic camp and the filming of a full-feature family movie with a lot of magic, to be released next year. Thanks to members Russ Ward, Kevin McConnell, Jack Jones, Matt Growden, and Brett Boyer for helping with the camp, and to Patrick Brunson, Jack Jones, Matt Growden, and TJ and Danielle Latham for their magic cameos in the movie. Congrats to Brett Boyer for being cast as "The Great Cobblestone" in the feature role in the film *Houdini: The Magical Dog*.

August started off with the largest number of Ring members attending a meeting in several months. Probably because Patrick was teaching a trick. Probably not. Patrick had three cards chosen and mixed into the deck, with his back turned, then named the cards. Members enjoyed learning this trick. Dean Carter gave his treasurer's report about juggling the books. President Brett Boyer led several discussions on future events, then performed a goblet trick that he performed in the upcoming 2027 film *Houdini: The Magical Dog*. Trace Cooper performed a prediction trick based on the game Clue, with members posing as murderers. Jack Jones (not to be confused with Jack Baldwin) performed and taught "Linking Bands." Tricha Jones assisted Jack. David Thompson performed a card wallet pickpocket routine. Russell Davis, after several years of not attending a meeting, performed a card trick using a miniature Coleman cooler to find the card, based on the trick "Lucky Coin." VP Matt Growden performed a coin trick making a large coin pass through a small hole. Evan Tate performed a card trick finding the chosen card of Kenneth Jordan. Russ Ward performed a card trick he learned from Payton Ward. Michael Brunson bused the tables after members finished their supper. *Patrick Brunson*

RING 219, LAFAYETTE, INDIANA – Bob Hurt/Ron London Ring

1st Thu., 7:00pm, Faith Community Center, Lafayette, IN
SCOTT STARKEY, President

John shared about his visit to Colon, Michigan, for the Abbott's Magic Get Together. There were some amazing shows from Mac King, Morten Christensen, Nick Diffatte, and more. There were some fascinating lectures and great garage sale finds as well. Next year's get together is slated to begin August 11, 2027, and we are excited to go.

Scotto started the evening's performances by having a spectator sort cards into two piles. By intuition alone, the volunteer was able to separate the cards perfectly into red cards and black cards. Next, Scott had an audience member

place a wooden toy block inside a small box while remembering which color was face up. Scott instantly knew which color was face up by using his various senses. The last time the block was in the box, not only did he know the color, but the block vanished entirely.

John had a foulard that he showed front and back. He draped it over his arm and produced a bouquet of flowers. He did this four more times and had a veritable garden of flowers. Next, from a single silk, John produced endless waves of additional colorful silks and streamers.

Benji explained why we say the phrase “Go bananas.” He displayed seven cards with bananas on them and seven cards with apples on them. With a bit of magic, three of the banana cards traveled to the apple cards.

Joe made a balloon bracelet and drew an animal prediction on it. He had a volunteer name their animal, and the ambiguous drawing wasn’t a perfect match — but it was perfect for making us guffaw. *Benji Milanowski*

RING 234, CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA - The Low Country Conjurers

Meets 1st Sun. of each month, 3:00 pm, Commonhouse Ale Works,
North Charleston, SC
GEORGE YOUNTS, Secretary
Email: george_younts@charleston.k12.sc.us

July meeting: Still burning in the afterglow of our first club show, Ring 234 was four strong (George, Jamison, Gary, and Zach) for 3 pm on a hot July Sunday in the N. Chuck, SC Brewery World. Even had a “hanger on!” “You had to be there.” Not too many tricks this time — more conversation. But here is what was shown:

“Name My Card,” found in Kirk Charles’ *Hidden in Plain Sight* book. Bankable by Eric Stevens (which George is patiently waiting for), but Jamison showed it off along with a new TCC close-up case. Zach did Pure Ambition from *Redemption* by Red Nist — pretty amazing move! Gary loaned out some Dai Vernon DVDs. George showed off a Harry Potter coloring book and gave four old *Linking Rings* to our “hanger on.” Plus, there was a brainstorming session on Card Duck material for Jamison’s Magic at the Beach Competition piece, and in this humble scribe’s opinion — Diarrhea Duck wins.

The big news is monthly meetings are moving. The next one is Wednesday, August 5, at 6 pm at the Sangree Library. We’ll set the September meeting date in August. Our next club show is October 9 and 10 at the Old Trolley Theatre, and we are scheduling a lecture right after that in October. Zach will be touching base with everyone who wants to do the show. There will be two rehearsals to be scheduled, and George will be looking into getting a date for a

January 2027 show at the Pearl in West Ashley. Meeting was about two hours long. Good talks, and our future’s so bright we gotta wear shades. Sim Sala Bim, everyone.

August: Jamison had already kicked things off, as George was entering, working the Trident System by Reed Fairy for Zack. Both George and Zack served as guinea pigs and got a little bit of the method too. Central used a switch bag for a fun card prediction effect with Gemini AI scripting. George reshaped the Green Neck System with his cow, chicken, and pig from Old MacDonald’s Farm, teaching everyone the method. Zack’s gifting was magnanimous with poker test copies and his teaching — a very good opener for walk-around. He also presented Craig Petty’s Super Imposed, opening it with the Thin Air Production Scarf. George gave a 100th I.B.M. St. Louis report from his July attendance. How did those two roosters come out of Andrew Goldenhersh’s straightjacket? Then of course there was jamming away with cards (Zack was in Heaven), with more old and new effects in the Sangaree Library’s community room space to end the evening. Love it! We are truly lucky to have this calm, clean, well-lit space to meet, learn, and create in after so many obstacles in former ones.

Dates to know for the future: Magic at the Beach, September 10–13. Lowcountry Magic Jamboree #2, October 9–10. Lowcountry Magic Jamboree #3, January 22–23. Next club meeting September 2. Lecture October 13. LCMJ #2 rehearsals: August 26, September 16, September 30. Things are getting busy and fun! Sim Sala Bim, everyone! *George Younts*

RING 243, CANTON, OHIO – Roth-Mills Ring

Meets the last Wednesday of each month (except December) at Mama Guzzardi’s Italian Restaurant (temporary site) 1107 N. Main St. North Canton, Ohio 44720
RANDY WEIDENHAMER, Secretary / (330) 933-8787
E-Mail: randy.weidenhamer@sbcglobal.net

The July meeting was held at Mama Guzzardi’s Italian Restaurant. Fifteen members were present. The meeting was called to order by Brent Schneider. No minutes from the previous meeting were read by Randy Weidenhamer, Secretary, as they were published in the monthly newsletter for all members to view. The treasurer’s report was read by Mike Salvino, Treasurer. All reports were approved as read.

Our annual magic banquet in November was discussed. Mike Bishop, entertainment chairman, stated that all the acts for the banquet are filled. The club has booked Nathan Kranzo to lecture in August. That ended the meeting and on to the magic portion of the evening.

Don Moody started off with another one of

his inventions with a domino card. He had a spectator arrange the numbers on the domino card. Don took another domino card from an envelope that matched the numbers the spectator chose.

Mike Salvino performed a trick shown to him by Tom Craven using the Hunter's Knot. He had a yellow and blue rope threaded through a ring, then tied both ropes into a knot around the ring. He had a spectator choose which color rope was to be tied around the ring. When he pulled on the ropes, the spectator's chosen rope was tied around the ring and the other rope was free.

Jim Hathy was next, using some cards with logs on the back of them. He turned the cards over to show there were pictures of ladybugs on the front. He had a spectator choose one of the cards and when she turned it over the ladybug had disappeared from the card and onto her hand.

Trent Rapp performed one of his own tricks using a state ID card. He was able to pull off the magnetic strip on the back of a spectator's driver's license, show it, and then restore it. It was a very clever trick.

Lou Heck showed everyone how to make a poodle from a string of pearls. That ended the magic for the night.

Mike Salvino

RING 257, LAS VEGAS, NV – Roger Dreyer, Fantasma Ring

Meets 1st Wed. of the month, 7:00 pm at Super Summer Theatre, 4340 Valley View Blvd., Suite 204, Las Vegas, NV 89102

DICK DISKIN, Secretary
Email: Kirk@crestkey.com
Web site: www.ibm257.com

We moved our meeting from Wednesday to Thursday so as not to conflict with Magic Live which, being in Las Vegas, had a great deal of overlap.

Magic Live was a fantastic get-together, and Ring 257 met in the bar area on Wednesday, where a tribute was given to Roger Dreyer of Fantasma Toys, which has been a great inspiration and fantastic benefactor to the Ring as well as the entire magic community. He signed the Allan Ackerman Scroll.

The scroll is a tribute of signatures of great teachers and reads: "Magicians of old used scrolls to record their Magic Enchantments. This scroll serves not to guard ancient secrets, but to open the gates to them. Throughout history, masters of illusion guarded their craft behind heavy curtains and unbreakable vows. But true magic does not live in magic coins or decks of cards. It lives in the spark of curiosity passed from one mind to the next. We honor your extraordinary contribution as a person who chose a different path. Instead of hiding the light, they became the torchbearer. They have

spent decades turning raw curiosity into refined wonder. They have not just performed miracles; they have taught thousands how to create them. As a tribute to you as a teacher of magic, we acknowledge your contribution and record your name herein on this, the Allan Ackerman Scroll for Excellence in Education, Lectures, and Writing from the Fantasma Ring 257, Las Vegas."

At the relocated regular meeting on Thursday, after Magic Live, two other people who worked with Roger to make Ring 257 the great group it is today were also tributed and signed the scroll. They were Todd Herbst and John Lewit, who together with Roger Dreyer have made Fantasma Ring 257 Las Vegas the great group and local industry leader that it is today.

We received thirty tickets to Piff the Magic Dragon and thirty to Matt Franco (winner of America's Got Talent), which we gave to I.B.M. Ring members — one of the benefits of being in Las Vegas (the drawback of course is the heat, but overall, a nice place if you are into magic).

We then had an excellent lecture from Jamie Masterson, who wrote a very impressive and informative book on magic. He went on to show his effects: Matrix (coins) with different improved moves; Kiss, which uses a much better way to use flash paper; a trick called Hot Lips; Color Change Deck; and Secret of the Invisible Berries, which is an improved sponge ball production.

On the philosophy side, he shared: "If it is apples to oranges, then you have to show the audience that they are apples" — a strong reminder that you have to put yourself in the audience's position. Show the audience so that they can be surprised. Not showing (and I have seen this many times) makes the audience wonder rather than be astonished.

The above tricks can be seen in Jamie Masterson's book *Carpenter's Conceptions*, available online.

Caj Brejtfus

RING 258, LEESBURG, FLORIDA – The "Magic Ian" Ring

4th Thu. at 7:00 pm, in the Ball Room of the Lake Square Mall, Leesburg, FL 34748

ROGER L. REID, Secretary / (321) 945-7500
E-mail: rogerreid1114@gmail.com / Website: www.Ring258.com

July 23, 2026: President Andy Rohweder opened the meeting at 7:02 pm. We had three guests: Jeff Gilliam, Michelle Meropol, and potential member Wayne Hughes. Missing in action was George Drake, recovering from cancer surgery.

The minutes of the June meeting were accepted as written. Also approved was the treasurer's report showing a balance of \$3,024.21 in the bank and \$61 in petty cash.

Under Old Business, the location of our Holiday party was discussed. Kim Young did some research on her own looking at local restaurants. She did not find anything that would fit our needs. President Andy Rohweder looked into Ski Beach, a restaurant on the waterfront. More information to come. Secretary Roger Reid stopped into the newly opened Italian/pizza restaurant in the mall. They have a private party room. We were given the owner's contact information to explore further.

Under New Business, "Florida Kids Helping Kids" will hold a telethon on Labor Day, Monday, September 7, in Belleview, at the Moose Club. They are looking for magicians to do walk-around and appear on TV. If you can donate some time to help out or perform, contact Treasurer Karen Lyons at *karenlyons2007@gmail.com* for more details. The September free lecture by Scott Humston is still "tentative" pending a possible booking. We should have a commitment in the next few weeks. The lecture by Dan Sperry is confirmed for October 22. We should contact other local magic clubs with promotional information. Will this lecture be free to all attendees? We might want to book the Community Room in the mall to accommodate all attendees. Greg Solomon brought up the "4 Meeting Rule" that is currently in effect. According to our in-house attorney, John Zenkewich, because the Ring is a not-for-profit corporation, we must review the bylaws if we want to remove this rule. President Rohweder will review the information in his possession. We need a Ring volunteer to become the club's librarian. Contact Andy at *rohrwederandrew@gmail.com* if you can take on this task. (It's not a big deal.) The magic theme for August will be "Table Magic and/or Walk-Around Magic." Kim Young won the 50/50 for a whopping total of \$24! And the formal part of the meeting concluded.

The after-meeting presentations were supposed to be "Card Magic with Gimmicks or Special Decks," but due to the fact that we had non-magician guests in the audience, we could not give away secrets of the gimmicks, etc. So it became a stand-up performance by ten members and guests, limited to two effects each. David Lyons led off with a vanishing card box and Brainwave. Sandy Schwartz did a counting effect called Marked Cards. Roger Reid showed an ESP effect using a one-way deck and Flinch. David Ginsburg did card manipulations to Crockett's Theme (music). Greg Solomon showed Not a Knot with cards and Must Be Joking. Kim Young did Two Card Revelation and Cell Out. Rick Stein did Impossible Find. Allen Klein (The Card Master) did I Have No

Idea and Blank. Guest Wayne Hughes did Female using a Svengali Deck. Andy Rohweder closed with 2 Deck Prediction and 2 Deck Surprise. And the meeting closed just before 9:00 pm!

Roger Reid

RING 265, LONDON, ONTARIO, CANADA— London Magicians Guild

Meets 2nd Wed., Labatt's Engineering Bldg. unless otherwise notified.
MARK HOGAN, Secretary

With the long, cold winter in the rearview mirror and summer almost upon us, it was time to have a "Start of Summer" celebration at the Piper Arms restaurant! After booking the back room but not getting it, we were allowed to use it, and seven hardy partiers came out (including Serge Pereira, who we were glad to see come out!).

There was food, and drink, and magic! Mark Hogan tried desperately to complete Joshua Jay's color-changing Prism Deck routine with a Phantom Deck ending where all the cards vanish except the selection. (It wasn't pretty — but it's all in how you finish!) Harvey Poole was showing off his rubber band prowess with some rubber band penetrations through his fingers and through a cellphone!

Byron Berry showed us a cool gimmick used to vanish a coin that just uses gravity to do the hard work! Serge Pereira (who we were glad to see after a long absence!) demonstrated a terrific way to allow more audience participation in Simon Cassegrain's Triumph Shuffle, as well as cutting instantly to any card anyone named. Amazing!

And Peter Mennie had the trick of the night with a variation on Bank Night using four window envelopes, each containing prizes. The spectator chose the "Fist Bump" prize, while all the others contained \$100 bills! Thanks to everyone who came out and started summer on a fun note. See you all in September!

Mark Hogan

RING 273, CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA - Oliver Ring

Meets 3rd Thur., 7:30pm at the Burns Club
PETER FOSTER, Secretary
Email: pfoster@pcug.au

Good meeting this month, although another fairly exclusive crowd, with just Richard Hunt and Phil Bevan joining me.

Phil started with a bit of fun. He did a quick card trick, then explained how the miracle happened, being due to the amazing technical wizardry of the deck. He then opened the deck, revealing moving parts and flashing lights inside! Very amusing. This was Tech Deck by Craig Petty.

Phil then did a routine with three Chinese coins and a ribbon. In multiple phases, the coins

penetrated on and off the ribbon. Very nice indeed, with very elegant props. This was *Charming Chinese Challenge* by Troy Hooser.

Phil continued with a packet trick. There were ten cards, which were separated into two piles according to the spectator's choices. At the end the cards were shown: one pile were all marked "naughty," the others were all marked "nice." This procedure is usually used with a poker theme, with the magician winning with a royal flush. Phil came up with this naughty/nice version, which makes it more generally understandable.

The theme for the meeting was rope magic, so I pulled out two ropes, one red and one white. A knot was tied in the white rope. This then jumped onto the red rope, so there was a red rope with a white knot on it. This knot moved around and was then untied, showing that the red rope did indeed now have a white segment. Phil also does this routine, and he gave me some good tips. This was the *Jumping Knot of Pakistan* by Daryl.

I continued with another rope trick. This used one long rope and two spectators. The spectators held the ends of the rope, the magician standing in the middle, in front of the rope. The spectators pulled on the rope and it went straight through the magician! Very visual and clean. This was *Hang Em' High* by Bob Sheets.

Phil then did an oil and water effect with three red cards and three black cards. They were cleanly mixed but then they separated. There were several phases, all very clean and convincing. Very nice indeed. This was *H2O* by Juan Colas.

Phil followed with a little wooden box that contained three colored balls (red, white, and blue). The effect was that the magician divined the selected ball, or made it vanish from the box. This didn't use any gimmicks, but the way it played out varied according to the spectator's choices, sometimes also using a second spectator. A nice routine that requires practice so that everything runs smoothly.

I then did a quick card trick with a theme of the Enigma code-breaking machine from World War II. A card was selected and lost in the deck. Then the deck was divided into four piles to symbolize the rotors of the Enigma machine. The piles were then shuffled by the spectators. The card was "decoded" by counting down one pile to get a card, this value then used to count down the next pile, and so on. The final card arrived at was indeed the selection. This was *The Enigma Machine* by Alvo Stockman.

I followed with something a bit different: some mind reading using a bunch of colored

pencils. Two spectators each mentally selected a color. The spectators arranged the pencils in a row and, with the magician's back turned, swapped some pencils around. The magician correctly identified the chosen colors. As a kicker, the magician also correctly predicted exactly where the chosen pencils would end up in the row. This was *Crayana* by Gabriel Werlen.

Phil got back to the theme with some rope work. This was not quite Professor's Nightmare, more a Sympathetic Silks effect. Three ropes, all the same length, were shown. These were bunched up and given to a spectator to hold. The magician then took three other ropes, all different lengths. These transformed into all the same length. Then the spectator looked at their ropes — they were now all different lengths.

I then did a card trick with a very unusual revelation. The spectator tried to mentally transmit their card to the magician, but was only partially successful. Other spectators were asked to take out their phones and check their Wi-Fi networks. Their list of networks suddenly changed to the name of the card! (This is not limited to cards — it could also be a book test with a word revelation.) This was *Hacker* by The French Twins.

Phil then got back to the cards. A spectator selected a card that was put in their pocket without looking at it. After some other effects, the spectator selected two cards that were removed face up — say, the Ten and King of Spades. The spectator inserted these cards into the deck. The deck was spread and the face-up cards were removed, together with the cards next to them. The magician suggested that they should have found their mates, such as the Ten of Spades finding the Ten of Clubs. But instead they only found other high spades — in fact they made four cards of a royal flush. Where can we find that last card? Of course, the final card needed was in the spectator's pocket! A good callback effect. This was *Royal Gemini* by Asi Wind.

Phil continued with one where the deck looked to be fairly riffle shuffled in the hands, with the deck placed on the table and the spectators pushing the cards in. Despite this fairness, the deck was immediately shown to be in new deck order. This was *Double False Faro Shuffle* by Kyle Littleton.

Phil finished with a quick rope trick. He showed a rope, then tied a knot. When he pulled the knot tight, a silk appeared in the knot. Always good to finish with something that follows the theme of the meeting.

Next meeting is on August 20. The theme is *Cups* (not necessarily including balls).

Peter Foster

RING 289, MACON, GEORGIA – Mike Fuller Ring

Meets 1st Tue. each month at 6:00 p.m., Fresh Air BBQ on Riverside Dr., Macon

DANNY WATSON, President / (478) 338-5572

Web site: <https://fb-m-ring-298-mike-fuller-ring.webflow.io/>

August: In Attendance: Mike and Linda Fuller, Tony Zelonis, John and Rhonda Donahue, Ron and Angie Livingston, Stephen and Oliver Purvis, Danny Watson, and Bill Sirmon.

After dinner at some of the finest BBQ in middle Georgia, we started off our meeting with Danny Watson's riddle sheet, which is always a nice treat to try and solve.

Our theme this month was old magic from the 1930s.

First up was Danny Watson with what he called 3 Coin Divination, in which three spectators each chose a coin — a dime, a quarter, or a half dollar — while Danny had his back turned. They were to keep them hidden so Danny could not see who had what. Next he dealt a few cards down in front of each spectator: one card in front of one, two cards in front of another, and three cards in front of the third (Mike Fuller, Linda Fuller, and Oliver Purvis). If they had the dime they were to take one card off the pile; if they had the quarter they were to take two times the amount of cards in front of them; and if they had the half dollar they were to take four times the amount of cards in front of them. Needless to say, due to some confusion it didn't turn out too well, so it's back to the drawing board.

Ron Livingston was up next with the help of Linda Fuller, who selected a card out of twenty-one cards and wrote it down on a slate for reference later. Ron then took her card and mixed it back in with the other twenty, and they were thoroughly mixed up and shuffled. Ron collected up all the cards, shuffled, and when Linda was asked what card she chose, it was named — and it was the top card of the pile. Nicely done, Ron.

Tony Zelonis was up next with his routine with a "What's Next" spot card, where he had one spot, then four spots, then three spots, then six spots as he turned the card around over and over. Finally at the end he had eight spots on the card. Looked nice, Tony.

Mike Fuller was up next as he brought in some old flyers and books from years back to share. He had some of Thurston's original throwing cards and some books from the Larsen era. He also brought out the old Chinese Sticks — the ones a lot of us started out with, the black plastic ones with the yellow tips and tassels — and showed us a routine to a poem that he wrote for the routine at the age of ten. Well done, Mike.

John Donahue was up next with his routine called "Coffee Break" by Gregory Wilson, where he had Danny Watson reach into a bag and remove a wooden coffee stirrer. He showed us the stick and snapped off a small piece of it to show its reality, then took the remainder of the stick and placed it into the paper bag and folded it with the stick inside. Then with the help of Danny Watson, Bill Sirmon, and Angie Livingston, they took turns snapping and breaking the stick through the bag. John then took the bag back, gave it a snap open, and Danny reached into the bag removing the stick unharmed. Everyone was amazed. Looked great.

If in the area, stop in and see us — we'd love to have you. Until next month. *John Donahue*

RING 324, MIDDLETOWN, OHIO – Middletown Magic

Meets 1st. Fri. 7:00 pm, Tytus Avenue First Church of God, 3300 Tytus Ave., Middletown, Ohio 45042

LARRY HOLLINGER, Secretary

4515 Northglen Court, Englewood, OH 45322 / (937) 836-4359

E-mail: IBMRing324@aol.com

President Larry Taylor officially welcomed us. First, we discussed opportunities to increase our visibility in the community. Then we went straight to the pizza and accompaniments that Charlie Cadabra brought for us. Thank you, Charlie.

Time for magic! Charlie Cadabra started us off with volunteer Larry Hollinger and the party trick "9 Card Psychic" — the classic nine-card display used to secretly indicate the selected card position. Next, Larry Payne gave us two effects: "Vanishing Coin (Into Fold of Silk)" and "Fantasia" with silk, safety pin, metal ring, and silk. "Electric Ron" (unofficial nickname) Ron Frank showed us three effects using his Syncro device: "Syncro – Stop on Predicted Time on Watch," "Syncro – Count Down to Selected Card," and "Syncro – Four Laps Equals Dollar Bill Serial Number," using the lap function on a stopwatch to get four sets of numbers that matched the serial numbers on a prediction dollar bill. Impressive! For an encore, Ron had a picture of Harry Houdini reveal the selected card. This is "Mini Houdini."

Next, Bill West knocked us dead with "Knock 'Em Dead," revealing the selected card as the only blue-backed card in a red-backed deck. Larry Taylor came back up front and did Frank Garcia's "Card Stab" for us. Then Larry brought out his "Color Changing Knives" for a very smooth performance.

Charlie Cadabra came back to center stage with three more: "Thurston's 10 Card Trick," which he taught us; "93785," which used volunteer June Taylor to help with the reveal; and a

demonstration with the extremely easy-to-see “Pro Size Cards.”

Bill West gave us “You Will Not Pick the Joker,” given to him by club member Rick Gaffney a long time ago. Larry Taylor ended the meeting with “Las Vegas Sleeper,” vanishing cards and transferring them into pre-counted piles held by volunteer Patrick Dugan.

So, if you are ever in Middletown, Ohio, on the first Friday of the month, please stop by and join us (and tell us what the heck you are doing in Middletown, Ohio). From Ring 324 — The Friendliest Ring Around. *Larry Hollinger*

RING 325, BRANSON, MISSOURI — The Tri-Lakes Tricksters

Meets 3rd Sat. of the month atlt's Magic & Joke Shop, 6:00pm, 124
South Business 65, Branson, MO
DR. CHRISTOPHER BECK, President
E-mail: beckibmring325@gmail.com

James Holmes, Anthony Mullins, Gary and Mary Geise, Yak Williams, Thom Taylor, Dan Doyle. Visitors: Sawyer Lucas and his mom Cindy Lucas. Jim Holmes called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Jim mentioned he is still working on options for us to participate in the local community. No specifics or dates were mentioned.

The Randy Goodman Lecture is scheduled in place of our normal full meeting on September 19. Encourage all your magical friends to come and enjoy.

On August 15, Jim has set up a meeting for us to attend the Magic of Taylor Reed Dinner Show. Dinner is optional and begins at 6 p.m. The theater show starts at 7 p.m. and is free for magicians and immediate family.

The I.B.M. Convention is in St. Louis this summer. Check out the website for details. Lance Burton will hold his youth mentoring sessions. The SAM Convention is in Appleton, Wisconsin, honoring Houdini's 100th anniversary.

Our high school visitor, Sawyer Lucas, was up first. With an assist by Dan Doyle, he presented his Paradoxical Deck. Dan selected two spades. Two Kings were next displayed and then reversed to the spades.

Anthony Mullins was up next and placed a box on the table. Following the recommended monthly theme of Silk Magic, he presented an American flag. Next, he placed a green silk into a tube. Sliding a magic wand into the tube and saying “Abracadabra,” a bunch of flowers was produced. Holding a handled bag, he inserted a flowered kerchief — Abracadabra — and a black silk was produced. Continuing with the silk theme, he displayed red and blue silks which changed into yellow and green and then

changed back to red and blue. Showing an open black paper, he rolled it into a tube. Blowing through the tube, a yellow and green silk flew out the other end. His final effect included a large multicolored silk and a window. Pushing the silk through a hole in the window, as the silk pulled through, the hole disappeared.

Our resident Slovakian, Thom Taylor, aka Nicholas Nickleby Instikoff and his greatest invention “Penetrating Oil,” next took the stage. Informing the audience he was attempting to read everyone's mind, he then asked what he was reading. Mary Geise responded “Nothing,” to which Mr. Instikoff replied that all minds were empty. Using his Penetrating Oil, a box, a kerchief, a round brass box, and five quarters, he asked Sawyer Lucas to select one quarter and make a mark on it. Cindy Lucas made another mark on the reverse side of the quarter. The coin was then placed into the box and when he shook it the coin rattled. When Sawyer shook the box there was no sound. Opening the round brass box, the marked coin was found. Using a new round container and five coins, when he opened the box one coin was inside a silk. Waving and exclaiming “Das Vidania,” he exited the stage.

Demonstrating a “Steel Ball Penetration,” Yak Williams was up next. Displaying a cup and brass ball, a wand, and a pen, he pushed the pen into a tube sideways, then pulled the pen from the tube and dropped the brass ball through the hole into the cup.

Gary Geise was next and asked Yak Williams to assist. Pulling quarters from a bag, he had Yak select one of the coins and mark it on both sides using a red marker. Gary then pulled a silk displaying a summer scene from his prop box. Attempting to pull the coin through the silk, he was unable to complete the effect and declared it a work in progress.

Using the help of Anthony Mullins, Gary Geise, and Sawyer Lucas, Dan Doyle was up next. Anthony selected a random card and signed it. Dan dealt ten cards in a pile. Gary then selected another random card and signed it. All the cards were gathered and Sawyer counted out ten cards, which he placed into his closed hands. Dan displayed three face-up piles of cards. Neither Anthony's nor Gary's cards appeared in any pile. Sawyer used the cards from his closed hands and counted twelve cards. Both Anthony's and Gary's were in the pile.

Yak Williams returned to the stage with a silk and a copper and silver coin. Assistant Gary Geise selected the copper coin. Yak put the coin into the center of the silk and Gary held on to the coin. Anthony held on to the edge of the silk. Yak said “Magic, Magic” and pulled the coin

out.

Thom Taylor returned to the stage with a set of Hippity Hop Hares! He used a silk to display the rabbits in different colors. The finale displayed red and yellow rabbits. Next, Thom showed off three mini coloring books. When he fanned them one way, all the pictures were just line drawings. When he fanned them again, the pictures showed in color. Laying the books on the table, he asked Gary, Sawyer, and Cheryl to select which books showed the colored pictures. All three selected the colored ones as opposed to the line-drawn pictures.

Sawyer Lucas returned to the stage and with the help of Gary came up with answers to the initials C, H, S, D.

Anthony Mullins returned once more with two silks, one red and one white. Stuffing them into one end of a tube, he proceeded to blow the end of the tube and a red and white striped silk came out.

Mary Geise

RING 392, BLOWING ROCK, NORTH CAROLINA – William E. Spooner Ring

Meetings monthly at 2:00pm in various locations
DR. JOE MAZZOLA, President
E-mail: jcmazzolado@gmail.com

July 19, 2026: Members present: Fletcher Roberts, Aggie Roberts, Joe Mazzola, Debbie Mazzola, Gerry Hayes, Cara Hayes, Sue Ellen Brookshire, Nelson Brookshire, Dick O'Shea. New member present: Kerry Richendollar.

President Fletcher Roberts called the meeting to order at the beautiful and always inviting home of Gerry and Cara Hayes.

The meeting began by discussing potential lecturers, a potential fall show date, and locations of meetings. Several options will be explored. Meeting locations for the remainder of this year are:

August: Joe Mazzola's Magic Theater in Statesville
September: Cedar Rock Country Club in Lenoir (possible lecture)
October: Joe Mazzola's Magic Theater (discuss and finalize show specifics for November 1 show)
November: Cato and Susan Holler's home in Marion (confirmed by Cato)

New business included a request by new member Joe Sabol for members to consider helping raise funds for housing for disabled people. Anyone who wishes to participate should contact Joe for details at joegreenhornet44@gmail.com.

There being no old business, magic began with Dick O'Shea performing an interesting rope knot trick followed by a tale about two Kings marrying twin Queens. His card manipulation skills were excellent and his patter very entertaining as the "red heads" and "brunettes" kept appearing at the appropriate magical

moments. Fortunately, it all worked out in the end!

New member Kerry Richendollar gave an excellent presentation of a "Cut and Restored" rope. It was a presentation somewhat different than most in that the number of middles and ends kept changing as he puzzled us with this effect. I didn't know a rope could have so many different configurations until now!

Gerry Hayes shared "Dinner with the Borgias" by David Parr. His "Renaissance" murder magic was fascinating and made us glad we did not live during that time in history. The props used were a real plus for this effect. Be careful what you drink at Gerry and Cara's next party!

He next presented a demonstration of the Charpentier Phenomenon, which is sometimes called the size-weight illusion. All I can say is that the trick was far better than being "just up to snuff!"

Cara Hayes shared a lovely effect in which she highlighted three of the soccer (football) stars involved in the pursuit of the World Cup. Three glasses representing the players were partially filled with colored glass beads. Two were selected. She then proceeded to "mix" the beads before putting them behind her back. With some slick moves, she was able to separate the beads into their original state! Something tells me she was being tricky somehow — sleight of back, maybe?

Up next was Joe Mazzola. He placed six black bags on a table. Aggie helped with a special selection process that revealed small plastic jungle animals were in the bags. When only one bag remained, a zebra was revealed. Joe then pulled a bag from inside his coat and, you guessed it, a zebra was inside. This was a fun trick and could be adapted for many levels — children to adult.

Joe made a beautiful 3-D laser-printed cup for his cup and ball routine. The ball kept moving in and out of Joe's pocket (or did it?). Anyway, he got quite the reaction when the ball appeared in Sue Ellen's hand as the finale. Magic in a spectator's hand is always a winner!

President Fletcher Roberts reminded us that sometimes we might want to revisit a trick we have done in the past but for some reason have stopped doing. He shared the "Fourteen Dollar Three-Card Monte" trick, which he had not used in a while. Based on his excellent routine and presentation, he should keep this one at hand.

Nelson concluded the magic with "Faith, Hope and Charity," which utilizes the "One Ahead" principle with a cup and four objects. His patter was a poem which he wrote to accom-

pany the moves involved. As Bill Spooner once remarked, "I should have practiced more!" as a hiccup occurred. The audience was kind and appreciated his explanation of how to accomplish the trick without a slipup!

Our next meeting will feature a magic "Showcase" as suggested by Dick O'Shea. Dick volunteered to present this component at our next meeting. As this writer understands it, it will be like a "mini-lecture," so other members should be prepared to share magic as well.

Following the meeting adjournment, refreshments were enjoyed by all. *Nelson Brookshire*

RING 398, APPLETON/GREEN BAY, WISCONSIN – Dr. Lynn Miner Ring

Meets last Tue. except Dec., 6:30 p.m., email for location.

RICK MOREIN, Secretary

E-mail: rmorein497@gmail.com

July: Our meeting this month was a little unusual – a tornado had caused extensive damage in a neighboring community. A couple of our members were affected by it, suffering some property damage. Fortunately, no one was injured.

In addition, there was some confusion that prevented us from getting into our normal meeting space. We improvised: some of us were able to attend our scheduled Zoom meeting. The rest of us (Daryl Rogers, Marv Roth, Michael Schroeder, and Kevin Koehne) hung out on a park bench sharing magic stories and experiences at the SAM Convention.

The Zoom attendees carried on with our regularly scheduled theme: Teach-a-Trick Round Table.

Bruce Hetzler tried to share a card trick with us, but it turned out his deck was blank. He then proceeded to print the faces and backs based on Don Alan's Mental Photography/Nudist Deck from his book *Pretty Sneaky*. A short discussion of that book ensued.

Brian Polzar then performed a card trick in which a spectator selects a card and the magician chooses a card. Both are placed back into the deck, and with a magic gesture, both cards are reversed in the deck. Bruce shared that he had learned a similar trick from Francis Carlyle in 1966!

Mark Pepelea then shared a trick where two cards are selected. He then stuck a Joker into the deck and it found the mates of the selections. This was "Fooler" by Paul Gordon, from a recent *Linking Ring* magazine. A discussion ensued about Bill Simon's Prophecy Move, with Lynn Miner indicating he learned the move from Simon Aronson, who called it the Head-over-Heels Move.

Bob Banerian demonstrated the 3 Tile Puzzle that he built, where a grid of 7x9 blocks is shown in a frame, and even after removing three individual pieces, he could still fill the frame with the blocks.

Finally, Lynn shared a thumb tie with zip ties, recommending a specific length – eight inches is the best length he has found. He then gave us a document that provided a variety of ways to perform and freshen up these types of escapes.

Kevin Koehne



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29 NEW MEMBERS

AVILA, ALEX, Monterey Park, CA

LAND, WILLIAM, Encinitas, CA

MABOUD, NADEEM, Chatsworth, CA

PETERSON, STEVE, Los Angeles, CA

STARKE, SPENSER, North Hollywood, CA

ZUCKERMAN, SARAH, La Jolla, CA

ZUCKERMAN, JACOB, La Jolla, CA

GOLDSTEIN, MICHAEL, Boca Raton, FL

KRENGER, ALEXANDER, Marietta, GA

LEE, GERALD, Honolulu, HI

LUNA, DANIEL, Honolulu, HI

CALHOUN, RON, Independence, KY

GRUENIG, HANS, New Orleans, LA

CHOWDHURY, ARJUN, Newton, MA

BROCKWAY, WAYNE, Kalamazoo, MI

BRUHNSEN, KEITH, Ann Arbor, MI

JARBOE, CARL, Grosse Pointe Park, MI

SMITH, ELLEN, St. Clair Shores, MI

ZASTROW, CURT, Midland, MI

STYLES, BRIAN, St Charles, MO

GREENBERG, ANNA, New Waterford, OH

MASAVEG, MIKE, North Ridgeville, OH

PAGE, JOHN, Columbus, OH

STEWART, LAURENCE, Chattanooga, TN

JAYASINGHE, CHANNA, Houston, TX

MOORE, MELISSA, Roanoke, VA

CASE, STEVE, Hamilton, Canada

CHUNG, JULIAN, Mississauga, Canada

BARTHAZI, ANDRAS, Budapest, Hungary

9 REINSTATEMENTS

LAUFFER, JAMES, Thousand Oaks, CA

COLEN, JAMES, Davie, FL

HIRASHIKI, GREG, Pearl City, HI

HONG, SUKHYUN, Honolulu, HI

IKEDA, AARON, Kealahou, HI

SIMON, CALEB, Sunset, LA

SALVATORE, DAVE, Woodbury Heights, NJ

CRAWFORD, CHLOE, Las Vegas, NV

RAPPEL, TIM, Bartlett, TN

I.B.M. YOUTH TRIVIA CONTEST RULES

(Continued from page 55)

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 55.**

Robert Harkness Parrish Jr. was born December 26, 1918, in St. Louis, Missouri, and the family later moved to Mason City, Iowa. Bob's interest in magic began with the opportunity to join the International Society of Junior Magicians, an idea originated by magician and dealer Vernon Lux (1906–1962), who published *The Dragon* magazine in the 1930s. The monthly gave readers a look at current happenings in the magic world and the effects being performed. Although Bob enjoyed all types of magic, mentalism became his real focus; his approach was direct and complete, so audiences could follow along. He would work other types of magic into a show but always closed with a mental effect that left audiences wanting more. One of his earliest was the “Duo-Telepathy Effect,” which he submitted to *The Jinx*, issue twenty-nine, in 1937.

In 1937, Bob and John Goodrum joined forces on the sixty-six-page booklet *You'd Be Surprised by Magic*, published by Max Holden. Its material can still be performed today; readers will find card and mental magic, manipulative magic, a number of thimble effects adaptable to items available to today's performer, and more besides. The booklet remains available and worth a look. By the 1940s, Bob was collaborating with Oscar Weigle (1918–2005) on the booklet *Do That Again*; the two remained close throughout their lives, in and outside of magic. *Do That Again* leaned toward mentalism, predictions, and divination, though it also included card and rope effects.

While attending Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, Bob registered with the local office. He went on to serve four years in the US Army and, after his tour of duty, returned to Northwestern and continued writing and editing. Other titles from this period include *For Magicians Only* (1944) and *A Guide to the Art of Magic* (1945); working with George Boston in 1947, he also produced *Inside Magic*, a rare look behind the curtain of the magic show.

Bob also contributed regularly to *The Linking Ring*, including an article on Ed Miller's Museum of Magic; his work can be read at askalexander.org. In 1952, he collaborated with Theo Bamberg on *Okito on Magic*, published by Edward O. Drane and Company in Chicago. The book's more than two hundred pages included secrets known only to Bamberg and his assistants, plus a section titled “Sleights and Techniques.” Bob also edited other magicians' work over the years, large and small, including Bert Allerton's seventy-two-page booklet *The Close-Up Magician* (1958). In 1959, his own *The Magician's Handbook* was published, covering essentials of the magic show in chapters ranging from “The Old Ways and the New” to “Take a Little Magic After Dinner.”

Through the 1960s and 1970s, Bob kept contributing to *The Linking Ring*, including “Some Words on Hofzinser.” He also wrote on Joe Scott's “The Card on the Wall” for *New Tops* in 1968, and that same year contributed “The Magic of Jack Gwynne” to *Genii*. In the mid-1970s, he worked with Alton Sharpe on the combined volume *Expert Card Conjuring and Expert Card Chicanery*. In October 1978, Bob won *The Linking Ring*'s annual contribution award for “Card & Cigarette Mentalism.” He remained active in the I.B.M., writing in his spare time for other magic magazines. Not every piece was for magicians chasing a new idea. His 1982 *Linking Ring* article “The Secret Out: How to Help Magic Through the I.B.M. Development Fund” was written simply in support of the club.

Bob also edited the long-awaited *Illusion Show: A Life in Magic* by David Bamberg, published by David Meyer Books. Billy McComb, reviewing the book, wrote: “My sincere thanks to all concerned in bringing it to us. It's compulsive reading.”

Bob made time for many magicians who needed editing help or wanted articles written in full detail. In the late 1980s he began putting his own firsthand observations into print, including a piece on Jack Kodell's life and work. His book *Words About Wizards: Recollections of Magicians and Their Magic, 1930–1950*, published in the 1990s, profiled more than a dozen performers, from Blackstone to Joseffy, Okito, and Charlie Miller, across seventy-two pages.

Bob became editor of *Magicol*, the quarterly of the Magic Collectors' Association founded by Dr. Morris Young in 1950, in 1988 and stayed four years, working alongside longtime friends including Walter Graham and Jim Alfredson.

In September 1991, Bob edited an overhauled and expanded reprint of *Illusion Show*, which grew from 331 pages to 440 pages and more than thirty photographs.

In 1992 and 1993, Bob continued submitting to the magic magazines, including his transposition card effect "Robert Parrish's Trained Cards," available at AskAlexander.org along with much of his other work. That same year he also wrote on favorite performers, including Theodore Anneman, in the article "Early Anneman and How He Thought."

Bob's health declined, and on March 3, 1994, he passed away in his sleep. His love for family, friends, and magic drove him throughout his life. He had a gift for stepping into another author's shoes to see a manuscript through to a finished, accurate, and marketable book, and an equal gift for his own original work. When asked what makes for success in magic, Bob Parrish said: "Magicians have found that their work is more effective if the method is as direct and simple as possible."

Gary R. Frank

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