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The Linking Ring

NOVEMBER 2026



JON ARMSTRONG

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3 CHRISTMAS TRICKS TO MAKE YOUR HOLIDAY SHOWS A SUCCESS!



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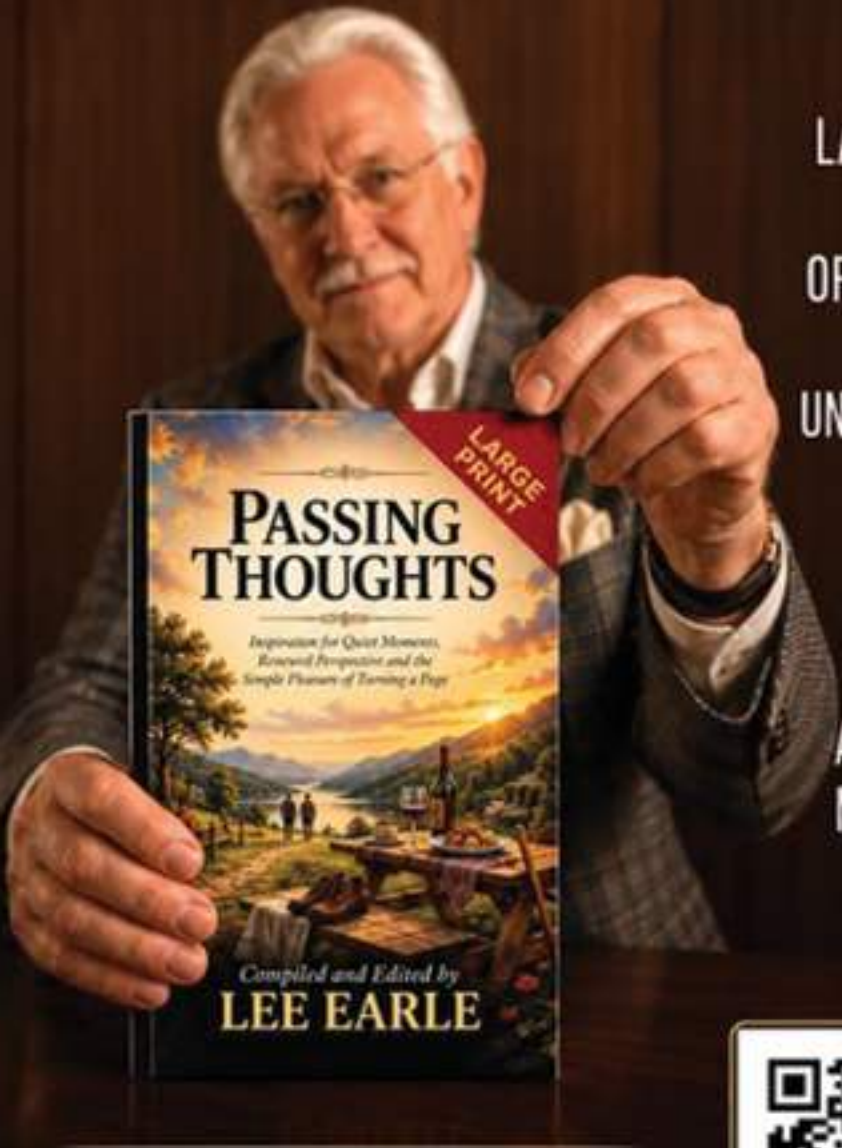
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Over the years, some I.B.M. members have allowed their active membership status to lapse because their dues were not paid. Provided that the lapse of membership is relatively short, not exceeding three years, the person may have his or her membership 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*.

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From the Editor

SAMUEL PATRICK SMITH

When nineteen-year-old Len Vintus learned that Houdini would appear at the Orpheum Theatre in Winnipeg, Manitoba, in February 1923, his hopes were high.

The previous year the young Canadian had joined forces with another teenager, Gene Gordon of Lyons, New York, to form the International Brotherhood of Magicians, a correspondence club.

The Society of American Magicians had started twenty years earlier, but it was based in New York City and was, after all, an *American* organization. When Houdini became president in 1917, he vigorously promoted the S.A.M., attracting members in larger cities where he was appearing. Len and Gene saw their organization as a way for magicians from around the world, in rural areas and towns of all sizes, to connect. In the late fall of 1922, they launched a mimeographed publication called *The Linking Ring* to put members in touch with each other.

Hoping to add Houdini to their short but growing roster, Vintus met the great escape artist with enthusiasm and a supply of I.B.M. membership applications. To his dismay, Houdini quickly went on the offensive. He forcefully said he did not want another magic organization to exist; the S.A.M. was enough, and Vintus and his friends should shut down the I.B.M. immediately.

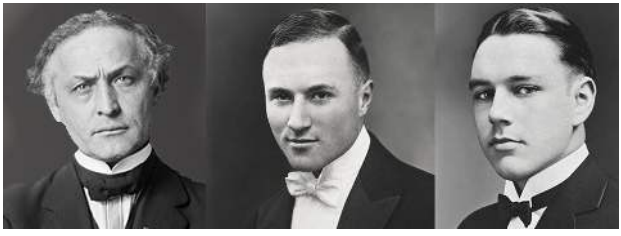
The news of Houdini's outburst reached Gene Gordon, who joined Vintus in a lifelong disdain of the egocentric escape artist. Gene let his membership in the S.A.M. lapse and didn't rejoin for more than half a century. Meanwhile, they easily recruited other famous magicians, including Blackstone, Thurston, and T. Nelson Downs, who enthusiastically supported them.

Perhaps it's true that time heals all wounds, or at least some of them. During the next century, the S.A.M. and I.B.M. continued reaching out to magicians, with many holding memberships in both organizations.

In September the Magic Endowment Fund of the S.A.M. and the Endowment and Development Fund of the I.B.M. cosponsored the installation of a historic marker in Kansas City, Missouri, the site of Houdini's first public suspended straitjacket escape.

One commentator noted the irony of our cosponsoring a marker honoring Houdini, when he showed such contempt for the I.B.M. Then last month, we featured Houdini on our front and back covers – his second *Linking Ring* appearance (his first being in April 1974).

Just because Houdini wasn't a fan of the I.B.M. doesn't mean we can't be fans of Houdini. We may disagree with others or dislike their personalities, but we can still admire their talent and appreciate what they bring to the art. After all these years, one can hope that even Len Vintus, Gene Gordon, and Houdini would agree.



Houdini. Len Vintus. Gene Gordon.

President's Page

JASON MICHAELS



Last month I shared a recent adventure from when I attended the British Ring Convention in Buxton, United Kingdom. Prior to my flight home yet after the British Ring Convention, I.B.M. member Derek Oliver kindly hosted me at The Magic Circle. The word "wow" may be an understatement. The Magic Circle is an extraordinary home for magic in London. From their library and beautiful artwork to their museum-quality artifacts and stunning theater, magic is very well represented here. According to Derek, there are many members-only events, but there are also a great many events for the general public.

As Derek gave me a tour, I was struck by the fact that many countries view magic as an art – which is not always true in the States. Arts organizations in the States often view magic as a variety art, which is disappointing and is not even close to being seen as an art.

In fact, years ago when I was flirting with the idea of marketing my show to performing arts centers and theaters, I found that magic is almost always seen as "family series" programming. Magic shows are specifically booked in these venues to appeal to all ages. Magic is not booked to push the art and craft forward. It is not booked to make an audience think or reflect. It is simply booked as a fun show full of eye-candy.

While I'm glad that magic is part of the conversation at all, it does not seem to be part of the same conversation that dance, musicals, and touring plays are.

Perhaps it is just me, but I find that troublesome. Given the incredible history that magic has, the scholarly journals and publications that have been published over the last hundred years, and organizations like the I.B.M., SAM, and AMA serving the magic community, I think that magic should be categorized as an art here in the United States.

Furthermore, I think that the I.B.M. as an organization should work harder toward an arts designation with local and national arts organizations. Doing this could open opportunities for arts grants and much more.

I believe that this is a goal worth pursuing. As I have gotten to know our members over the last five years of serving this organization, I have found a diverse, fascinating, and knowledgeable group of people. If you have any experience in this realm of arts organizations and/or government arts departments, please reach out to me and let's start a discussion. I'd love to talk about what next steps might look like.



Lu Brent made a career of entertaining audiences of all ages. When he passed away in 1993, he left behind a myriad of magic ideas, effects, and more. Anyone who witnessed one of Lu's performances went away remembering not only his name but also the magic he presented. From his early submissions to the magic magazines to the natural way he presented his show and himself, Lu Brent was one of those scores of magicians who made a lasting impression on all those he met. To learn more, turn to page 159.

Extracurricular Reading for Magicians

By Thomas Henry

Magic has a long tradition of passing the torch from one generation to the next by means of books. Just consider how many neophytes have been welcomed to the fold through the likes of *Modern Magic*, *The Royal Road to Card Magic,* and *The Amateur Magician's Handbook*, to name but a few. Such guides get the newcomer up and running with meticulous instructions in sleight of hand, misdirection, classic routines, and more.

But after such a start, the impetus to invent original material begins to quicken – something to make us stand out from the crowd. And that's when, I humbly suggest, it's time to broaden one's reading. It's long been my contention that creativity in conjuring is propelled by chance encounters with books far afield. The nineteenth-century French poet, Charles Baudelaire, put it well: "A book is a garden, an orchard, a storehouse, a party, a company by the way, a counselor, a multitude of counselors."

Allow me, then, to cue you into seven offbeat tomes which might have escaped your attention before. You won't necessarily find methods within them, but more importantly, they're bursting with intriguing themes and evocative hooks for captivating scripts. Mentalists, mental magicians, storytelling magicians, and bizarrists will perhaps feel most at home with this survey. But in the long run, we're all in the mystery biz, so I hope everyone might pick up a thing or two along the way. If nothing else, these books are just plain fun to read in civilian life!

The Complete Illustrated Book of the Psychic Sciences

As a lad just beginning in magic some sixty-five years ago, I was always admonished that the performer should be the best-dressed person in the room. Something analogous holds if spinning a routine around an arcane topic: be the one present most knowledgeable in that particular endeavor. Conviction assuredly evaporates if a participant catches you out in something contrary to well-established custom.

Well, here's the *vade mecum* which can bring you up to speed in a dozen different esoteric areas. Mind you, I'm not endorsing a belief in telepathy, graphology, cartomancy, radiesthesia, etc., which it treats. What's important is that this text provides in-depth and accurate lessons in what laypersons *have* believed over the centuries.

Notably, this enchanting primer was penned by spouses Walter B. and Litzka R. Gibson. The former may just be the most prolific author in magic, especially if you include all the ghostwriting he did for Houdini, Dunninger, Thurston, Blackstone, and who knows who else. And the latter, widow of the Great Raymond but subsequently wedded to Gibson, also wrote a number of books on occult subjects.

Moonwalking with Einstein: The Art and Science of Remembering Everything

This book had me on the edge of my seat from start to finish! Autobiographical in nature, it's the true and thrilling account of how the young journalist Joshua Foer, previously possessing a very ordinary memory, went on to win the 2006 USA Memory Championship. At this competition, among other feats, he set the record for memorizing

(continued on page 90)

Our Cover

JON ARMSTRONG

By Simone Marron

Long-time I.B.M. Member Jon Armstrong was born in January 1976 in Orlando, Florida – the theme park center of the world. Jon's father was career military, and McCoy Airforce Base in Orlando was the last place he was stationed. On a side note, Armstrong tells us, "An interesting fact is that when you fly into Orlando Airport, the airport identification letters are MCO and it stands for McCoy Air Force Base because where Orlando Airport is now, is where the old Air Force Base used to be."

Jon's parents were big fans of band dancing, and his mom and dad met dancing while stationed at McCoy. His dad was twenty years older than his mom, and Jon has one younger brother who now lives in Tennessee. Armstrong tells us, "We couldn't be more different, but we are close."

As a kid, Jon spent a lot of time in most of the Florida theme parks. Annual passes were relatively cheap, and after a while he got sick of riding the same rides and started looking for different things to do. He explains, "Because I was there so often, I started noticing performing magicians."

At the age of eight, at the Boardwalk and Baseball theme park Armstrong saw his first magician, Dan Stapleton doing a great standard classical illusion show. He knew then that this is what he wanted to do. Jon searched for magic books and the first he found was the *Amateur Magician's Handbook* by Henry Hay.

The next big influence in Armstrong's career happened a couple of years later when he met Dr. H.P. Lovecraft, who shares the name of the famous author. This Harry Lovecraft did a medicine show pitch and was a contemporary of Harry Anderson and Daryl. Jon tells us, "He did his act at Sea World, and it was the first time I had seen a magician be funny, and I wanted to do that." Armstrong would watch Lovecraft's show as often as he could and would attend around five shows nightly until he had the show memorized. Eventually they started to hang out after the shows.



Jon Armstrong.



A sixteen-year-old Jon, resembling Harry Potter.

When Armstrong was fourteen years old he saw Terry Ward perform a street show at Disney's MGM Studios with close-up using cards and coins and he was funny, and Jon realized that he wanted to do *that*!

Jon tells us, "I would obsess and watch Terry over and over again and eventually my mom paid for lessons from him and when I was seventeen, I lost my father, and Terry became like a surrogate father to me. I still speak to him almost every week." He continues, "Anything I've ever done in my life, is because of Terry Ward."

From Terry, Armstrong learned about making the shows into an experience with theater, presentation, and bringing things together holistically. Ward emphasized the Disney take on things which Jon was already enamored with.

Terry introduced Jon to other Orlando magicians, and I.B.M. Ring 170, the Bev Bergeron Ring, including Bev himself, who Armstrong had seen performing at Disney's Diamond Horseshoe and the Wally Boag show. Joining Ring 170 was huge for Jon. He met so many magicians with different disciplines who could help him with magical methods and procedures that Terry was less proficient in. Jon explains, "It was an amazing place for me to learn. Other than the history and wisdom that Bev brought, there were magic icons like Jack and Mary Kodell. Terry always guided me to the people that I could learn from. He was a true mentor."





Left to right: Jon, age twelve, in his performance suit. Jon at sixteen.



At Caesars Magical Empire with Scott Alexander, Ayala, and Brian.

At the age of twenty, Jon got his own show at Disney. Terry was offered a close-up gig at the Rose and Crown at Epcot but passed it on to Armstrong. He adds, "Terry often pushed me into doing things that were related to magic. He had me involved in improv and performing arts and acting at the Thespian Society at school and learning about set construction. It was important to him that I learned everything about performing holistically."

Known after a while at Disney as being Terry's protégé, when Terry wasn't available to take on a gig, it was offered to Jon. He explains, "I ended up filling in at corporate events, the Diamond Horseshoe and even became the riverboat gambling guy."

Because of this, Armstrong got to hang out with many different variety artists and learn from them. He tells us, "The five years I worked there was the best University of Entertainment I could have ever attended, and because I was paid, I didn't leave in debt."

At the age of twenty-five, Armstrong moved from Orlando to Vegas. He explains, "Back then Vegas was for families, which didn't last. A lot of magicians moved there thinking they were handing out productions shows at the airport. Of course that was not the case." He continues, "I was lucky and got to work at Caesar's Magical Empire for almost two years, as a house performer with Apollo Robbins, Joey Burton, Armando Lucero, Scott Hitchcock and Joan Dukore."

Soon Armstrong was meeting and working with some of his magic heroes like Michael Ammar, and Daryl. One day he was contacted and was asked to fill in for a performer in the close-up room in the Secret Pagoda. He had just worked the close-up room for the first time at the Magic Castle, and this was the audition tape that they looked at. After that, Jon was put into the rotation as one of the headliners. Through being seen more, he got to work the Magic Castle more, and when Caesar's Magical Empire closed in 2002, he made the move to Los Angeles.

He tells us, "It wasn't that I didn't like Las Vegas, but I just wanted to be close to the Magic Castle so that I could go there every night." For the next six months, Jon couch-surfed at friends' homes and spent every night at the Magic Castle.

Armstrong had become a member of the Academy of Magical Arts, which has its home at the Magic Castle, as soon as he turned twenty-one, with Bev Bergeron and Jack Kodell as his sponsors. He tells us, "I spent as much time as I could learning and performing at the impromptu tables. I made friends with a bunch of magicians including Derek DelGaudio, John Lovick, Derek Hughes, Rob Zabrecky, Andrew Goldenhersh, and Fitzgerald."

Armstrong received his first Close-up Magician of the Year nomination in 2004 and won in 2006. In 2024, he won his



Performing the Tiny Plunger at the Boys and Girls Club.



Performing in the Parlor of Prestidigitation at the Magic Castle.

first Parlor Magician of the Year Award and won his second this year for 2025. As each award can only be won twice by any magician, after winning two years consecutively, he is now ineligible to be nominated again for Parlor Magician of the Year.

About fifteen years ago, Armstrong switched from doing heavy close-up card magic to more stand-up general magic, with his focus turning to being on stage. He explains, "It paid off for me, and that's when I started working cruise ships." He continues, "I did the old Crystal Cruises with Magic Castle at Sea, and from there I was able to get a cruise agent who told me that if I had a stand-up show that with my personality, I could work on luxury lines. That is when I made the switch."

Jon didn't enjoy the luxury lines. His shows were well-received, and his ratings high, but he felt like he didn't fit in there. He was willing to walk away from the cruise industry, and then his agent suggested Disney Cruise lines. With Armstrong's history with Disney, he knew he had found his niche.

To try and secure employment with Disney Cruise Line, Jon wrote an essay about his life and working relationship with Disney growing up in Orlando. He explained that he was probably the only act that would audition for them that had previously gone through the Disney Company Traditions training twice, and that he understood the "Spirit of Disney" better than anyone. Disney is very picky, but Armstrong was able to convince them that he was the right person for the job.

Jon tells us, "I'm very proud that every single act that works on Disney is really great, is very unique, and does a fantastic show." On the strength of that essay, Disney gave him a trial week, and ten years later, he is still there.

Occasionally Jon will work for other cruise lines like Virgin Voyages where he will do their headliner series, or short Royal Caribbean cruises out of Los



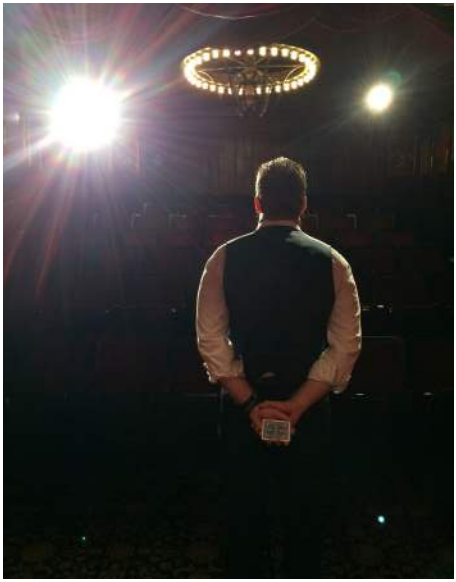
Jon's comic Smoke and Mirrors.



Performing on Penn & Teller: Fool Us.

Angeles, but for the most part, Disney Cruise Line is his bread and butter. He does multiple shows including a family show, a show that is more geared to adults, and a workshop.

Armstrong can also take his family on the cruises. He tells us, "My kid was basically raised by the Disney Kids Club for two years. It was amazing!"



A photo of Jon used to promote his Netflix documentary.

Jon was very close to Max Maven and had lunch with him every week for more than twenty years. Max suggested to Armstrong that he should run for the Board at the Castle, and in 2008, Jon became the youngest elected member to the Board of Trustees of the Academy of Magical Arts, at the time when Neil Patrick Harris was the President of the Academy of Magical Arts. Armstrong would remain on the Board for the next ten years, eventually taking over as the Chairman of the Board. He tells us, "Magic politics was one of the greatest pleasures and disappointments of my entire life. I feel that we kept the magic spirit alive and made a positive impact helping to save the Castle in its time of need and making things better for the performers and guests. However, magic politics can be exhausting, and you get very burnt out."

Today Jon feels good when he comes back to the Castle. The new ownership has instigated a lot of changes, and Armstrong is supportive of the changes that are being made. He feels he can again see the things that originally caused him to fall in love



At the Magic Castle Library Bar.

with the Castle, and to it being all about the magic. He explains, "I feel privileged that this is still a major part of my life, but I'm also very glad that I do not rely on this place for everything like I used to. Now my life is self-sufficient, and the Castle is a place where I can come and do some card tricks."

Jon is now happily married to his second wife Vanessa, who he met at the Castle. His first marriage is documented in the documentary *Magicians: Life in the Impossible*, which can currently be viewed through Apple TV and Amazon Prime. After his divorce Jon went through depression and gained a lot of weight. He tells us, "After a while I got myself back in the right place and ended up meeting Vanessa who was a guest of the Castle. I showed her a trick at the bar, and she thought it was mediocre, but she thought I was cute, so she let me talk to her anyway." Jon continues, "She didn't see my act until two months into dating and then she said, 'Oh, okay, you *are* good!'"



With his mentor, Terry Ward.

In July 2020, their daughter Maddie was born. Although only six years old, Maddie loves to help her daddy with his magic and is his biggest fan. Jon proudly exclaims, "She's the best!"

Other than the documentary, Armstrong has appeared on television many times. He had a cameo in *Arrested Development* and *The Office*. He was also an illusion consultant and worked on the TV show *The Mentalist* which starred Simon Baker for years. Bruno Heller from the UK was the creator of that show, and Armstrong relates what Heller told him, "He wanted



A standing ovation at the Walt Disney Theatre of a Disney Cruise Line ship.

to do a show about Sherlock Holmes, but couldn't copyright Sherlock Holmes, so he decided to call it *The Mentalist* because he had seen Derren Brown." He continues, "He told me that multiple times. He had no reference to any American mentalists. He didn't even base it on Derren. He based it on the idea of a Derren."

Armstrong explains, "Bruno wasn't a magic fan, although I brought him to the Magic Castle a couple of times. The only reason he thought about Derren Brown is because he needed to think of someone that he perceived to be like Sherlock Holmes."



Jon, age eighteen, with his brother James and mother Sue.

Armstrong worked on the pilot for *The Mentalist*, as well as for all seven seasons of the show in some capacity, whether it be in the writer's room, or on set. He was the hand-double for every piece of close-up magic that Simon did on the series. He tells us, "Bruno is a great guy, and I still get a Christmas card from him."

Jon performed on *Penn & Teller: Fool Us*, and tells us, "I fooled half of them, and if you ask them to this day what their favorite card trick is, they will tell you Tiny Plunger, so I'm proud of that, and of the fact that I was one of the few people that Johnny Thompson called and asked to appear on the show. I will hold that in my heart even more so than the show itself."

Armstrong also performed on a couple of episodes of *Masters of Illusion*, and has also appeared on *The Today Show*, as well as various talk shows and local TV.

Jon thinks of himself as more of an encyclopedic fountain of knowledge and a researcher/developer which helps him make effects unique and his own, rather than a creator, but he has become known for the Tiny Plunger, which he jokes will be the thing that's on his tombstone. He



Jon on tour.

has also recently brought out the book *How to Win*, which is theory, practical advice, and even a few magic tricks, all related to stand-up magic. It's about his transformation from close up to stand up with advice to others making that journey.

Armstrong also filmed one of the last L&L DVD sets, and has done four penguin lectures, and a Vanishing Inc. masterclass.

Jon is dyslexic, and tells us, "Reading classic magic text is a challenge for me, but there is a dyslexic font available that I put the books into, that helps me hold down the words. That, and walking in circles while I read helps me to focus." Illustrations also help him to focus, and while he does also watch magic videos, Jon feels that he does learn most of his magic from books. He continues, "If I can learn from reading books, anyone can."

Armstrong feels that his dyslexia is somewhat responsible for one of his superpowers. He explains, "Walt Disney and many other creative people are dyslexic. I have the ability to close my eyes and visualize a routine as I'm going through it, and that allows me to practice and rehearse in my head, and that's something I don't think I would be able to do if I didn't think this way."

In 2012 Armstrong with Ryan Brown and Mike Costa wrote and published a comic book called *Smoke and Mirrors*. Jon describes it, "It did magic for you as you read it, and it has a cameo with Howard Hamburg in it at the Magic Castle." The book stars his mentor Terry Ward and is available on Amazon.

Although Terry Ward is Jon's only mentor, he credits several people for making him a better magician, and they are Zabrecky, John Lovick, Derek Hughes, and Derek DelGaudio. As Armstrong graduated into stand-up, he gravitated towards magicians like Mac King, Pop Haydn, and the classic guys like Billy McComb, Alan



Jon with his wife, Vanessa, and their daughter, Maddie.

Shaxton and Terry Seabrooke. He tells us, "I got to spend some time with Billy McComb, and I have collected and read almost everything he put out, as well as audio interviews which are amazing. He is such a great inspiration to me."

Jon also fits in Performing Arts Center shows where he can in secondary and third markets. He explains, "They don't need me in New York or Chicago, but they need me in Poughkeepsie and Des Moines." He routinely finds 300-400 seat theaters where he will produce his own show for one or two nights. Armstrong continues, "I just do the stuff I created for Disney for the family market, and it's great."

Although Jon enjoys the touring gigs, cruising is still the mainstay for him, and he cruises around twenty weeks of the year.

When asked what advice he would give to somebody coming into magic today, he said, "I think the major thing that is missing is that magicians need to understand to be good at their magic first and not try to be original out of the gate until they have the strong magic down. I have no problem if you want to be a performing artist or a comic, but if you want to be a magician, perfect your magic first."

Armstrong is not alone in this thinking. Pop Haydn published an essay titled "Against Originality in Magic," and Eugene Burger was also of the mindset that magicians should perfect their magic before adding their original spins.

Jon wants to continue doing what he's doing for the foreseeable future, but eventually he hopes to be able to slow down and try doing more things that allow him to be at home. He explains, "I want to watch my daughter grow up and for her to still be proud of me. The worst part of my gig right now is all the travel time and all these days that I basically lose being in airports." He continues, "I also want to be able to spend more time in this amazing place that is the Magic Castle and is unique to this world. I want to soak it all in and fall back into magic over and over again."

Armstrong loves Los Angeles, and living in Burbank, but he realizes that it's not a market that would work for him to open his own theater show. He currently produces a monthly show in a Tiki bar that has forty seats, and he brings in a lot of his Castle friends to perform there. He also books the Illusion Magic Lounge in Santa Monica.

Jon wishes he had more time to visit Vegas to hang out with his friends and see more shows, but he just doesn't have the time with his busy schedule. He jokingly tells us, "My hopes and dreams are to have a thirty-hour day."

If you haven't had the opportunity to see Jon Armstrong in one of his performing habitats, look out for him appearing in a theater near you, on a Disney Cruise or at his favorite place, The Magic Castle. You will see a great, funny entertaining show!

Simone Marron serves as International Secretary of the I.B.M. She is a frequent contributor to The Linking Ring *and a recipient of the Bamman-Willmarth Trophy.*

From Our UK Correspondent

BRIAN LEAD



Traditionally, September is convention month where Ring 25 is concerned, and this year's event took place in the Derbyshire spa town of Buxton, famous for its wonderful Matchan-designed opera house which provided the setting for our gala show and stage competition.

President Moira Fletcher took to the stage, accompanied by International President Jason Michaels, to welcome conventioneers and declare the convention open.

Both set the tone for the weekend of magic which lay ahead, emphasising the friendship and common bonds which allowed us to create an oasis of comfort amid the vagaries and turmoil of the modern world. Jason brought greetings from the parent body, and alluded to his Tourette Syndrome, along with his personal journey which had turned adversity into strength. This feeling of positivity and well-being became the underpinning theme of the following two days.

What better way to start a convention than with our own John Kimmons, known for his dynamic performing style. He had the running gag of a cuddly toy being held up to produce music from *The Lion King*, and self-controlled music and sound effects were integrated into most of the routines.

One amusing anecdote concerned a red crayon puppet which got laughs by simply repeating "red crayon" ad nauseam. John's demonstration had proved so popular that the prop was soon sold out on the stand where he works, with people buying a purple crayon instead without realising the implications in terms of ventriloquial difficulty.

John stressed throughout the need for total commitment to the performance, but insisted that most of his pops would fit into a pencil case. The "Kimmo" lecture proved to be a masterclass, not only packed with ideas but also the additional performing personality which money cannot buy.

The History of Mystery went well, with our old friend Roy Field recalling conventions past at Buxton. My favourite anecdotes concerned the occasion when service at the banquet was so poor that diners



Opera House.



Auditorium.

ended up queuing in full dinner dress at the local "chippie" ("takeaway" for non-UK readers) and a stage competition which had so many contestants that it went on until two o'clock in the morning. This year's competition, from a field of just five, was won by Jay Gatling. Vicky Butterfly was awarded the Alastair Wand for a beautiful act with illuminated parasols and a spider's web "Zombie," conceived and constructed by herself.



Vicky Butterfly

Peering skywards and shielding their eyes from the sun, Buxton conventioneers in 1937 saw the silhouette of a man perched high up on the roof of the Crescent – a famous architectural feature from Georgian times, built in 1780. The man was Paul Graham, and he was about to engage in a publicity stunt to advertise the convention, attempting to walk round the narrow parapet of the building. Roy has been up on the roof himself and can testify to the fact that it is only eight or nine inches wide. Although the air was still down on the ground, gusts of wind were blowing at higher levels, and Graham soon found that his balance was more precarious than he had anticipated. He wobbled, lost his footing and landed painfully astride the balustrade. He eventually managed to throw himself sideways onto the roof of the building, and so averted disaster.

Probably powered by adrenaline, Graham manged to proceed with a blindfold drive, but when he appeared in the gala show that evening to present a second-sight act he broke down and was unable to continue, being gently led from the stage by President Oswald Rae. He recovered enough to be able to watch the second half of the show from one of the boxes.



The Cresent, Buxton.

That turned out to be quite a memorable gala, as during his act Milton Woodward's swirling cloak knocked over a stack of goldfish bowls, complete with water and fish. The audience's alarm was increased when his assistant, Millicent Cooper, not only ignored the stranded goldfish but actually stood on them. They were, of course, slices of carrot.

Paul Graham went on to perform more stunts in the future, and became president himself almost thirty years later, in 1964.

I introduced an 111-year-old ventriloquial figure named Norman Snodgrass, who was the on-stage companion of the female ventriloquist Josephine Langley. She worked professionally for twelve years, from 1911 to 1923, playing the Moss and Stoll Empires and the London Coliseum as well as being very popular on the MacNaghten circuit in Lancashire and Yorkshire. She had the same agent as Gracie Fields and topped the bill with the likes of Harry Lauder, George Formby Sr., and Frank Van Hoven.

When Josephine's son, Maurice ("Mo") Howarth, inherited Norman, he re-named him Elmer Squires. He wanted to strike the note of an upper-class character who was at the same time slow witted. The name derived from a character created by Jean Hugard for his *Magic Monthly* magazine, established in 1943. Elmer used to have a regular column. Mo corresponded regularly

with Hugard and exchanged ideas. Elmer has drooping eyes, a sharply pointed nose, and buck teeth. He is relatively crudely constructed, with a simple "block" mouth with no upper lip movement, and so no smile. The eyes do swivel to the left to look at the performer, and they can blink, but there is no independent movement to allow him to wink.



Brian with Norman/Elmer.

The most moving event of the convention was a show in memory of Chris Wardle, sadly taken from us last year at the early age of 52. Chris was no stranger to these pages as compiler of the British Ring Parade, and with a One-Man Parade of his own to his credit. This memorial show was hosted by Geoffrey Durham and featured Chris's lecturing partner, close friend, and former President Alan Maskell, along with other Past-Presidents Philip Partridge (with the "Triadic" book test) and Richard Cadell with his "national treasure" glove puppet Sooty, for whom Chris had created a special sawing-in-half routine. President Elect Rick Tynan presented a trick by Chris from our *Key Ring* magazine, as did Chris's long-time collaborator, James Ward.

Outstanding in an excellent gala show was FISM winner Nikolai Striebel, who performed real magic, it seemed, with a simple paper aeroplane fashioned from a sheet of paper discarded in a waste-paper basket. It soon took on a life of its own, and was eventually joined by a partner, dancing in mid-air. Nikolai also gave a very insightful lecture.

Other lecturers were Jason Michaels, with his astonishing number of large cups-and-balls loads, James Ward and Alex Jesson of the new Tricked Magic Company, which also won the Dealer Award.

There was a Youth Show with five young aspiring magicians, and the Jeffery Atkins Memorial Lecture took the form of a question-and-answer "conversation" with Andrew O'Connor (responsible for the Derren Brown shows, among many others), which was both absorbing and illuminating.

During the convention I was delighted to receive the Edde Dawes Trophy for my written contributions to magic. I always regarded Eddie as a guide and mentor (although he never thought of himself as such) and so this award is particularly meaningful.

"Fritz with a Z" performed a well-presented one-man show to close the 2026 weekend.



(l to r): Jason Michaels performing and lecturing. • Brian, Moira and the Eddie Dawes Award • Chris Wardle with his good friend and colleague Alan Maskell. (Phots By Jemma Tynan)

Ring 6 (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania) Hosts Annual Stage Magic Night

Our annual Stage Magic Night featured heated competition on a cool September evening. David Hale arranged for three non-members to be the judges: Alice Thompson (of the Community Arts Center), Jim McElroy (from SAM Assembly 4), and bubble magician Meadow Perry.

Bill McElvenny showed us a Philadelphia-themed routine where he tied ropes onto a wooden wand, then tied two coffee cups onto them, and tied a scarf around the whole mess. In a few moments, with help from the wand, everything penetrated the cups and clattered onto his table. A really visual effect. Next, Ed Schmitt ran his version of a TV game show, where a volunteer (Kim Spence) was able to select shoebox-size containers. Two at a time, Ed revealed that the boxes he and his volunteer held contained toy water pistols, and the pistols didn't work. At the last selection, Kim had another non-working water pistol, while Ed wound up with two large, fully filled water pistols that worked extremely well, soaking everyone seated up front.



Ed Schmitt explains the "game rules" to volunteer assistant Kim Spence.

David Hale invited another volunteer to help, as he told a story about how his grandparents met and got engaged. David borrowed a ring and placed it into a box that the volunteer held. He then uncovered a large, empty locket on a necklace. In the story, his grandmother lost the ring, but David shook the small box and opened it to show that it was empty. Another helper opened the locket, and there was the ring!

President Jim Capobianco invited four ladies onto the performing area and mixed up four ESP-style cards. He then asked them where to place the cards on a clear plexiglass square. That done, Jim asked audience members where to place the remaining ESP cards into the frame. When Jim turned the frame around, both columns of ESP cards matched up!

Chris Fabiano shared a story about hypnotism and AI technology to explain that what we would see might be either of these forces. Chris had two volunteers select a card and then hold each in their hands. Did we really just see that? He then had the volunteers show that the selected cards had switched places in their hands! How? Chris split the deck and showed bright LED lights inside to show that it was never a real deck of cards.

Jack Schultz had a large whiteboard with a grid showing thirty-six squares. He asked the audience to give him numbers for the top row, and then he filled in numbers for the second row. He filled out all thirty-six squares this way, then asked us to total the numbers with our phone calculators. Earlier he had handed out a folded sheet of paper



Judges and top winners in the Ring 6 2026 Stage Competition. Back row, L to R: Alex Thompson, Jim McElroy. Front row, L to R: Ed Schmitt, Tom Ewing, Laz Capobianco, Meadow Perry.

with a number written inside. Jack asked an audience member to open the paper, and it matched the number on the whiteboard!

Tom Ewing, magic historian extraordinaire, reminded us of the upcoming one hundredth anniversary of the death of magic's most well-known magician, Harry Houdini. He brought items similar to those used by Bess Houdini (spirit trumpet, handcuffs, playing cards) when she conducted séances in the years after her husband's untimely death in 1926. Tom asked for someone to select a card from a deck and write their signature on it. He shuffled the deck and placed it into a holder with two sheets of glass held above the deck. On his phone, he played a recording of Bess Houdini from the final attempt to contact her husband. She never was able to do that, but when Tom uncovered the card stand, Houdini had taken the signed card out of the pack and placed it between the two sheets of glass above it.

After conferring in another room, the judges made their choices:

Third Place: $25 gift card to Magic, Inc., and $25 download credit: Lazarus (Jim Capobianco).

Second Place: $50 gift card to Magic, Inc., and $50 download credit: Ed Schmitt.

Champion: $100 gift card to Magic, Inc., and $100 download credit: Tom Ewing.



Ring 6 judges and competing magicians.

During a break in the action, Tom Ewing also gave an outline of member George Hample, whom we just named as Honored Life Member of Ring 6 (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania). George has taught magic everywhere and was for many years the official City of Philadelphia Ben Franklin reenactor. *David Kelly*

Ring 50 (Washington, D.C.): A Magical Alliance: Magi-Whirl and DC Festival of Magic Reunite to Dazzle the Capital

For the third consecutive year, Ring 50's (Washington, DC) Magi-Whirl 2026, chaired by former Ring 50 President Danny Selnick, combined forces with the DC Festival of Magic, produced by Ring 50 member Brian Curry. Magi-Whirl welcomed over one hundred magicians for a weekend of lectures, workshops, and a bustling dealer room, while the DC Festival of Magic hosted world-class performers for a celebration of wonder, illusion, and five unforgettable, sold-out public shows. Together, these events maximized opportunities for magicians to learn, grow, and network.

The Labor Day weekend performances featured Benjamin Barnes, Kalin and Jinger, The Great Kaplan, Puck, and Jason Suran. Magi-Whirl attendees were treated to lectures by each headliner, alongside special presentations by Dan Harlan and SarahElla and Charles Greene.

Dan Harlan and SarahElla offered an exclusive workshop featuring the world premiere of Speakeasy Pro, a modern two-person spoken code system. Participants raved that this new system is simple and easy to learn and offers a broad range of performance possibilities.

Kalin and Jinger led an exclusive performance evaluation workshop for a select group of magicians. Each participant submitted a video of their act, which Kalin and Jinger reviewed to offer tailored guidance using their proven methodology.

Puck opened the weekend's performance lineup with astonishing sleight of hand and dazzling illusions, interwoven with personal stories that touched everyone's hearts. His lecture gave deep insight into how he invents, develops, and structures magic, inspiring attendees to apply rigorous structure to their own props and routines to build a rock-solid show.

Benjamin Barnes's lecture, "Books Are Magic!" explored hidden gems and techniques from his favorite literature, including his "World's Fairest Card Trick," which famously fooled Penn & Teller. Barnes invited Ring 50 members Geoff Weber and Dane Curren to watch closely, but they were completely fooled as well. Thankfully, Barnes explained the clever gimmick and the step-by-step flow of the trick. He also detailed his process for tight scripting, which is intentionally designed to elicit fear, comfort, amazement, and desire.

"Dave (The Great Kaplan) gave us just a glimpse during his lecture of what we were about to be treated to during his stage show," said Ring 50 member Steve DeSimone. "End to end, it was nonstop, high-energy, hilarious, creative, unique, and unmatched entertainment the likes of which I have never seen. It was an epic weekend of entertainment!"



Group photo of Ring 50. (Photo by James Minichello)



(l to r}:Benjamin Barnes. • Brian Curry – D.C. Festival of Magic producer.• Charles Greene.• Danny Selnick.• Ekashah Shah. • Making Sales. • Jinger Leigh. • Kaplan. • Kareena Schiller. • Bob Weimazn – Jason Suran. • Jason Suran – Mitch Praver.

The Great Kaplan's lecture, "Tips, Tricks, and Stunts," focused on material magicians can immediately incorporate into walk-around and stage acts. Using pieces from his own repertoire to illustrate ideas about presentation, comedy, character, and creativity, Kaplan juggled everything from hats and Ping-Pong balls to beanbag chairs. He was simply great!

Kalin and Jinger kept a busy schedule all weekend between their delightfully unpredictable evening show, their thoughtful lecture, and their personalized evaluation workshop. Their lecture, "Putting the Pieces Together – A Lecture for Magicians," explored their creative process, the performance methods they have developed over the years (which are now widely used across the industry), and how to best prepare an effect or an act. They openly shared their evolution and methodology for refining their act from the time they first met up to the show they had just performed.

Saturday night's Magic Mic, emceed by Ring 50 member Bastian Lazo, kept the magic going late into the night with a fantastic variety of short acts. Ring 50 members taking the stage included Buddy August, Todd Cooper, Capital Conjuror Dane Curren, Stephen DeSimone, Ed Knox, and Geoff Weber.

Between scheduled events, the dealer hall was packed with magicians hunting for new creations and established classics. Vendors



(l to r): Geoff Weber and Benjamin Barnes watch Dane Curren. • Max Erdrich(c) of Maximum Magic with Chris Panaphills and Ryan Daniels. • Josh Young and, Dan Harlan. • Larry Lipman an Danny Selnick. • Mark Kalin. • Vee Sovaan and Jason Suran. • Paul Daniels. • Puck. • Ring 50 President Mitch Praver.• The Great Kaplan. • Todd Cooper. • Event Logos.

included Paul Richards, Max Erdich from Maximum Magic Shop, Jeff Prace with Plain Sight, Mike Kaminskas, Barry Taylor, Antony Gerard, David Jonathan, and Mitch Geter with Project Enigma.

On Sunday, Ring 50 Capital Conjurors Dane Curren, Kareena Schiller, and Ekasha Shah entertained young guests with a flourish of close-up magic as they arrived for The Great Kaplan's matinee show. These young students showed the magic they learned over the past year in the youth program led by Drew Owen.

Dan Harlan and SarahElla returned for a

lecture titled "Beyond the Props," where they explained that magic is rarely remembered for the physical objects used, but rather for the moments and connections created. They explored how storytelling, character, and emotional engagement can transform simple tricks into meaningful, lifelong memories. Harlan opened with the "World's Saddest Trick," a poetic vanish of a tired red silk. Ring 50 member Stephen DeSimone nearly stole the show when Harlan invited him onstage to impersonate a running washing machine, an interaction former Ring 50 President Mark Phillips called "one of the funniest parts of the convention!"

Ring 50 member, historian, and author Charles Greene gave a special historical presentation based on his book, *Exposing Houdini: The Lost Glass Plate Images*. Greene shared his discovery of previously unknown glass plate negatives of Harry Houdini. The collection features over fifty unpublished images taken between 1903 and 1911, many of which were originally intended for an abandoned personal biography.

Mentalist Jason Suran presented his "Schmentalism" lecture, which featured a simple, highly practical routine built with a full suite of outs based on spectator responses. He demonstrated a few nearly undetectable actions designed to elicit multiple, repeatable reactions. Suran covered preshow work, the plausibility principle, word-association routines, and a lightning-fast peek. His hard work was also on full display during the final gala show of the weekend, where his performance left the entire audience unforgettably flabbergasted. But not before Jason completely stunned the audience and Ring 50 member Bob Weiman with a version of Ring 50 member Wes Iseli's trick "Flip," in which Bob was the last person standing and Jason revealed that he had Bob's picture on his undershirt.

Ring 50 will have a hard time topping this Magi-Whirl, but the planning for 2027 has already started! *Gerald Curren*

Ring 64 (Louisville, Kentucky) Louisville Magic Club Celebrates Eighty Years with Thirty-Seventh Annual It's Magic! Show

The Louisville Magic Club celebrated a major milestone on September 4, 2026, presenting its thirty-seventh annual *It's Magic!* Show while commemorating the club's eightieth anniversary.

Founded in 1946, the Louisville Magic Club has spent eight decades bringing magicians together to learn, share, perform, and celebrate the art of magic. The club is home to I.B.M. Ring 64 (Louisville, Kentucky), the Okito/Lance Burton Ring, and SAM Assembly 115, the Mac King Assembly, and continues a long tradition of fellowship, education, performance, and mentorship.

The anniversary production was held at the Clifton Center in Louisville, Kentucky, and featured a strong lineup of performers. Headlining the show were Lance Burton and Stephen Bargatze, with Cody Clark serving as show producer.

The evening also featured illusionists Dinky Gowen and Adrienne Phoenix, along with Jimmy McKnight, David Garrard, and Sidney Lee. Representing the next generation of magic were young rising stars Gideon Clark and Joanna Logsdon.

Before the first scheduled performer took the stage, however, the audience was treated to a special surprise.

The mayor of Louisville opened the show and told the audience that he had not performed magic in more than forty years. For the club's eightieth anniversary, he decided to step back into the role of magician once again.

He performed a few moments of magic and then saved his final effect for the Louisville Magic Club itself. His closing trick was the appearance of an official proclamation recognizing the club's eighty years of magic and its contributions to the Louisville community.

It was a fitting way to begin the evening. Rather than simply presenting a civic

proclamation, the mayor became part of the show and used magic itself to honor the club.



Cody Clark, show producer; Louisville Magic Club President Bret Sohl; Mayor of Louisville Craig Greenberg; and Lance Burton.

From there, the thirty-seventh annual *It's Magic!* Show continued with a cast that reflected both the history and future of the organization. The combination of internationally known professionals, longtime club performers, illusionists, and young magicians made the evening an especially appropriate celebration of eight decades of magic in Louisville.

The show's headliners, Lance Burton and Stephen Bargatze, each brought their own distinctive style to the program, while the rest of the cast showcased the breadth of talent connected with the Louisville magic community.

This year's program was particularly meaningful because it demonstrated one of the club's central traditions: passing the art of magic from one generation to the next. The evening brought established performers and young rising stars together on the same stage, offering a living picture of the club's past, present, and future.

For eighty years, Louisville Magic Club members have performed throughout the community, hosted lectures and conventions, shared ideas with one another, encouraged young magicians, and helped keep the art of magic alive.

The annual *It's Magic! Show* has become an important part of that legacy. Now in its thirty-seventh year, the production continues to bring live magic to Louisville audiences while providing a stage for both seasoned professionals and developing performers.

The club's anniversary program described its mission as keeping the wonder of magic alive and passing it on to the next generation.

The thirty-seventh annual *It's Magic!* Show was therefore more than an anniversary performance. It was a celebration of the people who built the club, the performers carrying on its traditions today, and the young magicians who will help shape its future.

After eighty years, the Louisville Magic Club is still creating wonder, building friendships, and passing the wand.

And with the mayor beginning the evening by returning to magic after more than four decades, then producing the club's eightieth anniversary proclamation as his final trick, the celebration could hardly have opened in a more magical way.



(l to r): Lance Burton performs "Miser's Dream." • Lance Burton and Elvis vanish a bird cage with audience kids.



to r): Stephen Bargatze performs the Titanic skit with an audience assistant. • Stephen Bargatze performs a card trick with audience helpers. • Joanna "Magic Jo" Logsdon performs "Linking Rings." • Jimmy McKnight and Company. • Gideon Clark. • Dinky Gowen produces a rabbit. • David Garrard performs "Beauty and the Barrels."



Full cast.

2026 I.B.M. Annual Convention

THE LECTURES

St. Louis, Missouri
Marriott St. Louis Airport Hotel
July 21–25, 2026

Reviewed by Ron Sylvester

PHOTOS BY MICHAEL MESSING

Chris Korn told the story of how he blew up FISM.

It may not have been exactly what I.B.M. officials wanted to hear as the organization prepares to partner with FISM for the first North America Championship at next year's convention in Las Vegas. But it had the magicians in St. Louis in stitches.

It also reflected how creative and entertaining the lectures were at this year's I.B.M. Convention. Even the Early Bird session that kicked off the event, a lecture on legal advice from a magician who is also a lawyer, had a big shot of comedy.

Korn was still technically a teenager, barely of voting age, when he broke away from his home in St. Louis to find his way in magic, traveling to Europe and finding success overseas. This was before *America's Got Talent* or *Penn & Teller: Fool Us* made a national television appearance available to any magician willing to work for it. Only the fortunate few could make it onto television, and they had names like Doug Henning and David Copperfield. Live shows and winning a world championship could propel a magician's career as surely as today's TV moments.

What Korn had seen at FISM didn't sit well with him. Magicians got standing ovations while others with lesser impact took home trophies. He said he told himself it was politics and connections over magic.

When it was Korn's turn, he performed a card-to-impossible-location effect in which the location, let's say, didn't sit well with the judges. It was an illusion seemingly powered by flatulence.

"I was met by security when I came off the stage," Korn said. He was banned for life from FISM.

But the ban didn't stop his magic, and it didn't stop him from giving an informative and entertaining lecture at the convention in July. We'll get to that later.

Lectures at the 2026 convention in St. Louis went well beyond teaching tricks and techniques and were as enjoyable as any of the shows. Sure, there were secrets to learn and props to buy, but the personal stories each lecturer brought to the stage were as valuable as any of the methods taught.

Here's a rundown of this summer's lectures:

CHRISTIAN MISNER (EARLY BIRD LECTURE)

Misner gave the lecture for early arrivers on Tuesday, the night before the convention's official opener. These are always a treat for people traveling a long way who want to get to the convention in plenty of time to absorb every minute.

A comedy magician as well as a practicing attorney, Misner delivered a lecture in two parts. He opened with a great rendition of the classic thumb-tip silk vanish, built into a routine that included plenty of crowd work and lasted several minutes. He took a piece of magic that everyone in the room had learned and long since forgotten and showed how something old could become a viable show element.

"Take something simple you do and blow it up bigger than life," he told the audience.

It was a reminder that we don't need to buy the newest, shiniest piece of magic to make a good show. You've probably got something in a drawer that's just as good, if not better.

Misner also put on his barrister hat to offer key advice on contracts and legal points for booking a show. Among his tips:

Don't allow a client to use a deposit more than six months after paying it. The deposit should be 50 percent of the fee.

Balance is due upon arrival.

Late starts count against the time hired to perform.

Consider intellectual property, such as photos and videos, in the contract, since you'll want them for possible marketing.

Cap liability limits, and carry liability insurance (a member benefit provided by I.B.M.).

Account for unforeseen circumstances, such as weather and other acts of nature.

Shift the legal expenses onto the client if you have to hire an attorney and take legal action to collect.







Christian Misner.

ARTEM SHCHUKIN

The FISM manipulation champ and I.B.M. Gold Medal winner from Russia shared his vibrant theatrical approach to magic and how he puts together a routine.

He opened by wandering onstage with a wheeled carry-on suitcase like a tourist lost in an airport. He had a strip of toilet paper stuck to his shoe. That toilet paper came to life, popping into his hands and wrapping his arm through the suitcase's extended handle.



Artem Shchukin.

Magicians recognized the effects as classics, including "Silk through Microphone," but put in the context of toilet paper and a suitcase, they became new.

Shchukin approaches each prop as if it were a living part of his show. "The object is the partner," he said. "Look for a conflict. It's like a cat and mouse, Tom and Jerry."

In this approach, Shchukin said, card manipulation becomes like "fighting with the cards." To develop the character, he will talk to himself during practice. "The inner work gives depth," he said.

He also described searching for music and working to make everything fit and time out exactly right.

In practicing his manipulation act, he aims to perform every move one thousand times.

AARON FISHER

One of the founders of Conjuror Community, Fisher gave those who crave card magic everything they could want.

Fisher went over his signature effects, "Paper Engine" and "Panic," the latter a nifty and simple deck disappearance.

He was entertaining and informative. Fisher taught an array of card magic that anyone could do with practice, with no knuckle-busting sleights needed. He would take a Vernon color change and simplify the moves.

"Great card magic comes from simple moves and a good structure," Fisher said. "The structure of a trick is what makes it so powerful."

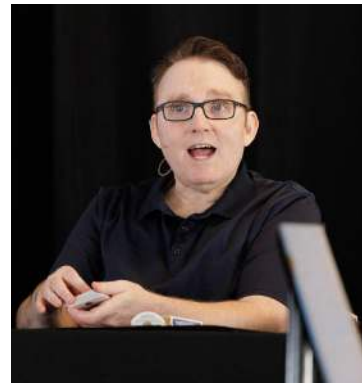
JONATHAN BURNS

The day after having the audience laughing at his hysterical, zany act, Burns went all interactive with an array of stunts and party tricks.



Aaron Fisher.





Past International President Bill Evans and Aaron Fisher.

Burns split the audience into groups that rotated through stations around the room, juggling water bottles, twirling toothbrush handles on one finger, and turning straws into musical instruments.

On the twirling toothbrush, Burns gave a great piece of advice: "If you do this at home, close the toilet seat first."

Burns, a physical comedian who draws inspiration from Steve Martin, Pee-wee Herman, and others, provided one of the most fun hands-on experiences of the week.







Jonathan Burns.

ANDI GLADWIN

Before we get to the tricks (and Gladwin had some dandies), let's talk about Vanishing Inc.

Gladwin told some hilarious stories about running the retail magic company he founded with Joshua Jay.

The best was when he was taking orders and working out of his house in Great Britain, and he noticed that one order was going to an address right down the road. To expedite it, he dropped the package off at the customer's door that day. Fast shipping! The customer responded by writing a terse letter to Vanishing Inc. Seems he had noticed that the package hadn't been shipped. But he had paid for shipping, so he immediately demanded a refund of the shipping cost. He got his money back, but no good deed goes unpunished, even in magic.

It was these kinds of personal stories that really livened up the convention, giving magicians a glimpse not only into the methods of tricks but into the entire magic community.

Gladwin opened with an updated version of Tommy Wonder's "Ring, Watch and Wallet." It used a new gimmick that's less complicated and less expensive. But Gladwin told his own story in the presentation. He said most magicians use a story about being mugged on the way to the show, but he didn't want to involve the audience in a violent story, or one so obviously false.





Left to right: Jeff Vanderhoff and Mark Zajicek; Judith Corbin and Jonathan Burns; Lincoln Stone.

I already had the trick at home, and I hadn't yet performed it because I couldn't come up with satisfying patter. Yet that one part of Gladwin's lecture had me thinking about presentation for days. After I came home from the convention, I hit on something personal, sat down at the keyboard, and wrote a script. I performed it the next time I did a show, and it hit with the audience. This is an example of how one little story, in one lecture, can propel your magic. If it weren't for the I.B.M. Convention, I might never have landed on the presentation. That's the power of these lectures.

Gladwin, of course, presented some impressive card effects: a transposition of jacks, a funny poker routine, an interesting equivoque, and a cool card control.

He ended his lecture with some great background on his documentary, *Stealing Magic*, about how he and others helped expose an outfit that was stealing effects off the retail market and selling them to unsuspecting enthusiasts. It looks like a strong story. It is now showing in select screenings and will soon become available to the public. We can't wait.

JON ARMSTRONG

This was a magic convention, and everyone in the audience recognized Armstrong as an originator of the great "Tiny Plunger." He's an award-winning close-up magician who has performed with Penn and Teller and headlined at Disney.

But he was having none of that. He was in St. Louis to talk about putting together a stand-up platform and parlor comedy act. And that was amazing.





Above: Andi Gladwin; Right, top to bottom: Andi Gladwin and Kelly Rusk; Andi Gladwin and Kevin Desrosiers

What Armstrong brought to the stage was a way to bring the intimacy of close-up magic to an audience farther away.

"Close-up is more conversational; parlor is more presentational," he said. "Making stand-up more conversational makes an audience feel they matter."

After doing his stand-up set, which included a genuinely great routine with his necktie, Armstrong broke down five things about putting together a strong show:

Unite: You want to play to the entire audience, so everyone has fun. That will also win them to your side. You want them rooting for you.

Engage: Magic is a theatrical art that breaks the fourth wall. Use that to your advantage.

Respect: Value the audience and their time. Make the show worth their while.

Impress: Impress not only with magic but with presentation. Dress sharp, and use lighting and staging to enhance the show.

Train: Use comedy to encourage the responses you want and to help the audience learn how to enjoy a magic show.

"The moment they leave the show remembering you and not that they saw 'a magician,' you have won," he said.

CONNIE BOYD

The most fascinating lecture didn't involve explaining tricks.

Connie Boyd, the convention's guest of honor, gave the gripping story of how a series of accidents and injuries led her to become a Las Vegas headliner, magic historian, podcast star, and author.

Boyd was a teenage ballerina who, like many dance students, eventually learned that she didn't have what the ballet world was seeking. But she did learn that her dancing skills could lead to a circus career. So she got a job with a traveling circus and became a high-flying trapeze artist. At the height of that career, everything came crashing down, literally, in the Houston Astrodome, when a rigging failed and she fell to the ground, breaking both feet.







Jon Armstrong.



Connie Boyd.

As Boyd pondered what to do next, she found the world of magic and was encouraged by legendary Las Vegas headliner Barclay Shaw to step out of the box and perform as a magician.

So she did what every neophyte magician does. "I spent my life savings on magic," she said with a laugh. She hired an illusion builder and went all in on a full evening stage show. She quickly realized there was more to magic than big boxes. She created a character that she described as "Marilyn Monroe meets Ann-Margret meets Elvira." Then she went after experts to help her make a real show, hiring Don Wayne as producer and Joanie Spina as choreographer (both from David Copperfield's team) and going about the serious business of being a Vegas headliner.

"I learned how to turn setbacks into opportunities," she said.

That led to a third career producing and directing stage shows for cruise ships and to becoming a mentor to other women who want to build careers in magic.

The 2020 COVID-19 pandemic brought everything crashing down once again. So she started a video podcast on YouTube, *Magical Women with Connie Boyd*, that gained nearly half a million followers and featured tales of historical figures and interviews with contemporary stars of magic who happen to be women.

That led to her next career, as an author. In 2025 she wrote *The Power of Magical Women*, the most in-depth anthology of women in magic ever produced. It features seventy magical women from this century as well as a journey through the history of magic, showing that women played crucial, if often overlooked, roles in the development of the art.

Boyd's story was powerful and impactful.

CHRIS KORN

Besides the hilarious FISM story about literally pulling magic out of his [redacted], Korn gave some serious notes about improving magic.

At the top of the lecture, Korn stressed listening to the audience and making them part of the show. He also said magicians should dress properly and make the show an event. "Make us look great again," he said.

The self-described "St. Louis hoosier" urged taking the time to personalize your show and make it your own. "You have a story to tell," he said. Korn also took the time to go back to the basics, from keeping your arm relaxed when palming a coin to a simple coin vanish that many attendees were practicing later. He also described how he improved his magic by performing at a rough biker bar.



Chris Korn.

He passed along some sage advice from St. Louis legend Harold D. Russell. "He told me to have fun out there," Korn said. "That's going to be your playground." More important, he stressed that magic needs to be supportive, not competitive. Magicians, he said, need to follow the lead of jugglers.

"Jugglers share everything," he said. "We need to stick together. Jam, trade ideas."

That's how we all get better.

JONATHAN LEVIT

Levit, another of St. Louis's homegrown magic stars, left the Gateway to the West, like many others, to head to Los Angeles and Hollywood.

Levit likens magic to jazz: the ability to listen to the audience and the flow of the show to create moments of "wow." He demonstrated with a four-card mind-reading reveal that played with the audience in comic moments and became more of an event than a routine.

"Slow down" was one of his main messages.

"Don't rush to the wow," Levit said. "Everything should seem natural and organic. There are always several ways to do a routine. Whatever you do, make it like it comes from a natural part of you."







Above: Jonathan Levit; Right, top to bottom: Jonathan Levit and Norma Gutierrez; Jonathan Levit, Diogene Leiva and Norma Gutierrez.

Trixie Queen:
Magic and Whistling

By Roy Field

I first became aware of **Trixie Queen**, the stage name of Ida Emily Want, when I was conducting research for my history of the British Ring, *Linking Britain* (2011), in 2010. Trixie had a regular column called "Tales Out of School" in the British Ring's *Budget* (now *Key Ring*) magazine, where she very much told it "as it was" about magic at the time, in an always amusing and often very pertinent style. She was that rare performer, a female male impersonator magician. There have been others – for example, it is known that Adelaide Herrmann appeared occasionally in male costume – but it is certainly rare.

Whilst doing my research, I got to know Trixie's daughter **Kay Murray**, herself a past president of Manchester's Order of the Magi. Together we explored more about her mother's remarkable life, and as you will discover, there was certainly much more to it than magic.

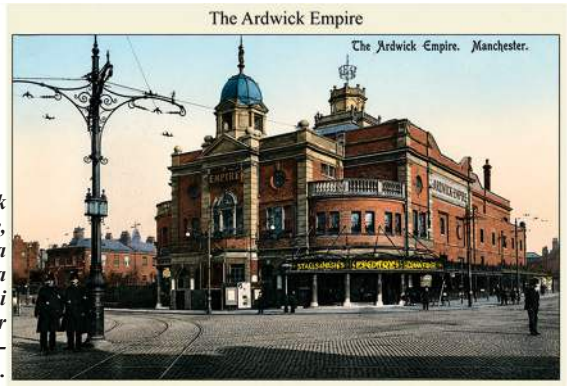
In 2024, Kay and I gave an "in conversation" presentation about Trixie at the I.B.M. British Ring and Northern Magic Circle conventions. The following is a narrative version of those question-and-answer sessions.

"Trixie Queen" was born **Ida Emily Want** in Ardwick, East Manchester in 1906. The celebrated suffragette Emmeline Pankhurst was the registrar of the birth. It was a working- class family and they were great theatre and music hall (vaudeville) devotees, attending the local Ardwick Empire (which later became the Hippodrome). Houdini, for example, played at the Ardwick Empire along with other music hall greats, so Ida was no doubt influenced by some of the many fine performances she saw at a young age. Home entertainment was normal in working-class homes at the time, and if you could play the piano, violin, drums, bones, or spoons, you were always in demand. Ida's party pieces were that she could sing, dance, and especially, whistle.

One of the many acts at the Ardwick Empire that impressed and influenced her was **Eugene Stratton**. Originally from the United States, he performed in blackface (a racist practice common in the era), singing his most famous song "Lily of Laguna" and dancing a dexterous soft-shoe shuffle. Of course, today such a performance would not be in any way acceptable, but it was a different era.



Ida Emily Want poses for a childhood portrait.



The Ardwick Empire, where a young Ida saw Houdini and other stars perform.

Concert parties and church socials to make money for local charities were a regular feature of life, often performed by talented local groups. One such group was the Manchester Kentucky Minstrels. It now almost beggars belief that a group of white businessmen from a major industrial English city could perform and pretend to be from the American South, but they were undoubtedly popular at the time, and this minstrel-style show could be regularly seen in British Music Halls and seaside shows. Little Ida was certainly impressed, so with burnt cork and soft taps and Eugene Stratton style, she joined them. A Manchester Kentucky Minstrels programme from the time shows Ida billed as doing a "Song and Dance – Mississippi Honeymoon." A young boy soprano, Don Estelle, was also in the chorus. Years later, he gained national fame on British television in the hit comedy show *It Ain't Half Hot, Mum.*



The Manchester Kentucky Minstrels.

Bones Solo	... ..." BLAZE AWAY " ...	Robert Stone
End Number	" HEZEKIAH JOHNSON'S JUBILEE "	Frank Kellett
Song and Dance	" MISSISSIPPI HONEYMOON "	Ida Want
End Number	... " KENTUCKY BLUES "	Frank E. Wills
Selections by members of the " Kentucky Banjo Team "... ...		
End Number	... ... " MY PET GAL "	Alf. Morrell
Ballad (to be selected)		Harry Rowe
Finale ... " FLOATIN' DOWN TO COTTONTOWN " ...		Eva, and entire Cast

A 1920s program lists Ida's "Mississippi Honeymoon" song and dance.

An artist who had an even greater influence on Ida's future was the male impersonator and excellent music hall performer **Ella Shields.** This style of performance, now sometimes referred to as crossdressing, was a regular and popular feature on the British stage. Ella was dressed immaculately in top hat and tails. Her most popular song was "Burlington Bertie from Bow," and her audiences would join her in the chorus with enthusiasm. She had star quality. (Julie Andrews performed the song in Ella's style in the 1968 film *Star).* Ida used her talent for whistling (more of which later) to earn money and invested in a hat, white tie, and tails. Even as an adult, Ida was "petite" at just under 5 feet tall, so getting something to fit, unless it was bespoke, must have been a problem. Nevertheless, later photographs of Ida, in full male evening attire as Trixie, are very reminiscent of Ella. She took elocution lessons to drop her flat Northern vowels, and her rendition of "Bertie" was always well received. Other songs in her repertoire which went down well were "Something About a Soldier" and "I'm Not All There." She also invested in a Chelsea pensioner's red dress suit for another act. (The Royal Hospital, Chelsea, is the home for retired British Army veterans who wear a distinctive red uniform.)



Ella Shields, the male impersonator who inspired Ida's Bertie act.

As well as singing and dancing with the Minstrels and developing her Ella Shields style, she appeared with a local concert party known as The Knuts. There were a number of "knuts" concert parties in the North, which I discovered when researching concert parties for another article. They seemed to be more prevalent in industrial towns than coastal areas. The term "knut" dates back to the Edwardian era and describes an idle, upper-class, man-about-town about whom the concert parties satirised. A popular song

of the time was "I'm Gilbert the Filbert, the Knut with a K."



Posing with the Knuts concert party, with whom she honed her singing and dancing talents.

Ida, of course, had another quite rare talent, as a "siffleuse" (a female professional whistler), with whistling being a talent she used on stage and elsewhere. She had powerful treble and vibrato without the use of her fingers. Her whistling talent was recognised and she was employed to use it in some interesting ways. Since the "talkies" had not yet arrived locally, The Manchester Silent Movie company in Longsight contracted Ida to accompany the pictures by whistling at the cinema. The contract was for 17 shillings and 6 pence, which at the time was quite a lot of money, equivalent to around £36 ($48) in today's values.

Ida was now a proper and legitimate siffleuse. The Queen's Picture Theatre in Manchester hired her on the understanding that she would *not* be paid extra if she received an encore! After taking elocution lessons, she was armed with an acceptable voice to take contracts with the BBC North Home Service based in Piccadilly Gardens, Manchester, performing as a siffleuse in *The Children's Programme*, which pre-dated the national *Children's Hour* for the princely sum of 1 guinea.

By the end of the 1930s, Ida's theatrical costumes were mothballed. She married her agent, music carrier, and accountant Walter Murray and they settled down in a furnished art deco house in Blackpool.

Life for Ida had changed, but while rationing and juggling coupons during the Second World War in 1943, a new opportunity arose when she learned how to knit. The BBC invited her to impart, on the radio, the virtues of "How To Knit Fair Isle On A Circular Needle" to the nation's housewives. Meanwhile, Walter joined with the Northern comic Dave Morris, at Blackpool's Norbreck Golf Club, to write scripts.

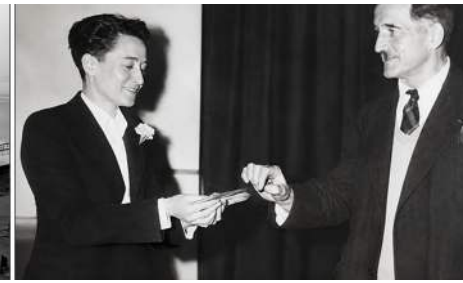
It was at this time that Ida's interest in magic started. She bought a 65-page booklet, *Willane's Wizardry*, from a railway station book stall and was hooked. The addition of magic added another "string to the bow" of Ida's life. Not only did she sing and dance and whistle, but she was now becoming a magician. Ida Want became **Trixie Queen**. Her "top hat and tails" Bertie costume turned her into a rare magical performer: a male impersonator magician. Her "man-about-town" act in the Bertie costume was soon joined by an "Eton Schoolboy" costume for another act, with both acts still remembered in the magic world today. Her advertising byline was "Trixie Queen-Siffleuse in 'Sleight' Suits." This was a cunning combination that could be taken in different ways. "Sleight" referred to sleight of hand, or more prosaically, her diminutive frame, while "Suit" doubly referred to a suit of cards and the male suit she was wearing.



Ida discovered magic after buying Willane's Wizardy on a whim from a railway station bookstall.



Blackpool's North Pier, home to the magic shop where Ida – as Trixie Queen – demonstrated tricks.



Trixie performs a card trick for Jack Gillespie, manager of the Blackpool North Pier Magic and Toy Shop.

With her newly honed magic skills and her skill as a demonstrator, Ida began performing on Sundays at the Blackpool North Pier Magic and Toy Shop managed by Jack Gillespie. Blackpool, located on the Lancashire coast of England, was and still is the centre for entertainment in the country's north. The city was rightly called "Showtown" and was a must-be place for magicians. Happy dads and grandads were easily persuaded to make this place part of a day out.

In addition to Trixie's magic and puppet demonstrations, a gyroscope top she used had people spellbound. With a pull of the wound-around string, a little metal motorcyclist ran along a taut wire at the front of the counter. It wasn't easy to perform, and Trixie probably had to pay a physio to reset her thumb regularly due to the physical stress.

Trixie was also a skilled glove puppeteer who gave demonstrations at the toy shop. Magician **Harry Corbett**, who found British television fame with *The Sooty Show*, bought his first Sooty puppet from the Jack Gillespie shop. Another well-known Lancashire television and stage performer, **Norman Evans**, used a glove puppet to great effect. Trixie's glove puppet is now at the Magic Circle Museum.

Her skills as a demonstrator were not limited to the magic world. The 1940s heralded the importation of wind-up and friction mechanical toys, and large department stores, such as Blackpool's RHO Hills, employed people to demonstrate them. Ida's performance background made her an ideal demonstrator. In addition to demonstrating toys, she offered samples of Marmite, a still-popular vegetable extract product promoted as a health food. Yes, Ida was deep in serving Marmite, but she didn't grow any taller!

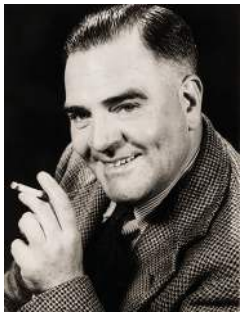


A demonstration of the glove-puppet now on display at the Magic Circle Museum.

Blackpool has a famous tower, a smaller version of the Eiffel Tower in Paris. There is an internationally recognised circus at the base of the tower, frequented by most holiday- makers. Souvenir "goodies" were popular to take home, so a souvenir pencil with a personal name printed on it was just the thing to buy from Ida. The sales were sanctioned by the great Tower Circus clown, **Charlie Cairoli**, who had taken on the corporate endorsement.

As "Trixie," Ida was gaining unique notoriety for her male-impersonation, man-about-town persona. Magicians visiting Blackpool gravitated to the Jack Gillespie shop, where she made many supportive contacts. **Oscar Paulson**, who at the time was the president of the I.B.M. British Ring, persuaded her to join the Ring. She remained an enthusiastic member and convention goer for the rest of

her life. She joined other magic clubs as well, but one in particular, the Top Hat Club, may not be as well known as the others. It was a Manchester-based club meeting at the Wiles Toy and Magic Shop in the well-known Lewis's Arcade. Here they would meet on Saturday afternoons to show tricks and read magic magazines. Lewis's arcade had a nighttime "reputation" and has since closed, replaced by a less-dubious Caffe Nero coffee shop. The arcade and shop, in its more raffish days, appeared in the closing scenes of the 1960 film *Hell Is a City*.



Oscar Paulson, who persuaded Trixie to join the I.B.M..

Ida was an enthusiastic supporter of The Order of the Magi, which at the time was an all- male Manchester club. She appeared on the bill for their dinners and shows. She was also an early member of the Northern Magic Circle.



Appearing as a guest at the Huddersfield Circle of Magicians, with Harold Beaumont and Alf Browne.

She was also a guest artist at other magic clubs, as can be seen in a poor halftone photo of her at the Huddersfield Circle of Magicians with two well-known Northern magicians of the time, Harold Beaumont and Alf Browne. Alf was known in his time for his colour-changing waistcoat, later popularised by Roy Davenport, the great- grandson of Lewis Davenport. The colour-changing waistcoats were a feature of Lewis Davenport's act in the 1920s and 1930s. Ida is shown with a Lyle clock, which she used often. It was later changed to show astrological symbols rather than numbers.

Although Trixie regularly wore a top hat and tails as described, one of her other well-known acts was the "Eton Schoolboy" routine. As she was of small stature with short hair, she could easily pose as a schoolboy. Also, the formal clothes worn by the scholars at that famous historic school, could soon be adapted from elements of standard male evening wear.



Trixie in top hat and tails (left); performing her Eton Schoolboy routine.

She came on stage using her siffleuse skills, whistling the "Eton Boating Song." With her imaginary friend Stinker, she got into mischief whilst a pianist played "Boys and Girls Come Out to Play." They got into trouble "behind the bike shed," so to speak, first by smoking. She had the classic clay pipes, but deliberately broken down so they looked smaller and more appropriate for schoolboys. The smoking illusion was created by acid and ammonia combined to produce ammonium chloride, a white powder that floats up to look like smoke (not something seen so much these days). Still lurking behind the "bike sheds," the Eton Schoolboy and Stinker opened a book featuring a pin-up model on the front. This "hot book" really was hot, immediately bursting into flames. After various other exploits, the duo retired

to their "dorm" where the imaginary matron calmed them down and entertained them with a little bear glove puppet whilst whistling "Brahms's Lullaby."



Trixie's "hot book" prop bursts into flames.

In another one of Ida's acts, dressed in her man-about-town Bertie costume, she performed "Telling the Cards." The act was based on fortune-telling, with Ida wearing a mask and rapidly identifying cards from a pack "by touch." Ida had cunningly changed the pack for a stacked deck, so she knew what was coming.



With her stacked deck, one of the many small, easy-to-carry props she preferred for her magic acts.

She also had an act based on a tram ride along the Golden Mile in Blackpool. She dispensed tram tickets which were torn and restored. During her imaginary ride along the "Mile," she spied a "Fresh Fish Sold Here" sign which allowed her into that classic routine. At times, she finished with a "Pass the Salt" in the style of Fred Kaps, as she always liked props she could easily carry on stage. For the schoolboy act, for instance, she had everything in a school satchel.

Something else she possessed, but it's uncertain whether it was a prop or just a souvenir, was a cricket bat with a cigarette lighter incorporated at the top of the handle. It was autographed by the entire English cricket Test team of the time, as well as 1950s magic stars who attended I.B.M. Conventions. Its current whereabouts is unknown.

When she entered her fifties, she stopped doing the "Eton Schoolboy" act as she felt, in spite of her small size, it would no longer look authentic. As she put it: "I love youth on stage … I put away my costumes when I realized I was no longer the image I had always aimed at."

In 1950, **George Blake**, who was on the first British Ring Council and internationally known, took over the editorship of the I.B.M. British Ring magazine the *Budget,* and Trixie began her long-running column "Tales Out of School." They are great fun to read or reread today and give a flavour of British magic at the time and its "disputes." Trixie always told it as it was and never held back her opinions! In her column, she led a campaign against the *Radio Times,* the main magazine for television and radio programme listings at the time, for publishing magic tricks with "how to do it" explanations. The campaign was successful and the *Radio Times* removed the tricks section.



TALES "OUT-OF-SCHOOL."
By TRIXIE QUEEN.

Jack Armitage of Hornsey, yet another "Scot" domiciled in London uses two "Poly-foto" positions for his publicity.

Position 1. Boring expression. Knot on a handkerchief.

Position 2. Smiling expression. Knot vanished.

The two photographs are convenient cigarette or small visiting card size and give action to STILL photographs.

Alice Bowshon, the London comedy-coupeer, has joined the grandee society. "The Marion Men's Union. Congratulations to him and good luck to you both!

One highly publicised magician, John Calvert, got an Ironical Lady from a Blackpool audience during the season.

During his "levitation of a lady" he had a child-assage on the stage to say: "I'd like to float, please." He replied: "I've already one lady on the hook!" And he had!

Bayard and Marion had a disarming question asked them this year in the Isle of Man. Their host arranged music, lighting, curtains for their walk-down act and finally said: "Now, what **temperature** do you like the room during your performance."

"Surprise of Glasgow, a Hastings prize-winner is interested in working in England (this sounds as though "Scotland "as long way off!) and asks: "What kind of magic are English audiences for? We'll He should know. **Good magic, well performed.** He's proved it.

G. A. Jones of Blackpool not only does "Locospots" of magic and a rodeling item; but is also the leading tenor in the male-voice choir with which he travels. **Versatile** on his business cards and brochure is justifiable.

***A clipping from Trixie's long-running column in the British Ring's* Budget.**

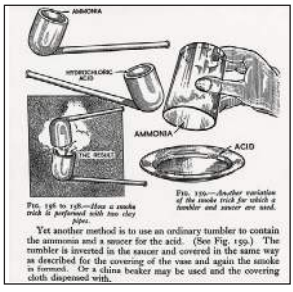
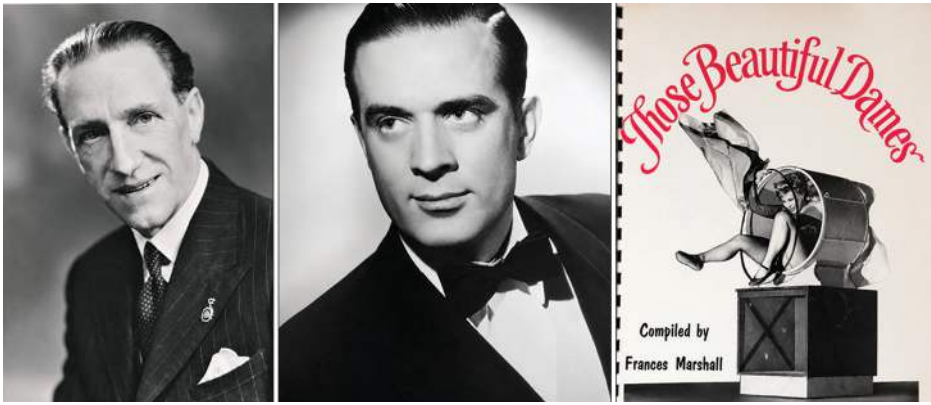


FIG. 156 to 158.—How a smoke trick is performed with two clay pipes.

FIG. 159.—Another variation of the smoke trick for which a tumbler and saucer are used.

Yet another method is to use an ordinary tumbler to contain the ammonia and a saucer for the acid. (See Fig. 159.) The tumbler is inverted in the saucer and covered in the same way as described for the covering of the vase and again the smoke is formed. Or a china beaker may be used and the covering cloth dispensed with.

The acid-and-ammonia effect behind her smoking clay pipes.



George Blake (left) commissioned Trixie's column while Ken Brooke (center) encouraged her to be herself. She was later recognized in Those Beautiful Dames (right), Frances Marshall's compilation of female magicians.

A Glasgow magician once wrote to Ida, saying he wanted to do shows in England and wanted to know what type of magic suited an English audience. An exasperated Trixie responded in her column "He should know! All you need is good magic, well performed!"

Trixie had many friends in magic who corresponded and advised her, such as George Blake and Ken Brooke, and some of the correspondence still exists and is fascinating to read. George, for example, advised her about her "Telling the Cards" routine, suggesting she make sure she got her helpers off stage so that she, alone, could get the final applause. He sold her the blow/lit tapers, which she may have used with the clay pipes in her "Eton Schoolboy" routine.

Ken Brooke, the UK's greatest magic demonstrator and dealer, was another who "told it as it was." He obviously liked Trixie and his correspondence with her is funny, useful, and affectionate. He felt that he and Trixie were in the "grafters club of magicians." He told her not to do "la di da" magic and to be herself. She must have told him she was "a bit mad." He responded that "it might be an idea to work on as we have a few fine lady magicians, but none of them are mad!" Like George, he felt that as she was so small, she needed to be on the stage alone, particularly when she was taking applause. Ida was featured in *Those Beautiful Dames,* a compilation by Frances Marshall of worldwide female magicians, and she was pleased to be recognised in the company of female performers such as Suzy Wandas and June Merlin.

Trixie was a strong supporter of the British Ring and their conventions. She appeared in some competitions and won a silver I.B.M. British Ring spoon. This was probably only awarded one time, so is now quite rare. Reading convention reports in the *Budget* show that she performed not only in competitions but also in ladies' afternoon and late-night shows and other convention events, presumably at this stage in her own clothes rather than her "Bertie" attire. In later life, she attended a number of FISM conferences.



Trixie at ninety.

Trixie lived to be a good age and was, as Ken Brooke put it, always a hard grafter. She continued working in various non-magic jobs until her middle eighties. Employers either turned a blind eye to her actual age or she didn't tell them! She worked for the Gas





Left: Trixie's business card with her byline "Siffleuse in 'Sleight' Suits," dated September 1948. Right: A handbill advertising her "Telling the Cards" effect.

Board for ten years, demonstrating again at Debenhams department stores and other local businesses. At one job she was described as "the oldest Girl Friday around." She was always active and received a bicycle as a present for her ninetieth birthday! Sadly, a stroke affected her in her last few years and she died at the age of 97, in 2003.

In one of many tributes published in the *Budget* after Trixie's death, Fred Elliot reminisced about her friends, excitedly asking at conventions "Is Trixie here yet?", looking forward to chatting and laughing with her. That is why she is remembered. She is forever the "Burlington Bertie from Bow" of magic.

••••••••

CODA: This narrative is based on public conversations with **Kay Murray**, to whom we are very grateful for sharing details of her mother's remarkable life. However, when the conversations and slideshow concluded, it was not all over. In true, end-of-British-Pantomime style, a song sheet appeared and Kay and Roy put on top hats to lead the audience in a rousing chorus of "Burlington Bertie from Bow," the song that inspired Ida's career as a male impersonator performer. She would have loved it!

I'm Burlington Bertie, I rise at ten thirty
And saunter along like a toff.
I walk down the Strand with my gloves in my hand
Then I walk down again with them off.
I'm all airs and graces, correct easy paces,
So long without food, I've forgot where my, face is,
I'm Bert, Bert, I haven't a shirt
But my people are well off you know,
Nearly everyone knows me from Smith to Lord Rosebr'y
I'm Burlington Bertie from Bow.



Author Roy Field with Kay Murray, Trixie's daughter. The duo lead a chorus of "Burlington Bertie from Bow" after a recent talk.



Roy Field is a magician, magic historian, and writer based in Yorkshire, England. He joined the Leeds Magic Circle in 1958, where he later served as its president, and became a member of the I.B.M. British Ring in 1960. A past president of magic clubs in Leeds, Derby, and York, he now writes columns for magic magazines on both sides of the Atlantic. He is the author of *Linking Britain*, a history of the British Ring, as well as *Gallery of Master Magicians*. He has served as president of the Northern Magic Circle and is an award-winning writer for articles published in *The Linking Ring*.



A Portrait of the Professional

DALE SALWAK

The Oakland Magic Circle

Magicians have the most rapturous and absorbed shoptalk of any artists I know. – Adam Gopnik

Jazz music [like magic] is the power of now. . . It's conversation. The emotion is given to you by musicians as they make split-second decisions to fulfill what they feel the moment required.– Wynton Marsalis

Photos Courtesy of David Sam

Sometimes we don't appreciate the value of what we have until we imagine life without it. How greatly diminished we and our art would be if worldwide magic clubs suddenly ceased to exist.

As a tonic, as a soft retreat from the unrelenting clamor of the world, with sun blinds down and doors closed to the curious, in this private province we are neither distracted from nor judged about our shared interests. Through newfound friends and their encouragement, it's here that many of us got our start and developed in the profession.

And so nostalgia and pure pleasure are the first words that come to mind as I reflect on my October 6 visit to the "oldest independent magic club west of the Mississippi River" – the Oakland (California) Magic Circle.

There for more than two and one half hours I entered into a conversation *with* (not lecture *at*) close to fifty of its one hundred or more active members and their guests. From my arrival at 6:00 p.m. until closing time at 10:00, they were engaged, enthusiastic, and eager to learn and share.

Founded in 1925 by Lloyd Jones, E.J. Battle, R.S. Bailey, and Blue W. Williams, the club meets on the first Tuesday of every month at the private Sound Room (having moved March 3 of this year from the Scottish Rite Center). Its purpose, as with all such groups, is to bring together people interested in all forms and levels of magic while taking a collective vow to elevate the art and protect its secrets.



The Sound Room.



(l to r): April Carter upstages Dale with the Center Tear. • Dale demonstrates a card production. • Helping Misha Frankly with a ball routine. • Card fan production. • Teaching Yonatan Tucker the roll vanish. • Hoshea Zeng. • Members of the Oakland Magic Circle await their dinner orders. • Michael Nguyen with Dale. • Perry Yan.

The Sound Room: What an ideal setting for magicians thanks to its President and Founder Karen Van Leuven, and her husband of forty years, Facilities Manager Robert Bradsby. Hidden away at 3022 Broadway, it is the nationally-recognized home of the Bay Area Jazz and Arts, Inc. (BAJA), a nonprofit organization that nurtures music, art, and creative ventures through live performance and educational programs – the very heartbeat, in fact, of the Circle.

As one who grew up listening to and learning from the thrilling keyboard greats – especially the musical illuminations and instantly recognizable voices of Oscar Peterson, Erroll Garner, Dave Brubeck, Thelonious Monk, Art Tatum, Peter Nero, Keith Jarret – I internalized early on the harmonic patterns and forms of jazz improvisation and instantly sensed a kinship between the two arts, jazz and magic.

Like magic, jazz communicates themes of mystery and enchantment. Think, for example, of the pleasurable and comforting classics "Bewitched, Bothered and Bewildered," "Skeleton in the Closet," "The House is Haunted," "Witchcraft," "That Old Black Magic," or "I Put A Spell on You."

Like magic, jazz goes beyond themes and lyrics to maximize an audience's receptiveness to distinctive native rhythms, improvisation, and emotional intensity, leaving them rarely in doubt about what they are supposed to be feeling;

Like magic, jazz has a clear structure (with variations), a "form," which all students of the art must recognize and learn to master early in their careers.

Using the standard AABA structure that I learned from taking along with my classically trained mother John F. Mehegan's four volume series, *Jazz Improvisation*, I adapted the lessons to magic.

First presented at the 1980 British Ring Convention in Eastbourne, I divided my presentation into four parts (like the standard 32-bar jazz performance), which I continue to use to this day because of its understandable and universal appeal:

(1) introduction of the melody: stories, theories, principles;

(2) variations on the melody: demonstration of Neil Foster's "Center Tear" – which worked for the volunteer and not for me ("You learn quickly,!" I said) – performed to Count Basie's cheerful "All of Me," followed by a workshop during which volunteers April Carter, ten-year-old Yonatan Tucker, and Misha Frankly learned a billiard balls routine and then performed it to Erroll Garner's "The Way You Look Tonight";

(3) solos or bridge: excellent performances by Perry Yan and Hoshea Zeng after which I offered suggestions just as if we were sitting in Southern California's Chavez Studio of Magic; and

(4) coda and return to melody: performance and explanation of my rope routine (every magician needs one), accompanied by Julien Ando's version of Joe Hisaishi's playful "A Town with an Ocean View" – as a tribute to my friend, the late George Sands and his "Sandsational" (whose son and full-time magician, Alan, I was delighted to meet afterward) – followed by questions and answers.

At work here, too, is the universal 80-20 rule (the Pareto Principle or multiples of tens) for productive thirty-minute practice sessions, about which thanks to a friend I first learned at that Eastbourne convention.

As the unstated theme of my Oakland presentation, it says that roughly eighty percent of results come from twenty percent of effort. Applied to magic, twenty percent of what we spend time practicing – really focusing on the right things, the right material – is likely to create eighty percent of our improvements. Less is more.

For all of these reasons, I left Oakland the next morning sporting an OMC lapel pin (thanks to longtime friend and club treasurer Manya Casto) along with an honorary membership (thanks to Michael) and feeling refreshed and replenished with creative energy.

I owe a great deal to President Michael Nguyen – a very fine stage and close-up magician in his own right – and the Board for inviting me and for making all the necessary arrangements, including the production of reprinted selections from my *Linking Ring* column offered free to all attendees. Another spiral bound edition was sold to raise funds for the club.

As I mentioned to him, if I lived closer I would without hesitation join and participate – a sentiment every professional needs to consider about clubs in their own area, if for no other reason than to support those that helped them to grow and prosper early in their careers.

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 Michael Nguyen and 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.*

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

Halloween Haven, AKA Houdini Hole:
A Subterranean Tribute to a Great Magician

By Dr. Cato Holler

Many of you are aware that in addition to magic, one of my other passions is caving. Spelunking is a term often used to describe sport caving, but serious explorers who engage in scientific speleological endeavors prefer to be known simply as "cavers." Over the years, our family has had the privilege of exploring and studying thousands of caves around the world.

This year is significant for both of my passions. 2026 is the centennial of Harry Houdini's death, as well as the year that one of my own caving discoveries turned into a tribute to the escape artist himself. It began with a solo hike in the early hours of Halloween morning, 2018, which led me to a cave that now bears his name.

I had set out alone to do some ridge walking, searching for new caves here in a remote area of western North Carolina. As I reached the top of a rocky plateau, I experienced an eerie phenomenon. The eastern sun hit my body at such an angle that my enlarged, somewhat distorted shadow was projected across the distant forest, resembling a huge Sasquatch.



Sasquatch.
PHOTO BY CATO HOLLER

Well, that's a bit spooky, I thought, *but how appropriate for Halloween!*

Following along the base of some cliffs, I spotted a series of cave-like fissures higher up. After an easy climb, I was able to reach one of the lower cracks and sure enough, there was a cave opening. I explored about 120 feet of nice walking passage, apparently previously unexplored, terminating in a small pit that seemed to lead into a lower level. I noted several side passages as well, and there hanging on one wall were two beautiful eastern tri-colored bats. What a great Halloween!

As it is unwise to explore solo, I headed back out, vowing to return with others to properly explore and survey this new find, which I tentatively named Halloween Haven. Because I had stumbled upon this cave as if by magic – and with this also being the anniversary of Houdini's death – I added Houdini Hole as a second moniker.

Two years passed before I would return to Houdini Hole. It was another October morning, 2020. This time I was accompanied by my daughter Nancy, a very experienced caver who has been exploring caves since a youngster; her husband Brent, one of the top cave cartographers in the country; and their daughter Scout, an ardent herpetologist. We had decided to make it a three-generation family project.

Unlike my first visit, the day was overcast and drizzly, so we donned our rain gear and enjoyed the hike. We spent most of the day thoroughly exploring and mapping this impressive fissure cave. Unlike the relatively stable solution caves, these



Nancy prepares to descend the deception pit.
PHOTO BY CATO HOLLER



Scout carefully examining a crevice salamander.
PHOTO BY NANCY HOLLER AULENBACH

granitic fissures are formed mechanically over time, as huge blocks of rock creep apart under the pull of gravity. They can be much less stable as a result. Characteristic of similar caves in the area, Houdini Hole contains lots of breakdown, sharp-edged boulders, and loose rocks. This cave has also proven to be a haven for a diversity of biota, including spiders, silverfish, crickets, and snails. Of particular interest were a half-dozen large crevice salamanders, much to Scout's delight. We took time to get some good photos of this unusual variant, found only in this area.

We rigged the pit and Brent and Nancy descended to the lower level for a quick reconnaissance. On my discovery trip, while peering down the narrow pit opening, I realized I had overestimated the depth. As a result, we named the drop "Deception Pit." Once Brent and Nancy climbed back up to rejoin Scout and me, we all backtracked to the entrance to begin a detailed survey using a new laser instrument.

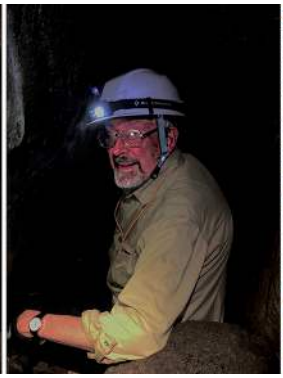
After mapping a couple of side leads, Nancy climbed into an impressive upper gallery we decided to name "Houdini Hall." Brent gave me a knee assist and with a wristlock from Nancy, I was able to join her. She jettisoned her vertical gear and then climbed the next pitch. Brent then joined me, removed his excess gear, and climbed up to join Nancy. They reported finding themselves in a very unstable area with a chance of large boulders shifting, but another entrance was in sight. It was decided that Brent and Nancy would delicately survey up and out the upper entrance rather than backtrack, for fear of dislodging debris on us below.

In the meantime, I grabbed their excess gear, tossed it down to Scout, and began to make my way back to the main level. Unfortunately, I had to pass through two nasty blades of rock ("The Impaler"!). As I slid between the sharp edges, I suddenly felt a painful sting in my lower abdomen – a significant abrasion, but fortunately no internal injury. At that point I couldn't help but think about poor Houdini, who was not so fortunate when he expired from a blow to the same area, reportedly resulting in a ruptured – and later gangrenous – appendix!

By that time, Nancy and Brent had surveyed the upper end of Houdini Hall through the upper entrance, which we dubbed "The Great Escape." They emerged beneath a large overhang on a cliff above Scout and me and were able to slide down to rejoin us at the main entrance. We then continued the survey back to the pit where Nancy and Brent redonned their vertical gear and descended to map the lower trunk passage, which they had reconned earlier. In keeping with the Houdini theme, we rightfully named it "The Sub Trunk." I lowered my camera



Brent surveying in subtrunk.
PHOTO BY NANCY HOLLER AULENBACH



Cato readies himself to explore Houdini Hole.
AULENBACH



Nancy exiting the cave.
PHOTO BY CATO HOLLER

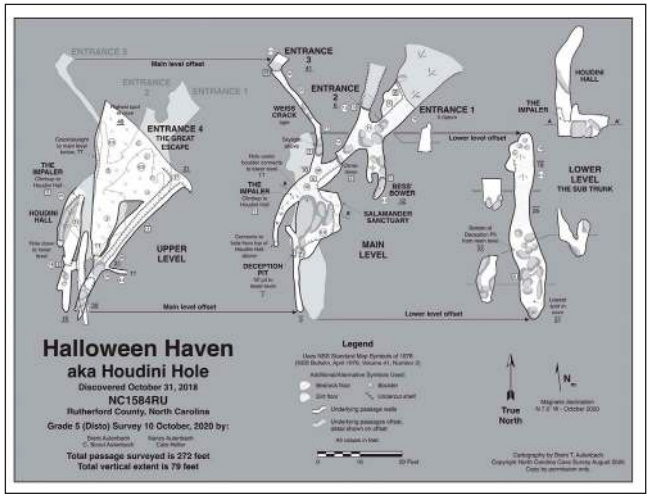
down to Nancy to snap some photos. As she reached up to grab it, a large flake of rock began to move from the wall. She immediately leaned against it with her body and was able to direct its fall so it wouldn't injure her or the excess rope on the floor. Another close call!

After finishing the lower-level survey, Nancy and Brent ascended. We unrigged the rope and ended up with 272 feet of mapped passage. It was a drizzly hike back to the car, but we were elated to have been able to survey this rather unstable virgin cave. Better yet, we all managed to escape Houdini Hole with no major injuries.

Burdened with more urgent work, it was not until this year that Brent was able to draft the final map of the cave. The timing turned out to be fitting, given the occasion. You will note on the map other appropriately named features. We named one quiet side alcove "Bess Bower," in tribute to Mrs. Houdini, while dubbing another side lead "The Weiss Crack," a reference to Houdini's Hungarian Jewish family surname of Weiss or Weisz.

So, let it be known that on this one hundredth anniversary of Houdini's death, Halloween Haven – also known as Houdini Hole – has been officially registered as cave #1584RU in the North Carolina Cave Survey.

Happy Halloween to all, and Happy Houdini Centennial Celebration!



The official cartographic map of Halloween Haven, aka Houdini Hole.

THE INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF MAGICIANS

Youth Trivia Contest

November's question: This entertainer was an acclaimed conjuror for six decades, featured on theater stages on three continents as well as on several island nations, persevered through fires and floods, was an integral part of one of the biggest circuses ever, and was active and admired in magic organizations. *Who was this performer?*

Answers must be postmarked by December 20, 2026.

August's question was: As far back as the 1800s, and possibly earlier, mediums and psychics used an unseen device to provide written evidence of precognition. *What was this device?*

Several Youth Members sent us answers to this month's question. Unfortunately, none of those answers were correct. Here are the basics of what we were hoping you'd find.

This little item wasn't used exclusively for "precognition," or predicting things. In fact, it was also used to provide evidence of communication with the spirits of the deceased – fraudulent evidence, of course.

It's been referred to by several names, the nail-writer *and the* Swami Gimmick *being the most common. These are all different names for items within the same group of secret writing tools; they vary in the way that they attach to the body part, but the fundamentals are identical.*

They're little slivers of material shaped to fit under or around the thumb, thumbnail, finger, or fingernail. They're designed to hold a small piece of pencil lead, chalk, or other writing medium at the tip of the digit. In the early days, these little gems were used mostly at the end of a finger, but over the years, they've become more commonly attached to a thumb. Although the appliance first became known in the 1800s as something used by fraudulent psychics, today it's one of the most powerful tools in mentalism and magic.

Most historians give the credit for inventing this fingertip writing tool to a man named Henry Slade. He became part of the community of "Spiritualist mediums" prevalent along the northwestern edge of New York State in the second half of the 1800s. It's possible that other fraudulent psychics used the device before him, and were successful in keeping it an "underground" secret, but the first known records attribute the gadget to Slade.

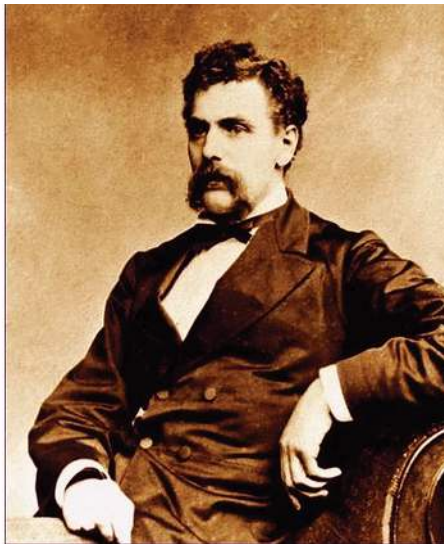
Henry Slade is believed to have been born in the 1830s in Johnson Creek, New York, a small settlement between Hydesville (where the Fox sisters lived and ignited the Spiritualist movement) and Niagara Falls. By the late 1850s, he was entrenched in the world of the Spiritualists, teaching and performing séances using the title "Reverend" Slade, and eventually "Dr." Slade. He began demonstrating the slate-writing phenomenon within a few years, and he took his presentations around the US, and across the Atlantic.

It turns out that the reasons we are aware of the name of Henry Slade in today's world are not limited to the belief that he invented the nail-writer. Slade was also the defendant in a spectacular trial in London, England, regarding his Spiritualist activities. The parties involved in the legal proceedings included Charles Darwin and John Nevil Maskelyne, and this enhanced the public's interest.

On his way to Russia, late in the summer



A photo of a young Henry Slade.
(Courtesy of Ken Trombly)



An older, more established Slade.

of 1876, Slade stopped in England to conduct some séances and make some additional income. During one of these séances, two associates of a very skeptical Charles Darwin clearly caught Henry Slade committing acts of fraudulent slate-writing. They filed criminal charges against him, and the court case that followed was front-page news for weeks. Darwin's involvement, other than being a rabid supporter of his colleagues, was mostly from the sidelines ... but he was a well-known and vocal figure.

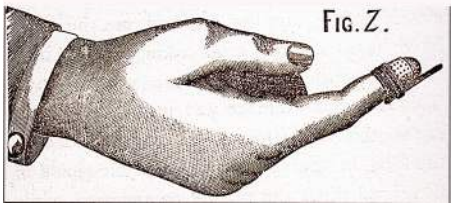
Maskelyne, however, became a feature witness. His entertaining "stage presence" and his testimony which exposed the secret writing device used by fraudulent mediums and psychics brought laughter and other audible responses from the spectators in the courtroom – responses normally associated with theatre audiences. (Keep in mind, the device wasn't yet a part of the toolbox of magicians and mentalists.)

At the conclusion of the trial, Henry Slade was convicted of fraud under the Vagrancy Act, and sentenced to three months of hard labour in the House of Correction. Fortunately for Slade, his conviction was reversed on a tiny clerical technicality, and he was able to slip out of the country before he was retried.



An etching from The Illustrated London News of October 1, 1876, of John Nevil Maskelyne testifying.

Slade's version was most likely a thimble worn on his index finger, and was amended with a piece of material extending off of the end capable of marking on slate. While seated at a table, he would hold a blank slate underneath a table with one hand and keep his other hand above the table and in view. The index finger with the attached writing device was free to move and write on the slate while the remaining fingers of that



Fingertip thimble device pictured in J. W. Truesdell's Bottom Facts Concerning the Science of Spiritualism.
(Provided by the Honorable Gary R. Brown)

hand held the frame of the slate braced against a piece of the table securely. These words, apparently written by "spirits," provided proof for Slade's trusting and unknowing victims that he had contacted and communicated with the deceased. As knowledge of this tool spread within the secretive community of these Spiritualist mediums, its uses expanded to include clairvoyant predictions.

In the decades that followed, this little piece of apparatus made a gigantic impact on mentalism and magic. Alexander, The Man Who Knows (Claude Alexander Conlin) showcased several feats of divination that relied on a nail-writer. In fact, it's very likely that he was the person responsible for coining the name "Swami Gimmick" through his advertisements selling the "Master Secret of the Swami." Joseph Dunninger practically built his career around them, and even employed the nail-writer to conduct the carnie's well-established "Guess Your Age" or "Guess Your Weight" scam in impromptu situations. Maurice Fogel was known to use them extensively, as was Richard Osterlind, who stated that he preferred the older nail-writer style.



A simple but effective under-nail Swami Gimmick with a piece of pencil graphite.

Like almost every device and technique in the field of magical entertainment, these secret writing implements were eventually modified and tweaked. One of the most significant variations was a relocation of the writing tip from an extension of the nail to the pad of the thumb. This location made it much easier to control and secretly write legibly while maintaining natural movements and gestures. This change was such an advance and advantage that its inventor, British magician and illustrator Eric Mason, called it the "Boon writer." That name is commonly used today when referring to the writing implement attached to the pad of the thumb.

Other adaptations have included the method of attachment to the finger or thumb. The earliest writers are believed to have been affixed to thimbles, or segments of thimbles. Some have been built into thumb-tips or pieces of thumb-tips. Later versions were held in place by narrow, easily concealed bands that wrapped around the end of the digit, or stuck in place by adhesives. There's no way to predict what the next innovation will be. OK ... that's an ironic choice of words.

You can learn about the nail-writer and some of its many uses in books, including The Nail-writer Anthology *by Thomas Baker,* Spirit Slate Writing and Kindred Phenomena *by William Robinson,* A Boon for All Seasons *by Eric Mason and Barrie Richardson,*

13 Steps to Mentalism *by Corinda (the Swami Gimmick is "STEP ONE"), and* Annemann's Practical Mental Effects *by Theodore Annemann. Accounts of Slade's contributions appear in many of these. There's also a lot of great information and stories in past issues of periodical publications, including* Genii, MAGIC, *and* The Linking Ring. *You'll find a fantastic, nearly book-length feature by the Honorable Gary R. Brown in* Gibecière *(Winter 2017) that chronicles quite a bit of Slade's history.*

Henry Slade died in 1905.

We'd like to scribble (with our Swami

Gimmicks) legible notes of ***tremendous*** *gratitude to the Honorable Gary R. Brown, David Charvet, and Ken Trombly for their generous contributions regarding this month's subject.*

If you submitted a response to this month's question, but you didn't send the *correct* response, please … *keep trying!* These questions aren't expected to be effortlessly answered using Internet-based search engines like Google. Bring your copy of *The Linking Ring* to your local I.B.M. Ring meeting and ask one of the more experienced magicians to help you find the answer. Show everyone how sharp you are, get your name printed in *The Linking Ring*, and win some great stuff from one of our best brick-and-mortar magic shops. You'll *love* the prizes!

Attention, Youth Members!

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

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

Please make sure you include a few references. If we use your question, we'll send you either a Ford 4610 tractor with a broken exhaust stack or a really cool magic book – our choice.

See if you can win! Follow the Contest Rules on page 162 and mail your responses to the address above.
Answers must be postmarked by December 20, 2026.



Get Thee Published in The Linking Ring!

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

Magic and Memories



David Ginn

For the next two issues I am sharing a pair of classics from my past. This month is the complete text of my *Comedy Cut & Restored Neckerchief*, a routine I used in almost every scout show I ever performed, so that you can use it during scout month in February. So let's plunge into the fun. And to my American friends, Happy Thanksgiving!

Comedy Cut & Restored Neckerchief

Why did I dream up the Cut & Restored Neckerchief in the first place? Because kids don't wear neckties as a rule, and because I started doing a lot of scout banquets in the early 1970s. I wanted to cut something other than a piece of rope and put it back together.

Little did I know the routine would be such a big hit. Why was that so?

I think mainly because it was personal. Not only was it always a scout neckerchief – Cub Scout, Boy Scout, Explorer Scout, whatever the case with the current audience – but it was that boy's own neckerchief.

Add to that the fact that I returned his own neckerchief after restoring it and boy, did it carry an impact. Yes, even though I used live doves or a rabbit in the show, the Cut Neckerchief was almost always the big hit.

Now I'll tell you the best time it ever worked:

A Boy Scout executive leader called me and said they were having a banquet in the Atlanta area for Eagle Scouts, all of whom had been to Philmont Scout Reservation in Arizona. Philmont is a special scout camp for boys who have climbed higher in rank. The scout leader booked me to do their banquet show, since I am also an Eagle Scout.

As usual, I asked him which exact neckerchief they would be wearing, because I already





(left): 1960: A fourteen-year-old David receives the Eagle Scout Award, surrounded by family.

(right): 2004: Wearing the same scout shirt forty-four years later, along with my 1960 scout campaign hat. Hey, thanks to Weight Watchers, the shirt still fits!

feared the answer. These boys would be fourteen to seventeen years old, he told me, and each one would be wearing his one and only Philmont neckerchief.

At the time, Philmont had a rule: only one neckerchief ever for boys who went there.

Yes, they drummed that into the boys' minds. They told the boys, if a lion rips your neckerchief to shreds, mail us back the shreds and only then will we replace it. Otherwise, nobody gets two Philmont neckerchiefs.

At the time, Philmont neckerchiefs were highly valued in the scout trading market! The Philmont neckerchief policy kept them that way!

"Is there any chance some scout might be wearing a different neckerchief?" I asked the executive.

"No," he said. "They are all required to wear their Philmont neckerchiefs. Why do you ask?"

I told him about the neckerchief trick and said, "I cannot really explain the magical workings, but in order to do it, I have to have a duplicate neckerchief that I can actually cut up."

"Well, that sounds like a great trick," said the executive. "And since you're a magician, I know you can keep a secret. So I'll tell you a secret."

He paused to let me anticipate. Then he said:

"I have an extra Philmont neckerchief – don't ask me how – and you can use it for the show. I'll hand it to you in a paper bag when you arrive. Whatever you do, tell no one about this! They'll think you're a real magician!"

The day of the banquet arrived, the scout leader handed me the bag, and backstage I folded and loaded the duplicate Philmont neckerchief in my change bag, as you'll read in the book.

When I got the fourteen-year-old Eagle Scout up and stole his own neckerchief off his neck, he started getting nervous. But when I proceeded to cut three big holes in his own Philmont neckerchief, he nearly fell apart!

"Don't worry," I joked, "they'll give you another one. All you have to do is mail all these pieces back to Philmont and wait three months for verification. But that's a long time to wait."

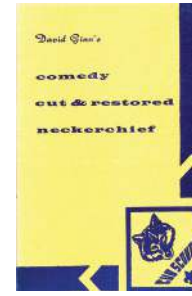
I continued the routine to the point of restoring his original Philmont neckerchief. I put it back around his neck and had him replace his neckerchief slide on it. When he left the stage, we both got tremendous applause.

In fact, the routine has never gone better, and probably never will.

I destroyed the cut-up Philmont neckerchief and never said another word about it after thanking the scout leader.

Boy, did that make the show!

When I started doing the Comedy Cut & Restored Neckerchief, I could buy Cub Scout blue-and-yellow neckerchiefs at 50 cents each; the price later increased to a dollar each. Even if they are $10 now, this is the first trick I'd think of doing at any uniformed scout function. Frankly, it's a killer!



You are about to read a routine that has brought me more laughs, more surprise reactions, and perhaps more applause and general fun at Cub Scout and Boy Scout banquets and meetings than any other magical effect I can remember.

And that's what I want you to know from the start: this is strong comedy material. I guarantee it. I've lived it.

During the winter of 1972, I booked a number of scout banquets for February and March. Since many scouts had already seen my current school assembly show, I decided to do a different program with more scout-oriented tricks for these banquets. That year I created a show that included a Boy Scout Handbook version of the old "Miracle Book

Test," the silks-off-ropes effect using scout neckerchiefs, a cut-and-restored rope routine, a rope escape, and so on. After performing a short silent opening and a talking sucker trick, I invited a scout on stage. My first volunteer had no idea I would cut his official scout neckerchief full of holes. But I did.

The laughs came. And so did the applause when I finally restored the neckerchief to its original condition. Since then, I've used my Comedy Cut & Restored Neckerchief in virtually every scout show I've performed for three years. Believe me, it's worth it! And it's one trick they always talk about long after I'm gone.

Since I will never have the opportunity to entertain every scout in the world with my neckerchief routine, I am passing my routine on so that you may have the fun of entertaining lots of scouts. Try it. You'll never regret it!

REQUIREMENTS: For the presentation you will need:

- One scout neckerchief
- A pair of good cloth-cutting scissors
- A standard change bag

I suggest you buy the standard Cub Scout neckerchief (yellow with a blue band); for Boy Scouts, buy the standard red or green. It helps to know ahead of time what type of neckerchief each pack or troop wears so you can have a duplicate. Cubs normally all wear the same. Boy Scouts differ. I usually ask when I'm booking the show so I'll be prepared. ("Be Prepared," by the way, is the Boy Scout motto.) One time I did a troop with special neckerchiefs, and the scoutmaster gave me a duplicate to use in the show.

Note that I normally use a change bag to make my switch. You can use other methods also, and I will describe several later on.

SET-UP: Roll the neckerchief as a scout would to wear it, but roll the flap part around the rest to make a long-rolled tube of cloth. Fold this long roll in half, then fold it around itself in 4-inch lengths and place the finished bundle in one side of your change bag. Have the scissors nearby or on you.



How I fold up the neckerchiefs each time they go in and out of the change bag. The long part is rolled about halfway, then folded in half and wrapped around itself after the point is wrapped to the inside first.

THE VOLUNTEER: "I'm going to need some help tonight, and for that I'd like to get a scout who has been in scouting only a few months. Let's see, how about that fellow there."

Important: I always get a scout who has only been in the program a short time, say six months or less. Because of this, I have a better chance of his neckerchief being relatively new, a good match for my new duplicate. Naturally, the boy must be in uniform.

Once the boy is on stage, I ask his name. We'll call him Bob. I explain to Bob that before he can help me with the trick, I must check him out to be sure he can follow instructions. "That's very important, you know." I tell him that he must do everything I say as fast as possible.

But first, I stand the boy on my left side and "notice" that his neckerchief isn't straight, whether it is or not. I pretend to help him straighten it. In doing so, I place both hands on his neckerchief slide and move one hand up toward the boy's neck as I slip the neckerchief slide down and off the neckerchief. "Hold your head up," I tell the boy. "There, that's better." Then I say, "You know, it would be better if you stood on my right." So I step behind the boy and slide him to my right, slipping his neckerchief slide into my pocket as he passes in front of me. Whether he knows the slide is gone or not doesn't really matter. However, if I do this fast and keep talking, he usually doesn't realize what has happened.

"Now before we start this trick, Bob, let's make sure you can follow instructions." I

have the scout stand at attention. "Feet together, stomach in, chest out, chin up, eyes straight ahead, ears closed. And would you put your right foot a little closer to the floor?" Then I start the test.

"Right hand up!" I say sharply. I pause. "Right hand down!" I do this a couple of times until the boy does it correctly. Then: "Left hand up! Right hand up! Left hand down! Right hand down!" Laughs are coming here because the boy invariably messes up. Many boys get nervous and forget which hand is which, adding to the comic situation.

After getting things straight, I move on to this: "Right hand up! Left hand up! Right foot up!" Stop. The boy should have his foot up off the floor and both hands up. Sometimes I turn away and pretend to look for a prop, leaving the boy dangling there. Believe me, this'll get laughs. The audience will be watching the boy try to keep his balance.

Finally I say, "Right foot down, left hand down, right hand down!" Then: "Left hand up, right hand up, right hand down, right foot up, left hand down, right hand down, left hand up – left foot up!" This is the biggest laugh, mainly because the boy already has his right foot up in the air and is balancing on his left foot. If he picks up his left foot …

You can make this part of the routine as long or short as you choose. I spend 30 to 60 seconds on it.

NECKERCHIEF STEAL: The next thing I do is get the boy's neckerchief in my hands. Remember, it is now merely hanging loose around his neck and shoulders.

"Well, Bob, that's pretty good. In fact, I'd like to give you something for doing so well." I reach into my pocket and remove the neckerchief slide stolen earlier. "Here you go: a genuine official Cub Scout neckerchief slide! You didn't have one, did you?"

Audience and boy both react to this for more laughs. Sometimes the boy is genuinely shocked, and his expression can bring the house down with laughter.

I hold the slide for a moment. Then I hand it to the boy, and the moment he takes it, I reach behind him, grab his neckerchief at the flap, and jerk it off him.

"Oh, this is a nice neckerchief," I say. "Have you had it long?" While the scout answers, I fold his neckerchief exactly the way I folded my duplicate in the change bag. I hand it to the boy and ask him to hold it a minute. Then I reach for the change bag.

CHANGE BAG GAG: I use this gag with the change bag to show it empty without saying it's empty. As I say these words, I do all the appropriate motions.

"Now before we get too far into this thing, I want to show you something we're going to use. Here it is. I call it a bag on a stick." Occasionally I get adult laughs on this, but I just continue on. "As you can plainly see, the bag is red on the outside and black on the inside. Now several years ago I tried an experiment. I tried to put the inside of the bag on the outside while leaving the outside on the outside. But it never worked. I found that every time I put the inside on the outside, the outside came on the inside. And when I left the outside on the outside, the inside stayed on the inside. But when I put the inside on the outside, the outside always went on the inside, even though I wanted the outside to stay outside while the inside was outside. So I decided it couldn't be done because when you put the inside on the outside, the outside comes to the inside, and with the inside on the inside, the outside stays on the outside." As I say all this, I speed up my talking, turning to the boy at the end. "You understand what I'm talking about, don't you, Bob?"

The scout usually says, "Yes."

So I say quickly, "Then explain it to me. I don't know what I'm talking about!"

After the laugh, I have Bob push his folded neckerchief all the way into the bottom of the bag. The moment he removes his hand, I make the switch.

THE CUT: "Wait a minute," I say as I reach into the bag and take out my duplicate neckerchief. "Before we put your neckerchief in there, I want to show you something." I lay the bag aside a moment and open the neckerchief completely. "You know, Bob, as a scout I'm sure you like to help people, and I'd like to tell you one way you can do that. Now, when you wear this

neckerchief enough, it'll probably get dirty. And it will need to be cleaned, right? Sure. Now you don't want to make your mom wash all your stuff. You want to help her out a little. So I'm going to tell you how to get these little spots of dirt out to save your mother all that trouble."

Saying that, I gather up part of the neckerchief middle in my left fist. "See that spot of dirt, for instance." I keep going whether anybody sees the spot or not. "You don't have to waste time washing that. There's a much easier way of getting that spot of dirt out of your neckerchief."

I take out the scissors, which until now have not been seen. Without hesitation, I cut the gathered piece of cloth away from the neckerchief. The piece drops. The boy usually gasps.

"There! See, that's easy!" I gather up another bit of cloth toward one end of the neckerchief. "And here's another spot of dirt, but don't worry. We'll get that one too!" Snip! The cloth falls away to the floor, and I proceed to cut out two or three more holes, saying, "Oh, look, here's another spot, and another one …"



How to cut the neckerchief to make circular holes.



Cub Scout neckerchief with three holes cut out.

How Every cut I make gets funnier, especially with me just going right on without hesitation, as if it's the natural thing to do. Finally, though, I stop cutting and take stock of the neckerchief full of holes. I dispose of the scissors.

"Well, Bob, how about that? See how easy it was!"

I extend the neckerchief to the scout as though the trick is over. "Anyway, Bob, thanks for coming up here to help me tonight." Another laugh. Pause. "Oh, well, maybe we can do something about this. I don't know." I start rolling the neckerchief up until only 6 inches of flap show. "There, Bob, you can wear it like that. Nobody'll ever notice!" But some parts of the holes can still be seen. So I say, "How about picking up those pieces, and we'll see about putting this thing back together."

The boy picks up the pieces, and I roll them in with the neckerchief, then fold the neckerchief as I did earlier. I hand Bob the folded neckerchief and pick up the change bag. I push my hand through the bag to turn it inside out, empty, then return it to its proper state. I instruct the boy to put the neckerchief back into the bag, all the way to the bottom.

RESTORATION: "Now, Bob, I want you to wave your hand over the bag and repeat the magic words after me. Are you ready? Okay. Here we go: Okee-fen-o-kee." He repeats it. "Okee-fen-ee-chee." He says that or tries to. "Ish-kee-bibble." This gets laughs because most boys muddle up the words. Sometimes I have them repeat the words a second time. "And now let's see what happened."

I reach inside the bag and pull out the cut-up neckerchief by one corner. It unfolds, and the cut pieces fall to the floor. The open holes look very funny. After the noise subsides, I continue.

"Maybe we didn't try hard enough, Bob. We'll try again."

As Bob picks up the loose pieces, I refold the neckerchief, inserting the pieces Bob hands me. Bob puts the finished product back into the bag, and as his hand leaves it, I make the switch.

"Wait a minute, Bob. I know what this needs: a little fresh air." I reach in and remove the boy's original neckerchief, still folded, from the change bag. "Here, hold this," I say, giving Bob his neckerchief. I turn the bag inside out. "Hmm. Nothing here." I lay the bag aside and turn to the boy. I have him hold the neckerchief with both hands, one on each side. The neckerchief is still not open.

How I fold up the neckerchiefs each time they go in and out of the change bag. The long part is rolled about halfway, then folded in half and wrapped around itself after the point is wrapped to the inside first.

"Now, let's say those magic words again. Ready? Okee-fen-o-kee. Okee-fen-ee-chee. Ish-kee-bibble. And now let's see."

I reach into Bob's hands, pull out the neckerchief by a corner, and give it a good shake to open it. Then I raise it up by the two top corners to show it completely restored.

"There you go, Bob. You see, things didn't work out so bad after all! And now, let's give Bob a big round of applause for helping out tonight!"

The boy goes back to his seat, and I smile in acknowledgment of the applause.

SWITCHING NECKERCHIEFS: Before I mention other methods of switching neckerchiefs, I want to answer one anticipated question. Someone is bound to ask, "Why switch neckerchiefs twice?" In other words, why don't I just cut up the boy's own neckerchief and then switch to give him a new duplicate to take home? I could, true. And I have once. But how many scouts arrive on stage with a new or freshly laundered and pressed neckerchief? Very few, I assure you. And I certainly don't want to spend time laundering my duplicate neckerchiefs to make mine look like theirs. So I switch twice. In that way, the scout actually goes back to his seat with his own neckerchief.

Note that during the cutting, the scout never touches the neckerchief. He is away from it, so even though it isn't his, he doesn't really have a chance to examine it. Additionally, he is caught up in the shock of seeing "his" neckerchief cut to bits. In all the times I've presented the routine, I've never had a scout openly doubt that I was cutting his own neckerchief.

There are, of course, plenty of other ways I could switch neckerchiefs. Once I was caught without my change bag, so I made my switch only once (after the cut) in the action of picking up a magic fan out of my side bucket receptacle, where I had a duplicate neckerchief hanging. A magician working in tails could conceivably switch using tail pockets. You could also use other devices on the magic market: a large changing canister, a Casket of Pandora, a change purse or drawstring-type change bag, or any one of a dozen similar devices. For me, however, I still like the standard change bag a lot. It does the job well, lasts a long time (I've had mine for twelve years), and doesn't take up much room in the suitcase. If you don't own one, it's a good investment.

Now get busy! Book yourself some scout shows and give this thing a try. Like I said in the beginning, you won't regret it, and you'll entertain a lot of people too!

Submitting Ring Events

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

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



Marketing MAGIC

KENT CUMMINS

Lots of A's of Marketing!

"Why not see how many A's of Marketing you can come up with?"
— Chris Walden

Did you like that photo grouping of the eleven most famous magicians of the past one hundred years in last month's column? (Okay, two of them were duo acts, so technically I suppose there were thirteen magicians … but that would be an unlucky number!)

David Copperfield, David Blaine, Doug Henning, Harry Blackstone, Lance Burton, Mac King, Max Maven, Penn & Teller, Siegfried & Roy, Mark Wilson, and Piff the Magic Dragon.

Chris Walden developed those images after his favorite AI tool failed to deliver what we were looking for. Chris asked me what I needed the pictures for, and I explained that it was to illustrate one of the points in my daughter's 3 C's of Marketing, which followed the 5 Marketing Moves, which followed the 5 P's of Marketing.

Chris laughed and said: "Why not see how many A's of Marketing you can come up with?"

I hadn't yet settled on a topic for this month, so I decided to run with his idea. Here are my A's of Marketing in no particular order.

AUTHENTICITY

The first "A" I thought of was "authenticity." Does this relate to marketing for magicians? You bet it does!

I am in the habit of asking Google what a particular word means. Here's what I found: "Authenticity is the quality of being real, genuine, and true to an original source or your own true character."

Go back to those eleven magic acts that I highlighted. No two of them are anything alike. Not even close. Yet most of them have performed many of the same classics of magic.

What does that mean for those of us who will probably never achieve international fame?

It means we need to not all look the same. (It also means that we need to avoid copying the latest magician that you see on television.)

Don't just read the instructions on that new trick and perform it exactly as described. Find a way to make that trick relevant to the character you play when you are performing magic.

I hate it when someone just says they need "a magician." What they need is "The Fantastic Kent Cummins!" To be truly successful, I have to consistently demonstrate my own unique style. I refuse to be a generic magician!

I know what my character is when I perform. I want to share the magic that I grew up with in ways that an audience can learn from and appreciate. I will never be trendy. I will always be vintage.

What distinguishes *your* magic performances from those of other magicians in your market? Remember that it is the perception of the audience that matters, not the opinions of other magicians.



The Fantastic Kent Cummins.

You don't have to perform in a dragon costume – in fact, that would no longer be unique – but there is no one exactly like you anywhere in the universe. There never has been, and there never will be. You are unique. Embrace that with your magic.

ADVERTISING

Okay, this is a real marketing word!

"Advertising is a paid form of communication that a company or group uses to bring public attention to a product, service, or cause." *(Source: Google)*

Advertising is also a way that we magicians let the world know who we are and what we do.

The difference between advertising and publicity is that advertising is paid for, so you have control over your message. Publicity is wonderful because it's free. But no matter how hard you try to create and control the message, you are at the mercy of other people.

I love publicity, but I have frequently had my name spelled wrong, and facts completely wrong. When I pay for advertising, the facts appear the way I intend – and my name is always spelled correctly!

ART

Magic is one of the performing arts, and it is important that we treat it as such in our marketing.

"Art is the conscious use of skill and creative imagination to express ideas, create beautiful objects, or provoke an emotional response." *(Source: Google)*

I live in Texas, and the Texas Foundation for the Arts does *not* classify magic as an art. They will help fund storytellers, clowns, and puppeteers, but not magicians. What's up with that?

Eric Hogue, former mayor of Wylie, Texas, spearheaded efforts with US Representative Pete Sessions and former Society of American Magicians President Dal Sanders to make magic a recognized art form by the United States Government. Their efforts succeeded during the 113th Congress in 2014. Two years later, Eric worked with David Copperfield to expand those efforts with a binding resolution created and approved by the United States Congress. They addressed the members of the House of Representatives in support of House Resolution 642 on June 9, 2016, proclaiming magic as an art form.

The International Federation of Magic Societies, or FISM, has also established the UNESCO Project – a global initiative to recognize the art of magic as part of UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

ARROGANCE

Arrogance? Seriously? As part of a marketing framework?

Yes! I see far too many examples of marketing arrogance by magicians! Just today, I read a magic newsletter talking about how magicians have such huge egos. And that often shows up in our marketing.

"Arrogance is an insulting way of thinking or behaving where someone acts as if they are better, smarter, or more important than other people." *(Source: Google)*

Have you seen any magicians who exhibit this trait? (I have.) Do *you* exhibit this trait? (I TRY not to! I think I am better now that I am older, but my wife sometimes still notices my arrogance.)

Most of us initially got into magic because of ego needs. Fooling someone makes us feel superior. But as we become better magicians, the best of us learn that we should be entertaining the audiences not by showing off how clever we are, but by sharing a sense of wonder.

In my humble opinion, doing the bra trick is "an insulting way of … behaving" in most cases. So are some of the kid tricks that rely on making fun of the volunteer. We can do better.

ACHIEVEMENT

"An achievement is a thing that you successfully do or get after working hard, planning, or using special skill." *(Source: Google)*

This word made me think of jugglers, who constantly try to juggle one more object, or learn one more difficult trick. And it applies to sleight-of-hand artists, too.

I love talking about goals, and this word reminds us that we need to set goals that we want to achieve, and then work assiduously (another "A" word!) to *achieve* those goals.

"Assiduously is an adverb that means doing something with great care, constant effort, and close attention to detail." *(Source: Google)*

We should all work assiduously to become better entertainers.

ACE

"Ace" has two common meanings that relate to magic:

Playing Card or Die: "A card or die face marked with a single spot, known as a pip. It often holds the highest or lowest value in card games."

Skilled Expert: "A person who performs a task with high proficiency, such as a top pilot or a student who gets top grades." *(Source: Google)*

My granddaughter, who performed with me for nearly ten years as "The Amazing Adele," has changed her name to "Ace." That matters more to me than "Ace" McDonald, although he has certainly had a larger impact on the world of magic. And McDonald's Aces, named for a different McDonald, is one of the best-known card tricks.

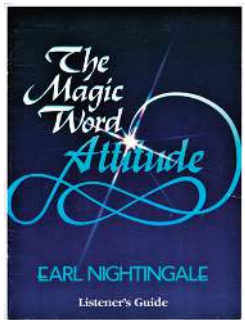
Even if you don't do any four-ace tricks, you should care about that second meaning. Each of us should become a skilled expert in the art of magic. How do we do this? Through study and practice, of course. But I think the most important way that we become skilled experts is through our attitude.

ATTITUDE

Would you like to know a real magic word, more powerful than "hocus pocus" or "abracadabra"?

"An attitude is a settled way of thinking, feeling, or behaving toward a person, object, or situation." *(Source: Google)*

And "attitude" is definitely the magic word in motivational speaking. Radio icon Earl Nightingale, one of the top purveyors of motivational materials in the twentieth century, wrote a book and recorded a tape called, "The Magic Word Attitude." Earl's number-one rule of success: "Improve your attitude!"



I think that our attitude also shapes the way we do our marketing. If we genuinely care about our audiences, we will market differently than if we mostly want to show off how amazing we are.

ABRACADABRA

"Abracadabra is a traditional magic word used in stage illusions and historically written on amulets to ward off bad luck, illness, or evil spirits." *(Source: Google)*

I included this because it is possibly the most-used magic word there is. When you ask an audience member to say a magic word, they might say "please" or "thank you,"

But they don't usually say "attitude." They typically say, "abracadabra."

ANIMALS

"Animals are living, multicellular organisms that make up the biological kingdom Animalia." *(Source: Google)*

Let's face it: the most recognizable representation of a magician is an image of a magician pulling a rabbit out of a hat. Never mind that magicians almost never actually perform such a trick, or that thanks to PETA and other animal rights groups, it is difficult to use animals of any kind in a magic act.



But audiences have always loved the animals that magicians have used in their shows. "Iris the Eye Bunny" was definitely the star of the show when I was "Mr. See It, the Magician with a Vision" for Texas State Optical.

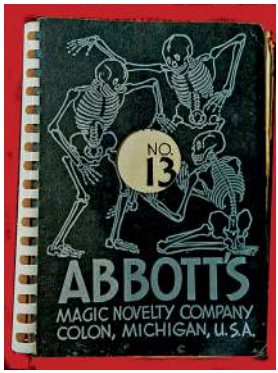
But we can still use Rocky Raccoon. Sorry, Siegfried & Roy!

ABBOTT'S MAGIC

"Abbott's Magic refers to the Abbott's Magic Company, a historic manufacturer and retailer of magic tricks and stage illusions founded in 1934 in Colon, Michigan." *(Source: Google)*

Hey, it's an "A" word, okay?

And for people my age, Abbott's represents the pinnacle of places to get magic – from their wonderful catalogs (Abbott's catalog #13, which I got shortly after it was issued in 1952, is still my favorite magic catalog of the hundreds I've since accumulated) to the iconic Abbott's Magic Get Together, which I was able to enjoy one year with my friends Frank and Margaret Dailey.



Abbott's calls itself "The Magic Capital of the World!"

AUDIENCE

Okay, so maybe this is the most important "A" word in marketing.

"An audience is a group of people who gather or tune in to watch, listen to, or read a performance, speech, or piece of media." *(Source: Google)*

An audience may sometimes be a group of people who gather to watch a magic show. And the success of that show will depend on the performer's ability to understand and appreciate the wants and needs of the people in the audience. It's not about the technical skill of the performer. It is about the performer's empathy for the audience.

Without an audience, you are just experiencing magical navel-gazing.

ASK ALEXANDER

"Ask Alexander is the world's most comprehensive digital archive and search engine for magic history, run by the *Conjuring Arts Research Center." (Source: Google)* *(continued on page 114)*



Inside the Wizard's Workshop

BILL WINTERS

Fellow magicians, meet Anthony Yap, a former product designer focused on designing and building kayaks, as well as consulting with others in the kayak industry. All this changed when the worldwide pandemic hit, resulting in Anthony's work with kayaks coming to a halt. With plenty of time on his hands, he turned his attention to magic. But we are getting ahead of ourselves.

Anthony was born in Australia, but also spent several of his childhood years living in Michigan where his interest in magic began around the age eight. It was there in the "Wolverine State" that he visited his first magic shop, Fantasy Attic in Ann Arbor. Over the next several years, he made a few pilgrimages to Abbott's Magic. It's not surprising that Anthony would find his way into magic, his great-grandfather, Robert Arthur Read, performed magic in South Australia back around the time Houdini and Chung Ling Soo were touring the continent. Great-Grandfather Read was a carpenter who was apprenticed to a now forgotten magician and ended up on the stage performing escapes, hypnotism and various sleights. This family connection kindled Anthony's love of magic history and his interest in magic props of that era.

While Anthony had a fascination with magic, it wasn't the applause from the stage he was interested in. What really caught his interest was the design element of props, both the look and the working mechanisms, and how a well-built prop could look like real magic, even to the performer. Since Anthony had a background in product design, it was



fortuitous that when Covid hit, he was living in Ireland where his wife Jackie is from. Anthony found himself sitting at home under lockdown thanks to Covid. With time on his hands, he started making magical props based on ideas which had been rattling around in his head for years. At first, these projects were just to give him something to do. However, he quickly realized he had a knack for magic building, and based on feedback from fellow magicians and builders, he decided to make a go of his hobby.

In 2020, he launched Retro Rocketeers. The company is a one man show. Make that one man and one woman, as his wife Jackie works alongside him in their little workshop. Together, they come up with design concepts, work out the bugs, create designs, manufacture and test the designs, develop the packing, and handle worldwide shipping. When 2023 rolled around, they heard the call of the Koala and decided to pack up their 3D printer and leave the Emerald Isle for the outback, well Victoria anyway.

While most of the builders profiled to date are eligible to collect Social Security, Anthony is a relatively young forty-something. And being from a younger generation, he has adopted 3D printing as a main feature in his products. This relatively new technology allows for traditional 3D plastic printing, resin printing, or printing wood filament pieces that can then be stained, sanded and added to other wooden parts. The 3D printed pieces are then accented with jarrah eucalyptus, a native Australian hardwood with a luxurious look, a deep reddish hue, and a wonderful smell. This unique style of building has garnered Anthony a growing customer base of magicians from around the globe.

According to Anthony, "My design philosophy is that I love blending the old with the new. In terms of design that comes from inspiration from magic's golden age along with a love of mysterious ancient cultures. So, I often like to build new props that look or feel as if they came from an ancient time. Blending the old with the new in terms of effects, is where I will often be inspired by classical props built earlier in time, or classic effect genres, but I will always try to add some new element to the piece, in my way hoping to add to the lineage of the effect." To this end, Anthony takes full advantage of today's magnets which he finds inherently magical. While not all his props have magnets in them, he uses them when they can be hidden effectively to add to the overall effect on the audience.

While Anthony is always thinking up new designs, many of his inspirations are based on ideas of the builders whose work he greatly admires. These builders include Okito, Jack Hughes, Alan Warner, Robert Harbin, Lubor Fiedler and Tony Lackner just to name a few. He also loves diving deep into old magic books for inspiration. One of the things Anthony loves about makers from the past was their ability to blend science and magic. People like Buatier de Kolta and Robert-Houdin, who used the cutting-edge science of their day to mystify through intricate mechanisms. While he finds that a lot of magic today can be excused as advanced electronics, the integration of hidden mechanical mechanisms can be extremely fooling especially. According to Anthony, he gets great satisfaction in bringing ideas from the past back to life in a new way.

Anthony's approach has been to alter the prop for cleaner handling, make it examinable by the audience when possible, or add a new phase to an established effect. One example of this would be his "Celtic Marble Mystery," inspired by Jack Hughes's Petra Spheres/Hole in One. Mr. Hughes's version required that the balls be taken from the tray, a ball selected, and then placed back onto the tray, with the selected ball always being placed back into the same position. Anthony modified the effect by adding a new mechanism that allows any ball at any position to be selected with no balls needing to be handled throughout the effect. The spectator simply points to a ball or calls out a color. Abracadabra, the selected ball vanishes from its position and reappears under the glass. Another example is his Bifrost Blade. Inspired by one of his favorite childhood effects, Crystal Clever, he modified the sword through ring by using a new method to make a piece where



all parts are solid and can be individually inspected with no moving parts or springs within, just solid pieces. Another example is his outstanding Divine Divide Cut and Restored Ribbon, which I personally own. He offers this effect and other props in both a Celtic and Egyptian motif.

When beginning his creative process, he starts with hand sketches and then integrates those sketches into a 3D computer model. When sculpting, he will often sculpt organic shapes in virtual reality. Technology unimaginable to Floyd Thayer and Petrie-Lewis. While Anthony doesn't claim to be a performer, he prides himself on understanding the mind of the performer. With that focus in mind, he thinks through how the prop will be handled in a performance, how the spectators will view it. This allows him to concentrate on small subtleties that help enhance the illusion. According to Anthony, "This could be something seemingly simple like making the prop viewable from all angles so the performer can simply spin the prop around when first introducing it, but in doing so subtly letting the audience feel as if there's nothing being hidden. Or one of the things I really like doing is when possible, developing into a prop what I like to call '3-Finger Handling.'"

The idea behind 3-Finger Handling is that you can handle a prop with only three fingers from each hand. Picture picking up, or handling a prop with your thumb, pointer finger, and middle finger (on each hand). This gives a fair and open appearance to your handling of the prop by touching it very minimally.

Retro Rocketeer effects designed for 3-Finger Handling include the "Master of Chance 2.0." Anthony's remake of this classic does away with the need to pick up and remove one of the pieces completely from sight for a few seconds. Instead, he redesigned the pieces so you could perform the secret move right in plain sight and without any of the pieces ever leaving the spectator's view. Other effects using this minimal handling include his "Eyes of Loki," which uses a handling similar to Hippity Hop Rabbits.

When it comes to 3D printing, Anthony uses this like any other tool in his workshop. According to Anthony, it sometimes has a bad stigma due to cheap-looking items being seen everywhere, but when a part is visible, he treats it as he treats a piece of wood. Each piece still needs to undergo assembly, sanding, finishing, hand painting, weathering and varnishing so it looks and feels like a finished quality part.

Anthony will be the first to tell you that using 3D printing, where appropriate, helps add fine details into designs that otherwise wouldn't be feasible. It also allows magic creators to build in secret mechanisms or hidden compartments that couldn't be produced in other ways.

When it comes to output, Anthony's smallest run was the "Mayan Rod of Resurrection," a tribute to the 100-years of Sawing a person in half illusion. A solid rod is placed on an altar, covered with the ends still showing and then sliced into three pieces. The pieces are shown around and then placed back onto the altar and an attempt is made to put them back together, but a "mistake" would see the rod squished together now shorter and fatter in the middle. In the final phase, the rod is stretched back to normal size. If you are the lucky owner of this effect, you have the rarest piece of Retro Rocketeers in your collection.

As for its largest runs, two effects have been put out to a wider audience. These include the "Bifrost Blade" and the "Divine Divide," his most recent release, which is a version of the cut and restored ribbon effect, which allows the ribbon to be inspected and signed on both ends before being clearly threaded through the prop, cut, and then visually restored.

Anthony's design philosophy is to never just re-release a new piece in a different design. Two examples of this philosophy being put to work include his update on Jack Hughes's "Hole in One," redesigned and released as "Celtic Marble Mystery." Another example is his "Ultimate Triangle Mystery." This effect is an evolution of Okito's "Triangle Mystery." Anthony redesigned it so that the main prop could be shown from all sides. He also made the prop see-through, which gave a more convincing feeling that nothing could be hiding behind it. Or his "PSI Block" series, where he redesigned Robert Harbin's "Tipping Block," which needed to be balanced against a surface. Anthony's redesign allows the block to be self-standing, upright on a table. This improved design added an extra element to the effect where two sides of the block were colored differently and after the block is stood up, the spectator can call out which color they would like the block to land on. Magically, it does just that.

Retro Rocketeers' most recent release, the "Apex Key Box," is one of Anthony's favorite props. It is his take on Anverdi's "Key Box." Anthony has created a new method that is fully mechanical, no electronics. Yet the piece can also be performed 100% hands-free by the performer from start to finish. Each spectator gets to try their key within the lock, no forces, no switches, the prop does all the work for you. In fact, a spectator, not the performer, can be the one to try the remaining key. Best of all, the box has a special built-in mechanism to stop any spectator mishandling.

Having performed "Divine Divide," I can tell you that Anthony's products have a look of refinement and very clear workings; these are not cheap plastic toys. And while they are not cheap, they are worth every penny. By blending hand painting, resin casting, and woodworking with 3D printing and laser engraving, Anthony has created something unique. If you're not familiar with his work, I encourage you to have a look. I think you will be pleasantly surprised.



Polishing the Rings

SKIP WAY

Little Card, Big Job

Does your Ring offer members a unique membership or identification card? Most don't, and that's a missed opportunity. For too long, membership cards have been little more than laminated loafers emerging from burgeoning wallets once a year to remind us that our dues are payable. We print them, mail them, and forget them.

Break That Cycle! Put that lazy pocket potato to work! At their simplest, membership cards confirm identity and membership status. With a little creativity, this wallet freeloader can instantly access a member's record, speed up check-in, track attendance, monitor membership status, and record participation. Not bad for a bit of cardstock that generally sits on its assets.

Keep It Simple. Less is more when designing your Ring's membership card. A useful card needs only the Ring name and logo, along with the member's name, photo, membership identification number, membership expiration date, and – if you're open to a little automation – a scannable barcode.

Membership cards are not biographies. Addresses, birth dates, phone numbers, and other personal details do not belong on the card. Securely store these personal details in a password-protected file. Your card's barcode needs nothing more than a unique member number to document and retrieve this sensitive member information.

Physical or Digital? Membership cards can take many forms: plastic cards, printable PDFs, digital images, mobile wallet passes, badges, or key tags. Plastic and laminated cards remain durable, familiar, and easy to carry. Printable PDFs are inexpensive, easy to update, and convenient to replace. Pin and lanyard badges work particularly well at meetings, lectures, conventions, and larger gatherings. These are especially helpful when we forget a name. Come on! It happens to all of us! We all know that "pal" and "buddy" are codewords for "What's his name?!"

Digital cards avoid printing and replacement costs. Encourage members to save a PDF file, or an image file of the ID in their smartphone's photo app, for easy access. Explore storing Ring IDs as Apple or Google Wallet passes. You can automatically update properly configured wallet passes when membership status changes.

Plan Ahead. Digital does not mean infallible. Wi-Fi drops. Phone batteries die. Scanners go offline. Smartphones are wonderful right up until they become expensive black rectangles. Consider a backup printed card and a searchable member database. Rings that plan for tech glitches keep events moving. Those that do not, do not.

Put Your Card to Work. Embedding a unique member number into a barcode creates an instant bridge between the member and your Ring's records. That can save your treasurer and secretary a lot of keystrokes as the check-in line snakes down the hall. Scanning this line can retrieve a member's record, verify the status of their membership dues, and, if the spreadsheet or database is configured for it, record their attendance and payment history.

There is no need for costly software or a computer science degree. If someone in your Ring can create and manage a basic database or spreadsheet without breaking into a cold sweat, you are remarkably close to automation.

Track the Numbers. A simple spreadsheet or database powered by scannable Ring cards can answer many useful questions. Which activities attract the most members? Are newer members participating? Which Ring events bring inactive members back? Analyze participation trends and identify errant refreshment committee fugitives.

Choose Only the Technology You Need. Decide what problems you need to solve before investing time and funds into this project. Do you want to identify members? Track attendance? Verify dues? Record participation? Provide discounts? Send renewal reminders?

For a small Ring, manually entering each member's number into an Excel dues-and-attendance spreadsheet may be enough. If you decide to use a scanner, be sure it supports your chosen format. Inexpensive standard (1D) laser or linear barcode scanners will not read QR codes. QR codes require an area image (2D) scanner. For most ID cards, simple barcodes are more than sufficient, and they are incredibly easy to create and use.

Don't go overboard! Technology should ease Ring problems, not create new ones. There is no prize for building a management system so complex that the incoming secretary needs a computer science degree, three passwords, and a séance to operate it.

Strengthen Belonging. Tracking Ring metrics is an excellent goal, but our membership cards serve an even greater purpose. Organizations have long understood the value of pins, certificates, and other material tokens. A carefully designed Ring card is one of the strongest of these. It clearly announces, "You're one of us!" which is much more welcoming than, "Congrats! Your dues check cleared!"

Make the card part of your Ring's welcome program. Present it to new members with a brief meeting ceremony. Introduce them to the group and explain the opportunities their membership provides. This modest ritual can turn an ordinary piece of plastic into a valued keepsake.

Reach Beyond the Ring. Explore ways to connect your Ring's card to discounts or benefits from local magic shops, theaters, restaurants, printers, and other businesses serving or employing entertainers. Magic shops and other magic-connected businesses can use your card's barcode to track member support and purchases. This beats the rarely effective, "Trust me, I'm a magician" gambit.

A QR code on the back of printed and digital cards can connect a spectator's phone to a Ring webpage revealing a playing card, ESP reveal, or similar magic effect. Include an "Interested in Magic?" tagline with a link directing potential new members to your Ring website or social media page.

The Card is a Tool. With a bit of creative thought, the lowly membership card can help your Ring operate more efficiently, welcome new members, and strengthen the connections that keep them coming back. Not a bad legacy for a former print-and-forget wallet squatter.

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

Sign up 1!

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



Did You Know?

JOE HERNANDEZ



A Magical Tribute: *Tandil Ilusiona* Fills Teatro del Fuerte in Honor of René Lavand

Tandil Ilusiona (Tandil Inspired Dreams) held its second edition at Teatro del Fuerte in Tandil, Argentina, with a Grand Gala in tribute to the legenday René Lavand. The lineup featured Doctor Bona, Merok, Mago Caro, and Henry Evans. The show began as guests entered the auditorium and concluded with a heartfelt standing ovation for Tandil's celebrated master.

The anticipation was palpable, with a queue stretching for a block and a half from Teatro del Fuerte to the school of San José. Hundreds gathered, eager to attend the gala. Tickets sold out quickly and excitement buzzed outside. Inside, guests were welcomed into a foyer transformed by a smoky ceiling and blue lighting, where an illusionist performed silent close-up tricks among the crowd, setting a mysterious atmosphere for the evening.

Adrián Guerra acted as host and gave performances all the way through the evening. The distinguished guests were Mayor Miguel Ángel Lunghi, various local dignitaries, and members of René Lavand's family – namely his wife Nora, his grandchildren Micaela and Kevin Lavandera, and his son and daughter-in-law Lauro and Miriam Lavandera – thus highlighting the importance of the event for the city and in relation to the Lavand family legacy.

Audience participation set the tone from the outset. Before the show began, Guerra handed envelopes to six attendees and invited six others onstage to choose cards. Gasps and applause erupted when the envelopes were opened to reveal cards perfectly matching those selected on stage.

Bona continued with dazzling card tricks, closing his act with a heartfelt tribute to his mentor, Doctor Willy – a guiding force during Bona's formative years. Merok followed with a visually stunning act, weaving together a rose, a candle, playing cards, and colored balls – displaying flawless sleight of hand and mesmerizing visual artistry.

Between acts, Adrián Guerra kept the audience engaged with sharp wit and inventive routines – such as making a knot vanish from a volunteer's hands, and stealthily borrowing a watch from an audience member, only to dramatically reveal it later.

At just twenty-three, Mago Caro invited two audience members onstage for a mind-reading feat, astonishing the crowd by accurately predicting the number of red and black cards they would select.

A highlight of her performance was referencing René Lavand's poetic idea that playing cards have a "woman's soul." After drawing queens repeatedly, she astonished the crowd by transforming the entire deck into queens with a single flourish.

Throughout the night, tributes to René Lavand echoed from the stage, honoring the magician who put Tandil on the global magic map. Guerra also remembered the late Spanish magician Juan Tamariz, a close friend and mentor, before performing a trick Tamariz had personally taught him.

World champion card magician Henry Evans, fresh from a US tour and renowned for his expertise, delivered the closing act of the gala. He began by inviting two volunteers to the stage, amazing them with card tricks – one that transformed the color of the deck's back and another that magically sorted cards by number and suit with a series of deft cuts.

One of the most moving moments came when Evans reflected on his journey with René Lavand: discovering magic through Lavand's performances, later meeting him in person, and eventually sharing the stage and memories with his mentor. He then conducted a routine based on Lavand's well-known concept of *lentidigitación* (slow-motion sleight of hand) and the expression, "It cannot be done any slower."

Evans performed a series of coin vanishes and transformations, a routine he had always hoped to present to René but never could. As he finished, Evans looked skyward and gestured upward – a silent, heartfelt dedication to Lavand, hoping the master was watching "from somewhere."

For one final flourish, five audience members each received a deck in a black bag. To everyone's amazement, their selected cards combined to form a royal flush in spades – the exact hand requested, perfectly matching both suit and rank.

In a fitting finale, Doctor Bona, Merok, Maga Caro, and Henry Evans returned to the stage together, earning thunderous applause from the captivated audience.

As the evening ended, Guerra invited the audience to give René Lavand a final round of applause. The master's presence lingered in the stories, the performances, and the enduring spirit of magic that still radiates from Tandil to the world.

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 puchased at *www.booksbyjoe.com*.



Conjurer's Foolosophy

JOE HERNANDEZ

I've learned that a cardician is a conjuring specialist in the art of legerdemain, trained in the use of pasteboards and employing intricate, concealed techniques of prestidigitation to create magical illusions for entertainment. In many respects, the craft of the magician is like life itself: reality and illusion differ only by the most delicate veil of perception. Genuine wisdom consists in realizing that the things we take to be real are frequently the result of influence from unseen forces – forces that may be our own or those of other people. Just as the philosopher does, the cardician causes us to doubt the appearance of things and enables us to enjoy the mysteries that lie behind the ordinary.

*****

I've learned that many amateur magicians are obsessed with making their actions seem "natural," believing that practicing in front of a mirror will somehow turn a clumsy move into a brilliant feat of deception. Because of their enthusiasm, they fail to realize that real magic does not consist in perfect imitation, but in getting the audience to think that the move is natural even though it isn't. Experienced magicians understand that the key is not flawless technique, but rather the skillful way in which they perform to convince the mind, not just the eye. The wisdom found in magic, just as it is in life, is the knowledge that appearances are less important than the stories we tell and the belief we create – along with a touch of misdirection, which is always a good idea.

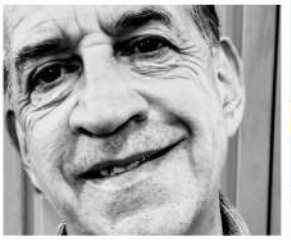
*****

I've learned that if you wish to improve your magic, then you must go outside your comfort zone since progress is located just beyond the safe and familiar. Each risk of failing or being embarrassed promotes growth and innovation. The truth is that discomfort is not your enemy; it is in fact your best teacher. Often the greatest changes start with one step into uncertainty, and this not only increases your skills but also your courage and resilience.

*****

I've learned that reality and deception have one thing in common: both begin in the brain, since it is there that our perception, memory, and way of interpreting things determine our understanding of the world. Reality is based on objective facts and external stimuli, whereas deception consists of altering or distorting information, usually in order to affect people's beliefs or actions. Both processes show how powerful the brain is in creating our experiences and thus blur the boundary between what is real and what is merely imagined.

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, Frank Garcia: The Man with the Million-Dollar Hands*, and the soon-to-be-released *The Wise Magician,* from which the above excerpts are taken. Books can be purchased at *www.booksbyjoe.com*.



Happy Shopping

Canadian magician Garnet Garven has shared this fun group exercise in grocery shopping. *Linking Ring* readers will be familiar with his several One-Man Parades.

The connection between magic and mathematics has a long and intriguing history. Martin Gardner leads the pack in math magic effects, I think, and many others have contributed as well.

The word 'four' is the only number in the English language that is the same size as the length of its written name. This is a fun exercise for a group of magic students. Make sure everyone has a paper and pencil!

EFFECT: Begin by saying "attention all shoppers," then give the following background. Cambridge, Massachusetts, is home to two great universities: Harvard and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). There is an old joke about grocery store express checkout lanes that limit customers to "twenty items or less." A student from MIT cannot *read*, and a student from Harvard can't do *math*!

If you are a heavy-duty shopper and have more than twenty but fewer than one hundred items, there is a special super-express lane. You will need to discover the secret password to use this lane.

"I have written the password here," you say, pointing to a folded sheet of paper. "Let's see if you can create it?"

Write the password "four" on the folded piece of paper to share at the end of the exercise.

Follow these steps to super service:

1. Print the name of your favorite number (between 20 and 100) as a word, e.g., "78" becomes "seventy-eight."

2. Count the number of letters in this word, e.g., "seventy-eight" has 12 letters.

3. Print the name of this new number (e.g., "twelve").

4. Count the number of letters in this word (e.g., "twelve" contains 6 letters).

5. Print the name of this new number (e.g., "6" becomes "six").

6. Count the number of letters in this word (e.g., "six" contains 3 letters).

7. Print the name of this new number (e.g., "3" beomes "three").

8.. Count the number of letters in this word (e.g., "three" contains 5 letters).

9. Print the name of this new number (e.g., "5" becomes "five").

10. Count the number of letters in this word (e.g., "five" contains 4 letters).

11. Print the name of this new number (e.g., "4" becomes "four").

12. Count the number of letters (e.g., "four" contains 4 letters).

Carry on this process and stop when they have written down the same number ("four") as a word twice.

Ask the students for their final number. It will not matter what number the students began with, as all options will reduce to four. Open your folded paper to reveal the matching password. Happy shopping!

Today's Special Password is
FOUR.

Feel free to use the

SUPER EXPRESS CHECKOUT

Thanks again to Garnet. Please look out for more of his future Parades.

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

International Brotherhood of Magicians
Minutes of the Annual Business Meeting – Mr. Stephen Levine
July 23, 2026
St. Louis, Missouri – 11:15 a.m. (CDT)

Call to Order

The Annual Business Meeting of the International Brotherhood of Magicians (I.B.M.) was held on Thursday, July 23, 2026, at the Marriott Airport St. Louis. The meeting was called to order by International President Mr. Stephen Levine at 11:27 a.m. (CDT). International Secretary, Ms. Simone Marron was present to record the Minutes and declared a quorum.

Approval of Minutes from 2025 Annual Business Meeting

The Minutes from the 2025 Annual Business Meeting were approved by unanimous consent, and the Minutes Approval Committee was discharged from its duties.

Roll Call

The following members were in attendance:

Board members: Mr. Stephen Levine, Mr. Jason Michaels, Mr. Keith Fields, Ms. Simone Marron, Mr. Charles Arkin, Mr. Jeff Sobel, Mr. Scott Cantrell, Mr. Matt Stanley, Mr. Mike Woodward, Mr. Eric Schuster, Mr. Vincent Reres, Mr. Mike Stratman, Mr. Rolando Santos, Mr. William Evans, Mr. Joe M. Turner, Mr. Billy Hsueh, and Mr. Mike Dunagan.

Non-Board members and guests included: Executive Editor of *The Linking Ring*, Mr. Sammy Smith, Executive Secretary Mrs. Sindie Richison, Legal Advisor Mr. Timothy Vient, and Chaplain Rev. Tina Salvaneschi. The names of other guests in attendance were recorded separately.

Appointment of a Minutes Approval Committee

International President Mr. Stephen Levine appointed Mr. Jeffrey Sobel, Mr. Eric Schuster, and Mr. Scott Cantrell to the Minutes Approval Committee.

Adoption of Agenda

No items were added to the agenda, which was then adopted by unanimous consent.

Reports of International Officers

Officers and Committee Chairs in attendance were asked to give a brief summary of their reports that appeared in the Big Book of Reports for the benefit of the members present at the meeting.

International President – Mr. Stephen Levine: Mr. Stephen Levine stated that he had a great year as co-convention chair and was honored to serve as International President. It takes a village, and the people he worked with made it much easier as they are a great team. Many programs were implemented including the youth protection program, the publishing of Modern Magic, improvements in marketing and social media, and the addition of 450 new members. At this convention there are ninety-eight first timers and twenty-eight new members. Mr. Levine thanked the local Ring 1 and Mike McClure the MO TVP for all their assistance.

International President-Elect – Mr. Jason Michaels: Mr. Michaels reported that he is very excited about the direction the organization is heading in, especially with the increase in membership and registrations. The I.B.M. is moving in the right direction. The technology, marketing, and leadership continuity is laying the groundwork for the next three years.

International Vice President – Mr. Keith Fields: Mr. Fields reported that it has been a great year for the I.B.M. There has been so much energy from committees and membership. The 1221 Ring meetings have been successful, and having a second monthly meeting is currently being looked at. We are a volunteer organization, and Mr. Fields asked that more volunteers step up.

International Treasurer – Mr. Charles Arkin: Mr. Arkin has been serving on the Investment and Youth Scholarship committees and expanding revenue sources with book sales and good returns on investments. The Youth Scholarship program was able to fund fifteen youth scholarships for this convention, and Mr. Arkin hopes to have more next year.

International Secretary – Ms. Simone Marron: Ms. Marron continues to work with the office, members, and Board members. She also serves on the convention committee, which includes the booking of the convention dealers, the new logo'd t-shirt project as well as working on the administration of the Lance Burton Teen Seminar, and her International Secretary duties.

Reports of Committees & Cost Centers

Convention – Mr. Matt Stanley & Mr. Stephen Levine: Mr. Stanley and Mr. Levine were convention co-chairs this year and will continue next year in Las Vegas. Mr. Stanley has been working tirelessly on the ballroom and lecture room setup and the LED backdrop. Conventions are set for the next four years as well as the North American FISM championships for next year. This year over 230 banquet tickets and 130 Merlin lunch tickets were sold. A survey will be sent out to attendees after the convention.

Executive Editor of *The Linking Ring* **– Mr. Sammy Smith:** Mr. Smith reported that the new printing contract for *The Linking Ring* has produced a better-quality magazine with cost reductions. The old contract cost $2.35 per issue and was limited to color on sixty-four pages. The new contract is $1.88 per issue with unlimited color. Mr. Smith thanked Mr. Eric Schuster for doing such a wonderful job with the digital online flipbook on the website.

Head Office International Executive Secretary – Mrs. Sindie Richison: Mrs. Richison reported that she has been very busy trying to get members to log in to the new

website. Time has been spent informing the members of benefits, especially on the website. Many of the Modern Magic books have been shipped out, and now the new Order of Merlin lapel pins are in stock. Mrs. Richison thanked the Board for all their help.

Endowment & Development Fund – Mr. Bill Evans, Mr. Rolando Santos, & Mr. Shawn Farquhar: Mr. Evans reported that the EDF sponsored the *Modern Magic* book and the second book in the series *More Magic*. They also sponsored the Lance Burton Teen Seminar and are pleased to announce that the new web page for the EDF is now live on the website.

Membership Committee – Mr. Jeffrey Sobel: Mr. Sobel reported that membership numbers had increased by 438 members at the time of his report and have now increased by 450. The Membership committee is focusing on growth. Mark Zajicek will be the new Membership Chair.

Ring Coordinator – Mr. Vincent Reres: Mr. Reres reported a new charter for Ring 404 in Mexico as well as a new charter for virtual youth Ring 1221. Mr. Reres is working to restart Ring 329 in Key West and is also speaking with potential Rings in Alabama, California, Kentucky, Mississippi, Utah and South Africa. Mr. Reres has also spoken with members from Idaho and North Dakota at this convention about chartering Rings in their areas.

New Member Engagement – Mr. Vincent Reres: Mr. Reres reported over 200 new members since the midyear meeting. There has been a 70% open rate of welcome emails and a 17% attendance at the welcome Zoom meeting. Mr. Reres thanked the Board members who have attended the Zoom meetings.

Order of Merlin – Mr. Shawn Farquhar: Mr. Farquhar was not in attendance, but Mr. Stephen Levine reported that he signed over 600 Merlin certificates, and that five members hit seventy years of continuous membership, and one reached eighty years—and he is 106 years old. Mr. Levine thanked Mr. Matt Stanley for creating the wonderful Merlin slide show.

FISM – Mr. Erik Tait: Mr. Tait was not in attendance.

Ring Relations – Mr. Johnny New York: Mr. New York stated that he has conducted several Zoom meetings and revamped the ring quality program which has now been presented as the Effective Ring Achievement program. Due to the presence on the website, and the support they have received, they have had more participation than anticipated. Mr. New York is interested in increasing the I.B.M. footprint at every Ring meeting around the world.

Sick & Convalescent Committee – Mr. Jim Short: Mr. Short did not attend the meeting, but Rev. Tina Salvaneschi reported that Mr. Short has been sending out cards and doing an amazing job.

TVP/Ring Counselor – Mr. Jeffrey Sobel: Mr. Sobel reported that two years ago, the TVP response rate was 32%, and today it is at 86%. The TVP meeting at Tacoma had six people in attendance and at this convention, twenty-two showed up. Mr. Mike McClure will be taking over as chair of the TVP/Ring Counselor Committee.

Long Range Planning – Mr. Jeffrey Sobel: Mr. Sobel stated that the committee has been capturing great ideas into a strategic plan. There are currently 6,835 members and more volunteers are needed.

Awards Committee – Ms. Melody Munoz: Ms. Munoz was not in attendance.

Life Member Committee – Mr. Matt Stanley: Mr. Stanley reported that there have been eleven new Life members since the midyear and thirty-four since the convention last year. An additional four have signed up at this convention. There are a total of 262 Life members, and sixty in attendance at this convention. There have already been three exclu-

sive Zoom events for Life members, and in September Jeff McBride will be lecturing on Zoom.

Marketing Committee – Mr. Jason Michaels: Mr. Michaels reported that the E-newsletter continues to be sent out to more than 15,000 email addresses with a 50% open rate. The Ambassadors of Magic program continues to thrive, and the annual convention continues to be marketed and advertised aggressively with designs from Ryan Pilling and Tiffany Sauvage. Social media is reaching magic enthusiasts, and the technology for the new website is increasingly supported. Hosting I.B.M. podcasts have increased downloads from the 3,759 at the midyear to 7,400 now, and YouTube views have increased from 1,700 to 2,600. There will be a convention podcast released with Lance Burton, and a videographer has been hired to make convention reels.

Publishing Committee – Mr. Scott Cantrell: Mr. Cantrell reported that 525 copies of Modern Magic have been sent out, 400 of which are paid sales grossing $25,880. The More Magic and Ian Adair projects will be up next.

The Trustees of the Johnny and Pam Thompson estate have given permission to the I.B.M. to publish a book of the stories of Tomsoni & Co., which were audio and video recorded and written up several years ago during interviews conducted by Simone Marron. The logistics of this are being explored.

Technology Transformation Committee – Mr. Eric Schuster: Mr. Schuster reported that since the new website was launched on December 1st last year thousands of hours of work went into developing the new content that has been added with so much value, and with much more to come. There have been 28,000 unique visitors to the website with 52,000 sessions, with half of that traffic being on a mobile device from all over the world. There are now over 100 member segments that give us an understanding of membership to help make strategic decisions.

Youth Committee – Mr. Keith Fields: Mr. Fields reported that the youth protection policy is now in place at the international level, and he would like to see this done at the local levels also. There are three youth performers in the stage contest final, and Mr. Fields hopes to have enough youth competing next year to be able to have a separate youth contest.

Diversity & Inclusion – Mr. Dwight Redman: Mr. Redman was not in attendance, and no report was submitted.

Grievance Committee – Mr. Bill Evans: Mr. Evans reported that happily he has nothing to report other than that Mr. Stephen Levine has been added to the committee.

Legal Advisor – Mr. Timothy Vient: Mr. Vient reported that he has provided legal analysis to the Board and office. Most of the work he has done is confidential, and he has worked with the office and responded to over fifty international requests in the last year. Mr. Vient has also helped local Rings to make sure they are compliant with international rules and he has also helped with probate requests.

Necrology Service

The necrology service and breaking of the wand ceremony was carried out by I.B.M. Chaplain Rev. Tina Salvaneschi, Mr. Rolando Santos, and Mr. Bill Evans to memorialize the members we lost during the previous year.

***The Linking Ring* Awards – Mr. Sammy Smith**

This year's recipients for articles published between April 2025 and March 2026 were as follows:

BAMMAN-WILLMARTH TROPHY
MICHAEL MESSING
Outstanding Photography
2012–2026

***THE LINKING RING* AWARD OF MERIT**
BALASUBRAMANIAN "MAGIC BALU" CHANDRAN
"50 Golden Tips for Magicians to Earn a Great Name and More Shows"
October 2025

MURRAY COOPER
"Adelaide: More than Just a Name"
November 2025

VINCE WILSON
"Remembering Hiawatha Johnson Jr.
Magician, Storyteller, and Friend"
March 2026

***THE LINKING RING* AWARD OF EXCELLENCE**
DR. STEVEN SCHLANGER
"Box"
April 2025

ROGER "SKIP" WAY
"Insurance for Entertainers"
July 2025

GARNET GARVEN
One-Man Parade
"Self-Working Coin Magic"
August 2025

ROLANDO SANTOS
"Houdini and Spiritualism"
October 2025

MICHAEL STELZER
One-Man Parade
February 2026
IAN BAXTER
One-Man Parade
"Hindu Shuffle Scrapbook"
March 2026

THOMAS HENRY
"Meet the Foxglove Force"
"A Tale of Two Tomes" and Other Outstanding Contributions
2025–2026

JOE HERNANDEZ
"Did You Know?"
2023–2026

Old Business:
Further to the motion being passed by the Board of Trustees at the midyear meeting, and being published in *The Linking Ring*, Mr. Stephen Levine proposed a change to the Bylaws with the following motion:
MOTION: That the existing:
Article III Membership
Sec. 4. Any spouse or assistant of an Active Member or Honorary Member is eligible to become an "Associate Member." Associate members may not vote nor hold an International Board of Trustees (officer or executive committee) position, and do not receive *The Linking Ring*.
Be replaced with the following:
Article III Membership
Sec. 4. Any spouse or assistant of an Active Member or Honorary Member, living or dead, is eligible to become an "Associate Member." Associate members may not vote nor hold an International Board of Trustees (officer or executive committee) position, and do not receive *The Linking Ring*.
The motion carried unanimously.

New Business:
There was no new business.

Order of Merlin Presentations – Mr. Mike Woodward: Order of Merlin presentations were made to all new Order of Merlin members, as well as those achieving a new tier.

Installation of Officers:
The installation of officers was conducted by International President Mr. Stephen Levine.

International President:	Mr. Jason Michaels
International President-Elect:	Mr. Keith Fields
International Vice President:	Mr. Jeffrey Sobel
International Treasurer:	Mr. Charles Arkin
International Secretary:	Ms. Simone Marron
Executive Committee:	Mr. Johnny New York 2026-2029
Executive Committee:	Mr. Ben Young 2026-2029

There being no further business to come before the members of the International Brotherhood of Magicians, the International President, Mr. Stephen Levine, adjourned the meeting at 12:58 p.m. (CDT) by unanimous consent.

Respectfully submitted,

Ms. Simone Marron
I.B.M. International Secretary

Extracurricular Reading – from page 17

an entire shuffled deck of cards flawlessly in one minute and forty seconds. The report of his odyssey is truly gripping.

Besides relating his personal story, this book is also filled to the brim with anything and everything concerning memory training. Included are fascinating historical vignettes, tales of notable contributors to the art, modern-day scientific assessments, and much more. The author also shares a variety of practical methods which can instantly be put to good use by us novices.

To my mind, memory training is fundamental to much of what goes on behind the scenes in mentalism and mental magic. Indeed, of the dozen or so routines in my permanent repertoire, at least half involve being able to instantly recall mystic symbols, card positions, dice configurations, quotations, etc. And, of course, there's that business of learning a script well. If any of this resonates with you in your own work, then crack open Foer's book and prepare to be inspired.

The Elusive Quarry: A Scientific Appraisal of Psychical Research

Author Ray Hyman possesses perhaps the best credentials imaginable to compose a book on investigations into extrasensory perception. Not only has he enjoyed a distinguished academic career as a research psychologist, but in grad school days he was well known to be an expert chiromancer (palm reader). Then there's his background in conjuring; head out to Ask Alexander, and you'll find he's made many contributions to *The Linking Ring*, including a pair of One-Man Parades. And, oh, he's also revered as one of the leading authorities on cold-reading.

This book is actually a collection of essays and papers surveying the progress (or lack thereof) of investigations into ESP over the years. And that history truly is colorful. Besides the comings and goings of many celebrated people worth mentioning when you're on stage, much of what they believed possible would also make for enthralling themes in mentalism or mental magic.

I'll confess this was a slow read for me, but that's good! While very well written, it's just that the points made are often quite deep and require much reflection. So, to maximize your profit, spread the reading out over several weeks and ponder what that word "proof" really means. And one tip: skip the initial chapter at the outset, which is a trifle technical, and come back to it later if desired. The remaining narrative is much more lively and accessible to us outsiders. But whatever you do, don't miss the concluding section, which sports the essay subtitled "How to Convince Strangers That You Know All About Them."

Max Maven's Book of Fortunetelling

Of all the books in this list, here's the one which startled me the most. Despite being on the slender side, the treatment is not only wide-ranging – from all times and all peoples – but surprisingly deep. It pales me to think of the research Maven must have put in before ever picking up the pen.

This is nothing less than a comprehensive survey of fortune-telling lore in its many guises. It touches on cards, dice, dominoes, rune stones, palmistry, astrology, handwriting analysis, pendulums, Ouija boards, the interpretation of dreams, and much, much more. The detail ought to be sufficient to enable you to come across as learned in those obscure arts.

Whether seeking total conviction, or temporary suspension of disbelief, or (as I prefer) portraying the ideas more lightheartedly during the performance, you'll find a tremendous trove of tantalizing plots within this treatise. Likewise, it boasts some impressive sounding

terminology as well as historical references, ideal for sprinkling about in your script; the substantial index is an invaluable boon in that respect.

Numerology or, What Pythagoras Wrought

The adjective *rip-roaring* perfectly describes this gem from Underwood Dudley; it'll have you in stitches throughout! For it's an unbelievable record of how members of our species will fall for almost anything, no matter how crazy. In particular, this is the story of numerology and number mysticism throughout the ages.

For almost thirty years I've been recommending it to colleagues on the outlook for outrageous storylines. For here, all in one volume, are the relatively unknown accounts of those intrepid "researchers" who've unearthed mystical numbers possessing arcane meanings within the Bible, Shakespeare's plays, speeches of political leaders, the Egyptian pyramids, rhythms in the human body, and oodles more. If nothing else, the list of persons who come and go throughout reads like a *Who's Who*: Pythagoras, Fibonacci, Sir Christopher Wren, Napoleon, Richard Nixon … and again there's an equal number of unsung cranks who felt sure they alone had unlocked the secrets of the universe.

Routines involving numbers are too often dull as dishwater. But framed around some of the bewitching anecdotes found herein, they suddenly take on new luster. Moreover, be sure to catch the very clear account of the *law of small numbers*. This was new to me and a genuine eye-opener. Keep it from your audience though, for it explains why we should never be surprised when a particular number all of a sudden seems to signify something special in human affairs.

Making the Alphabet Dance

One of the strongest demonstrations a psychic entertainer can present is that of telepathically receiving a word the participant is merely thinking of. Or, a birthday party performer might find favor when Jo-Anne the Duck engages in some amusing and unexpected byplay with an alphabet deck. Then again, over the years several magic notables have come up with clever coincidence effects framed around Scrabble tiles.

Just in general, though, letters and words haven't figured all that much in the conjuring canon. This book, by Ross Eckler, could change all that. While ostensibly penned for persons possessing a penchant for puzzles, reading between the lines reveals it to contain a number of heretofore untapped methods. Yes, you'll encounter the usual culprits, such as garden-variety anagrams, branching anagrams, along with an expanded take on *Mutus Nomen Dedit Cocis* for you cardicians. But more importantly, Eckler chronicles countless other quirks of our mother tongue which could supply fodder for novel routines.

For lovers of mere tomfoolery with language, this book can't be beat. Still, at times, the word and letter patterns uncovered by the author often run deep, and demand committed concentration to comprehend. Bear in mind, though, its eight chapters are fairly independent and can be tackled in any order desired. So, just take the path best suited to your needs or interest. And here's a teaser: serendipity struck when I came across one of the best anagram pairs imaginable for a two-way out. But my lips are sealed hereafter …

A Dictionary of Symbols

First things first: this is more an encyclopedia than a dictionary, for of the hundreds and hundreds of entries found within it, all are defined by at least a paragraph, often several paragraphs, and sometimes many pages of fascinating lore. Also, because of its substantial scope, you'll probably never want to read it cover to cover. Yet, it's worth its weight in gold as a treasured reference to be turned to again and again.

(continued on page 122)



Sick and Convalescent

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GARNET GARVEN
MORE EASY COIN MAGIC ONE-MAN PARADE



Written and Illustrated by Garnet Garven

One of my favorite sections of *The Linking Ring* is the Ring Reports. Not only am I reminded of the great diversity and geographic reach of our membership, but also of the fact that the International Brotherhood of Magicians is truly an international organization. For many members who do not live near a local Ring, the reports offer a window on IBM Ring Life. So let me acknowledge the fine work of Ring Editor Lauren Jurgensen, and those who came before her, for all they do to keep us connected.

One of the reasons I read the Ring Reports is to better understand the kinds of magic our members enjoy. I am always appreciative when I read that one of my Parade routines was performed at a Ring meeting. It is a measure of the relevance of my contributions and motivates me to offer more.

In August 2025, *The Linking Ring* published my One-Man Parade, "Self-Working Coin Magic." The Parade went on to win a *2026 Linking Ring Award of Excellence*. The ten coin routines were designed for older magicians and others who may have lost the hand and finger dexterity to confidently perform coin sleights.

Since then, I have received feedback, suggestions, and other ideas. While some magicians may have lost the confidence to perform complex sleights, most are still able to manage simpler ones - so no slight intended! As well, the term "self-working" may have been something of a misnomer. There are many mental and procedural steps required to deliver an entertaining performance, with or without coins.

This follow-on Parade is titled "More Easy Coin Magic" rather than "Self-Working Coin Magic." By "easy," I do not mean simple. The dozen effects and routines in this

collection are time-tested, entertaining, and require less demanding sleight-of-hand. As with my previous Parade, none of these routines use gimmicked coins.

This is my seventh One-Man Parade and my second thematic collection of coin effects. To my magician colleagues, I say again, "Pick a coin… any coin, and enjoy!" To my collaborators, I.B.M. members Warren Morse of Los Angeles and Lisa Krol of Saskatoon, Canada, thank you for your reviews, comments, and supportive feedback. And to my many other magic friends, too many to name, thank you for your input, encouragement, and friendship.

Garnet Garven is a retired business school professor and longtime dean. His One-Man Parades in *The Linking Ring* have received four Awards of Excellence. He is a member of the International Brotherhood of Magicians, the Society of American Magicians, The Magic Circle (MMC), Fédération Internationale des Sociétés Magiques (FISM) and is Past President of the Palm Springs Magicians Club (Ring 291). He resides in Canada but spends winters in Palm Springs, California.

Ashless Penetrating Coin

I am hesitant to claim a modernization of a classic coin effect dating back as far as 1897. This may be an example of the evolution of magic. The routine is perfect for parlor performance. Let me know what you think.

EFFECT: A piece of paper is wrapped around a coin and placed on an aluminum foil container, which is then set on top of a drinking glass. Traditionally, the paper-wrapped coin is set on fire, leaving only the ashes as the coin penetrates the aluminum container and falls into the glass below.

In my version, however, there is no fire. Instead, the magician taps the paper-wrapped coin with a magic wand. The coin then magically penetrates both the paper and the aluminum container, audibly dropping into the drinking glass below.

BACKGROUND: This effect combines the classic paper coin fold with the traditional burning of paper on a metal ashtray, followed by the coin falling into an empty drinking glass.

My adaptation replaces the wax traditionally used to attach the coin to the bottom of the ashtray with a magnet. While magnets and coins have a well-established connection (pardon the pun), this adaptation eliminates the nuisance and unpredictability of melting wax, as well as the mess created by burned paper and ashes. To my knowledge, this is the first adaptation to make this substitution.

British magician Ellis Stanyon published the basic coin fold in *Conjuring for Amateurs* (1897), under the name "A New Coin Fold." The title itself suggests that the technique had an earlier history. In 1935, Jean Hugard published "The Best Coin Fold" in *Coin Magic*. The technique is now generally associated with Hugard. In 1941, Martin Gardner introduced the metal-ashtray version, "Coin Through the Plate," in his publication *After Dessert*.

It was this version that I first performed in the mid-1960s. In recent years, I have experimented with substitutes for the dab of wax traditionally used to hold the coin to the bottom of the metal tray. Wax can leave a residual mark, so I have tried rubber cement, glue sticks, and other adhesives, with mixed success.

I have also tested several types of paper to generate the heat necessary to release the wax and coin. I have always found it difficult to keep the folded paper packet burning consistently. Moreover, many venues, including schools and churches, restrict the use of matches, fire, or open flames.

Instead of a metal tray, I use disposable aluminum foil containers. I keep a small stack of them on the side of the table. Unlike a specially constructed metal tray, these ordinary containers arouse little suspicion.

I discovered that concealing a magnet in one of the containers provides a cleaner, simpler, and more reliable method of performance.

SET-UP: Figure 1 shows the key items used in performance. You will need to construct a simple gimmicked aluminum bowl. I use a 5-inch-wide aluminum foil container. Using scissors, remove the outer beaded edge from the lip of a duplicate container, leaving approximately a 1/4-inch lip. When glued in place, this trimmed piece will fit almost invisibly over the main bowl (**Fig. 2**).

Fig. 1 PRESENTATION

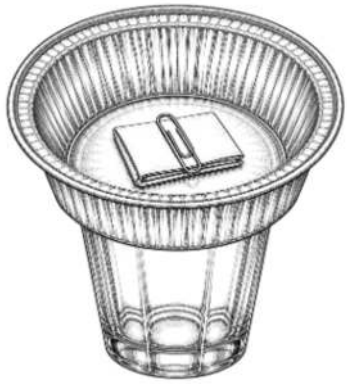
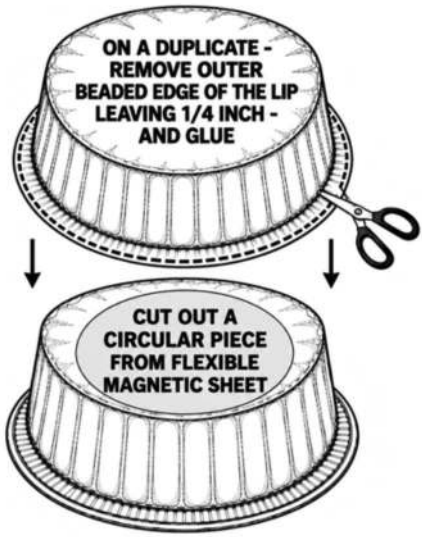


Fig. 2 GIMMICK



Place a circular piece of magnetic sheeting between the two containers (**Fig. 2**). This is the flexible magnetic material commonly used for advertising and often seen on refrigerators. Hobby stores carry magnetic sheets with or without adhesive backing. Stationery stores also carry "peel-and-stick" magnetic sheets designed for use as business card backing.

Magnetic sheets are available in different strengths, so you will need to experiment. You want the magnetism to be strong enough to hold the coin securely, yet weak enough to allow it to release easily with a simple tap of the magic wand. To reduce the magnetic hold, place additional pieces of paper between the magnetic sheet and the container until you find the desired combination.

You now have a pseudo-chop cup à la Paul Daniels!

The challenge when using American coinage is that US coins do not contain enough ferromagnetic material to work effectively. Coins from Canada, Europe, the United Kingdom, China, and India can be used instead. More obscure international coins can add an element of mystery to the performance.

Alternatively, consider using a small key, metal slug, washer, or antique button. Tokens from subways, buses, vending machines, laundromats, and arcades can also be ideal. Finally, fantasy or commemorative coins, challenge coins, and medallions can provide interesting possibilities and may help support a compelling patter theme for the routine.

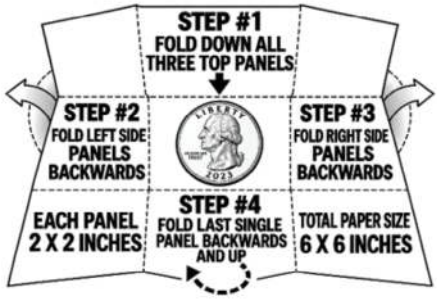
WORKING AND PRESENTATION: On your tabletop, have a stack of four or five aluminum bowls, with the gimmicked bowl on top. The top bowl contains the coin or substitute, a large 2-inch paper clip, and a pre-folded 6-by-6-inch piece of paper. Place a black marker, drinking glass, and magic wand beside the stack.

The magician begins, "I have a few items on my table to show you. I was going to conduct a science experiment involving paper, metal, glass, and fire. Unfortunately,

the Fire Marshal has kiboshed the idea. But I still want to show you what I have." Display the drinking glass, the aluminum bowl, a coin (or substitute), and a piece of paper. Colored paper is best for presentation purposes.

There are several versions of the coin paper fold in the magic literature. My favorite is shown in **Figure 3**. I use a 6-by-6-inch piece of paper, which creates nine 2-by-2-inch sections. This allows the final packet to be held by its edge while the coin secretly slides out through the bottom of the packet into the magician's waiting hand. Pre-fold the paper so it can be easily refolded around the coin (**Fig. 3**).

Fig. 3 PAPER FOLD

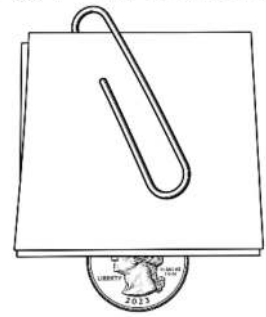


Have a spectator initial the borrowed coin. Place the coin in the center of the paper and fold the top row of sections down toward yourself (**STEP #1**). Pick up the paper while pinching the coin in place. Fold the left-side sections toward the audience and around the coin (**STEP #2**). Repeat with the right-side sections (**STEP #3**). Finally, fold the bottom section up and toward the audience (**STEP #4**). The magician says, "As you can see, the paper is totally folded around the coin."

Note: This special fold leaves the bottom of the packet (the edge closest to the magician) open, allowing the coin to slide out when desired.

As you place the large paper clip on the 2-by-2-inch folded packet, secretly allow the coin to drop out of the packet into the palm of your hand (**Fig. 4**).

Fig. 4 PAPER PACKET



The magician says, "Usually, when I set the paper and coin on fire, I use a paper clip so I don't get burned. But the paper clip still helps to secure the paper and coin." Place the aluminum bowl on top of your palm, magnetically securing the coin to the bottom of the bowl. Drop the paper-clipped packet into the bowl and place the bowl on top of the drinking glass. If desired, you can have your spectator quickly pinch the packet to confirm that the coin is still secured, which, of course, it is not. The large paper clip helps disguise this. Watch your angles when holding the bowl so as not to reveal the attached coin.

With your magic wand or black marker, tap the top of the paper packet three times, lightly twice and then firmly on the third tap. The coin will audibly drop into the drinking glass. Have the spectator remove the paper clip and unfold the paper to confirm that the coin is gone. Remove the bowl, showing that it has no hole. Pick up the glass, rattle the coin from side to side, and pour it into the spectator's open hand. Have the spectator confirm that the initials are their own.

As an option, you can recite this magical incantation as you tap the paper packet:

INCANTATION

"By paper bound and metal tied…" (first light tap)

"Let coin and parchment now divide…"(second light tap)

"What once was held, let now be free … From hand to glass, and back to me." (final firm tap to release the coin)

Copper-Nickel-Silver

Some older magicians, and even a few younger magi, find small coins difficult to manipulate. Mounting the coins on blank playing cards not only provides a touch of comedy but also makes them easier to handle and far more visible, especially in parlor performances.

EFFECT: The magician asks the audience whether they would prefer to see a card trick or a coin trick. Whatever the choice, the magician replies, "I aim to please," and displays either the red or blue backs of three playing cards or flips them over to reveal a different coin affixed to each card.

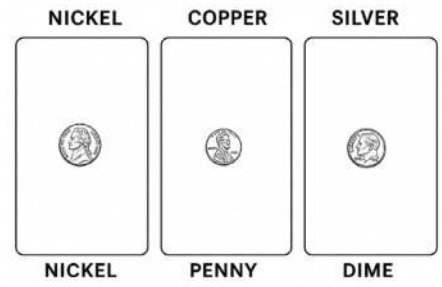
Three coin-cards are displayed coin side up. A spectator secretly selects one of the coins in their mind. While the magician's back is turned, the spectator freely mixes the coin-cards and turns them face down. Without asking a single question, the magician turns around and immediately identifies the spectator's secretly chosen coin.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION: In 1951, Bob Hummer created a divination routine titled "Mathematical Three-Card Monte." Five years later, Martin Gardner explored the underlying principle in his classic book *Mathematics, Magic and Mystery* and in subsequent publications. Over the years, many magicians, including Al Koran, Nick Trost, Karl Fulves, Harry Lorayne, and Darwin Ortiz, have developed their own variations of the effect.

The routine is traditionally performed with playing cards, although other objects have occasionally been substituted. My version combines playing cards with three coins: copper, nickel, and silver. The patter for my presentation centers on the symbolism of the past, present, and future.

Glue a penny, a nickel, and a silver dime to the face side of three blank-faced playing cards. Alternatively, use the Ace of Clubs, Ace of Diamonds, and Ace of Hearts. Each coin should completely cover the center pip (**Fig. 1**).

Fig. 1



Step 1: The Display

Invite a spectator to examine the three coins. The magician says, "Three coins. Three different metals. Three different values. But today, these coins represent something much more personal. Long before credit cards and digital wallets, people carried a mixture of coins in their pockets or purses. I used to borrow coins from my audience, but that's become more difficult with each passing year. Today, these three coins represent the past, the present, and the future."

For close-up performances, arrange the coin-cards on the table. For parlor or small-stage performances, display them on an easel or display board so everyone can see them clearly. Alternatively, invite three spectators to assist, each holding one of the coin-cards.

The magician continues, "The penny reminds us to save. It represents thrift and value. *Counting every penny*, *not a penny more*, and *pinching pennies* are sayings associated with this little copper coin. My grandfather used to say that every penny has a story. How true this is. Now that the penny has been, or soon will be, phased out in many countries, it has become a reminder of the past. Let's place this copper coin in the center to ground us."

The magician picks up the nickel and continues, "The nickel represents spending and the practical side of everyday life. *Don't take any wooden nickels*, *not worth a nickel*, and *down to my last nickel* remind us of the challenges we face each day. *People save pennies, admire silver, but spend*

nickels, often without a second thought. Let's place the nickel beside the penny."

The magician says, "Finally, we have the silver dime, the smallest of the three coins, yet the most valuable. Often tucked away for something special, it represents the future: saving, investing, and hope. There's an old expression, 'to turn on a dime.' It reminds us to stay flexible, to be ready to change direction whenever life demands it. Let's place the silver dime on the other side of the penny."

Place the coin-cards face up in a row. The penny goes in the center, the nickel on your right (the audience's left), and the silver dime on your left (the audience's right).

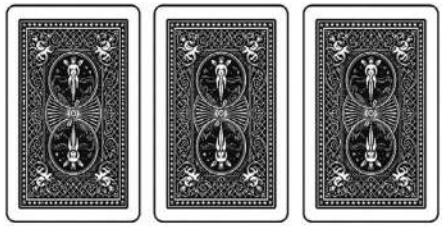
The magician continues, "I'll need the help of a spectator, someone who appreciates the value of money. A penny-pincher … someone who wouldn't take a wooden nickel … someone who can turn on a dime." After selecting a spectator, invite them to examine the coin-cards.

Step 2: The Secret Selection

The magician begins, "These three coins tell the story of time itself. The copper penny represents the *past*. Copper was mankind's first working metal. The nickel represents the *present*. It is the most modern of these three metals. And the silver dime, a timeless metal, represents the *future*. It bears this year's date, reminding us that tomorrow begins today."

The magician continues, "While my back is turned, I'd like you to think of these three coins not as money, but as three different ways of looking at life. In a moment, I'd like you to make a private decision. Secretly choose one of those three ideas. Don't say a word. Don't point. Simply picture your choice clearly in your mind. Think of the past, the present, or the future."

The magician continues, "When you have decided, turn your chosen coin-card face down. To make it more difficult, swap the positions of the other two coin-cards and turn them face down. All three coin-cards should be face down. Let me know when you're finished, and I'll turn around.



Hummer's principle requires you to track only the coin-card that begins in the center position. Follow this item throughout the routine. When you turn around:

If the center is the penny, the spectator selected the penny.

If the center is the nickel, the spectator selected the dime.

If the center is the dime, the spectator selected the nickel. It's that simple!

Step 3: The Reveal

The magician says, "Past … present … or future … I think I've got it." Pick up the three coin-cards and hold them in a spread facing yourself, remembering which coin-card originally occupied the center position.

Hold the predicted coin-card aloft and say, "For the first time, tell everyone: which coin did you choose?" When the spectator names the coin, dramatically reveal the matching coin-card.

Optional Repeat

If desired, the routine may be repeated with the same spectator or with a new volunteer selected by the current spectator. The magician says, "There's an old saying in magic: a magician should never repeat the same trick for the same audience. Fortunately, this isn't a trick or an illusion. It's a demonstration of observation … an experiment in deduction … or perhaps even a touch of psychic perception."

The magician says, "So, let's test this one more time." Repeat the procedure. After correctly identifying the second selection, conclude by saying, "Whether you believe it was deduction, intuition, or something more mysterious … I'll let you decide. I simply call it … 'The Three-Coin Mystery.'"

Aladdin's Coin

Misdirection and coins – say it isn't so! American actor and acting teacher Sanford Meisner's famous quotation, "Acting is behaving truthfully under imaginary circumstances," is key to this routine. The visual of a coin being slowly rubbed against the magician's arm before seemingly melting creates a memorable magical moment, the goal of every magician.

EFFECT: With the magician's sleeve rolled up and the elbow resting on a table, a coin is vigorously rubbed up and down the bare arm. The coin is fumbled onto the table a couple of times, then retrieved, with the magician trying again. Gradually, the magician slows the rubbing motion until the fingers begin to flutter and the coin appears to have melted away. The coin can remain lost to Aladdin or magically reappear.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION: I learned this dissolving coin effect sixty years ago and have performed it in a variety of ways on hundreds of occasions. No setup is required. Recently, I added an Aladdin's lamp and Arabian folklore patter to the routine, which has been well received by audiences.

The magician begins, "You'll all recall the story from the *Arabian Nights* of Aladdin's magic lamp and the genie who granted the lamp's holder three wishes. According to folklore, the holder of the lamp would rub its metal surface, and magic would result."

The magician continues, "Many believe that Aladdin's lamp was lost to the spirit of its genie centuries ago. But what has survived is this magic coin, and the secret that it was never the lamp that was magical. It was the rubbing that mattered."

If necessary, roll up the sleeve of your right or left arm and position your arm and coin as shown in **Figure 1**. Recite the following chant to the genie:

Rub it once and rub it twice,
Wake the magic, rub it thrice.

(fumble the coin to the table, retrieve the coin, and resume the rubbing)

Rub it here, then rub it there,
Magic's hiding everywhere.

(fumble the coin one last time, retrieve the coin, make a switch, ditch the coin, and resume rubbing an apparent coin)

Rub it slowly, rub it light,
Bring the magic into sight.
One last rub, and then we'll see
A little magic, just for thee.

Alternatively, the following shorter chant can be used:

By lamp and flame, by magic bright,
What's here by day shall leave tonight.
Genie, Genie, hear my plea,
Make this coin … disappear for me.

Figures 1–4 COIN RUBBING

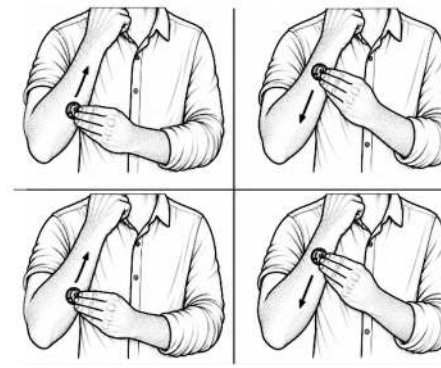


Fig. 1 Hold a coin against a bare arm and vigorously rub it up and down the arm.



Fig. 2: Let the coin fall to the tabletop a couple of times, quickly retrieving it and resuming the rubbing motion.

Fig. 2



Fig. 3: On the second fumble, pick up the coin with both hands, retaining the coin in the right hand. Pretend to take the coin in the left hand, then close the left hand over the imaginary coin and continue vigorously rubbing the apparent coin against your skin. It is natural for the coin to remain out of sight during the rubbing motion.

Fig. 3



This misdirection allows the right hand, which secretly holds the coin, to move toward the back of the neck. There are several options for disposing of the coin. Drop it down the back of your shirt or place it inside the collar, against your neck. If using a dime or nickel, a duplicate coin can be concealed in the fold of the outer right ear. Alternatively, a duplicate can be placed in the front shirt pocket or another location for a reveal.

Fig. 4: Slow down the rubbing motion and flutter your fingers as your left hand moves off your right arm, showing that the coin has disappeared, dissolved, or been magically rubbed away.

Fig. 4



Coin Thru Ring

Impossible penetrations are always magical and can be entertaining when presented with interesting patter. This storyline and magical illusion are ideal for strolling magic at weddings or for close-up performance in a coffee shop. It requires a little practice to ensure smooth, natural movements.

EFFECT: A ring and coin are displayed at the fingertips in opposite hands. The coin is gently tapped a few times against the opening of the ring, demonstrating that the coin is too large to pass through. With matrimonial patter and a magical pronouncement, the ring is visually and impossibly pushed through the center of the coin … and then reversed.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION: No setup is required, but a traditional, rounded wedding band works best. I use a quarter, but depending on the size of the ring, a 50-cent piece may be needed. Experiment to determine what suits your hands.

The magician begins, "Rings and coins have been associated with marriage for thousands of years. The ring, a circle with no beginning and no end, represents love, commitment, and devotion. The coin represents the promise of sharing, prosperity, and the couple's commitment to support one another. Sometimes the promise is the money you're about to lose!"

The magician continues, "The coin is too big to pass through the ring. Fortunately, magicians have discovered a solution. You

don't make the coin smaller. You don't make the ring bigger. You simply say the magic words. The traditional words are, 'For richer or for poorer.' The coin goes through the ring, but the money usually goes the other way. Remember – live long and prosper!"

RING AND COIN HANDLING

Fig. 1: Display the ring and coin in a frontal view so the audience can see through the ring. Lay the ring on top of the coin, demonstrating that the coin is larger than the ring.

Fig. 1



Fig. 2: Slowly move the coin toward the ring.

Fig. 2

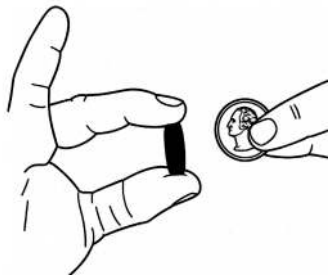


Fig. 3: Audibly tap the coin several times against the ring to demonstrate the size difference again as you share your patter.

Fig. 3

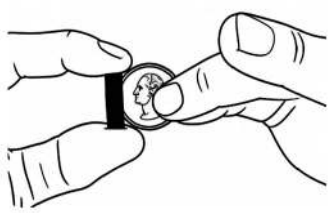
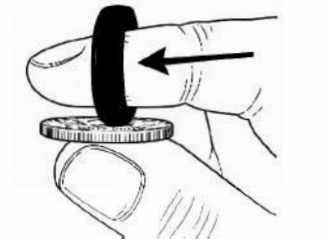


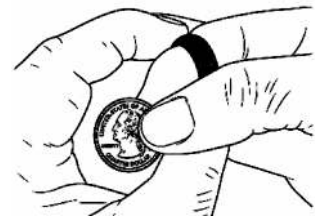
Fig. 4: Below is a top view of the "secret move." The coin slides on the outside of the ring as you push your finger into the center of the ring.

Fig. 4



Below is the end position of the penetration. Reverse the movement to "pull" the coin out of the ring.

Fig. 5



6-7 for Adults

It's not often that magicians get to be the cool kid in the room and stay hip with the latest trends. Here is your chance to impress the younger generation.

EFFECT: This is an impromptu routine that can be performed anywhere, anytime. A spectator secretly places a nickel in one closed fist and a dime in the other. The spectator multiplies the value of the coin in the right hand by 6 and the value of the coin in the left hand by 7 and announces only the total. The magician immediately reveals which coin is in each hand.

BACKGROUND: The "6-7" hand gesture is a recent viral internet trend and Gen Alpha/Gen Z slang in which you hold out both hands, palms facing up, and alternate lifting them up and down. It mimics the physical motion of "weighing" two different options in your hands. The phrase and gesture are fundamentally nonsensical. It

became a popular piece of "brain rot" slang because it has no real, fixed definition. Kids and teens use it as a playful catchphrase, a random response, or a way to confuse adults and participate in an inside joke. This routine is another reason for anyone over thirty not to trust teenagers!

The effect dates to the Victorian days of magic, 1845-1900, and employs the parity principle. This routine is based on Martin Gardner's classic "Which Hand?" from *Mathematics, Magic and Mystery* (1956), itself rooted in much older recreational mathematics. Gardner describes it as an ancient trick that uses a penny and a dime. Royal V. Heath's published method relies not on the announced total but on a subtle psychological observation: watching which multiplication takes the spectator longer to perform mentally.

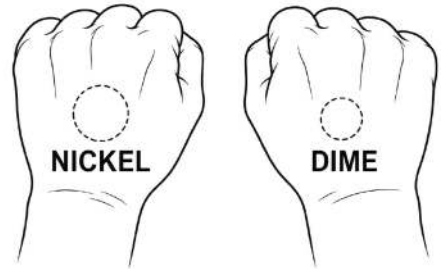
The method requires the spectator to multiply the value of the coins in their fists by even and odd single-digit numbers. To me, this seems arbitrary and suspicious. My version replaces the penny with a nickel, since most countries have phased out or demonetized their lowest-value subunit coins. Also, I have modernized the routine using the nonsensical internet meme 6-7. For the repeat of the effect, I use the number of digits on each hand to offer a more logical basis for the multiplication.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION: The secret is simple: just focus on the right hand. Multiply the value of the coin in the right hand by an even number (e.g., 6) and the value of the coin in the left hand by an odd number (e.g., 7). If the total of the two products is odd, the dime is in the right hand. If it is even, the dime is in the left hand. It's that simple.

The magician inquires, "Does anyone know what 6-7 means?" Gesture the motion in a quizzical manner. Ask a younger person to try to explain. Have fun with this, because it will be difficult for the younger audience member to explain fully. The magician continues, "I still do not really understand. In my day, we would say 'six of one, half a dozen of the other' or 'fifty-fifty.' Or it's just a 'coin flip.' So let's use a couple of coins to try to make sense of this 6-7 nonsensical nonsense."

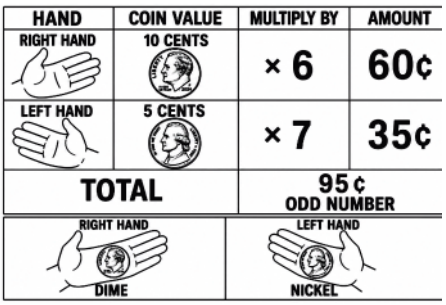
PHASE 1: Have the spectator secretly hide a nickel and a dime, one in each closed fist (**Fig. 1**).

Fig. 1



The magician says, "So only you know which coin is in which hand. Let's see you do the 6-7 gesture. I still do not get it! Please take the value of the coin in your right hand and multiply it by 6. Take the value of the coin in your left hand and multiply it by 7. Please add the two numbers. What total do you have?" If it is an odd number, declare that the coin in the right hand is the dime and the coin in the left hand is the nickel. If the total is even, the answer is the reverse. The magician gestures 6-7 and says, "Not bad, not bad. Maybe there is something to this 6-7 thing." See **Figure 2**.

Fig. 2



PHASE 2: The magician continues, "Let's try it again. Please hide the coins. You can keep the same order or change it; only you will know. This time, you have

10 digits (fingers and thumbs), so multiply the value of the coin in your right hand by 10. With the left hand, multiply the value of that coin by the 5 digits on your left hand. Add the two numbers." Follow the same reveal.

OPTIONAL PHASE: If you feel bold enough and the audience is welcoming, you can try Royal V. Heath's method. As a different twist, have the spectator place both coins in one fist. Ask the spectator to multiply the value in each hand by 5. Multiplying 5 by 0 is easy, but the spectator will likely hesitate over multiplying 5 by 15 (75). You will recognize the hand that caused the pause. Have the spectator add the two numbers (as a distraction) and then point to the hand holding all the coins.

Kipp's Flip

This is a clever single-coin handling that is going to make you flip. The coin maneuver allows the magician to always predict the correct coin orientation of "heads" or "tails." I learned this coin handling five years ago from I.B.M. magician Kipp Sherry of Boise, Idaho. While Kipp does not claim this as his own creation, it is something that he has honed and performed for years. As an advanced handling, Kipp can manipulate two coins. Only the single-coin effect is presented here, as the handling takes some practice. With his permission, I am including what I call "Kipp's Flip" in this Parade.

EFFECT: The magician invites a spectator to play a game of "heads or tails." A coin is produced, or borrowed, and the difference between the "heads" and "tails" sides is shown. The magician flips the coin into the air and asks the spectator to call "heads" or "tails" while the coin is spinning. Every time, the spectator calls it wrong, and the magician wins.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION: A quarter-sized coin can be used, but larger coins work best for handling and visibility. Make sure the spectator and audience can easily recognize the difference between the two sides of the coin. Sometimes I place a 3/4-inch colored stick-on dot label on one side.

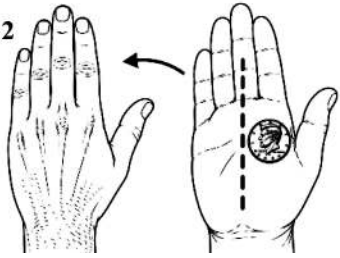
With the right hand, flip and catch the coin in the same hand (**Fig. 1**).

Fig. 1



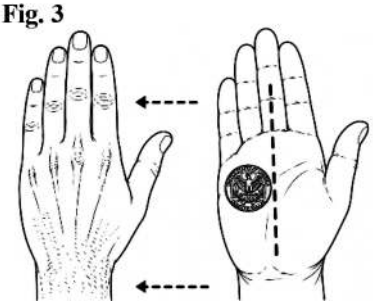
If the spectator calls "heads" in the air, catch the coin in the right hand and quickly take note of the orientation (**Fig. 2**). If it is heads, simply turn the coin over on top of the left hand. Uncover the hand and announce "tails." This is the normal catch and turnover move.

Ftg. 2



If the spectator calls "tails" in the air and the coin lands heads up, toss the coin upward so that it does not flip (**Fig. 3**). Quickly catch the coin in this upward motion with the back of your hand, cover the coin, wait a beat, then reveal the coin and announce "heads."

Fig. 3



For the non-flip move, before you toss the coin in the air, let the coin slide to the left side of your palm. This helps keep the coin from turning over. As you toss the coin, move the right hand upward to catch it, then cover it. This is another example of the "large motion covering the smaller motion."

The effect can be performed as a simple demonstration or as a routine associated with gambling. Kipp Sherry uses the coin flip at charity fundraisers to collect "donations." You can create your own patter, but below is a suggestion.

The flipper begins, "For thousands of years, people have trusted the humble coin to settle arguments and make decisions. 'It's a coin toss … fifty-fifty chance … yes or no … heads I win, tails you lose … a toss of a coin or the luck of the toss … it's up in the air … the odds are even.' These are sayings we associate with the simple coin flip. The coin flip is probably the fairest decision-making system ever invented. No arguments, no debates, no committees, just heads or tails. A coin toss seems to be the only time people willingly let gravity decide for them."

The flipper continues, "My grandfather used to say that every coin has a story. It passes from hand to hand, travels from place to place, and carries with it secrets that we will never fully know. He also reminded me that every coin has two sides, and so does every story."

The flipper says, "When the coin goes up, you call it. If you're right, you win. If you're wrong, I'll explain how you misunderstood the rules." The routine can be repeated a few times before you say, "Famous Las Vegas tycoon Steve Wynn said, 'If you want to make money at a casino, you better own the casino.' Similarly, if you want to win a coin flip, you better own the coin." Then let them examine the coin or place it in your pocket and move on.

Mental Heads or Tails: Three Effects

If you found the handling of "Kipp's Flip" too challenging, here are three "Heads or Tails" effects that are less manual and more mental. Drawn from the magic archives of the 1940s, they employ the parity principle. The performer determines the hidden coin's orientation by looking at the number of coins and comparing it with the parity of the visible heads-up coins.

Effect 1: Flip D'Not Flop

EFFECT: Four coins are randomly mixed (heads and tails) and arranged on a tabletop. The magician turns away and asks a spectator to turn over any coins as many times as desired. The spectator says "flip" each time a coin is reversed. The spectator then places a bottle cap over one of the four coins. The magician turns around and correctly determines whether the covered coin is "heads" or "tails."

BACKGROUND: There is quite an evolution behind these three effects. The underlying idea is credited to L. Vosburgh Lyons and appeared in *The Phoenix*, Volume 1, No. 8, in 1942. The effect "Call It a Puzzle" used six colored discs, each bearing a different symbol. Later, Bob Hummer developed a family of effects in which apparently random operations preserve the underlying parity of the objects. Martin Gardner subsequently connected Hummer's work to the same flipping principle used in coin effects and effects with other objects. The ingenious combination that produces these effects was devised by Al Thatcher and published in *The New Phoenix* in October 1962.

Karl Fulves independently confirmed the attribution in his *Big Book of Magic Tricks*. He credits Thatcher with the routines, Lyons with the basic effect, and Hummer with the parity principle.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION: After selecting a spectator, the magician begins, "We have one dollar, four quarters to be exact. For greater visibility, let's use a black Sharpie to print a large 'H' for heads and 'T' for tails on both sides of the coins." **Note:** Marking the coins (**Fig. 1**) is optional, but I find the bold lettering makes the coins easier to see when performing for a larger group.

The magician continues, "Please place the four coins in your cupped hands, mix them, and drop them onto the table to arrive at a random orientation of heads and tails. If you wish, you can mix the coins again." When the spectator has finished mixing, arrange the coins in a 2-by-2 pattern **(Fig. 1**).

Fig. 1



In the **Figure 1** example, there are 2 heads and 2 tails. The method requires the magician to note only the number of heads. The magician simply adds this number to the number of times the spectator flips a coin.

The magician says, "I am going to turn away, and I want you to turn over as many coins as you like, as many times as you wish. For example, you can turn one coin over five times and not the others, or three of the coins, or all the coins in any combination you wish. But each time you turn over a coin, say 'flip' out loud."

Demonstrate the flipping of the coins in various combinations. Before you turn away, make sure the coins are back to the original arrangement of 2 heads and 2 tails shown in **Figure 1**.

Count the number of times the spectator says "flip." Add that number to the number of heads-up coins that were visible before you turned your back. You only need to determine whether the combined number is odd or even.

The magician instructs, "Please take the bottle cap and cover any one of the coins. When you have done this, let me know, and I will turn around."

Fig. 2: FIRST EXAMPLE

In this example, the spectator randomly turned over the coins and called out "flip" a total of 9 times. Using a bottle cap, the spectator then covered a heads-up coin.

Fig. 2



Since you started with 2 heads-up coins before you turned away, and the spectator announced 9 "flips," the total is 11 (2 + 9 = 11), which is an odd number. Because only 2 heads-up coins are visible, another heads-up coin is needed to make the total odd. Therefore, the coin under the bottle cap must be heads up.

Fig. 3: SECOND EXAMPLE

In this example (**Fig. 3**), the spectator randomly tossed 3 tails and 1 head.

Fig. 3



The spectator flipped coins 5 times and arrived at the arrangement in **Figure 4**.

Fig. 4



You started with 1 heads-up coin, and the spectator announced 5 "flips." The total is 6 (1 + 5 = 6), which is an even number. Because 2 heads-up coins are visible, an even configuration is showing. You do not need another heads-up coin. Therefore, the coin under the bottle cap must be tails up.

Try other combinations until you are comfortable performing the effect.

Effect 2: Double the Fun

EFFECT: If four coins are fun, then eight coins must be double the fun! This time the spectator does not have to say anything. Silence is golden! Eight coins are randomly mixed, heads up and tails up, and arranged on a tabletop. The magician turns away and asks a spectator to silently turn over two coins at a time, as many times as they like. The spectator may choose a different pair each time. When finished, the spectator covers one coin with a bottle cap. The magician turns around and correctly determines whether the covered coin is heads up or tails up.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION: Once the spectator has mixed the eight coins and dropped them onto the tabletop, secretly count the number of coins that are heads up. All you need to remember is whether the number of heads is even or odd. When the spectator has finished turning over pairs of coins and has covered one coin, turn around and count the visible heads-up coins. An even number of heads at the outset indicates even parity, while an odd number indicates odd parity. Because the coins are turned over in pairs, the parity is preserved.

For example, the eight coins shown in **Figure 1** have five heads-up coins, an odd number. Therefore, the initial parity is odd.

Figure 2 shows an example of the coins after the spectator has turned over several pairs. The spectator has also covered a tails-up coin with a bottle cap, shown as transparent for the purpose of these instructions.

Remember, you only need to focus on the parity of the heads-up coins. Since the starting position in **Figure 1** had an odd number of heads (five), you are looking for an odd number of heads (three) as shown in **Figure 2**. Once you determine there is an odd number of heads-up coins, you are done. The covered coin must be tails. If there were an even number of heads-up coins, the covered coin must be heads to restore the parity.

To sum up, if the parity of the number of heads remains the same before and after the spectator hides a coin, the chosen coin is tails. If the parity changes, from even to odd or from odd to even, the chosen coin is heads up.

Try different combinations until you are comfortable performing the effect. Note: I used eight coins in this example, but the method works with any number of coins. Five, six, or seven coins can be used. More than eight might signal to an observant audience that you are counting coins.

Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Effect 3: Coin Waltz

EFFECT: I call this effect "Coin Waltz" because the spectator's one-two-three-sequence mirrors the rhythm of a waltz, traditionally written in 3/4 time. The spectator turns over one coin, then two, and finally three. This one-two-three-sequence can be repeated as many times as desired. Since 1 + 2 + 3 = 6, an even number, parity is preserved.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION: The magician begins, "First, we used four coins and called out 'flip' when a coin was turned over. Then we had eight coins and silently turned over two coins at a time. Let's try another approach. I call this the 'Coin Waltz.'" You can have the spectator determine the number of coins to use; I suggest five to eight. Have the spectator mix the coins and arrange them in a single row.

The magician continues, "Not sure about you, but when it comes to dancing, I have two left feet. As in the waltz, I invite you to turn over any coin, then any two coins, and finally any three coins. You can turn over the same coins or any coins you wish." Demonstrate the sequence before turning away. Count "one" for the first coin, then "one-two" for the second move, and finish with "one-two-three." You will have flipped coins six times, but the parity of the original layout will be unchanged.

The magician continues, "Just pretend that you are at an Arthur Murray Dance Studio and repeat the 'one coin, two coins, three coins' sequence as many times as you wish. Try not to step on your own coins! When you are finished with your dance lesson, please cover any coin with the bottle cap. Let me know when you are ready for me to turn around."

Again, for the reveal, if the heads-up coins were an even number before the flipping, you will be looking for an even number after the flipping. That means the covered coin will be a tails-up coin. If the number is odd, the covered coin will be a heads-up coin.

As a variation, you can let your spectator cover two coins and then tell the spectator whether the two coins match. Have fun with this and repeat the effect a few times to demonstrate that it was not random luck.

Napkin and Coin: Three Effects

More evidence that the "oldies are the goldies." I have included three classic napkin-and-coin effects because they require very little sleight of hand. These are about as close to self-working coin magic as one can get. More importantly, I have always enjoyed performing these classics, especially at the dinner table. Performed individually, the effects can seem somewhat lacking. Combined, however, they offer a more complete and entertaining routine.

Effect 1: Coin Thru Napkin

EFFECT: A coin is held at the fingertips, and a cloth dinner napkin is draped over the coin and hand (**Fig. 1**). The front of the napkin is lifted to show the audience that the coin is still underneath. The napkin is twisted, allowing the coin to appear to penetrate the cloth. When the napkin is opened, it is completely intact, with no sign of a hole.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION: A broad family of handkerchief/napkin-and-coin effects was well established by the late nineteenth century. Professor Hoffmann's *Modern Magic* (1876) describes several coin-and-handkerchief effects and credits Jean Eugène Robert-Houdin (1805-1871). The *Tarbell Course in Magic* later included both "Vanishing Coin in Handkerchief" and "Coin Through Handkerchief" among its classic coin effects.

Many magic books followed, with adaptations and variations of these classics by T. Nelson Downs (1867-1938), Walter B. Gibson (1897-1985), John Ramsay (1900-1952), J. B. Bobo (1910-1996), Teiichi Yamada (1899-1983), Slydini (1901-1991), and David Roth (1952-2021). The coin magic we perform today was built on the creativity and ingenuity of the giants who came before us. We all stand on their shoulders.

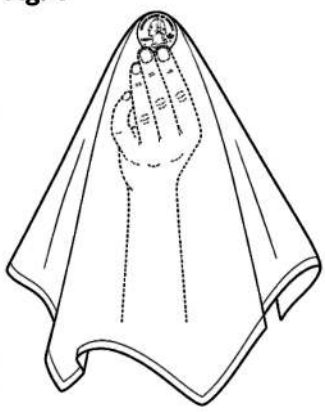
In performance, the patter I use relates to the thread-count density of the cloth napkin. The magician says to the host, "I must say, these are very high-quality napkins. Nothing but the best for your guests! I estimate that such high-quality dinner napkins must be 400 to 600 threads per square inch. There is a simple way to determine this by using a coin."

The magician continues, "You see, or maybe you can't see, but all cloth napkins have a certain thread count. This means that the napkin is actually full of very small holes, too small for the naked eye to discern. The spaces between the individual threads in a fabric are technically called interstices (pronounced *uhn-tur-stuh-seez*). Who knew that this dinner party would be so educational!"

The magician holds the napkin close to their eyes and says, "Yes, I can see the interstices. I may have difficulty pronouncing the word, but I can see it. Let's test and try to identify the actual thread count." Complete the routine. Once the coin is twisted through the napkin, conclude with a declaration of "500 thread count, just as I thought."

Begin with a coin held at the fingertips and drape a cloth dinner napkin over the coin (**Fig. 1**).

Fig. 1



Secret Move: The index finger and thumb of the other hand take hold of the coin through the outside top of the napkin (**Fig. 2**). From behind, the outside thumb secretly makes a small tuck or fold in the top of the napkin directly behind the coin. The thumb underneath the napkin then pinches and holds this fold against the back of the coin. The coin and a small piece of the napkin are now pinched together.

Fig. 2



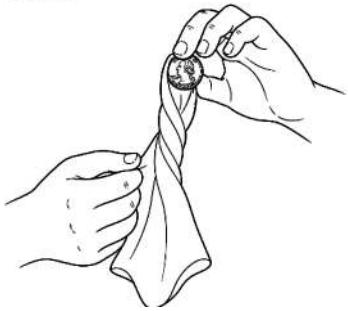
The front of the napkin is lifted backward over the coin, showing the audience that the coin is still held at the fingertips (**Fig. 3**). Instead of returning only the front layer of the napkin to its original position, lift both the back and front layers over the coin. This subtle action is very convincing, but it secretly places the coin outside the napkin.

Fig. 3



Twist the napkin and slowly pull the coin through the center of the napkin (**Fig. 4**). Raise the coin and show the unraveled napkin with no hole. Complete your patter on the thread count.

Fig. 4



You are now ready to perform Effect 2.

Effect 2: Disappearing Coin

EFFECT: While seated at a table, the magician spreads a cloth napkin in a diamond position, places a coin at its center, and folds the napkin around it. When the napkin is opened, the coin has mysteriously vanished.

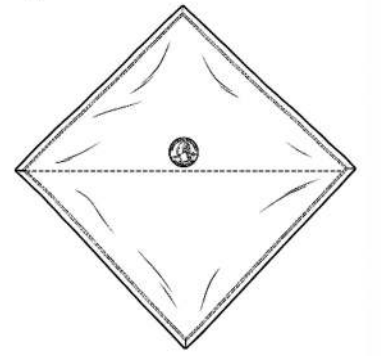
WORKING AND PRESENTATION: In this effect, the coin is retained in the folds of the napkin. The magician says, "A cloth napkin is often a sure sign you're dining somewhere special. One also must always remember one's fine dining manners. I always seem to forget where to place my napkin when I have finished my meal. I am reminded that if you need to excuse yourself, you place the napkin loosely on the seat of your chair. This signals to the waitstaff that you are returning. You place your napkin loosely on the table to signal you are finished with your meal."

The magician continues, "While I know that my dinner host is going to provide an appropriate gratuity for the meal, I often leave a little tip inside my folded napkin. For example, I might place a quarter. Before you judge me, remember that it's the thought that counts when tipping. Although I may not be the biggest tipper, I observe that when it comes to tipping, some people will stop at nothing!"

Just before the coin is shown to have disappeared, you can make a comment about not wanting to embarrass your host by suggesting they might not tip enough.

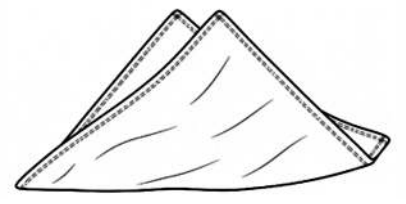
Lay the napkin diagonally with a coin in the middle, just above the center line (**Fig. 1**).

Fig. 1



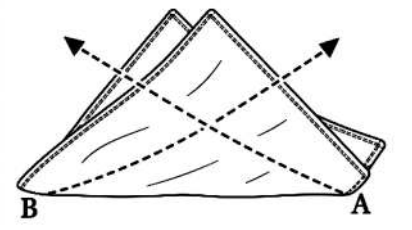
Fold the napkin so the bottom corner is placed to the right of the top corner (**Fig. 2**).

Fig. 2



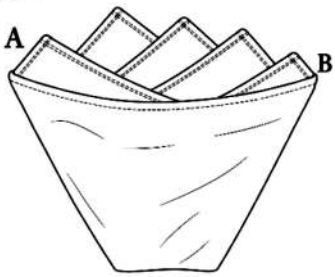
Fold the bottom corners as shown (**Fig. 3**).

Fig. 3



Take hold of the napkin at points A and B in **Figure 4** and pull it horizontally, stretching your arms out while keeping the napkin taut. The coin will seem to have disappeared but will be concealed in the napkin fold. For misdirection, keep looking below the napkin in search of the missing coin. Keeping the napkin taut, tilt it vertically until the coin slides into your hand. Unravel the napkin while holding the coin behind the cloth.

Fig. 4



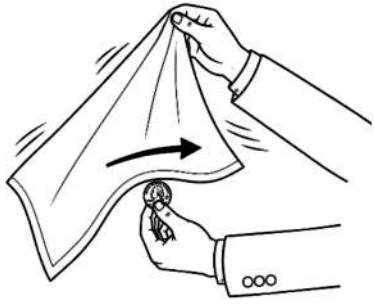
In the parlance found in our older magic books, the coin may be vested or sleeved. Alternatively, the coin can be reproduced and used in the next effect.

Effect 3: Final Disappearing Coin

EFFECT: A coin is held at the fingertips and covered with a cloth dinner napkin. The napkin is quickly pulled off the coin. On the third pull, the coin disappears from the magician's fingertips.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION: Hold the coin at the fingertips. With the other hand holding a corner of a cloth dinner napkin, drape the napkin over the coin and quickly draw the napkin across the coin from front to back (**Fig. 1**). Repeat this, showing the coin still at the fingertips.

Fig. 1



On the third pass, as you reach forward with the napkin, pinch the corner of the napkin against the coin, steal the coin, and stretch the napkin so it touches your chest (**Fig. 2**). Drop the coin down your sleeve or into your shirt or jacket breast pocket. Quickly pull the napkin off your hand, showing that the coin has vanished.

Fig. 2



The magician begins, "We have had a wonderful time this evening, and I want to thank our host. A good napkin is always ready when you need it. It protects your clothing, cleans up the occasional spill, and quietly does its job without asking for any attention. But this coin and napkin are also very symbolic." Perform the three-step vanish. The magician concludes, "A coin is a little like a good dinner guest: it always knows when to leave." Thank your host as you fold your napkin and bid farewell.

Send comments and appreciations to:
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The Card Corner

MIKE POWERS



This month's contribution comes from the prolific Marty Jacobs. Marty offers free access to his extensive magic site at *www.ruseletter.com*. I subscribe to the advanced version, which gives you even more access. It's only $5 a month, and I recommend that you give it a shot. You'll find an incredible amount of valuable material there.

Marty gave me permission to teach "Inside Job" in the Card Corner. My description is a stripped-down version of what Marty has on the site regarding presentation. The trick is normally part of the paid, advanced version of the site, but Marty has kindly given all of you access to the full version, where he goes into detail on credits and also on presentation. You'll find a link in Final Thoughts. You should definitely check this out for a fully formed and detailed presentation. This is one of Marty's fortes.

And now on to "Inside Job," which is a multiphase version of the classic "Robbers" effect. Here, not only do we have four robbers (jacks) but also two doormen (jokers), two detectives (kings), and a diamond necklace (the Ten of Diamonds). You'll find a performance video at *www.mallofmagic.com/cardcorner*. Moves tagged with ***** have video instruction at *www.mallofmagic.com/themoves*. The password is **marlo7d**.

Inside Job by Marty Jacobs

EFFECT: The deck represents a hotel that has been infiltrated by four robbers (the four jacks). There are two doormen (two jokers) who keep the "riffraff" out. After a robbery attempt, two detectives (two black kings) are called in. They bait the trap with a diamond necklace (the Ten of Diamonds). The robbers are caught, but it is found that the two doormen have absconded with the necklace, so the robbers go free.

SET-UP: You'll need two matching jokers in the deck. Remove them and place them face up on the table. Now spread the cards and remove the two black kings and the Ten of Diamonds. Place these cards face down to the side. Say, "These cards will play a role later."

PROCEDURE: You recount a story about four criminals who got away with "a daring diamond heist in the heart of New York City." You explain that the four jacks represent four career criminals, the deck represents an expensive hotel in New York City, and the two jokers are the doormen at the high-end establishment.

Spread the deck with faces toward you and upjog the four jacks as you come to them. Square up the deck as you obtain a left fourth-finger break under the second card from the face, leaving the jacks outjogged. Now strip out the four jacks and add them to the face. Lower the deck so that the spectators can see the faces. Spread the top four cards, showing the jacks. Now square up and lift the six cards above the break (the four jacks and two X cards). Set these aside face up. Marty suggests placing them onto the card box so that you can pick them up easily when the time comes.

Place the two jokers at the face of the deck. Make sure they face the same direction, preferably toward the audience. Say,

"You know you're at a posh hotel when they have *two* doormen!" Obtain a left fourth-finger break under the joker at the face. Now pick up the jacks (all six cards) and move them onto the deck momentarily. Pick up the broken joker under the jacks. Your right hand now has a seven-card packet: J, J, J, J, X, X, joker. Say, "The jacks said 'hi' to the doormen as they entered the hotel and checked in. They immediately took the elevator to the top and assembled on the roof."

Flip the deck face down in the left hand and place the seven cards (as four) face up on top, holding a break under the packet with your left fourth finger. Spread the four jacks, being sure not to flash the X cards, and say, "Each jack had a special role." Flip the entire packet face down (as four) and remove the top card (joker) with the right hand as you continue with, "The first burglar went to distract the two doormen …" Openly place this card face down on the bottom of the deck. Take the next "jack" and place it, face down, about ten cards from the face. Say, "This one navigated the hotel's corridors with the grace of a cat, heading straight for the vault to break into the hotel's numerous safety deposit boxes." Take the third "jack" and place it about ten cards from the top as you continue, "This jack's specialty was cracking safes. He went to the penthouse where the rich people stayed." Finally, take the top card and turn it face up on top. It's a jack. Say, "And this jack was the watchman. He had broken into the CCTV and could watch what was going on." Flip the jack face down.

Continue, "The doormen heard some unusual sounds and decided to call the cops. The lookout took note of the call and signaled to his accomplices." Flip the top card, a jack, face up and continue with, "In a swift and coordinated move, all three of them sprinted up the stairs to the rooftop. They rappelled down the side of the building and escaped into the night." Suiting action to words, drop the face-up jack (the lookout) onto the table and then turn each of the next three cards face up, one by one, also dropping them onto the table face up. This is the end of Phase 1. The robbers have escaped.

PHASE 2: Continue the story with, "The managers were greatly embarrassed by this incident and hired two private investigators to try to catch the thieves." Flip the tabled black kings face up. Continue with, "Their plan was to advertise that the hotel was going to have a fabulous diamond necklace on display in its grand ballroom. They hoped that this would entice the robbers to return, at which time the PIs would catch them and reestablish the hotel's reputation." Flip the Ten of Diamonds face up. It represents the diamond necklace.

Take the deck face up in the left hand. The two doormen are at the face. Drop the Ten of Diamonds face up onto the face of the deck. Now spread the cards a bit and resquare as you obtain a break under the top four face-up cards (Ten of Diamonds, joker, joker, X card). Take these four cards in a right-hand **Biddle Grip*** as you table the deck face down.

Rotate the four cards face down in the left hand and immediately take them again in a right-hand **Biddle Grip***. Slide the bottom card (Ten of Diamonds) onto the left palm using the left fingertips. Now peel the top X card, sidejogged a bit to the right, onto the Ten of Diamonds. Finally, place the double (two jokers), sidejogged a bit to the right, on top of all. It should appear that you're holding three cards (**Fig. 1**).

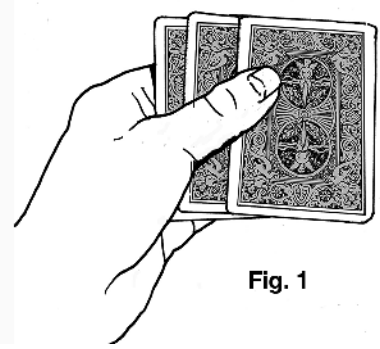


Fig. 1

Square up and take the four cards (as three) again in a right-hand **Biddle Grip***. Use the left thumb to peel the top joker onto the left hand. Flip it face up using the right

hand's packet. Repeat this with the second joker, ending as in **Figure 2**. Turn the right-hand palm upward, showing the Ten of Diamonds. Be sure to keep the double square.

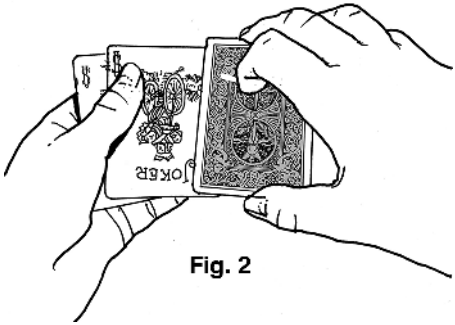
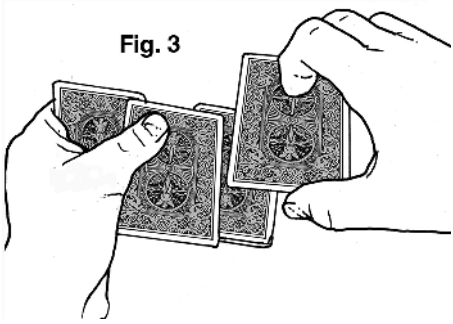


Fig. 2

Flip the two jokers face down in the left hand and add the right hand's pair face down on top. Square these cards in the left hand. Now lift the upper half of the deck with the right hand. Thumb off the top card of the left hand's group onto the lower portion of the deck (**Fig. 3**) and finally drop the right hand's half deck on top as you say, "Each night the two doormen hid the diamond necklace in a secret secure location somewhere in the hotel." It appears that you put the Ten of Diamonds (the diamond necklace) into the deck. Actually, it's the top card of the left hand's three-card packet.

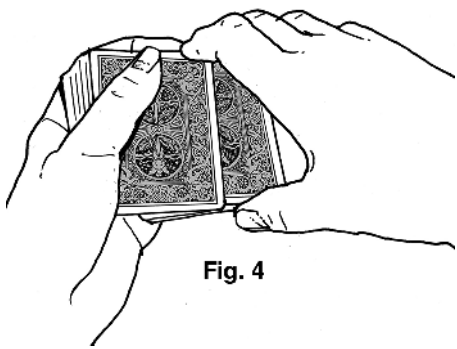

Fig. 3

Flip the packet of three face up in the left hand and take it into a right-hand **Biddle Grip*** as you peel the face card (joker) back into the left hand. Place the remaining two cards, as one, onto the joker. It appears that you just have two jokers in the left hand. Flip the packet face down as two and place the cards into the card box as you say, "The detectives asked the two doormen to go home for the night to make the prospect of stealing the diamond necklace more appealing to the robbers."

THE BIG ENDING: Hold the deck face down in the left hand and obtain a left fourth-finger break under the top two cards. Add the two detectives (black kings) face up on top. Lift the four cards above the break in a right-hand **Biddle Grip*** as you peel the uppermost king back onto the deck. Drop the remaining three cards (as one) onto this card. Now **Double Cut*** the top card (black king) to the bottom as you say, "The two detectives hid out, ready to pounce on the robbers."

STATUS CHECK: There's a black king face up on the bottom and another one face up third from the top, under two face-down X cards. The jacks are face up on the table.

Obtain a left fourth-finger break under the top two X cards. Pick up the jacks in spread condition. Now turn them face down on top as you say, "The robbers had already positioned themselves on the roof." Lift all six cards above the break slightly so that your left thumb can peel the top card onto the face-up king. Be careful not to flash the king as you do this (**Fig. 4**). Continue to peel the next two jacks face down onto the deck. This leaves you with three cards as one. Drop these on top. So, from the top, it's: jack, X, X, jack, jack, jack, face-up black king.


Fig. 4

Take the top card and flash its face. It's a jack, making things seem copacetic. Place it face down on the bottom of the deck as you say, "The first jack hid out in the lobby, making sure no police were there." Put the next

card (X card) about ten cards from the bottom as you say, "This one started near the bottom looking for the diamond necklace." Place the next "jack" about ten cards from the top as you continue, "The third robber worked his way down from near the top. And, as always, the fourth robber stayed on the roof watching the CCTV feed." Flip the top card face up, showing a jack, and then flip it face down again. The stage is set.

Say, "Suddenly the detectives sprang their trap." Here you must cut the deck, either secretly or openly. You can perform a pass, or you can pull the bottom half of the deck free with the right hand and slap it down on the cards remaining in the left hand. Either of these methods centralizes the two face-up black kings with the four jacks face down between them. Spread the deck face down, revealing this condition. Remove the face-down jacks and turn them face up as you say, "The robbers had been caught. The only problem was that they had not stolen anything. The necklace was missing, but the robbers didn't have it. They ended up being released." Continue, "The necklace was never found, but it was rumored that the doormen had shown up at a casino in Dubai as a couple of high rollers." Here, you open the card box, revealing the Ten of Diamonds between the two jokers (the doormen). This concludes the story.

FINAL THOUGHTS: Marty has really taken the classic routine and pushed it into new territory with the introduction of the doormen, the detectives, and the diamond necklace. He has kindly made his original handling and scripting available to readers of this column. Here's the link: *bit.ly/4burglars*. You'll also find detailed crediting at the site. Many thanks, Marty!

Mike Powers
mpowers@mallofmagic.com

PARADE CONTRIBUTIONS WANTED FROM RINGS AND INDIVIDUALS

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

Marketing Magic – from page 73

Do you want more information about any aspect of marketing? Maybe you should Ask Alexander!

CONCLUSION

I've said it before, and I'll probably keep saying it until we all understand it. There is no magical marketing framework that will ensure your success. But choosing and consistently using a framework that makes sense to you can provide a huge boost, propelling you to the achievement of your goals – just like magic!

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 Time.

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



In 1940 Jean Hugard and Fred Braué released a seminal and foundational book, *Expert Card Technique*. In a brilliant spasm of irony worthy of *The Twilight Zone*, *Expert Card Technique* was the follow-up to Hugard and Braué's *Royal Road to Card Magic*, which was published eight years later! Where's Ripley when you need 'em? *Expert* is dense with fantastic tricks, methods, theories – perhaps way too many, which is why *Royal Road* became an even more popular card magic textbook: the whole approach was streamlined and made more concise.

In *Expert*, there is a section on "Mental Discoveries," and in it is a fantastic trick; "Crystal Thought." There is no mention of its originator, except that Hugard writes it is a routine that has sparked many methods. Essentially, a single card is placed face down on the table. A volunteer is now asked to name any card. When the card is turned over, lo and behold, it is the spectator's thought-of card! (This is the typical description of the trick.) Anyway, the explanation in the book says the overall effect is "surprising" and that the trick is best suited for a "propitious moment." So much for tooting one's horn, Mr. Hugard. I am certain many magicians skipped immediately to the next trick after reading this! Further, Hugard's method involved flourishes, tricky card handling, and the ever-elusive-to-make-look-good sleight, "The Mexican Turnover."

Eighty years later, the brilliant John Carey re-examined the idea, routine, and necessary methods. To borrow words falsely attributed to Albert Einstein, "Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler." (For those of you appearing soon on *Jeopardy!*, what Einstein *actually* said was: "The goal is to make basic elements as simple as possible without losing the truth of the experience.")

In issue 1575 of *Magic New Zealand* (ca. June 2020), John presented "Crystal Thought Redux." As soon as I read it, I told John that his solution is so brilliant, so clever, so technically easy (and soooo Carey!) … it is amazing it had not been thought of or written up in the past eighty years! We talked about getting his version published in *Auto-Magic* at some point in the future. I am sorry it has taken me this long to pass this bit o' Johnny-Genius along to you. I have been performing it a lot lately, and it is one of those routines that, if you give it enough presentational hooks, just kills!

So here it is. Learn it with cards in hand, then think very carefully about how you would like to present it! Don't present it as a "card trick" – it is much more. Present it as the mental miracle it appears to be to your audience.

Thank you, Mr. Carey. Here's my version of John's version of "Crystal Thought."

Crystal Thought Redux … Deluxe!

You will need a duplicate card to perform this awesome trick. Any card will do. John prefers the Queen of Hearts. I believe a picture card is best too, but I would limit this to the Queen, King, or Jack of Hearts (in that order, as these three are apparently the most commonly named court cards).

For now, let's go with John's pick, the Queen of Hearts. Your starting position is to have one of the two Queens of Hearts on top of the deck and the other on the bottom.

A quick false shuffle or cut is performed. My preference is to run off the single top card of the deck (the Queen of Hearts), then do a standard overhand shuffle, laying those shuffled cards on top of the singleton Queen of Hearts. When you get to the last few cards of the stock, run them separately. You'll end up as you started, with the Queens of Hearts on the top and bottom (technically, you have moved the bottom queen to the top and vice versa). Or you can do a quick riffle shuffle, keeping the top and bottom cards in place. Whichever you do, just don't mention it. Let the audience merely consider the shuffle at the periphery of their minds.

Now, take the top card (the Queen of Hearts) and casually (and without mention) place it face down on the table a little off to the side, as if it doesn't really matter. John stresses in his write-up, "Just *do* it!" Don't call attention to it. Don't call it a prediction or anything, just casually place it on the table.

"I'd like to show you how a little bit of psychic experience can affect the semi-real world. Let's begin! I will send you an image of a playing card using my Super-Ninja-Brainwave Skills. Otherwise known as 'Super Ninja BS.'" You are holding the deck face down in your left hand as you casually ask your volunteer to "cut off a portion of cards" (about half is good) and "place it on the table." Tap the center of the table to indicate a good spot to place the pasteboards. As soon as the packet is placed, lay the remaining half in your hand on top of the tabled half at a crossed angle. This, of course, is Max Holden's wonderful *Cross-Cut Force*.

Again, addressing your volunteer, you make a weird, studied face, then say, "I am sending you an image of a playing card, one of fifty-two. Are you getting anything?" Whatever the answer, play with it, then finally ask them to "name any card that quickly comes to mind."

If your helper calls out Queen of Hearts, thank every lucky star in the night sky. Comment: "Most people tend to name the Ace of Spades or ____ [just name any random card]. But you mentioned the Queen of Hearts. Which means either you are a great telepathic receiver or I am a great telepathic sender, or both …" Ask your helper to turn over the tabled card, then be prepared to scrape them off the floor when they see the tabled Queen of Hearts. (This happens more often than you would think. Many studies put the number at 24 percent!)

If any other card is named (let's say it is the Six of Clubs), comment, "That's a good card; interesting. Let's try something a little different. Let's reverse the process." Point to the cross-cut deck on the table, then say, "Lift up that packet at the cut spot and look at the bottom card. Memorize the bottom card. Then put the deck back together and give it a complete cut or two." Your helper will be spying, memorizing, and then burying the duplicate Queen of Hearts. Then say, "Now you try that Super Ninja BS thing and telepathically send the card you just peeked at to me!"

Cogitate for a moment, then declare, "Hmm … I'm getting a card that is not just red or black, but has lots of colors. And it is a high-value card … and … I *think* I got it …" At that point, you pause, take a deep breath, pick the deck up off the table, and then quickly, roughly spread through it with the faces toward you. In fact, you look for the card she named moments ago: the Six of Clubs. When you find it, snap it out of the spread and hold it demonstratively overhead (its back to the audience). "Yes! I feel it! I will commit!" Then just drop the card on the table face down on top of the card you plopped down before you even started the routine. Then casually drop the deck into your pocket and slide the two face-down cards to the middle of the table. It is time for their spotlight!

"So we were doing our little experiment in telepathy. We shuffled the cards, you cut the cards, and only then did you look at the random card at the bottom of the cut." You have by now slid the two tabled cards into your left and right hands, switching them at the same time. "I am sure I received the card you were just thinking about … what was it?" She will say the Queen of Hearts. You say, "That's exactly what I got!" and you turn over the Queen of Hearts card in your hand. Let the applause die down, then drop the Queen of Hearts to the table.

Continue: "But you will recall, before we started any of this, I removed a single playing card from the deck and placed it aside in full view. And only after all this did I request that you name any one, single playing card out of the fifty-two. And that freely chosen card that you just called out randomly was …?"

She will shout out "Six of Clubs!"

Then you calmly say, "You got it!" as you turn the remaining card around and receive applause, gasps, and lots of exclamations!

Imagine an email to me at mbreggarmagic@gmail.com.

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Paper Propeller

STUNT: A small piece of paper is made to spin on your finger like an airplane propeller.

SECRET: Cut out a two- by three- inch piece of paper napkin. Most writing paper is too heavy for this stunt, so you'll need to use a lightweight piece of paper of which most cheap restaurant napkins are made.

Fold the paper in half across its width and make a good crease in it. Then fold all of the edges up about a quarter of an inch away from the peak of the crease. Pinch each of those corners together away from the peak of the crease. The paper should look like a little tray with a crease running down the middle of it (**Fig. 1**).

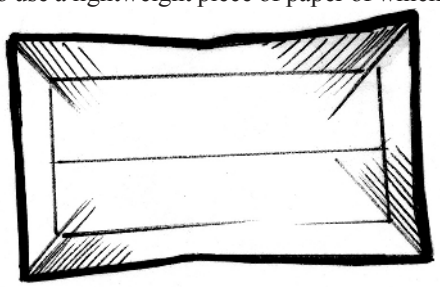


Fig. 1

Place your middle or index finger in the center of the paper at the valley of the crease. Extend your hand and the paper away from your body while pinching the paper between your finger and thumb.

Place your middle or index finger in the center of the paper at the valley of the crease. Extend your hand and the paper away from your body while pinching the paper between your finger and thumb.

As you begin to spin your body in a circle, release your thumb from the paper, and if you'll keep your middle finger in the center of the paper it will spin like an airplane propeller (**Fig. 2**).

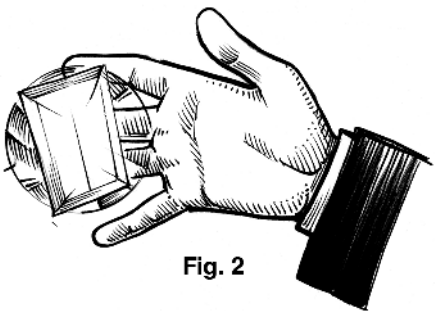


Fig. 2

This is one of my favorite stunts to show someone. It was taught to me by the famous entertainer Avner the Eccentric. People will swear that some type of trickery is involved, but it is pure science at work.



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

JOSEPH BENNETT

Joseph Edward Bennett Jr., 57, of Paw Paw, Michigan, died August 28, 2026. He belonged to Ring 211 (Grand Rapids, Michigan) and Society of American Magicians Assembly 103. He was born September 4, 1968, in Kalamazoo, Michigan. As a child, Joe participated in many extracurricular activities. His first interest was Moo Duk Kwan Tang Soo Do karate, in which he earned a black belt at age ten. Joe returned to the sport in his forties and earned a third-degree black belt (3rd Dan). He was a Boy Scout, became an Eagle Scout, and served on the Diocesan Council of the Catholic Diocese of Kalamazoo. He began his lifelong practice of magic at age twenty and attended Abbott's Magic Get Together in Colon, Michigan, every year. He became a collaborator and mentor, started his own magic business, and performed most weekends. He is survived by his wife, Sharon "Sherry" Anderson, whom he met at age fifteen; children Joseph III, Eric Terry (Erika Encarnacion), Matthew, Daniel, and Marie (Christian Johnson); his parents, Joseph and Barbara; brother Steven (Shelly); and extended family.



PAUL G. CAPITO JR.

Paul G. Capito Jr., 79, of Warren, Ohio, died August 29, 2026. He held I.B.M. number 47019 and had been a member since 1991. He belonged to the Order of Merlin (twenty-five years of continuous membership) and Ring 2 (Youngstown, Ohio). A lifelong resident of Warren, he graduated from Warren G. Harding High School and worked for Denman Tire until his retirement. Paul was a collector, took part in toy shows with his family, and shared magic with his grandson and great-grandson. He is survived by his wife, Diane Gene (Bell) Capito; sons Paul J. and Michael J. Capito; four grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.



JOSEPH SLOAN HALES

Dr. Joseph Sloan Hales, 87, of Cheyenne, Wyoming, died August 15, 2026. He held I.B.M. number 60438 and had been a member since 2003. He belonged to Ring 250 (Fort Collins, Colorado). At age fourteen, he wrote his life goals on a 3-by-5-inch card, including the years he intended to attend medical school, marry, and start a family. He carried that card with him for the rest of his life. He worked as a surgeon, anesthesiologist, and rancher. Sloan was born in Glendale, California, and was captain of his high school basketball team. At Brigham Young University, he was elected freshman student body president. He began a three-year mission in the South German Mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in 1959. He earned his degree in German from BYU and attended



the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine. He completed his surgical residency in San Diego in 1962. Sloan was drafted into the United States Army in 1971 and served as a surgeon in Stuttgart, Germany, for three years. There, fellow soldiers called him "Major Magic." He moved his family to Cheyenne in 1974 and worked as a surgeon until 1978. He returned to the University of Colorado to train as an anesthesiologist. For the next forty-five years, Sloan practiced anesthesia at what is now Cheyenne Regional Medical Center (formerly Memorial Hospital of Laramie County and United Medical Center), retiring in 2022 at age eighty-three. He served as chief of the Affairs Committee, sat on the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission, the BYU Medical Planning Committee, the BYU Archival Recording Foundation, and the Warren Air Force Base Military Committee, and was physician to the Laramie County Jail for several years. In 1983, Sloan and his wife, Anna Marie, moved to the Wyoming Hereford Ranch, becoming the first owners in the ranch's history to live on the land since its establishment in 1883. Together they worked to preserve the oldest continuously registered livestock ranch in the nation, raising Hereford cattle and establishing an Important Bird Area (IBA). He is survived by his wife of sixty-three years, Anna Marie Nielson Hales; their children, Heidi (Michael) Staheli, Marisa (Jim) Crawford, Glenn (Carri) Hales, Patricia (Michael) Genho, and Natalie Hales; nineteen grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his daughter Angela Bird in 2008.

LARRY HIBBS

Larry Ray Hibbs, 84, of Louisville, Kentucky, died September 23, 2026. He held I.B.M. number 38361 and had been a member since 1983. He belonged to the Order of Merlin Shield (thirty-five years of continuous membership) and Ring 64 (Louisville, Kentucky). Larry worked for Ford Motor Company for thirty years. As a magician, he performed at nightclubs and birthday parties and taught magic. He was an airbrush artist who made T-shirts and a wood carver with the Fall City Carving Club. He is survived by his children, Mark Hibbs, Mendee (Marty) Hale, and Rebecca (Jeremy) Wade; six grandchildren; three great-grandchildren; and brothers Daryl Hibbs and Richard Hibbs. He was preceded in death by his wife of sixty-six years, Maxine Hibbs.



MANFRED JOSEPH LOSCH

Manfred "Manny" Losch, 80, of West Orange, New Jersey, died August 18, 2026. He held I.B.M. number 21845 and had been a member since 2010. Manny was inspired to pursue magic by Joe Willner, a family friend who had worked as a professional magician and stage hypnotist in prewar Vienna. He lived in England, including London, where he continued to study, practice, and refine his skills. In New Jersey, he entertained people with magic tricks, made balloon animals for local children, and memorized and recited poetry. For more than ten years, he lived in a nursing home, where he continued to perform magic.



KENNETH B. MARSH

Kenneth B. Marsh, 90, of Federal Way, Washington, died August 16, 2026. He held I.B.M. number 46957, had been a member since 1991, and belonged to Ring 52 (Seattle, Washington). Born in Kettering, England, he moved to the United States and spent three decades as a structural and mechanical en-



gineer for Boeing before retiring in 1995. Kenneth continued working as a contract consulting engineer until 2005. His work took him to more than twenty countries. He learned to speak more than seven languages, including Latin, which he had studied as a child. He had a personal library of two thousand books. In addition to magic, Kenneth practiced tai chi and qigong and had an interest in natural health. He played guitar, loved classical music, and sang in his church choir. He was a tai chi instructor at the Sammamish YMCA, chair of the Juvenile Court Conference Committee in Kent, Washington, and a docent at the Museum of Flight in Seattle. Through Toastmasters International, he served as governor of District 2. He was also a member of the Retired Society of Engineers. He loved hiking, rock climbing, animals, and nature, and he twice climbed to the top of Mount Rainier. He is survived by his brothers, Michael of Great Britain and Patrick of New Zealand; daughters Lynda and Heather; stepchildren Michael and Susan; fifteen grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren; and extended family. He was preceded in death by his wife, Pamela.

WILLIAM "BILL" VANGORDER

William "Bill" VanGorder, 83, of Halifax, Nova Scotia, died September 6, 2026. He held I.B.M. number 17759 and had been a member since 1960. He belonged to the Order of Merlin Excelsior (sixty years of continuous membership), Ring 316 (Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada), and Ring 2100 (Global Electronic Ring). Born in Hamilton, Ontario, Bill spent his career in the charitable and nonprofit sectors. For nearly three decades, he worked for the YMCA, serving as Atlantic Area director. He later spent sixteen years as president and CEO of the Lung Association of Nova Scotia. In his later years, Bill became an advocate for senior citizens across the Maritimes. As advocacy and education director and past chair of the Canadian Association of Retired Persons (CARP) Nova Scotia, he worked against ageism and to secure health care equity and financial security for older adults. With his wife, Esther, he co-founded Nordic Walking Nova Scotia, sharing his love of fitness and the outdoors with hundreds of people. He was a regular member of the "Wednesday Crew" at the Theatre Arts Guild, where he served on the board of directors and as producer, director, or lighting designer. Bill put himself through university in the 1970s at Waterloo Lutheran (now Wilfrid Laurier University), working as a magician and running summer camps for the YMCA in Hamilton and Kitchener. He also belonged to the International Psychic Entertainers Association. He is survived by his wife of twenty-eight years, Esther VanGorder; daughters Elizabeth (Allan) VanGorder and Tamara (Stephen) Cox; two grandchildren; a sister, Margo (Valerie) VanGorder; and extended family and friends.



When a Magic Friend Dies

While it is a responsibility of Ring Secretaries to notify our Headquarters Office or Executive Editor of the death of a member, many members do not belong to Rings, and even the deaths of Ring Members often slip through the cracks. Please take the time to send us a short note and copy of any obituary notice. Don't let a fellow magic lover slip away without notice. Send to Editor or Headquarters Office. Addresses on page 4. Thank you.

Extracurricular Reading – from page 91

Incredibly, this colossal compendium was compiled by a single scholar, J. E. Cirlot, a Spanish poet of unmistakable mystical bent. He covers the meanings of symbols arising in art, literature, mythology, fables, parables, religion, fortune-telling, and even the early progenitors of modern science, such as alchemy and astrology. In short: it's rife with themes for riveting routines, as well as engaging embellishments for scripts. Moreover, those who craft their own props will delight in the many descriptions of artistic motifs perfect for decoration.

The symbols documented and decoded are sometimes abstract, like the meanings of colors, numbers, geometric shapes, zodiac signs, tarot trumps, fruits, trees, flowers, etc. And sometimes they're fabulous creatures such as the centaur, dragon, gorgon, ogre, phoenix, sphinx, unicorn, and so forth. Because the contents are so wide-ranging and so beguiling, Cirlot's work itself would be ideal for a book test.

To conclude this survey of the seven tomes I've found valuable when inventing new magic, let me point out how to acquire them yourself. On the whole, these are older books, but still readily available second-hand. I bought all used, except one, via independent dealers who list their wares on Amazon – and at bargain prices! As for Dudley's book, I grabbed that hot off the press when it first appeared, but used copies are still common.

But now it's your turn. If there's an out-of-the-way resource you've found beneficial in your own magical development, why not consider touting it here in the pages of *The Linking Ring?*

Thomas Henry is a frequent contributor to The Linking Ring*. You may reach him at* everett.ritland@gmail.com.

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

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

Meets 1st Wed. of month, Parkway United Church of Christ 2841 N.Ballas Road, St. Louis, MO 63131 / Web Site: www.IBMRingOne.com
SANDY WEIS., Treasurer and Scribe / E-mail: ibmringone@gmail.com
1755 Elkins Drive, St. Louis, MO 63136

On August 21st, Ring One had the privilege of hosting an exceptional lecture by Jamie Williams, the internationally respected magic creator, performer, and lecturer whose work has shaped modern close-up magic across the globe. Williams, based in South Wales in the United Kingdom, is widely regarded as one of the most influential creative voices in contemporary magic. His original effects are performed by working professionals worldwide, and his reputation continues to grow through his appearance at major conventions and magic societies.

Jamie is an Associate of The Inner Magic Circle and was named WOW Magazine's Magician of the Year.

Ring One members were treated to a lecture that blended commercial, real-world magic with deeper insights into psychology, structure, and audience connection. Jamie shared several of his signature effects, including Regal's Roundhouse, Sticker Kicker, 2Face, I Suck at Poker, Wait, and others. He presented each with humor and the professional polish that has made his work so sought-after.

Because Jamie was touring the United States, Ring One was fortunate to secure him for an evening that proved both inspiring and highly practical. Members responded enthusiastically, and many purchased his special lecture-package of effects offered at a reduced rate. His material, designed for real audiences and refined through years of professional performance, left attendees energized and eager to incorporate his thinking into their own magic.

On September 2nd, Ring One hosted another lively Magic Open Mic Night, a favorite tradition that continues to grow in popularity. Performers included Seth Terrell, Keith Smith, Steve Finkelstein, Kevin Desrosiers, James Higround, Jeff Halcomb, Ken Trokey, Matthew Horowitz, and D. Jay. The evening was hosted by Tim Shegitz, who kept the energy high as he introduced each magician.

The performers represented a wide range of experience, from first-time performers to seasoned regulars, and an equally wide range of ages, including a high school student and several long-time senior members. Each magician brought a unique effect to the stage, ensuring a diverse and engaging program. Many performers invited friends and family, adding to the warm, supportive atmosphere. Members are already asking for more Magic Open Mic Nights, and the momentum behind these events continues to build.

Ring One's Board of Directors continues to meet monthly via Zoom. Before the pandemic, meetings were held in person, and several members recall the adjustment period required to learn the new technology. Today, however, the Board will never consider returning to in-person meetings, since the online flexibility has made it possible for 13 to 15 members to attend every month. The virtual format is efficient, structured, and allows the board to complete its agenda within an hour.

Another major improvement is the evolution of The Spirit, Ring One's monthly newsletter. Previously emailed as a finalized document, The Spirit is now hosted directly on Ring One's website. Under the leadership of editor Susan McClure, the newsletter is updated continuously, ensuring members always have access to the most current information. The new format has become a highly valued resource. It is informative, accessible, and always up-to-date.

Ring One's calendar is planned months in advance, and preparations are well underway for the annual Fall Show, scheduled for October

17th at the Florissant Performing Arts Center. This year's theme, Magic in America, promises a vibrant celebration of American magical heritage. The show will feature one afternoon performance, and members are diligently rehearsing and refining their acts. There will even be a theater-wide world record attempt.

In addition to performers, several members have volunteered to assist behind the scenes as stagehands, ushers, and support staff. The collaborative spirit behind this production reflects the club's commitment to excellence and community engagement.

On October 7th, longtime Ring One past-president Steve Barcellona will present a special lecture in celebration of the launch of his book, A Professional Partygoer. Steve is a full-time magician with decades of experience in close-up, strolling, and stage magic. His lecture will explore the realities of building a career in magic, and he has even promised "party favors" for attendees. Members are eager to learn from his professional insights and celebrate this milestone in his career.

Ring One's membership continues to expand, and the club is fortunate to have a meeting space large enough to accommodate its growth. Initially, meetings were held in one of the church's classrooms, but it quickly became clear that the space was insufficient. The church now allows Ring One to meet in the main sanctuary where services are held, providing ample room for continued expansion.

Ring One's future looks bright, with strong leadership, growing membership, and a calendar full of engaging events that celebrate the art of magic and the community that sustains it.

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 September 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 "Paper Magic."

Opening the evening's magic, Gary Morton performed Detonation/Unfathomable from Card Tricks after Dark by Steve Beam. Gary invited Bob and James to assist him. He placed two boxed decks on the table: one blue and one red. Gary asked Bob to select the "star" deck; he chose the blue deck. Then Gary removed the cards from the box and had James cut the deck; after the cut was completed, Gary replaced the deck in its box. He then took out the red deck and spread it face up on the table. Gary had Bob pick three audience members to choose a card by number, color, and suit. The card they chose was the 8C. Gary next asked Bob to cut the deck and then deal the bottom half into two piles. Bob was asked to turn over the top card of each pile and also the other half of the deck to reveal a 9, an Ace, and an 8. Gary added them up to get the number 18. Gary asked James to count down to the 18th card in the blue deck; it was the 8C.

The evening's magic continued with Bob Gurdak performing a Self Working Prediction with Cards from an Internet Coach. Bob asked Jim to assist him. He had Jim shuffle up a deck of cards. While Bob turned away, Jim was then instructed to deal a card face up, and starting with the card's number, deal cards face down on top, counting up to twelve. He was to continue this process until it was no longer possible. Jim ended up with five piles. Bob then wrote a prediction on a piece of paper. He then asked Jim to reveal the five face-up cards from the bottom of each pile. Bob added up the value of the five cards; he got 22, which was the number Bob had predicted.

Peter Lucke entertained us with Picto Play from Paul Richards. He invited James, Gary, and Bob to assist him. Peter explained that each card had a picture on it and under the picture was its name. Peter showed some examples. He then had each person pick off a small packet of cards without looking at the bottom card. Finally, Peter was able to predict the identity of each bottom card.

James Killmeyer followed with Ring Magic from Greg Wilson. He began by showing us a gold finger ring. He placed it on his right hand's index finger. James briefly covered it with his left hand, and it vanished. He made a brief upward motion with his left hand, and it magically reappeared on his index finger. James next put it on his ring finger, and with a slight motion of his hand, the ring jumped to his middle finger. He made the ring jump back and forth between his two fingers. Next, he put the ring in his left pants pocket, and suddenly it reappeared on his right hand. James replaced the ring in his pocket, and concluded his effect by inviting Bob to hold out his hands. James nodded his head and the ring fell into Bob's hands.

Fritz Coombs continued with Mapped by Michael Lair. He began by speaking about his various travels throughout the United States. As he did so, he held up square sections of a map that corresponded to the places he had visited. Fritz concluded by putting the sections all together and then opened them up to reveal a

complete, intact map of the United States.

Jim Klayder closed the evening's magic with his version of the Torn and Restored Card. He began by asking an audience member to select a card from his deck. It was the 3H. Jim wrote the date on the card and also signed it. He then tore the card into four quarter-sized pieces. Jim placed two of the pieces on the table. The remaining two pieces in his hands, he reassembled into a half card. He then added one piece from the table to make a three-quarter card. Finally, he joined the final quarter piece to restore the complete card, which he gave to the audience member.

Following the evening's magic, Bob Gurdak explained how his magic effect worked mathematically. And Jim Klayder explained an interesting Faro shuffle control using the Penelope principle developed by Alex Elmsley.

Peter Lücke

RING 5, DAYTON, OHIO – Dayton Magic Club

Meets 2nd Fri. each month at 7:30pm, Mighty Fortress Lutheran Church, Kettering, OH.
DAVE DAVIS, Ring Reporter / E-mail: daytonmagicring5@yahoo.com
Web site: www.sites.google.com/site/daytonmagicring5

On Friday, August 14th, Ring 5 of the Dayton Magic Club was treated to an extraordinary evening of sleight-of-hand and showmanship as international multi-award-winning magician Mr. Jamie Williams took the stage. Holding the prestigious title of Associate of The Inner Magic Circle with Silver Star, Williams delivered an unforgettable lecture and deep-dive Master Class that left an indelible mark on everyone in attendance. The room was packed with 20 dedicated Ring 5 members alongside two enthusiastic guests, all eager to learn from a master of the craft.

The gathering kicked off with Mr. Williams opening his repertoire, breaking down several of his most highly acclaimed and signature routines. Rather than simply revealing mechanics, he tipped the velvet curtain on the exact timing, misdirection, and choreography that make his original effects land with maximum impact.

Following the main presentation, attendees transitioned into an intensive, 90-minute **Master Class**. Shifting the spotlight away from standard sleights and secret gimmicks, Mr. Williams pivoted to the underlying architecture of true stagecraft. The session tackled:

Audience Psychology: How to control attention and turn passive spectators into active participants.

Body Language & Spatial Awareness: Using posture, gaze, and subtle physical cues to direct focus effortlessly.

Real-World Refinements: The understated micro-details, vocal rhythms, and storytelling techniques that elevate a simple "trick" into an unforgettable theatrical moment.

It was an inspiring, insightful event that reignited the passion of every performer in the room, proving once again why live magic lectures are the beating heart of the magic community.

Michael A. Bayer

RING 9, ATLANTA, GEORGIA – Georgia Magic Club

Meets 3rd Mon. of month, 7:00pm, Mt. Vernon Presbyterian Church, 471 Mount Vernon Hwy, Sandy Springs, GA
Ring 9 Website: www.gamagicclub.com
BILL PACKARD, Secretary / Email: billpackardmagic@gmail.com

July 20: TIP (To Improve Performance) Lecture: "Never Stop Thinking," by Christophe Fouquet. Christophe's approach to magic mirrors his day job in computing — every time he sees a trick, he looks for the flaws and tries to simplify, streamline, and fix them. Solving problems at work helps his magic and vice versa! He demonstrated three kinds of "thinking" applied to three routines.

Transform what you already have. Christophe improved Chad Long's Flash (Color Changing Flash Drives) with pocket management and a penny stuck to the thumb drive so he can feel the initial orientation and start and end clean.

Change the presentation. By framing the Bank Note plot with Quiver gimmicks as a Monty Hall problem instead of a confrontation, he sends the spectator home thinking about the problem rather than feeling beaten.

Add additional phases. This was basically a Dice Through Cup routine using a collapsible cup, and three (apparently two dice). One die rattles and is magnetic. Christophe attached a fridge-magnet sheet to the outside of the cup, making it a Chop Cup. With the aid of the Rattle Die to secretly switch dice, he performed several phases of Die Through Cup (both into and out of) and also Die Through Table (both down and up, while collapsing the cup). He ended clean with an Invisible Assistant (magnetic hold out on his leg).

Business Meeting

In President Clark Kjorlaug's absence, Vice-President Zack Ivins welcomed 27 attendees, including one on Zoom, and guest Hartley Varon (Mike's son).

No one present attended the SAM convention in Appleton, WI. Upcoming gatherings mentioned: IBM in St. Louis, MO (7/22-25), Magic Live in Las Vegas, NV (8/2-5), KIDabra (last gathering) in Atlanta (8/12-15), Be Magic in New Albany, IN (8/20-22, no dealers), Atlanta Magic Night (returning, 11/14), TRICS in Charlotte, NC (11/19-21), Atlanta Harvest of Magic (3/18-20 — Debbie Leifer announced on

Ken Scott's behalf that registration is now open for $215, with price increasing to $230 on August 10; website is atlharvestofmagic.com), and Bluff City Conclave in Memphis, TN (4/16-17).

Martin Baratz just came back from HypnoThoughts Live in Las Vegas and reported that next year's convention will be in Atlanta (11/5-7).

Steve Langston reported that the Georgia Magic Book Club is in the middle of studying Magic in Mind by Joshua Jay (a free 553-page download from Vanishing Inc., including audio book). Next Zoom meeting is August 12.

Patrick Bucken and Darryl Berman reported on Project Magic — two locations, with the first Friday of the month at Hope Lodge.

Next Magic Meetup is scheduled for July 26 at Fellini's in Decatur.

Michael Carbonaro is appearing at Sandy Springs Performing Arts Center on October 10. John Armstrong will be at Dragon Con (event is 9/3-7).

There was a brief recap of Larry El Mago's lecture, including how he exceeded expectations and had several unique items for sale. Lecture Chair Debbie Leifer gave a reminder about Jamie Williams from England coming on August 10 and a new announcement for Bernardo Sedlacek from Brazil August 25.

There were two acknowledgements regarding July birthdays. Angus McLean is having a series of surgeries this week, and Dominic Prestera is recovering from a broken tibia.

Secretary/Treasurer Bill Packard awarded a certificate for favorite theme performer for May to Steve Langston.

Theme Performers: "Storytelling Sorcery." — Perform a piece of magic that features a story. Zach Ivins MC'd.

Michael Varon told the story of his wife's lost wedding ring turning up in an unlikely place, then found a selected card by spelling "I Think I Do" and again by dealing to a number totaled from spectator-chosen cards, finishing with a previously named card found the same way.

Aragorn performed a Professor's Nightmare routine starring the village Shamon brothers, Shorty, Stretch, and Norm.

Patrick Buchen performed Coins to Glass with four quarters representing his youthful financial independence, spending them on a date, a ring, a wedding, and car repairs.

Ross "the Hat" Democko had young helper Hartley assign the roles of Magician, Damsel, and Dragon to himself, Ross, and the audience, told a fairy tale with everyone participating, then revealed that the assignments had been predicted.

Anthony Vinson, taking his theme from the TV show "To Tell the Truth," determined the orientation of a coin in a box and then played a game of "Which Hand Is It In."

Steve Langston had a spectator choose a "blind date" Queen (it was the Heart), dealt the four Queens with three cards on each, vanished each Queen, then spelled "The Queen Of Hearts" into four packets to reveal the four Queens on top.

Lynn Fox cast a spectator as a movie producer who, while holding an envelope, eliminated all but one of 52 "characters," then produced (saved from a fiery dragon) the remaining card from the envelope.

Martin Baratz, invoking Anton Mesmer's study of animal magnetism, used the values of three random cards, some dealing, and gematria (reducing a number to a single digit) to prove a prediction of both a number and a playing card.

Ravi Navare had a spectator select and return a card and cut the deck several times face up and face down, after which the deck "told him" where the selection was.

Darryl Berman, using a packet of Oscar-winning movie poster cards, determined which movie a spectator selected and also predicted the movie card that had been set aside beforehand.

General Magic Performer: Lisa Varon held a prediction in her closed hand, had audience members eliminate two of three invisible coins "on display" (penny, nickel, and quarter) and call heads or tails, then opened her hand to reveal the remaining coin in the named orientation.

As determined by the spinning Wheel of Names, Zach Ivins presented several giveaway packages. The recipients were not called out on the video I reviewed.

Winner of the Coveted Royal Pin for Theme Magic was Michael Varon. Next month's theme (August) is "Purely Prestidigitation" — perform a magic trick accomplished only by sleight of hand.

August 17: TIP (To Improve Performance) Lecture: "Miracles Between Courses" by Eric Schuster — tricks you can do at the dinner table with borrowed objects and no props.

Silverware Lie Detector: Clark thought of his favorite piece of cutlery (knife, spoon, or fork), swapped pieces around while Eric's back was turned, was allowed to lie about his choice, then hid two pieces under the table. Eric announced which hand held the favorite and named all three positions.

Cups and Crayons: Clark hid a blue crayon under one of three cups, swapped and mixed the

cups freely, then added an orange crayon under any cup (even the same one). Eric located both crayons.

Which Hand (four hands, two spectators): A ring was hidden in one of four fists. After a couple of swaps, Eric determined which hand held the ring.

All three demonstrations use Gabriel Werlen's Green Neck System (the title is a pun on the French word for cutlery) as explained in two Green Neck books and a Penguin Live lecture. The core idea is that you're forcing a posi tion, not an object. Each object has a "secret identity" (knife = 1, spoon = 2, fork = 3, like a memorized-deck stack), and two spectator-performed swaps do all the work: an Initial Switch (swap the other two) and the Determining Switch (swap the two that are not in a reference position), and the thought-of object is now in the reference position. The cups and hand variations involve slightly more advanced applications of the basic principle.

Business Meeting

President Clark Kjorlaug welcomed 30 attendees, including one on Zoom and one guest (Ross Democko's girlfriend).

Past conventions reviewed: IBM in St. Louis, MO, Magic Live in Las Vegas (Martin Baratz gave an excited testimony), KIDabra in Atlanta (an emotional last event). Future gatherings promoted: Be Magic in New Albany, IN (8/20-22, no dealers), Atlanta Magic Night Returns! (11/14), TRICS in Charlotte, NC (11/19-21), Atlanta Harvest of Magic (3/17-20 — Debbie Leifer encouraged registering right away for discount), Bluff City Conclave in Memphis, TN (4/16-17, organized by Joe M. Turner), and IBM in Las Vegas (7/13-17 — Mike Dunagan and Eric Schuster gave a briefing of the plans, including combining with FISM).

Steve Langston reported that the Georgia Magic Book Club is studying Magic in Mind by Joshua Jay. Next Zoom meeting is scheduled for September 9. Darryl Berman promoted Project Magic — first Monday of the month is at Hope Lodge, second Monday at Shepherd Center. Steve Goldstein reported that the next Magic Meetup is tentatively scheduled for October 4 at Fellini's in Decatur.

Lecture Chair Debbie Leifer asked for a recap of Jamie Williams' magic lecture from August 10, and reminded us that Bernardo Sedlacek is scheduled for August 25. Clark promoted the Georgia Magic Club annual auction, scheduled for the October monthly meeting (October 19).

Mike Dunagan and Debbie Leifer presented details regarding the Club Show (our first in almost a decade), scheduled for 2:00 on Sunday, December 20 at the Spotlight Community Stage at the Roswell Cultural Arts Center. Proceeds will go to St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital. They even reserved the fantastic facility for another public show on April 25, 2027.

Theme Performers: "Purely Prestidigitation" — Perform a magic trick accomplished only by sleight of hand. MC'd by Vice President Zach Ivins.

Mike Varon, drawing on Fernando Pessoa's "The Book of Disquiet" and its accountant-narrator's musings on illusion and reality, performed a multi-phase Oil and Water routine that ended with every card changing to the same color.

Walter Fields performed a Paul Diamond-inspired, multi-phase two-in-the-hand/one-in-the-pocket routine with sponge rabbits, finishing with a ball.

Carey Huddleston caused a silver coin and a copper coin to switch places between his hand and a spectator's.

Aryeh Rabin magically located the four Aces in a shuffled deck, then transformed them into a Royal Flush.

Ross "the Hat" Democko told a dark tale illustrated by four photos (serial killer Eliza Blackwood, a plantation house, a mob, and a gun), made the whole room hear the gunshot, then confessed that in rehearsal he had fired the cap so close to his ear that he had tinnitus for two hours.

Christophe Fouquet caused a magic wand to penetrate a quarter, then magically removed the quarter from the wand.

After defining alchemy, Steve Langston transformed a silver coin into a ball of material, back into a coin, and finally into gold.

Eric Schuster caused an Ace-through-Five straight packet to reverse its order several times.

Anthony Vinson, after offering several wooden boxes to anyone interested, performed an esoteric multi-phase Coins Across routine both in his hands and with an Okito Box.

Daryl Berman, recalling that his wedding night fell on the day of Princess Diana's fatal accident, caused four Queens to change their back colors one at a time.

General Magic Performer: Martin Baratz, inspired by Eric's lecture, performed and explained the parity principle behind the touch one/switch two procedure in Bob Hummer's Mathematical Three-Card Monte.

Giveaways by the Spinning Wheel of Names: Juan Tamariz's Royalistic, Spooky Nyman's First Class, Craig Petty's Lucky Lotto, Andrew Mayne's Photosynthesis, Santa's Sleigh Ride playing cards. Winners were not named in the video.

Winner of the Coveted Royal Pin for the "Purely Prestidigitation" theme was Anthony Vinson. Next month's theme (September) is "Macabre Magic" — Perform something bizarre or spooky. *William Packard*

RING 13, PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA – Tampa-Greenberg Ring

Meets 1st Thu., 7:30pm, Dee Jay's BBQ Ribs and Grille, 1155 Washington Pike, Bridgeville, PA
MARK ZAJICEK, Secretary / E-mail: ibmring13@gmail.com
Web site: www.ibmring13.org

In September, Ring Vice President Ralph Kelly again presided over our business meeting as severe thunderstorms with destructive winds kept a number of our members sheltering in their homes. Despite the threatening weather, several members brought magic items to sell or trade during our flea market and swap meet after the meeting. Lucy Hall introduced our performers, demonstrators, and sellers.

Seven-year-old Anna Greenberg gave her first performance for Ring membership by tapping a magic wand on a small top hat to produce a colorful flower. Such a pleasure to see yet another generation of the Greenberg family performing the art of magic!

Chris Handa brought a box full of tricks to sell or trade, including tricks from Royal Magic that he offered each youth to pick one item. Chris talked about Past International President Rolando Santos' new book, Into the Veil: A Tribute to Lary Kuehn, which includes a contribution from Chris. Chris then performed a routine using a pictorial dictionary and a tin containing a pair of dice. Chris gave the tin to Tony to shake, open, and then look at the two dice inside. Chris instructed Mark Newara to open the dictionary to any page number that involved the numbers shown on the dice. Chris correctly named the images and the key word on that page. Chris repeated the process with Mark Zajicek and Ralph, and Chris again correctly identified the pictures on another page in the dictionary.

Jeff Vanderhoff brought several boxes of magic items to sell, which included videotapes, DVDs, books, and a variety of close-up props and stage effects, all at steeply discounted prices.

James Cooper brought a bag full of decks of cards and other items that he had purchased within the last year. James demonstrated one item as he placed seven plastic drinking straws into a paper bag. James shook the bag, reached inside, and pulled out a giant, seven-foot long, plastic straw.

Levi also brought some magic items to sell, including card clips made by Lucy. And Tracey Hinsch also brought a variety of magic items that she was willing to help find a new home.

Before breaking to allow everyone to shop the magic flea market, Don Greenberg and Mark Z shared some of their highlights from the July I.B.M. Convention. Don told us about the very first I.B.M. Annual Convention that was held 100 years ago, on June 9 and 10, 1926, at Egyptian Hall in Kenton, Ohio. Don brought with him some extra, replica copies of the souvenir program from that first 1926 I.B.M. Convention that had been reproduced and distributed to this year's convention attendees. Thank you, Don!

The following week, Ring 13 hosted a special, new, guest lecture by Nathan Kranzo. Nathan showed us many new effects as well as some new ways to perform some of his older creations. Most of the tricks that Nathan shared with us could be made on your own, but Nathan also offered ready-made versions of his products along with his new lecture notes and several of his books. Thank you, Nathan! *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

Vice President Will Baffle welcomed guests and convened the September delegates for an evening of magical education and inspiration.

Will reported on plans for our September public show at the historic Fort Worth Rose Marine Theater. Our bylaws commit the club to producing and performing one public charitable show each year. Featured performers include the closeup work of Russell Shead and Geoff Grimes and stage performers Jeff Halburg and Lady V (Vanessa), Matthew Martin, Aaron Stone, Randi Rain, Devin Hall and the Hall brothers, and Will Baffle with Pam Jenkins. Proceeds from ticket sales support improvements at the Theater.

Several reported on the weekend's TAOM Convention. Members enjoyed the strong magic and the chance to hang out with area magi.

Will made a pitch for Duane Laflin's out-of-print book, Magicisms, his collection of essays on motivation for magical entertainers.

The Program

Will introduced the surprise lecturer, a friend to magic who hasn't shared his wisdom formally for more than ten years—Pix Smith. His lecture—"60 Things in 60 Minutes"—observations that make our magic more magical! He began with a reference to Tarbell's comments on pleasing the audience. Next, he noted, we have to

have an answer for "why do we do what we do?" We are taking the audience's time—the most valuable thing they have. Another witticism: "There's no reason to do a move if you can tell a lie!" Or how about, "Learn to take a compliment!" Pix advised, "Know who your audience is." And from the "Professor," "Confusion is not magic!" Mark Twain—on the 'pause'—might have written: "Respect silence—you have to give the audience a chance to catch up." Pix admonished us to remember, "'Steak/potato/parsley—you (as the performer) are not necessarily the steak!" Another axiom of effective entertainment: "Maintain eye contact." "Deliver every line to a person." And behind the scenes, "Always be nice to the staff!" For the rest of the hour, the wisdom kept flowing! Pix left the stage to a well-deserved ovation.

The evening ended with a munching fest of Doc Grimes's cookies and great anticipation for our community show this month.

Geoffrey Grimes

RING 16, MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE – Society of Memphis Magicians

Meets 1st Tue., 7:00pm, Germantown Presbyterian Church
DR. JON STANFORD, Secretary
Web sites: www.ring16.org

Magic is Booming in Memphis, and our Ring Meetings continue to grow in both attendance and performers. Our August Meeting was dedicated to our annual magic auction. It was the largest attended meeting of the year with many buyers and sellers. Everyone left happy except our Treasurer Don Berry, who had to keep all the financial totals. I think that he had lost some more hair by the end of the auction.

Our September Meeting began with our Front Table, which was taught by Mike Speros. Mike is a long time member of the ring and an excellent card magician. He performed and taught 3 routines. They were Perfect Prediction by John Scarne, Predictor by Liam Montier, and Random Sample Shuffleboard by Simon Aronson. He also shared many ideas and methods for making predictions. Mike presented an excellent Front Table that was enjoyed by all.

Our Front Table was followed by a short business meeting. Our own Jimmy Dixon and his son Kim Dixon have announced that they will be selling 2 lifetime collections of magic in the next few weeks. Jimmy and Kim are both famous Pitch Men for the Magic Mouse at fairs throughout the country. We have many ring members performing across the South and as far as Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. Our busy magicians are Grayson Smith, Larry Clark, Jeffrey Day, Joe M. Turner, Doug Green, and Michael Clayton. These shows range from the Humane Society Gala, AutoZone's Corporate Convention, Library Shows, Senior Citizen Shows, Memphis Magic Night, the Peabody Hotel, Theme Parks, the Houdini Festival and many private functions.

Now on to the Magic Performances of the night - Our Theme was Predictions:

Our 1st performer was Martin Seiler, who is one of our mentalists. Tonight he performed a 2 Prediction Routine. This was a Numerology Square using playing cards as the matrix. He repeated the routine making it more difficult by removing one of the rows. Martin is a well known CPA in the Memphis Area and his numbers always add up with 100% accuracy.

Our 2nd performer was Jason Pendergrass aka Magic Jason. Tonight he performed his Long Neck Rabbit aka Clippo Rabbit. Jason utilized a spectator to carry out his Neck-ectomy antics including restoring his rabbit when the neck had been completely severed.

Our 3rd performer was Grayson Smith aka Amazin' Grayson. Grayson is the staff magician for the Memphis Veterans Hospital. Grayson performed a comedy Cups and Balls Routine. He was aided by an electric lamp that kept turning back on after it had been turned off. This became a running gag throughout the routine. Grayson finally removed the bulb and placed it on the table. At the end of the routine the bulb turned back on while lying on the table. Grayson picked the bulb up, blew it out and took his well-deserved bow.

Our 4th performer was Deanna Pendergrass, our youngest member. She proceeded to perform the traditional Cups and Balls. She did a great job. It is so good to see the future of Ring 16 performing for the members.

Our 5th performer was Jeffrey Day. He is a Victorian Magician and will be performing at the Houdini Festival in a few weeks. Tonight he performed State Prediction, which he credited to Mark Shortland. Jeff had a Wooden U.S. Map Puzzle. All the state names were also printed on wooden disks. Jeff removed one of the states and a spectator chose a disk. When the map was uncovered the state missing matched that on the spectator's choice perfectly.

Our 6th performer was Joe M. Turner. Joe is a past President of the IBM. Tonight he presented his version of Harry Lorayne's "The 29th Yard." This is a multipart card routine performed expertly by a master entertainer.

Our 7th performer was Kyle Anderson. He presented his version of Joshua Jay's "The Couple Curse." The spectator chose a card but when revealed it appeared to be the wrong prediction. Upon closer inspection the Queen Card

was holding the correct prediction (6 of spades) in her hand.

Our 8th performer was John Campbell. He performed a routine titled "Sekitan." This is a prediction routine that utilized the cell phone of John's and that of a spectator. John used high tech magic mixed with quick brain power to achieve the derived prediction. The kicker was when the prediction was revealed it also included today's date and the chosen word that the spectator had thought of but never revealed.

Our 9th performer was Walter Joerg. Walter is also one of our fine mentalists. He likes to utilize high tech wizardry to achieve almost impossible predictions. He did not disappoint tonight. A spectator was given an Oxford Dictionary. He wrote down a word and placed it in his pocket. Walter mind read a number from the spectator's mind. This number represented the page number, column, and line of a word which matched that word that the spectator wrote down.

Our 10th performer was Dr. Jon (Dr. Jon Stanford). He had a card chosen from a deck of cards. He had a previous prediction of the chosen card in a large envelope. When revealed the giant card was written in Chinese therefore it could have been any card. When turned sideways it revealed the chosen selection. As a kicker when the card is turned over it revealed a giant 8 of hearts which was the chosen card.

Our final performer of the night was Doug Green. Doug is a nationally known mentalist who presented a Great Prediction routine which he titled "Rona's Prediction." He will be presenting this routine in his one man show in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin later in the month. This is a multi-part routine revealing a birthdate, a location in the world, a comical revelation of a famous performer, and the cost of the trip before it is finished.

What a Great Night of Magic, If You are ever in the neighborhood on the First Tuesday of the month we welcome You to join in on the Magic.

Dr. Jon Stan

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 September in-person meeting started out a treat! Our own Al Schneider regaled us with several stories from his impressive creative magical repertoire. In short, his insights and musings turned into an impressive 1.5 hour lecture!

Al shared stories of how he has created some of his pieces of magic; how he has expanded his "5 Steps of Magic" to include a 6th step; his thoughts on audience management, false assumptions and hand nuances. Al shared the story of how he created the most impressive piece of coin magic in 1960, as a seventeen year old caddy, who believed that the handling of Sympathetic Coins was weak and that each reveal of moving coins could be made better. His result was "Matrix". Enough said.

Al also shared that he was the first person to create a video, through L & L, that dealt strictly with magic theory. This was unheard of at the time, but has resulted in being L & L's best seller magic video of all time.

He expanded his thoughts on the false transfer and vanish, with additional musings on lapping and picking up props. It is always an honor to be in the presence of such a master and we, in Ring 19, are so fortunate to have him in our midst.

Michael Barnard performed with a Buddha Box and provided some interesting finesse with coins to the box to provide a more silent delivery (he thanked Al Schneider for the move).

Dan Norat, with Tyler Erickson and Charles Wakefield assisting, performed a card trick with a card box reveal.

Calvin Mattson, with assistance from Dan Norat, performed Quadruple Coincidence.

AnnMarie Thomas wowed us with her jumping knot rope routine, this was followed by Dan Koopmans' sandwich card trick Royal Mounties. Dan was assisted by Tyler.

Charles Wakefield is working on a routine involving an Invisible Deck, plus a deck box with a color-changing deck. We discussed breaking up the routine with other props to separate the various card decks.

Patrick Sheppard offered up a mini teach-in regarding use of the Invisible Deck. He provided some insights for managing how you look at the audience for which you are performing, and how you manage the deck for best results. Patrick explained several moves/displays for various situations, whether close up, parlor or stage.

Tyler brought up performance of magic and how some people are reluctant to show something "because everyone knows that trick and how it is done". He explained that this is not necessarily true and we need to be aware that something old is new for someone who has never seen the effect before. With that said, Al Schneider performed his version of the Vanishing Salt Shaker.

Our Zoom meeting had a smaller attendance, but was just as interesting.

We started the meeting by revisiting the trick that Dan Koopmans performed at the in-person

meeting - Royal Mounties, taken from Garcia and Schindler's Magic With Cards. This led to a discussion of magic books for beginners. The top three: the aforementioned Magic With Cards; Magic for Dummies (both for tricks); and Magic and Showmanship by Henning Nelms (for theory).

Rick Hinrichs performed a torn and restored card effect by Brent Braun. Rick used a special gimmick with the trick that made it very entertaining. We discussed ways to further enhance the trick, as well as other favorite T & R versions.

Tyler told us that he is working on a non-specific project regarding awareness of magic theory. He is currently collecting data and posited questions to the group regarding their thoughts, and the theories they generally think of with magic, such as tension/relaxation, cancelling methods, offbeat moments and the ever popular Parenthesis of Forgetfulness.

If you are ever visiting the Twin Cities on a meeting day or wish to attend a Zoom meeting, please reach out to the Ring website listed above. *Jennifer Graham*

RING 21, HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA – Caryl Fleming

Meets 1st Thu. at Holy Virgin Mary Orthodox Cathedral auditorium, 650 Michelorena St., Los Angeles, CA 90026 / Web site:www.IBMRing21.org
MANNY D'MAGO, Secretary
P.O. Box 340841, Arleta, CA 91334 / (424)653-7614
E-mail: mannydmago@gmail.com

As Hollywood's Ring 21 summer comes to a close, our club is winding down with a spectacular session of magic! August's meeting went absolutely bonkers as some of our members, including yours truly, are recovering after a sensational week of magic in Vegas from Magic Live early in the month. We hosted our annual 'Fool Us' presentation at our monthly meeting the following week, hosted by none other than myself (Manny D'Mago) and Gerry Schiller.

Also, as a special treat that evening, we had some surprise guests who gave us a very special presentation of a special act they wanted to perform for us…the incredible magic duo of Cecile and Mighty! After our president, Bob Weiss made his announcements about the club's happenings, began the induction of some of our newest members into the club with a small speech and latest happenings, Cecile and Mighty went straight to work, performing a fantastical act of magic and singing which our club enjoyed very much!!! There was sooo much mixed into their performance that it was impossible not to clap, laugh, and become amazed! There was one thing…somehow a huge magnet was used to move a certain box with Cecile in it which also floated that I could not explain, so I suppose that was the first "Fooler" of the night.

Kicking off our 'Fool Us' night was Ellen Stein with a very complex calculator trick that confused the heck outta me and I couldn't figure out. My counterpart Gerry was equally fooled so she ended up walking away a fooler. Our next contestant was Warren Morse who presented a stand with a board showcasing a beach, also using a bucket of sand toys, cards about a beach and a spectator selecting a card. Needless to say it was a very tricky performance and Gerry and I were fooled! I was starting to get really frustrated at this point, but in a good way if that makes sense!

Next up was Raul (whose last name I couldn't get, my sincerest apologies!) who performed a card trick to a volunteer (Roy Ball) relating to someone he'd like to meet. Unfortunately for him, Gerry and I figured out the trick and method and were not fooled. Next up was our very clever Rachel Slocombe with a card trick that was very clever and had Gerry and me scratching our heads as to how! She definitely fooled us! After her was Brandove Occultist who performed some card magic with 2 spectators who each selected different cards from a spread of shuffled cards. This fooled me because I could only describe this as a type of cards across but the method I could not nail down and neither could Gerry.

Next up was one of our new members, Storm Velez, who performed a prediction using a dollar bill, a marker and using me as her volunteer. The dollar had all of her predictions correctly written on it, and the color was even different than the sharpie she was using. Dang it, it fooled us too! After her was AJ Bernah who performed a classic rope trick which we figured out was his own variation of a Professor's Nightmare…it didn't get us this time, better luck next year!

Next up was Larry Davidson who used a picture of a celebrity and had a volunteer select a card who turns out to be the celebrity in relation to the random selection. At this point I started to rethink my career in magic and was already ticked off at getting fooled, but in a funny way! Next up was Mark Anthony Petrucelli, who used a box with billets with different ideas and items written on them and had a volunteer select a note, and the prediction matched his exact prediction, which was under a bowl in full sight the whole time…man, we were fooled again!

After that, Alex Avila performed a card trick with a free choice selected by a spectator, however, as amazing as this was, Gerry and I had nailed this one down. Finally, closing off our fool us night was Bob Weiss who performed some magic for us just for the heck of it and

because he wanted to get in on the fun. He fooled us and walked away giggling like a kid who got away stealing candy from a baby!

Moving on to our September meeting, it was very special, filled with tributes and a broken wand ceremony for a past member who was very talented and meaningful to our club, Lois Harmeyer. She's described as a woman of immense creativity and entrepreneurial spirit, a licensed cosmetologist who owned and operated the Busy Bee Beauty Shop for 23 years and, beyond her business, Lois dedicated her life to the performing arts, becoming a beloved leader in both the puppetry and magic communities. She was a 50-year member and past president of the Los Angeles Guild of Puppetry, served as treasurer for our International Brotherhood of Magicians Ring 21 for decades, and was an active member of the Academy of Magical Arts at the Magic Castle. Her creative talents extended to building puppets for Seymore & Johnson Puppet Productions, crafting wigs and curtains for the famed Bob Baker Marionette Theater, and contributing to Jim Henson's The Muppet Movie. You'll be missed, godspeed.

The evening's delights continued as a past president and treasurer who was recovering from illness came through to join us and take part in our meeting, the bewildering Bob Thomas! It was good to see him in good health and spirits.

Our club also held our annual elections for the change of the guard; however, our board members ran unopposed and were reelected by default except for our members at large who saw new members join in and get elected. We also held a four corners lecture, but it became a 3 corners lecture due to one lecturer being unable to attend. Our three corners lecture was hosted by Bob Weiss, Gerry Schiller and Ron Sciciron. (Forgive me if I butchered your last name!) All our lecturers brought something unique to their presentations and made it so that if you were lucky enough to be there, you'd definitely walk away with something special.

These months of meeting for August and September were absolutely memorable with plenty to rant and rave about. Stay tuned for our next meeting in October where we will be hosting our annual Ring 21 banquet at the El Mariachi bar and grill in Encino, emceed by myself and Bob Weiss, with performances by Magic Apple owner Brent Geris and the always mystifying Nader Hanna. Don't miss out and as always, this is Manny D'Mago reporting live from the magic entertainment capital club of the world, Ring 21, signing off!

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

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

"See you in September. See you when the summer's through…Have a good time, but remember, there is danger in the summer moon above. Will I see you in September, or lose you to a summer love?" These were lyrics sung by The Happenings in 1966 (peaked at #3 on the Billboard Hot 100) but previously released by the Pittsburgh group called The Tempos in 1959 and written by Sid Wayne and Sherman Edwards (reaching #23 on the US Billboard charts). The main love of IBM Ring #23 is magic (except for our significant others) so no worries about seeing all our friends after summer vacations. The September 2nd meeting was very well attended, featuring the lecture by Nathan Kranzo! Announcements noted upcoming lectures with Randy Goodman on September 14th, and Kevin Kelly, who will be lecturing on October 7th, a meeting night, and will be free to paid members. We welcomed our IBM TVP Mike Bayer. He noted that the next International IBM meeting would be in Las Vegas and will dovetail with the FISM qualifying competitions where magicians compete to represent our continent at FISM in Busan, South Korea in 2028. This will be the 2027 IBM Convention and FISM North American Championship July 14-17.

Next, it was announced that we will be having our annual flea market in November. Dennis Smolinski is taking the charge and organizing it this year. It was also announced that Dr. Averbook's museum was featured in the September issue of Genii magazine (The 90th Year!) about loaning 47 pieces to the Jewish Museum of Amsterdam for the exhibit: "Abracadabra: Mysteries from Houdini to Hans Klok" that begins on September 25th, 2026. There were also tips for anyone planning to loan items to museums and caring for pieces. See www.AverbookMuseum.com and jck.nl/en/agenda/abracadabra and www.genimagic.com.

It was enthusiastically noted that three of our members will be performing with the traveling show as local representatives at "The Magician's Table" here at Playhouse Square! This is an innovative theatrical show that combines a

themed plot enacted on stage for the evening. The audience is "attending" the Celebration of Life for a recently deceased elder, elite magician where strange things happen from beyond. This is combined with several tables of close-up magic performances for small groups of twelve at each table. Tim Hill, Bryan Gerber and Ray Taylor are all working these performances and will go on through mid-October. Congratulations to them on being selected!

Nathan Kranzo gave an entertaining, fun, and very practical lecture. He had a nice personality and appeared to enjoy his time with the club. I think most everyone was impressed with his full deck of card vanish. Everything he taught was well thought out and spanned a variety of skill sets; however, most effects he taught were within the reach of a beginner to intermediate magician.

The evening ended with warm goodbyes and plans for seeing each other at the next set of lectures and meetings. Everyone had a great time! Magic has a way of fostering that.

Dr. Bruce J. Averbook

RING 29, LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS – Little Rock Magic Ring

Meets 1st Thur., 6:45 pm., First Community Bank, 17820 Central Parkway. Little Rock, AR. / Web site: www.LittleRockMagic.org
MARK MULKERIN, Secretary

Due to a series of combined meetings and lectures, our normal meeting schedule was a bit scrambled. Our August meeting took place much later than usual so we could host a lecture on August 31st by the very talented British magician Jamie Wilson. A gifted creator, performer, and lecturer who earned high praise at the 2026 Blackpool Magic Convention, Jamie did not disappoint at Ring 29. From a simple, hilarious gag taking photos with a paper iPhone to several sophisticated mentalism routines, he delivered an excellent, heartfelt presentation.

On September 12th, we welcomed another outstanding performer and lecturer, Alan Sands. Alan is the son of George Sands, creator of the famous "Sandsational Rope" routine performed by David Copperfield, Jeff McBride, Michael Finney, and many others. Alan shared history and material from his father's 57 years of creating magic, alongside lessons from his own 45 years as a full-time performer. He covered an enormous range of material — including balloons, ropes, coins, and razor blade swallowing. It was an exceptional learning experience from a seasoned pro.

The newly elected officers held their first board meeting on August 22nd, covering a wide variety of topics. Notably, the board voted to make the aforementioned lectures free to all Ring 29 members. We discussed strategies to attract new members, generating several strong ideas. We are also exploring ways to coordinate with other local Rings to promote magic across Arkansas, potentially utilizing our website as a central information hub for all four state Rings. Finally, we began initial planning for next spring's annual magic show at the Jacksonville Community Center and the upcoming joint Ring 29 & 308 auction featuring magic from the Jon Bucher estate. All in all, it's been a busy, but productive few weeks of Magic in Arkansas.

Bob Bullock

RING 31, MADISON, WISCONSIN – Ben Bergor Ring

Meets 1st Wed. each month, 6:30pm.at the Sequoya Public Library, 4340 Tokay Blvd., Madison, WI.
MARK PEPELEA, Ring Contact
(608) 425-8839 / mpepelea@gmail.com
Website: www.ibmring31.com
http://www.facebook.com/BenBergor.IBMRing31

Our September meeting was Madison Ring 31's Open Mic Night. After a discussion of business and upcoming magic events around Wisconsin, the members took turns presenting material from their repertoires of magic and amusements.

Tal Kuhnz – Tal brought in several well-designed special effects from the Korean designer Jai Min Lee. A magical box, a smoker device and from within the box lighting effects...YES…the box opens and closes mysteriously by itself…as well as popping a deck of cards out after opening! (All controlled from a wand.) Tal combined these different elements into a stunning opening for a mystery spooky card effect. His patter, while demonstrating his orchestration of special effects, is what truly unified all these pieces into a strong theatrical presentation. He used strong storytelling skills to take us into a tale about a "Pandora's box," which "although never comes with a warning label, clearly should have."

Wayne Peterson – Wayne's presentation was an overview of various silk effects he particularly appreciates. He loves the classics, demonstrating with humor and aplomb Icle Pickles's 20th Century Rabbit, Magic Hanky by Warren Stephens, and Jumbled Numbers Comedy Streamer from Funtime Magic. He interspersed his tricks with many whimsical quips and various observations. One quite amusing bit involved a running joke about the ring member attending on Zoom...who, although Wayne kept comedically addressing throughout his routine…clearly was not present, with only a posted picture up throughout Wayne's entire segment.

Cliff Wollin – Cliff performed Predictor by

Liam Montier: a bold, self-working card magic trick the author calls his "greatest" creation, combining hidden classic mathematics (the Gilbreath Principle) with a fresh twist in which the spectator repeatedly creates stacks of cards which always match each of the 3 predictions. One of the few effects which grows stronger with each of the three repeating yet varying performances.

Mark Pepelea – Mark performed the wonderful John Bannon effect Power of Poker, a self-working gem in which the spectator picks all the cards for his hand in a 5 card draw poker game; yet inevitably loses. (Bannon credits the original trick to Dave Solomon.)

Benjamin Talbot – Ben performed Missing Mates by Kevin Casaretto, as featured in the Card Corner column (LR, June 2026). After the astonished members gasped at the final ending, Mr. Talbot revealed that they could enjoy the inner workings of the trick on page 101 of the referred to issue. He then graciously showed them how to perform this wonder of card magic himself.

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A vibrant and lively meeting indeed, the open mic was a standing ovation of fun for all those attending. The Ben Bergor Ring meets on the 1st Wednesday of each month, 6:30 to 8:30 pm, at The Nitty Gritty Restaurant, 315 E. Linnerud Dr., Sun Prairie WI. *Benjamin Talbot*

RING 43, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS – Harlan Tarbell Ring

3rd Fri. except July and August, 7:00 p.m., at Magic, Inc. 1838 W. Lawrence, Ave., Chicago, IL
MIKE KAMLET, President / E-mail: kamlet@ameritech.net
175 E. Delaware #8502, Chicago, IL 60611 / (312) 266-2129
Web site: www.ring43.org

The program for our August special meeting was a lecture by Ondřej Pšenička.

Ondřej is an award winning performer with more than twenty years of experience. Hailing from the Czech Republic, he has performed on stages across the globe and is a regular at the World Famous Magic Castle. Known for his quirky humor, subtle surrealism, and technical mastery, Ondřej has baffled audiences and fooled Penn & Teller three times on Penn & Teller: Fool Us. His creations blend originality, precision, and playfulness, making every performance unforgettable.

Ondřej chose Craig Reeder to assist. Craig picked a card, returned it to the deck, and shuffled the deck. Without even touching the deck Ondřej identified the card as the 2S. He then spelled Craig's name and turned over the card revealing the 2S. (Impossible Divination)

Craig picked another card, lost it in the deck and cut the deck into three piles. Ondřej eliminated two of the piles and then said, "Your card was the 10S and it's the eleventh card from the top." It was! (Butterfly Challenge)

Craig picked another card at random and placed it on his seat without looking at it. Ondřej looked through the remaining cards and said "two, nineteen, and twenty-six". He removed the cards from the deck located at those positions and, when he turned them over, they were three Jacks and he said Craig was sitting on the fourth Jack (JC)!

Finally, he had someone in the audience name a card (KD) and he tossed a card into the deck and showed that it landed next to the KD!

All of these tricks were done with Ondřej's Butterfly Deck, which he explained and demonstrated.

Ondřej then went into depth about the back patterns of various cards and how you could use these back patterns to identify the chosen card.

Craig picked another card and lost it in the deck. Without looking at the deck Ondřej removed a card, inserted it into the deck, and used it to part the deck at Craig's card. (Toledo Cut)

Finally, Ondřej did a card trick inspired by blind magician Richard Turner. He placed the four threes on the bottom of the deck. He then repeatedly riffle shuffled the deck, gradually separating the threes in the deck. He then cut the deck and shuffled with half face-up and half face-down. He repeated this several times and then ribbon spread the cards, face-up. Four cards were face down in the spread and they proved to be the four threes. (Inner Turner)

After the meeting some of the members adjourned to Primo Chuckie's Restaurant for additional fun and fellowship. *John Hutsebaut*

RING 46, OKLAHOMA CITY – Seymour Davis Ring

Meets 1st Mon. of month, New Beginning Fellowship Church, 15601 S. Pennsylvania, OKC
LEE WOODSIDE, Secretary
E-mail: WoodsideLee@hotmail.com
Ring Web site: www.okcmagic.org

We were very pleased to host lecturer Alan Sands in lieu of our normal September meeting. This lecture was offered free to all paid-up members of Ring 46. Alan began by making a balloon animal and spicing up the presentation with a few double entendres.

Alan performed the complete "Sandsational" rope routine originated by his famous (in the magic world at least) father, George Sands. This a four-minute routine using a rope (Alan described the best kind to use), an audience participant, scissors, a change bag, a latex dove, and even a bang wand. This is most definitely a crowd-pleasing routine.

Alan brought out five miniature rubber chickens and entertained us with a stripped-down version of the venerable sheep and thieves routine. He then gave us the benefit of his professional expertise involving microphones, audio, and rechargeable batteries.

Alan performed the "Ropesational" routine, which is a two and a half-minute rope routine that requires no actual cutting. The advantage is that one can use the same ropes over and over.

For close-up situations, Alan used a dollar bill to create an origami purse. After making the purse, he pulled a quarter from it.

Alan showed five razor blades and asked that an audience participant select one of them. He showed that the chosen blade was sharp by slicing a playing card with it. He then swallowed the razor blades and chased them with a length of thread. Reaching into his mouth and grasping the end of the thread, he slowly pulled it out. Suspended from the thread at even intervals were the razor blades.

Alan brought forth a deck of playing cards and offered them to an audience member for shuffling. After retrieving the deck, Alan shuffled them a couple more times and then handed half a deck to each of two audience participants. He asked several audience members to each name a playing card and Alan immediately told which person held that playing card. He then named the remaining playing cards held by each of the participants. He said that this is the "Extra Sandsational Perception (ESP)" routine.

We highly recommend Alan Sands as a lecturer for any magic organization. Perhaps a bit of his professionalism will rub off on you!

Lee Woodside

RING 49, HAMILTON, ONTARIO, CANADA – The Doug Henning Magic Wand Club

Meets 2nd Tue., 7:00p.m. (except July and August), Ryerson United Church, 265 Wilson St. E, Lancaster, ON
DOUG HUNT, President, / E-mail: stiltrecord@yahoo.ca (519) 750-4703
Web site: ring49magic.com

Here in Hamilton, ON we have officially kicked off our 2026/2027 season with a great presentation from a locally known children's entertainer, Scott Wilkins (aka Rumple the Clown).

Before introducing Scott, our President had one piece of unfinished business. Last year he honored the members involved with our annual charity show with a plaque, but one member, Barry O'Neil, had missed that meeting and so he was presented with the award.

Then, on to our guest speaker, Scott Wilkins. Now, as alluded to above, Scott is a children's performer, so he has chosen to perform as a clown (but he does include magic in his shows). But it becomes very obvious, very early on, that his actual background is in theater.

He was born in England, where he studied theater. In 2010 he found an opportunity to move to Hong Kong to teach English. Scott and a friend began developing some ideas on what they could sell the school boards there as far as unique methodologies to make it fun for the kids.

This quickly evolved into clowns (with magic) and puppets, a traveling 'Theater Bus', and the business name of Rumple and Friends (which is the business he still operates), and they became the largest English Entertainment company in Hong Kong. More personally, he also met and married his wife while there.

Then COVID hit.

A very difficult time for entertainers, as we all know. Scott and Nichol moved back to Brantford, ON to be closer to family and Scott found some work, but in 2022 Scott saw an opportunity to get back into children's entertainment and went back to it full time in 2024.

Scott offers a whole host of services: his shows, disco parties, drama classes, circus training, theater, glow in the dark soccer, and much more. He spoke about his philosophy for entertaining, much of which centered around engagement of the audience.

We learned a lot from Scott — highly recommended.

Rene Chouinard

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

At this month's gathering, Ring 58 was treated to a fantastic lecture from Brad Morgan of Morgan Magic Lab.

Brad gave us a behind-the-scenes look at his creative process for developing new magic props and routines. Throughout the evening, he performed a handful of his original and reimagined effects while sharing the thinking, experimentation, and problem-solving that went into creating them.

A major focus of Brad's lecture was the use of 3D printing in magic. He shared how he uses a 3D printer to design and manufacture his own props and gimmicks and offered practical insight into how other magicians can begin using this technology to bring their own ideas to life. It was an especially interesting look at how modern tools can open new possibilities for creating and customizing magic.

In addition to Brad's excellent lecture, Ring

58 was pleased to welcome two new remote members to the club: Hal Saxon of Dothan, Alabama, and Eddie Ambrister of Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

We're excited to have Hal and Eddie as part of Ring 58 and look forward to their involvement with the club.

It was another great evening of magic, creativity, fellowship, and learning for Ring 58!

Timothy Pressley

RING 64, LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY – Okito/Lance Burton Ring

Meets 7:00pm various dates at Kosair Charities, 982 Eastern Blvd., Louisville, KY 40217
MICHAEL A. RAYMER, President
Web site: www.louisvillemagicclub.com

The Louisville Magic Club Ring #64 Lance Burton/Okito Ring held its monthly meeting on August 11th at 7 PM at its usual meeting place, the Kosair Charities Center on Eastern Parkway in Louisville, Kentucky. There were more than fifty members and guests in attendance for this very special lecture. The meeting was called to order promptly at 7 PM by Club President Bret Sohl and after a few brief updates on club activities such as upcoming events, shows and happenings as well as a special 'Thanks' to Tom and Katie Crecelius for graciously hosting the club picnic on August first at their home and a special shoutout to club members Sidney Lee, Jim 'Uncle Red' Harris, Ken Abbott, Allison White and yours truly for lending their magical talents to the 33rd Annual Kentucky Humane Society's 'Paws for the Cause' Fund Raiser which was attended by more than 500 patrons. 'Thanks everyone!' It was now time to introduce our very special guest lecturer for the evening; drum roll if you please...our special guest lecturer was none other than Kentucky's own homegrown Master Magician Lance Burton! Yes, THAT Lance Burton, the world-famous and internationally known, Louisville Magic Club's namesake, star of Las Vegas stages, movie screens, TV shows, special events and all things magic, Lance Burton. WOW! We are so-o-o lucky to have such an incredible magician such as Lance to take time from his busy lecture to give us an up-close and personal look into a side of Lance that no one else knows about. The theme for the lecture was a bit different as most lectures go. Lance didn't just perform a whole lot of tricks and then explain how they were done etc., sure he performed '1,000 Grains of Salt' explaining how to use the thumb tip effectively, the type of salt to use (popcorn salt) right down to the type of salt shaker to use with only one hole instead of several for a more consistent pour. Lance also did a very nice coin-in-handkerchief routine, adding some very special and surprising additions along the way. Primarily, the main focus for the evening was one big Q & A session where Lance answered any and all questions that were asked ranging from how he got his start in magic, his mentors, his overall career, his friendships with other magicians, his lifelong personal friendship with another fellow Kentucky magician Mac King, some of the celebrities that visited his Las Vegas shows and so much more, including his appearance on 'The Tonight Show with Johnny Carson' for which he was allowed to use the entire 12-minute time slot for his performance, something unheard of before or since. Lance continued by stressing to us to, 'Keep Working on your Magic' make changes to your magic or your routine, but still keeping the effect static, effective and purposeful. It was a great evening of information and anecdotes from one of magic's best, no doubt about it. Of course, at the end of the lecture Lance signed autographs, took pictures with many of if not everyone who was there for this once in a lifetime chance to meet one of the best magicians in the world. He even awarded prizes (calendar, hats, T-shirts, pictures) to those individuals who he felt asked the most interesting and mindful questions during the Q & A. It was a great and magical evening for sure! See you all next month and have a magical day!

Carl Loud

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

There was more going on at the September meeting than at a Ringling 3-Ring Circus…and we had 23 members and guests ready for a night of fun, creativity, and magic. Past President, Gary Roberts (and his wife Kathy), organized about seven large tubs of magic that was donated to the Ring by former member, Steve Gottschalk. Steve had some pristine props, tricks, DVDs, books, and apparatus that Gary and Kathy spread out on eight large tables for the nearly two dozen of us to purchase — it's a good thing we started the meeting an hour early! A giant "Thank You!" to Steve for this donation as we plan to use the earnings for upcoming lectures.

We made room in the schedule for some performances. Sharing a new script for the duck/bunny silk, Dan Walsh walked us through an involved routine and asked for our input afterwards. Tom Witcomb gave Alen Thompson a choice of red or blue, then slammed his hand

on a paper sack of that color – showing a large knife under the one not called for; Tom used Sean Cullen to help with a bit of This, That & the Other to correctly predict this Free Will outcome.

Once again making the 90-mile trek to be with us, Bruce Young shared a single-red sponge routine that ended with a blue square and yellow triangle. Catching us all off guard, Edward delCastillo snuck in Brent Braun's Position Impossible to seriously fool us with this miraculous card effect. Tom Vorjohan shared a hand-made tumbling toy he got in Cincinnati, a grinding wheel that shot six-foot sparks, and a quick elbow effect he learned at Magic Live. Also teaching a trick that he learned at Magic Live, Frank Velasco did an impressive card trick using invisible dice he got from John Bannon's breakout session. Our illusion builder, Gene Alcorn, did Any Card at a Number that he has been doing since he was a teen using Si Stebbins very uniquely to avoid math and shifting cards.

To conclude, we wanted to do a "creativity workshop" with the group like Blake Vogt's breakout session he did in Vegas at Live and like Blake's podcast. With tubs of miscellaneous stuff, about a dozen of the group actively brainstormed ideas. After the meeting, about a dozen of us met at Miller's Ale House for food and more magic at "the meeting after the meeting."

Tom Vorjohan

RING 84, MELBOURNE, VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA – Charles Waller Ring

Meets 1st Mon. 7:30 p.m. (except January), at the Welsh Church, 320 La Trobe Street, Melbourne
AIDAN THOMPSON, President/Secretary
E-mail: aidan.thompsom@fultonhogan.com.au

General Business

Anthony Street is in town performing an illusion show on the afternoon of Saturday, 12 November. Cosentino was recently seen in Ballarat and is coming soon to the Nunawading Centre for a non-illusion appearance. A burlesque by Dita Von Teese, Nocturnelle, was on show recently at The Palais in St Kilda, featuring a strong line-up of stage illusions.

The Sydney Convention runs 8–9 November, featuring Joshua Jay and Raymond Crowe; those able to travel earlier can catch Joshua Jay at the Sydney Opera House on 7 November.

The New Zealand Magic Convention follows on 23–25 October in Queenstown, New Zealand and some of our members are flying over.

Magic at the Meeting

Chris: brought along a jumbo sponge heart with four small hearts, but no instructions — the routine remains open for the group to work on next month.

Gary: performed a tube-and-bottle illusion in which a glass transposed with the bottle, a mandarin passed from the tube into the glass, but the tubes were always shown filled with red and yellow disks — likely a Thayer-made illusion.

Ian: showcased one effect from his One-Man Parade in the June Linking Ring. He proceeded to demonstrate his glide technique, explaining how he developed it and how it can be used to retain the bottom card.

Wal: presented a four-coin penetration. Coins passed one at a time through a metal plug inside a tube, each coin could be seen and heard as it moved through the tube. He followed this with another coin effect where a coin passed through a box and his hand with a tap of his magic wand.

Kym: performed a dice-guessing effect: after the spectator hid three dice behind their back, Kym correctly named the hand the dice were in and the value on top. He repeated this by covering each die with a cup for a more amazing result.

Mark: continued his bizarre magic theme with two effects: a book test using two volumes of The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo series, correctly naming the first line of any chosen page. Plus a Jack the Ripper story using a clever origami-style page which when turned still did not reveal the identity of the Ripper!

Aiden: performed a Clippo effect using classified ads from the local newspaper. An effect he has used as MC at his company's awards nights along with his groan-inducing jokes!

Peter: demonstrated a wooden finger chopper and attempted a three-fly routine using items from his own laundry.

Chris: closed the evening with the story about Harold Thomas, who designed the Aboriginal flag for the people of Australia. Chris illustrated the tale with a multi-phase colour changing cane and appearing handkerchiefs: a burnt stick taken from the fire changed colour (black to red to yellow), transforming into hanks that blended into the Aboriginal flag. A lovely story-based effect to round out the night.

Peter Hanway

RING 89, BATTLE CREEK, MICHIGAN – Neil Foster Ring

Meets the second Monday of every month, 7 p.m., at American Museum of Magic located at 107 E. Michigan Ave. Marshall, MI 49068.
ERIC SULLIVAN, President
140 W. Michigan Ave., Marshall, MI 49068 / E-mail: trazdal@att.net

August brought another great evening of magic and fellowship to IBM Neil Foster Ring 89. In attendance were Gene, Nancy, John Sherwood, John Kik, Kevin Rosewood, Phil (Le Grand Wysard Phillip), and Eric Sullivan (Trazdel).

The "Salute to Harry Blackstone Sr." at the American Museum of Magic was such a success. The event took place following Abbott's Get-Together.

Our next major performance opportunity is quickly approaching. The Magic Cabin Ring 89 Magic Show is scheduled for October 24th. We discussed the performers and timing for the show during the meeting, and there is still an opportunity for members who would like to take part. Interested in performing? Reach out to Kevin, Eric, or John S. We'd love to have you join in the fun.

Finally, we would like to congratulate Alumnus Krag Ryal, who is being inducted into the Michigan Country Hall of Fame this month. It's always exciting to see one of our own members recognized for their accomplishments, and we look forward to celebrating this achievement.

John S. brought along his small set of rings and performed his version of Dai Vernon's Symphony of the Rings.

Following the performance, Phil shared some of his thoughts on crafting amazement with smaller rings. He shared his routine for the smaller rings and different moves to use.

Here are the upcoming events for Ring 89:

Ring 89 Monthly Meetings

7:00 p.m., the second Monday of every month

American Museum of Magic

Weekly Magic Show at 2:00 p.m.

Every Saturday

Email info@americanmuseum.com if you would like to perform

Marshall Area Farmers Market

8:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m., every Saturday

125 West Green Street, Marshall, MI 49068

Marshall Historic Home Tour

Saturday & Sunday, September 12th & 13th

Let Kevin know if you would like to help perform at this event

Marshall Area Farmers Market: Kids Day

August 29th, October 31st

8:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

125 West Green Street, Marshall, MI 49068

The Magic Cabin

October 24th, 2:00 p.m.

We will be returning once again to the Great Escape Stage Company to perform as a Ring!

The next meeting will take place on September 14th at 7:00 p.m. at the American Museum of Magic in Marshall, Michigan. The theme is everyday objects. Until then, keep practicing, performing, and sharing amazement.

Kevin Rosewood

RING 90, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

Meets 1st Thu. of each month about 7:00 pm at Heights Cumberland Presbyterian Church, Academy & Moon NE.
CHRISSY CADABRA, Secretary / (505) 507-5656
Website: Albuqadabra.com / E-mail: info@ChrissyCadabra.com

Ring 90's latest gathering unfolded like a guided tour through the many personalities of magic—clever, quirky, spooky, mathematical, and occasionally downright mischievous. Each performer brought something distinctly their own, creating a night that felt less like a meeting and more like a living anthology of magical thinking.

Chrissy Cadabra opened with an Angelo Carbone concept, using a homemade gimmick to visibly push a playing card through a table. It was tactile, bold, and delightfully impossible proof that ingenuity often lives in the workshop long before it reaches the stage.

Paul Galindo followed with an intuition test and the Out to Lunch principle. After writing a spectator's initials, chosen # 37, and current date, he arranged the numbers into rows. Then came the kicker: every direction—vertical, horizontal, diagonal, even the four corners—added up to 37. It was part puzzle, part prophecy, and entirely satisfying. Members were reminded that Genii Magazine's August 2026 issue features a deep dive on Out-to-Lunch. Additional tips were to get modern business card or money clip holders that resemble thick rubber bands, and to also check out Doc Eason's metal-clip "Out to Dinner" variation.

Gene Gutierrez's Red-White Triumph routine was a study in controlled chaos. After a spectator removed jokers and selected two cards, he shuffled the deck repeatedly and let the spectator cut it as much as desired. Gene dealt cards into piles, recombined them, flipped half face-up, and mixed everything together. The finale revealed two perfect opposites: one pile entirely red face-down with a single face-up black selection, and the other entirely black face-down with a lone face-up red selection. Gene also shared a charming Out to Lunch variant featuring a boy climbing a rope out of a basket.

Larry Marken brought out his beloved "Box of Tricks," a wooden relic he's used for over four decades. From it he produced a series of effects, including a tiny rope labeled "the end." When he unfolded the box halfway, the rope spelled out exactly that; unfolded fully, it politely added "thank you." The routine—published in the Linking Ring Parade, October 2021—remains a testament to Larry's craftsmanship and gentle humor.

Tom Karas demonstrated a Devil's Hank routine using a homemade handkerchief and an Illuminati coin. After folding the cloth into a purse and placing the coin inside, he pulled the coin cleanly through the bottom. It was understated, elegant, and wonderfully perplexing.

Bill Fienning, an Order of Merlin – Life Member, shared an IBM souvenir book before diving into his signature world of spooky, handcrafted magic. His

Out to Lunch routine involved a "contract to the dark side," complete with approval stamps and a final transformation from avow to disavow. He showcased a rewritten Christian Shellman routine about a Bruja (witch) who predicts people's expiration dates, his renamed Time Misremembered watch effect (where remembered time vanishes along with the watch's hands), and an array of eerie homemade props: a smash bag over a railroad spike, a psychic rabbit named Robbie, a locking metal cross, an Asher Couch crystal-swap box, and even the Hand of Fatima. Because Bill is known as a "collector of artifacts," his magic feels less "performed" and more naturally unearthed.

Dave Dunlap offered a fresh take on Out to Lunch using a card illustrated with a lock. After the spectator initialed both sides, a haunted key slowly turned over in his palm to magically "unlock" the drawing. When the card was turned over, the drawing had changed to an open lock—a simple, clever moment of animated impossibility.

Russ Romans closed with a charming anecdote from his teaching days. His go-to attention-grabber was Sponge Ball to Square—a quick squeeze that transformed a soft red ball into a bright cube. It was his way of signaling to students that class wasn't merely beginning… magic was. *Chrissy B.*

RING 93, DUBUQUE, IOWA – Tri-State Magic Club

3rd Sun., 2:00pm, Adam's Dance Connection, 900 Jackson, Dubuque, Iowa
JIM MCCREA, President, (309) 235-6215
E-mail: jrmfpc@gmail.com

Mark Pepelea performed, "The Mockingbird" an impossible mentalism card routine created by the legendary magician Max Maven. A spectator shuffled a full deck of cards completely, then divided the deck into four separate piles. Audience members mixed the four piles as much as they wanted. One spectator chose a pile, selected a card, and hid it in his pocket. Mark then read the spectator's mind and named the location of the matching mate card in less than 10 seconds.

Chris Westemeier performed his own version of "Oil & Water." He showed 6 jumbo cards, three red face cards and 3 black number cards. He turned the cards over to show the red face cards had red backs and the black cards had blue backs. The cards were mixed face down, alternating colors. Turned face up, and given a moment, the cards were spread to show the reds and blacks had separated. The cards are mixed again, shown to be mixed on the fronts and on the backs of the cards, but when given a moment, they were suddenly separated red and black again. After performing, Chris asked the club members for some ideas to improve the effect, feeling it should have three phases, but his attempts to add a phase never felt right. Some suggestions were made that Chris liked and was already planning to incorporate.

Phyllis Fishnick performed the Chinese Washer Man from Daryl's Fooler Doolers series. Her original patter was based on helping her mother on wash day. After all the work of pumping the water, carrying it into the kitchen, heating the water on the wood stove, filling the washing machine, finally to hang the wash. Being so poor, mom did not have clothes pins, so she would tie each piece to a rope. Her job was to tie loose ends together to secure each piece of wash. When all the wash was secured to the rope, the rope was strung between two trees. Job finished! Oh no! A summer storm came rolling in! What to do, how could she get all the wash off the rope before the storm hit? Fortunately, that day her apron had a hole in the pocket. All she needed to do was grab the hole and place it on the end of the rope. Almost in a flash, she was able to remove all the clothing swiftly. Phyllis closed her performance by mentioning that she recently went to the doctor for her yearly check-up. Doctor told her to "drop a little weight." She picked up two one-pound weights, and dropped them. The group agreed that she had lost a few pounds.

Walking Magic Bob demonstrated some basic effects of using the thumb tip. He talked about how it didn't matter what color the tip was, because if handled correctly it should never be seen by the audience. Bob showed a small silk in his right hand, while showing the left hand to be completely empty. He then transferred the silk to his left hand and showed the right hand completely empty. Walking Magic Bob then proceeded to push the silk into his left hand and made it completely vanish. The silk appeared and vanished several times and Bob made it a point to several times show a thumb with no visible tip. *Walking Magic Bob*

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

It was picnic night for the friends and families of King Magic Ring. The gathering had a lovely picnic and then it was magic time.

Jerry Mullenix stepped to the front of the line-up with a couple of very funny presentations. He held a funnel — surrounded by nothing but air — and caused water to emerge and stop, emerge and stop from its opening. Just

when you thought it was over, out comes more water. Now, having water at the ready, Jerry asked to have a card selected. That card was used to cover a container filled with water. The container was inverted and NO water fell even when the card was removed. It seemed to be suspended by no natural means. Some of us heard a tinkling sound, but he assured us it was just the water turning to ice. Lastly, water was poured into an open large die and lifted over his own head. He inverted the die to show it empty and proved he was the bravest of us all.

Introduced next was jolly Jim Greer, who gave us a lesson on how magic works. A large two-sided domino was shown to have FOUR sides with a different number of dots on each. It was revealed that the secret was indeed a simple one. He just covered the empty space with his hand. HOWEVER, dots quickly appeared in those positions, as well. I don't think we learned much there. Afterwards, Jim asked for help with a comedic cut and restored rope routine. It began slowly as the spectator could not seem to operate a simple pair of scissors. Other scissors were used to cut the rope and it was 'magically' restored with a knot. Ultimately the knot disappeared and the rope was complete once more.

Joe Cole had the Halloween spirit a bit early with a presentation of "Blood from Stone." Joe held a rock firmly in his hand. He gave it a hard squeeze and, in a brief moment, blood began to pour from the rock. Exposing the trick, Joe showed us the large jagged shard of glass coming from the rock. It would appear that the blood was Joe's, all along. Joe's last trick was to have a spectator select a picture from a Wooly Willy hairstyle choice book. They selected one with a large shaggy beard. Just as the book was moved from in front of Joe's face, he had an identical beard on his face — a perfect match.

Khan-Du and Company's, Charlie James, was called up next. Charlie carried only four cards with the pictures of animals. The four participants were each asked to just think of an animal that they see. After mixing the cards those participants were asked if they now see their selected animal. When they did, Charlie announced the name of their animal, each time.

For the evening's conclusion, Johnny-O! (John Swomley) began his portion by sneezing up a donut. He followed quickly with an 8-card brainwave trick using breakfast cereals instead of just playing cards. The selected cereal ended up with a different colored back than all the others. John pulled out another small packet of cards that had different food printed on them, explaining that this was how someone can choose what they'd like to order. When a spectator went through the process, they got … the check. This ended our picnic on a humorous high note. *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@verizonz.net

On August 15, Ring 96 met for its most recent meeting. The night was a huge success on many levels.

Our guest lecturer Jonathan Molo arrived early and facilitated the pre-meeting workshop. Jonathan gave out a pair of helpful cards to assist everyone, then taught us his version of the classic effect "Anniversary Waltz." This is a fine effect in which two people each choose one card and the two cards wind up right next to each other in the deck, with one card reversed on the other. There were several moves involved, starting off with a Hindu Shuffle. Jonathan was touting the fact that this trick can be done in your hands, so it is excellent for any strolling situation.

President George Reis started the official meeting with some announcements of upcoming events. Sadly, he called Kim Hallinger to the front of the room to speak about magician Michael Mirth, who lost his long battle to cancer recently. Kim spoke highly of all the work Michael did. She suggested there would be a memorial and magic estate sale in the near future.

George introduced our lecturer for the evening, Jonathan Molo. Jonathan opened by calling two volunteers to the stage. He performed his version of Ring Flight. The borrowed and vanished ring ended up inside an envelope inside his wallet. This included a moment where we all thought the ring would be found on Jonathan's key ring, but it was an extra level of mystery. After showing the reveal, he proceeded to teach how the trick was done.

Jonathan spoke at length about the importance of making connections with your audience. Don't just walk out on stage and do magic — look at your audience, talk to your audience, and talk with your audience. Jonathan had won a strolling competition at the Magic Castle last year and credited his audience connection with helping him win. Asking a potential audience "Would you like to see a quick magic trick?" goes miles further than just forcing yourself on them. Always start with a polite greeting. It makes people feel comfortable around you.

An important piece that many performers might miss is to always give to a room the energy

that you want back. If you give off friendly, they will be friendly. If you give off intense, they will be intense.

When you start your set, begin empty-handed. Psychologically it builds trust; you can take out your props after you introduce yourself.

If someone wants to have a conversation with you, let them — it becomes part of the show. This becomes natural, and people will remember how you made them feel. Your show is a play and your volunteers are actors. Let them have a speaking role.

Jonathan performed and taught the trick he had done in our pre-meeting workshop, "Anniversary Waltz."

Jonathan did a sponge ball routine that would work for any age but was especially designed for a younger audience. Sponge balls multiplied and vanished. He demonstrated the moves for sponge ball work. Always let children have a voice — they want to be heard and very often they are not.

Jonathan ended his section of the lecture with a card trick. A volunteer picked a card, and a second card was picked by the magician. Does the second card match the first? No. But the volunteer shook the second card, and it became the chosen one.

Part II

Jonathan's wife, event planner Jaime Perez, came to the stage to talk about how to get your show out there and keep it out there.

Jonathan offers a 100% money-back guarantee on his shows. How many magicians would be comfortable doing that? You must truly believe in your show to make an offer like that. And every magician should be that confident in their product, whether they offer the guarantee or not. Make sure your product is worth the price you are asking.

Have a strong digital presence. Have lots of current photos of you performing your shows. You can pay for digital media sources to post, but there is much available for free, so it may not be necessary.

Jaime recommends Instagram and suggests keeping it regularly updated.

Be confident in your price — do not be wishy-washy about it. Potential clients have many options to choose from, but you are the best option they have.

Be clear, be professional, and be very easy to work with.

Every interaction is part of the show, even before the show starts. Be helpful and very easy to work with. Quality shows cultivate repeat customers.

The magic spilled over to dinner at a local restaurant after the meeting. Another exciting evening at Ring 96! *Cliff Gerstman*

RING 102, SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA - The Maurice Rooklyn Ring

Meets 3rd Tues. of month at 7:30 p.m. at Northside Chatswood Salvation Army Church Hall Cnr. Bertram and Johnson Street Chatswood.

JACK SHARP, President / email: jack@jacksharpmagic.com.au

With our president Jack Sharp currently overseas, Peter Wood opened tonight's Mentalism meeting by introducing our host for the night, Eugene Zanozin. He immediately brought back Peter who handed a spectator a wallet to hold. With a little mathematic chicanery the spectator predicted the contents of the wallet, which was a five dollar note. Eugene, after a quick gag, then introduced Phuoc Can Hua, who had various items chosen such as the city of Sydney, the singer Rihanna, the colour orange and the fruit papaw, using coloured numbered envelopes. He then showed the wallpaper image on his laptop, which showed a picture of Rihanna eating a papaw in Sydney with a predominant orange colour.

Eugene then brought forward our guest, Sean Taylor, who explained the forthcoming Sydney Magic Festival, which would be held at the Regent Art Deco Theatre in Richmond in early October. The idea of Tom Weil, over ten magicians will be performing both stage and close up magic over four days at the recently renovated theatre complex.

Our next performer was Barry Abkin, i.e., "Abracabazza". He mentioned that he had just picked up this game called Pictionary. He showed Cam a card with about 100 objects listed and asked him to think of one of them, and to say it over and over in his mind. He asked Anthony to also pick an object. Barry was successful in sketching both items. Barry then handed out a book to Conway and asked him to look up a long word of, from say, 8 to 10 letters. Barry successfully deduced Conway's word in this performance of Angelo Carbone's "The End" book test. Cam Leo was our next performer with a great high speed multiple book test demonstration using a well known pocket dictionary and a copy of Sherlock Holmes stories. The routine ended with the page of a chosen word discovered to be missing and found in an envelope held by a spectator.

Eugene, with another well received "Dad" joke, introduced Conway Restom, who performed a multi phase routine incorporating ESP/Zener cards. Our next performer was John Kanawati, who showed two jokers. He explained that he would use them like kitchen tongs to prevent any suspicious handling of the

cards. Using a probability patter story, he placed a card between the jokers that he said was a queen, and asked a spectator to name a queen. John then showed that there were actually four cards between the jokers, however, only one of them was a queen. It was the chosen queen and the other three cards were shown to be jokers in John's rendition of Gordon Bean's "Entourage".

It was now time for Eugene's spot. He discussed some of his ideas including the 3 elements of any good magic routine — surprise, suspense and connection with your audience. He mentioned current favourite mentalist Luke Jermay and emphasised that you should "love your audience". All this whilst performing an excellent routine including touches of "Mental Epic" and Alan Shaxon's Confabulation. He then reintroduced Sean Taylor, who claimed to have been the first magician in Australia to make a full time living from performing mentalism. Sean began his talk by explaining why he changed from being a family entertainer to being a mentalist. Discussions with Clifford Warne, and his reading of Chuck Hickok's Mentalism Incorporated, helped with his decision.

A magician changing to a mentalist will have several problems to solve including lack of visuals, communication, covering the process and covering the dull nature of much of the procedure. A hint that English mentalist Ian Rowland gave him was to just keep talking. Some resources for mentalists that Sean recommended include all the books of Bob Cassidy, The Bold and Subtle Miracles of Dr. Faust by David Hoy and any of the George B. Anderson booklets. The meeting concluded with a supper provided by Peter Wood. *Peter Rodgers*

RING 105, COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA – The Coe Norton Ring

Meets 2nd Thur. of the month 7:00 P.M. at Home of Tony Metze, 123 Holly Ridge Lane, West Columbia, SC
TONY METZE, Acting Secretary / Email: tonymetze@yahoo.com
Facebook: Columbia Magic Club IBM Ring 105
Website: www.IBMRing105.org

On August 20th, '26, four members of our club met early at Rush's restaurant across from our meeting place, chewing and jawing for almost two hours. We then headed over to our new location and opened up the meeting by greeting all and hearing a little business while devouring brownies baked by Jay's wife and listening to Eric and Jay's adventures at Magic Live in Las Vegas, which soon brought up a club trip for 2028 to Blackpool. Magic then appeared with Jay Altemus showing a card effect learned from a newly acquired magic kit. John Tudor showed a collection of antique cigarette magic gimmicks used with pipes, cigars and cigarettes. Jim Poage brought out his collections and offered them up to all who wanted them and also performed his favorite handcuff escape while locked in a glass box. Ricker M Soos was our spotlight performer who presented 3 haunted effects with handouts of how to build and put meaningful flow to each. First was a cloth used to trap a spirit lured by candy then trapped within a bag of which floated and fell when spirit took shape. Second was a story built around a movie with a haunted doll who made the room jump when her locked box exploded open. Third was a fire card being found by a Scarecrow, who jumped from his perch to reveal said card. Mike Kimble then performed with a bizarre box sealing a die within that could not be changed by shaking but was soon seen to reveal chosen number. Thomas Buckley surprised us by making pizza appear which soon vanished thereafter. Christian Tillison showed pictures of cards that a crumpled paper revealed the selection. Tony Metze confused all by staking items which revealed a number mentally to Tony Campbell. Eric Johnson invited a spirit rapper to reveal a selected number chosen by the group while he was sealed up behind doors. Russell Anderson showed his table floating around. Tony Campbell made food disappear and other magic was accomplished or elaborated on until we needed to disperse once again. We meet on the third Thursday of each month. Come join us and keep the magic happening. *John Tudor*

RING 106, NEWARK, NEW JERSEY – Slydini Pyramid Garden State Ring

Meets 2nd Wed.,8:00 p.m. at Tha Sparta Avenue Stage, 10 Sparta Ave., Sparta Township, NJ
STAN BLADEK, Secretary / E-mail: quakmagicphil@aol.com

August: Our August summer meeting was lightly attended, but the magic was very good. Sometimes some of the smaller sessions help perfect routines more than having a full house. Mike Healy gave us a rundown on the Magic Live convention, which he had attended. He also gave a glowing report on watching "The Wizard of Oz" at the Sphere.

He then proceeded to show a couple of recent purchases. He showed off "Deck Penetration" by Rob Bromley. This ingenious trick has a solid steel bolt passing through a deck of cards. Upon opening the deck, the cards are found to be solid. He then showed off his new "Mosaic" app on his iPhone. With this he can show a picture of any celebrity that an audience member calls out.

Bruce Harpster demonstrated "The 19th Hole" trick, which was originally named "Penetrospheres," invented by Jack Hughes.

This trick shows five balls of various colors surrounding a shot glass that is covered with an upside-down drinking glass. Any ball can be freely selected and it will appear in the shot glass, which is still covered by the drinking glass. Bruce then followed up with a four-ring Linking Ring routine that was very well done. He based his routine on that of Ernesto Melero.

Stan Bladek performed an original Halloween trick based on "The Escaping Block" as found in *Make* magazine. In his version, six coffin-shaped blocks, each with a Halloween symbol on it, are found inside a small casket with a spear going through them. After removing the coffins, two are chosen. They are then replaced in the casket and speared in place. Upon opening the casket lid and turning it over, only the two chosen coffin blocks fall out. The rest remain in the casket with the spear going through them.

Our club is always open to visiting magicians who may be in the area on the second Wednesday of the month. Please stop on by to say hi, see some great magic, and make some new friends.

September: Our September meeting began with some disheartening news. One of our oldest members, Manfred Losch, had passed away in August. In addition, some of our members have been having their own set of health problems, so attendance was down for our get together. Those in attendance had a captive audience with undivided attention.

Phil Schwartz brought out some of his old Adams tricks. He brought out the Triangle Mystery, which is a nickel, penny, dime trick. The old time packaging is not seen much these days. He also had Color Detection, Block Detection as well as an old "Politically Incorrect" paddle trick featuring a strip tease woman.

Dan Sylvestri told about an interesting meeting he had with Mickey Silver at Magic Live and showed off some slick coin moves. He demonstrated Daryl's Cross of India as well as showing off a beautifully made leather purse with a silk lining called "Red Ruby Rose."

Stan Bladek worked on a Halloween trick based off the Escaping Block trick. He modified the box to look like a casket, and instead of square wooden blocks, he carved out old time pine box coffins. Each one had a different character pasted onto it. Through a process of elimination, only one block remained which matched his prediction. The reveal was quite ingenious.

We are hoping for a quick return to good health for all our members, and hope that our October meeting will be representative of all Halloween has to offer in honor of Houdini's 100 years since his passing. *Stanley Bladek*

Audley Walsh/Conrad C. Bush

Meets 1st Tues. 8:00 pm, at United Presbyterian Church, 511 Ridge Road, Lyndhurst, NJ. 07071
CARL MORANO, Secretary / web site: ibmring113@yahoo.com

The small turnout allowed the group to go deep and intensive on a few topics. Ring VP, Jay Paul, ran this month's meeting and it began with a deep dive into the workings of the magic square. Related to the magic square, Mark Cahill and Tim Fortune discussed the workings of John Bannon's miracle math card effect, Spellbreaker, and performed it. Next, Tim Fortune discussed the mechanics of an imaginary die effect where two spectators toss an invisible die back and forth and announce numbers. Whoever adds and announces 50 or more first, loses the game. Mark Cahill performed an epic card routine called Up The Ante by Martin Smith. After a series of dealing piles, shuffling, cutting and other card gymnastics, Mark was able to predict which piles had red and black cards and all red and all black cards! Finally he revealed the balance of the deck to be arranged A thru K in chase order! Even card master Jay Paul was humbly impressed! Jay Paul presented a cell phone calculator routine where anyone could add random numbers to reach a six or seven digit number. When all but the last number was revealed, Jay knew exactly what the last digit would be! It was based on a very obscure mathematical principle. Next up, the king of the packet trick, Dennis McSweeney, performed one of his go-to bar magic routines. It was a story-based routine where Kings and Queens kept switching rows and locations. Carl Morano introduced a mystery packet trick he was given by Mark Cahill at a previous ring swap meet. Mark remembered it as Limited Edition by Gordon Bean and Larry Jennings. Carl was greatly impressed with it and announced the Princess Card on-steroids trick was going straight into his act! The remainder of the evening was spent sharing card routines and dissecting Jay Paul's very deceptive card switch in a spectator's hand move. *Carl Morano*

RING 115, SINGAPORE – The Great Wong Ring

Meets 15th of each month, 7:00 pm, Function Room 2, #03-01, National Library Building, 100 Victoria Street, Sigapore 188064. Website: ibmring115.org
JOHN TEO, President / Tel: +62504422, 97509017
10M Braddell Hill #01-49, Singapore 57931

IBM Singapore Ring 115's May meeting was held on Saturday 15th August 2026, in Function Room 2, Level 3, of the National Library building. Luke Tan and Axl Ching were the hosts.

The total attendance was 26 members and 1 guest. The theme for the evening was Street Magic.

The evening started with an open forum inviting members to share their experiences of street magic. This attracted sharing by Alan Kwan, Kai Emmanuel Kuah, Rob Newberry, Kogi Oberoi, Betsy Teo, James Cowan and Desmond Peh. The most common method of approaching people was to look for those who are relaxed and having casual chats. Avoid people in deep discussions or in a hurry. Confidence is quickly built with a quick snappy trick. The ways to deal with hecklers ranged from showing a strong trick that was more difficult to fathom to walking away politely and never be rude. The latter often results in the group silencing the heckler and inviting you back.

There was a short break of 5 minutes before going into performances by the members.

Desmond Peh was the first performer with a cup and coins routine. Copper silver coins appeared and disappeared. Magically his index finger penetrated the silver coin - Kung FU Coin. In the end the coins disappeared and first a small dice and last a giant dice dropped out of the cup.

Chew Liang Huat showed his oil over water using cards made by laser cutting stiff cardboard. He had two sizes, a normal size for close up and the jumbo size for stage presentations. Four cards were riveted together in one corner and cannot come apart. He showed two 2 brown (oil -O) cards and 2 blue (water - W) cards. They were in order O O W W. In a flash they were mixed O W O W. However since oil only floats on water they amazingly they reverted back to oil over water, i.e., O O W W.

Alan Kwan had a card selected and replaced in a normal deck. He asked a volunteer to select a number between 10 and 30. Number 13 was chosen and on dealing cards on the table the 13th card was the chosen card. He also explained how he used the features like narrow and wide borders on the back of the card and small and large radii cut corners.

John Teo demonstrated how he could influence the decisions made by his volunteer. Two packets of seven cards each were presented to the volunteer. The volunteer made a third packet of seven cards by freely choosing cards from either of the first 2 packets. The third packet matched the performer's prediction regarding the number of red and black cards. This was repeated two more times. In his second effect, he caused the top sheet of a Post-It note where he wrote "Your Card" to magically travel up the deck and attach to the volunteer's chosen card.

Lim Teck Guan did two very old Chinese tricks. Two separate equal length strings became one long string. A ribbon tightly clasped in his fist was released. Finally a chosen card, 6H, from a normal deck was buried in it. Firstly it appeared at the top of the deck and then at a random position in the deck chosen whilst riffling. The finale was that the whole deck had transformed to 6H.

James Cowan, brought two unusual books named "Strangely Singaporean Book" and "Celebrity Presage Alligator Vegas". He humoured the members by reading quotes out of the Singapore book. In the end a card chosen, KD, from a packet wrapped in a dollar bill ended on the chosen page in the book. He also predicted the chosen musical character from the second book.

There was another short break. Kai Emmanuel Kuah went on to celebrate the 100th death anniversary year of Harry Houdini by magically escaping from wrists tied with a rope only to be in shackles within a time chosen by a volunteer between 1 & 10 seconds. He remained shackled for only a short time since amazingly the keys to unlock them were found in the top pocket of the volunteer.

Guest LI KaiZheng, from NTU, was introduced. Teo Yu Xiang is a young member of the club and keen to learn and show his magic. He did a number of effects in quick successions: One cup and balls, climaxing in the production of 2 tennis balls too large to be inside the cup, an invisible deck routine, ten cards across, escape from shackles, and professor's nightmare. He aspires to perform in other countries like Malaysia.

Desmond Peh came back and demonstrated his refined version of showing three same length ropes of Professor';s Nightmare. He shared his personal self as an avid reader, author, a teacher and a magic tutor. He has used his talents to work with youngsters from a magical platform through the MOE. He learnt most of his magic from books and demonstrated his slick paper to money effect.

Luke Tan and Axl Chine did the 5x lucky draws. Ng Kah King closed the session by underpinning how magic can transform one's life: for example, develop tendencies of becoming an extrovert, raise self confidence and can be a source of sharing happiness. He went on to aptly describe the club as inclusive giving equal opportunity to all its members. He made a point of mutual respect for performers and members attending so good use is made of the time committed by both parties.

Formal meeting ended at 10:30 PM. Informal jam session continued. *Kogi Oberoi*

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

Ring 129 has a lot to report this month. First, at the end of August we were treated to a lecture by British magician Jamie Williams. He was very entertaining and gave us a lot of tips, including the choreography of presenting card tricks. He also had a lot of unusual items for sale.

September was Houdini month in Kansas City, per an official proclamation from the mayor of Kansas City, MO. (More on this later in the column), so our September meeting focused on Houdini. We began by watching part of a film on some of his best-known escapes, including a recording of his voice. Kelly Rusk showed us some comic books from his personal collection which featured Houdini. Duane Fields gave us a bit of Ring 129 history, reporting that the late Harry Otto, who was called the "dean of Kansas City magic," worked with Houdini. Those of us who have been with the Ring for about half a century remember Harry. Dennis Burks displayed some books on Houdini from his personal collection.

We then moved on to our quarterly contest, which determines who will qualify to compete in our annual contest for magician of the year. Phil Franklin performed a mentalism routine based on the game of Clue, but it broke down due to a mixup in the instructions he gave to the spectator. Samuel Bricker's routine was based on a lota bowl, which stood for a spittoon. Harry Schuman's routine involved the manipulation of a Losander floating table. In the voting, Samuel was chosen to advance to the annual contest.

In the open "Show Me the Magic" segment of the meeting, Steve Steiner did a gag routine with a foam-rubber camera, John Hicks performed a four-ace routine, and Adam Brown mystified us with a mentalism routine that utilized a cellphone.

Now for the most important event of the year. For the past year Dennis Burks has been heading up an effort in coordination with our local SAM Assembly to have a plaque erected to commemorate the spot in downtown Kansas City, MO (Tenth and Main Streets) where Harry Houdini first performed his trademark routine—the upside-down straitjacket escape. His efforts paid off September 9 through 11. On September 9, John Cox, perhaps the world's greatest expert on Houdini's life and career, gave a lecture at the downtown Public Library on Houdini's life, focusing on his connection with Kansas City, which most of us were not aware of. This event drew a large crowd, not just of magicians but of members of the general public.

Then, two days later, we held the actual unveiling of the plaque itself, in conjunction with SAM Assembly 38. John Cox gave a brief summary of what he discussed in more detail two days earlier, Kelly Rusk and Matt Gurley (presidents of the Ring and Assembly, respectively) followed with their remarks, including the reading of the mayor's proclamation naming September 2026 as Houdini month. This was followed by the actual unveiling of the plaque, which was financed by both the IBM and the SAM. Finally, as a fitting conclusion, our own Lance Rich performed the upside-down straitjacket escape. Thanks to our extensive publicity, in addition to a large number of magicians, over one hundred members of the general public were in attendance. It was a fitting conclusion for the seemingly endless hours of work put in by the two clubs. S*tu 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

August: Our August meeting coincided with the onset of more temperate weather in Billings, which has endured a long hot summer, including one day with a record 111 degrees! We welcomed our newest member, Jonathan Laurin, as well as Paula Baker, who sometimes comes not to perform magic but to be our most appreciative spectator and occasional volunteer.

Kent Messmer was also present, our meeting fortunately falling on one of the few days that he has off from performing magic and presenting his inflatables during the fair season in Montana. We started the meeting with some reminiscing about prior performances and unusual things that had occurred during some of them. Kent won the prize for best story when he recalled a time when he was performing at the Marlboro Ranch and a bird just happened to land on his table and sit awhile as he continued to perform his trick.

Brent Cromley brought along several books that he had recently received from Ron Bender, a retiring magician from South Dakota who had called Brent wanting to distribute them to magicians who would use them. Kent took one on escapes, and Jonathan also found a volume or two he thought might be useful.

Then it was time for magic. Jonathan started things off by performing what he most enjoys doing: a card trick. He quickly fooled the rest of

us by knowing which card would be on top of the packet of cards selected by his volunteer.

Brent ran through three tricks he plans to perform this week for a short show at CLDI, a nonprofit development organization working toward affordable housing and other projects on the South Side of Billings. These were Joshua Jay's "Jumbo Homing Cards" and "I Dream of Mindreading," and "Sorta Swiped," an effect from Big Blind Media's collection "Ultimate Self Working Card Tricks."

Closing out the magic for the evening, Tony Shandy had an interesting tale to tell about the problems involving balancing a coin on his forehead and the dangers involved if that coin happened to be embedded in his forehead with a nail. In Tony's case, the nail was there but Tony seemed to survive just fine. The trick is named "Nailed" and is from Rich Marotta.

Debbie Sherman was also on hand to treat us all to some delicious chocolate chip cookies — a great end to a fun meeting. If you're traveling through Montana sometime, give us a shout and we'll try to meet up.

September: In September, our group transitioned to a new meeting location to better accommodate members traveling from out of town as the evenings grow shorter. Patrick Branger and his wife, Casey Smith, owners of Montana Premier Entertainment—a premier provider of party supplies, inflatables, and live entertainment—generously hosted us. A major perk of the new venue is access to their impressive collection of large-scale stage apparatus.

Patrick kicked off the meeting by showcasing a newly arrived illusion: the fearsome "Jaws of Death." The group had a blast testing it for the first time. In performance, Patrick will attempt an escape while suspended upside down in a straitjacket before a burning rope snaps, unleashing two massive steel jaws with a crushing clang.

Switching gears, Kent Messmer demonstrated a far less dangerous piece of gear: a classic Busker's Pouch. The waist-mounted bag provides easy access for depositing and retrieving props during walkaround routines. Kent then took the floor to perform Nicholas Dakin's "INK-redible," featuring an eye-popping animation of moving ink across a spectator's signed card.

Brent Cromley took us back in time with two classic routines learned from old Harry Lorayne VHS tapes: "Duck and Deal" and "The Spectator Cuts the Aces." He followed these up with a demonstration of Michael Vincent's "Intuition Speller."

To close out the night, Patrick and Kent brought out a classic Mak Magic illusion, "Murder, Inc." Patrick plunged fifteen metal daggers straight through Kent's head—though fortunately, Kent's head had vanished just in time!

While our local contingent in Billings is small, we stay connected with roughly two dozen magicians across the state and are always eager to welcome new members. We remain the only active, in-person ring in Montana, though James Jones hosts a monthly S.A.M. Zoom meeting for area performers. If you're ever traveling through the Big Sky State, look us up—we'd love to session! *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

President David Freeman opened our August meeting. We had 34 in the seats with 4 guests,

Arlen Solomon with the SAM Youth Program, Colyn Gingola, a guest of Dennis Phillips and David Koenig's wife and son, Sherry and Mike.

Jacki Manna gave a happy report of her summertime shows and Greg Solomon has also been busy with his old-time medicine show. Dr. Ken Schriebman gave a glowing report about the recent Magic Live. Craig Ousterling updated the information on the January 27 Gator Gate Gathering of Close-up Magicians.

One hundred years ago this October 31st, Harry Houdini died. Club historian, Phil Schwartz, presented his 122nd Magic History Moment on Houdini, who Phil described as "living many lives, all at once." It was a history of Houdini as an escape artist, illusionist, collector, pen pal, aviator, film star, publicity expert, and exposer of spiritualists & mediums.

At the end of Phil's talk, Greg Solomon, aka Professor Mortimer, presented him with a trophy celebrating his decades of magic history presentations at our club meetings. The trophy is in appreciation for all the time and effort Phil has put forth in preparing and delivering an incredible 122 college level lectures on Magic History which have included showing rare props, books, posters, and ephemera.

The monthly show opened with Dennis Phillips wiggling out of a strait jacket. He first explained how strait jackets were developed and used and he was buckled in tightly by Tom Black and Terry Ward. Phillips explained that it is impossible to escape without effort and a practical step-by-step plan. He got his arms over his head, but he had to roll on the floor. Getting up, he got the strap between his legs loose and

then the neck strap. Finally, using the leverage of the arms strap under his foot, he was able to shed the jacket like a snake shedding its skin.

Bob Swaddling did a delightful Coin in the Bottle and back out again. The ingenious method was his own creation and will fool anyone who knows the classic method. He generously showed us how he created the needed gimmick. Mike Nigrini had a clever collection of picture cards with bunnies and three magician's photo cards. A volunteer made a series of choices and number of cards chosen. It was the number that opened the combination lock on a small box that was also the number on a card inside the box.

Paul Q showed an hourglass with orange sand and a stack of index cards with famous movie stars and characters. An index card was chosen and Paul turned over the hourglass and tried to guess the movie character. Just as the sand ran out, he got the thought "Darth Vader" and at the same time, inside the upper part of the hourglass, was amazingly a small bust of Darth Vader. Eric Geyer had a real card mystery. He had an assistant divide the pack and mix both packs in an up and down slop shuffle. Then they pulled off a pile of cards and Eric opened a piece of paper that predicted the number of cards face down and then the number of red cards and he seemed to be wrong until he fully opened the paper, and he was correct after all!

Dan Stapelton performed his own improved version of Max Maven's "Kurotsuke". Five white stones and one black stone are placed in a paper sack, and six spectators are asked to secretly select a stone. They are brought up front, and Dan slowly eliminates the spectators with the white stones and reveals who has the black stone. Greg Solomon did a cute comedy bit about forgetting his wallet in the wash and everything shrunk. He played the "rock-paper-scissors" game with a spectator and predicted the winner and had a sword that penetrated a turning clock hand.

Finally, Dr. Ken Schriebman had a matrix of all the cards and inserts in a fresh deck of cards, 56 in total which were pasted backside out on an upright card. From another deck, a card was chosen by a volunteer. The matrix was seen to be in sections and disassembled and reversed and there was one card-sized hole in the face-out cards. It was the selected card. When the volunteer looked through the deck, the card was missing and it was also the missing card in the matrix. But that was not all! The missing card was found back in the empty box. *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

Eight people attended our August 2026 meeting. Attendees included: Steve E., Lamont M., Curt M., Frank P., Mitchell L., Joe J., Juan F., and Dan M.

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 not a set end time or target end time for the meetings and people filter in and out as they are able.

The group sessioned throughout the evening of our August meeting. Card effects were the order of the evening and there were too many to track as the group sessioned and discussed effects and techniques for over three hours. A small sampling follows. Steve demonstrated the bluff shift by Chris Kenner, the Zarrow addition, and a Steve Mayhew effect. He also demonstrated an effect of his own which was dubbed The Steve-a-rino Card Finder 5000, at least for the evening. Lamont and Juan traded various card effects, and Juan was working on the push through shuffle and demonstrated a poker deal. Dan demonstrated several effects including a quadruple production of cards. That led to a discussion at that end of the table of the countdown force and as a part of that, Frank demonstrated the Fogel 3-card prediction.

There were numerous other discussions and as usual smaller groups formed and reformed through the evening as folks discussed magic over pizza.

The next meeting will be Monday, July 21st, 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

With ten members and a few guests – including two first-time guests – we started the evening with our monthly Teach-In hosted by our own Vice-President and renowned comedy magician, Geoff Williams. Geoff just returned from a stellar appearance at the TAOM, and he leaves this week for the Magic at the Beach convention. He shared his own multiple location effect (Dynamite 4, from his "Stuff That Violates My Parole" lecture notes) which has

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

just four cards selected and found in a fun and well-built sequence that ends with the deck vanishing. This was a great routine to learn!

Going to "The Classics" for the theme, Alan Zunich brought in a Strat-O-Spheres that he purchased in 1980, and he performed Roy Kissell's routine which was a delightful change from the jaded stoplight construction so many magicians use. Lowell Tauszik did an effect using alphabet cards with the help of Matt Williamson to get a mental image as Lowell performed A-B-See by Spidey. It was back to a children's classic as Ken Spanola had some peanut butter and jelly jars swapping places as he had done for many kids shows over the years.

One of our first-timers, Bob Bader, did a great presentation of Professor's Nightmare – sharing the way he has been creatively doing it for years. Dai Vernon made two appearances on this "classics" night; first, Matt Williamson did his Twisting the Aces as a standup presentation which looked perfect. Our resident electronic/app guru, Rick Casale, used two sponge balls for a quick routine and taught his retention vanish (but no electronic wizardry this month). Rudy Hernandez had a borrowed ring transfer from a cord to a magic wand (and he taught us), and then a newer trick with four colored envelopes for a miraculous trick called Bankable by Trick-Trick Boom.

Going back to the 1940s, Geoff Williams had updated Rufus Steele's Hocus Pocus Miss Jones for a great card revelation. Joe Dobson had a card signed by Alan, as he did Solid Gold by Paul Richardson. Since Bob Klase missed August's meeting, he called us to do one phase of a three-phase card effect designed for phoning it in. Tom Vorjohan turned back to Vernon for an Emotional Reaction with Barbara Zunich. Our other first-time guest, Allen Nye, performed a great ESP version of "Will the Cards Match?" with a captivating story about testing Dr. Rhine conducted. To conclude the performances, Frank Velasco did a Danny DaOrtiz trick that Frank reverse engineered after seeing it while eating in the food court at the Orleans with Danny during Magic Live. *Tom Vorjohan*

ING 179, BALTIMORE, MARYLAND – George Dency Ring

Meets 2nd. Thu., 7:30pm at Chestnut Ridge Church, 1010 Saters Lane, Timonium, MD 21093

ANDY LONDON, President / Email: alondon@concast.net

The joint meeting of IBM Ring 179 and SAM Assembly 6 took place on August 13, 2026 at the Chestnut Ridge Church in Timonium, MD. There were 21 members attending, and 3 guests.

Announcements: Dave Thomen announced the November 12, 2026 meeting's originality contest, and gave examples of what qualifies as originality, and announced the annual holiday party will be on Dec. 10, 2026. Dave also announced a plan to encourage attendance at annual conventions. Using proceeds from a recent club fundraiser, a $50 reward will be granted to members who attend either the 2027 SAM convention in Atlantic City, NJ, or the 2027 IBM convention in Las Vegas.

Teach a Trick - Andy London played two social media videos where a non-card and card trick were taught.

Performances: The theme was Halloween magic.

Matt Jacobs - did a Nathan Kranzo trick. Two volunteers selected 2 different cards, and the deck is placed into the card box. The first selected card rises out of the card box. The second selected card is also found, through a different method.

Howard Katz - He threaded a metal nut on a metal bolt, and placed them standing up on a table mat. A cup was placed over both the nut and the bolt. Howard made a magical gesture, and a few seconds later removed the cup, and the nut was magically removed from the bolt.

Ken Caplan - (1) Did a necklace and ring routine where a ring is magically attached to a necklace. (2) Made a chopstick go through a dollar bill.

Michael Worsham - performed Houdini's Silent Prediction: a volunteer selects a card from an ordinary deck, and placed back in the middle of the deck. A packet of business-sized cards with Harry Houdini's face is shown, and the top card in the packet is signed by the volunteer. The packet of Houdini cards with the signed card on top is placed right on top of the regular deck of cards, with the signed Houdini card facing down towards the regular deck. Houdini finds the selected card, as revealed when the signed Houdini card is removed to show that the selected card is in Houdini's suit pocket.

Joe Pachino - Joe deals 4 cards face up to become 4 piles. A volunteer calls out red or black for the rest of the cards, as Joe deals each card on to one of the 4 piles. The volunteer's choices are found to be all correct.

Mary Pomykala - told a story with an accompanying rope trick.

Jared Raitzyk - did a trick with 2 decks of cards. A volunteer picks one deck and shuffles it. The volunteer picks a card, and Jared deals down part of the deck, and eventually finds the chosen card.

Pete Pridanonda - showed 3 cards with mystery doors. A zombie is behind one door. After turning and showing the cards, eventually one

door is shown to have a group of zombies.

Richard Kitterman - Peanut M&Ms are used as marbles. The peanuts are covered with bowls. The peanuts magically move one at a time from one bowl to another bowl until all 4 peanuts have moved from one bowl to another.

Dennis Hasson - did a Dan Harlan trick called "Hold It, Buster!" using jumbo cards with 2s and Kings/court cards on them. The 2s and Kings change place and are not where they are supposed to be.

Paul Belanger - Used a toy bunny and a packet of cards. A volunteer selects a card, which is returned to the packet. Cards are spread face down on a table. A toy bunny is wound up, and moves over the cards until it stops on the selected card.

Joe Bruno - Joe first gave a tip about a substance called Sure Kwik for your fingers to give you a better grip. Joe then did a poker demonstration. He repeatedly dealt 5 cards, showing different poker hands, like a straight, flush, full house, 4 of a kind, straight flush, and royal flush.

Mike Rose - displayed a tooth-shaped box with pins inside. Then he stuck one of the pins through his hand without any blood.

Dave Thomen - talked about older magic, and handed out a sheet of tips reprinted from Tarbell Volume 5. Then he did an eye popper illusion trick with a spoon to make it look like he had removed his eyeball. Next Dave did a spoon bending trick. Finally, he did a demonstration of rope through body.

The meeting ended with a raffle with magic door prizes donated by members or from magic collections. *Michael Worsham*

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

The August 11 Jamie Williams lecture could be summed up in just one word: Predictions, games, fun, and more. Even though Jamie is from London, UK, and seemingly spoke English, it was with a British accent. Once we got Jamie to remove the rocks from his mouth, everything was fine. Great magic and great prices. Boarding Call and Sticker Kicker were two outstanding tricks amazing Ring 194 members. Jamie told how he was a London policeman for many years. Jamie earlier lived in Windsor (not the castle).

September Minutes: So much going on for Ring 194. Reports included the October Ring Shows to raise money for the Ring's lectures, Dean's report, finishing the sales of the Cook Books, teach a trick tonight, and the lecture on Erdnase. Tonight was Card Magic Night! Guests included Judy Smith and George Lassiter. Bill Mullins provided more information on the history of Erdnase to fill another book on Erdnase. Bill has been collecting books and information on Erdnase for several years including an original copy of Erdnase's 1902 The Expert at the Card Table. Bill gave his views of who was Erdnase and the plagiarism of Erdnase's book from 1902 to 2026. When asked about the Erdnase Color Change, Bill explained it to the adoring crowd. Patrick, in third person, counted over fifty books and pamphlets. Older members recalled having a copy of the book in their libraries when they started doing card tricks. Lots of preparation for the lecture.

Then came Trace Cooper's teach a trick using ropes instead of cards. Trace did two cut and restored rope tricks named Mongolian Single and Mongolian Double Knots leading into the Professor's Nightmare. Very good. Then came the cards. Brett Boyer performed a pick a card with Russell Davis naming the card within 10 seconds. Evan Tate did a card matching trick. Evan also rolled six dice twice and both times the dice added to 18. The dice were not loaded and not Evan's. Real magic! VP Matt Growden found the selected card twice, once doing it the hard way and once doing it the stupid way. Erdnase performed one of his card tricks. Patrick Brunson performed a card trick based on his teach a trick from last month. Kevin O'Connell performed a card trick using Jack Baldwin as the picker of a card. David Thompson performed a card finding trick using Jared Cassidy. Deano (aka Dean Carter) mixed cards and found them. Russell Davis did two card tricks then cheated both Matt and Evan by spinning Evan 11 times to find Matt's Jack of Clubs. Drivers attending were Kenneth Jordan and Michael Brunson. *Patrick Brunson*

RING 199, RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA – Lee & Snavely Ring

Meets 1st Sat. of month, United Church, 820 E. Williams St., Apex. NC
DAN HARLAN, Secretary
E-mail: contact@danharlanmagic.com
Website: www.raleighmagicclub.org

SEPTEMBER 2026: You're still here? Waiting for me? How kind of you. And incredibly patient, too. It's been many months, but now we're reunited, and it feels so good. Almost as good as the time Josh had some jokers (from the audience AND the deck) help him reunite some cards. Then, Gale Molovinski vanished his cards (and their case) in a box built for just such

a case. And remember when Tucker Goodman (using pennies with emoji stickers) lost all his cents to predict a happy poo before Pat Walker produced a coin with a pencil and Paul K changed discs from red and blue to green and yellow? Yeah, good times. Nearly as good as the time Justin Witt un-colored a coloring book to reuse it and Bhavish Malkani managed to get a red deck to change to blue while Marc Seelinger pushed a pencil through a fancy frame without harming the glass. Yeah, we had crazy fun, didn't we? Crazy, like when Bob Crane made rubber bands melt through one another and Cesar Vega withdrew cash directly from his bank card while Sean MacBain told you what word you were thinking of and Russ Condrey won a game of Red vs. Black by exactly the number he said he would. Wild times! It was as wild as the time that Mohit Bajaj asked us to keep track of the Queen of Hearts but it kept changing places with a Four of Spades and Cesar Vega treated us to "construction site conjuring" with carpenter pencils. We'll never forget that.

And, can we ever forget when everybody performed the same trick in different ways and Dan Harlan acted like a schizophrenic motivational speaker at a kids' sleepover? Life-changing, right? And how about when "Pastor" Noah performed an impromptu sermon? Or the time Tony Thomas took on the two unequal ropes and Chloe Glaser had a Nightmare for the first time. What about Josh's lesson on the struggles of sharing phone charger cords with siblings? Neat. And wasn't it great when Paul Syros learned a new trick and Russ Condrey invented a substitute-teaching project for kids? Plus, Bob Crane showed us how to fix a hardware store mistake. Measure once, cut once, magic once! Then, we learned about risk stratification from Mohit Bajaj and Tim Dumas enchanted us with Fairy Godmother mice collars straight out of Cinderella. Ahh, memories. To be continued…

Dan Harlan

RING 205, LIMA/FINDLAY, OHIO – Northwestern Ohio Magicians Association (NOMA)

Meets last Sun. of the month at Mike Grubbs's home in Findlay.
GENE CRAFT, Secretary, 5038 Pheasant St., Elida, OH 45807
E-mail: Ecraft@woh.rr.com
Web site: www.angelfire.com/oh/ring205

Ring 205 met at Mike's home on August 30, 2026. Gary Friedrich opened the meeting at 7:00 pm. Several different lectures around the area were discussed. Also we had a big discussion concerning 3-D printing and its use in magic.

Reminder to everyone that our annual banquet and installation of officers is October 25, Sunday. Social hour 5:30, meal 6:30, installation of officers and magic to follow meal. Please pay Doug Ferguson $20 for each meal and $20 for club dues. Call Doug: (843) 478-0558. Banquet is at Main Events Room, 314 N. Main St., Findlay.

October is Magic Month. Roberta suggested we do some education program for magic hobby at the Findlay Library. She will follow up on this suggestion. Doug Ferguson gave the treasurer's report.

Gene Craft used a household cleaner to freshen up his deck of cards. Surprising to everyone it vanished all the faces and backs of each card. Mike Grubbs used a series of cards to spell off "Match Them For Us Now". When he revealed both stacks all the cards matched.

Roberta Howard presented a book titled "Houdini's Library". From the pages of this book she was able to share several stories about Harry Houdini and his love for reading and saving books. Doug Ferguson lectured on a unique card routine.

Gary Friedrich presented the evening show. He began with a dollar bill manipulation and then a card box vanish. He continued with several card manipulations and a floating dollar bill. He concluded his show with a BANG! Eddy Grubbs was also present. We enjoyed the magic for the evening and concluded with some social time around the snack bar. *Gene Craft*

RING 210, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN – Duke Stern Ring

Meets 2nd Wed. each month 7:00pm at the Plymouth Community Arts Council, 774 Sheldon Rd., Plymouth, MI 48170
RANDY A. SMITH, Secretary
Web site: www.aamagic.org

This month our meeting kicked off the club's new Literary Challenge, encouraging members to dig into old magic books and magazines, learn something they haven't performed before, and bring it to a meeting. Each performance during September through December earns an entry in a drawing for a magic prop worth at least $100, to be awarded at the January meeting. The first meeting produced a good crop of entries. Lincoln Stone demonstrated an escape from Abbott's Magic Collection, Volume 17: Escape Routines. George Honer presented Joshua Jay's Card Ruler, showing how a deck of cards can double as a surprisingly useful measuring device. Robert Langefeld performed a Miser's Dream routine, and Ryan Hoffman reached all the way back to an 1873 source for the classic "Piano Trick." Bob Goodwin presented a mathematical mentalism effect from M-U-M, and Karl Rabe performed Greg Eanes' "String Along Monte" from a December 2013 issue of The Linking Ring, ending by presenting his volunteer with a rather

unusual "diamond necklace," Karl's unique twist on the effect.

Earlier, Dan Jones performed Card Warp and shared a story about performing it for a visiting Japanese Little League team, prompting a discussion about how strong visual magic can transcend language barriers. The club welcomed guests Kiran and Lekha Mutyala from Farmington Hills, and Sean Howell announced that the next Parlor Show is set for October 24, with one or two additional performers still being sought. Karl Rabe gave members a tour of the newly revamped AAMC website and its members-only features, including the calendar, newsletter archive, and collection of past articles. The club also celebrated receiving a national award at the recent I.B.M. convention and noted that membership continues to grow. Mike Thornton rounded out the educational portion with a presentation built around the alphabet, including ideas for both mentalism and children's entertainment. *Karl Rabe*

RING 217, LUBBOCK, TEXAS – West Texas Wizards

Meets 2nd Mon., 7:30 pm, Carillon Club House, 1717 Norfolk Ave.
GEORGE E. CORBIN, Ring Contact, 1717 Norfolk Ave., Lubbock, TX
(806) 281-6265 / Email: grgcorbin@aol.com

The September, 2026 Lubbock Magic Club meeting was one of the best club meetings I've attended in a long time. While our normal club meeting date is for the first Monday of each month, we met the next day on Tuesday, September 8, instead, due to the conflict with the annual Texas Association of Magicians Convention over Labor Day Weekend.

Our meeting was kicked off by president Mark Umstot, who gave a detailed report of his adventure in Houston for the TAOM convention. He spoke highly of the talent, particularly of Geoff Williams, whose comedic presentations were unparalleled. Mark also attended the TAOM Board Meeting, which is always at 4 PM on Friday of every TAOM. It was there that he pitched the LMC's bid for a TAOM convention in Lubbock in 2028, but we were outdone by a last-minute bid from the SAM Assembly 206 in Austin for a 2028 convention in Georgetown. Following the bid, however, several board members came to Mark and inquired about a future date for Lubbock. This gives the Lubbock Magic Club more time to prepare through membership growth and fundraising.

Next, LMC secretary Bronson Chadwick (yours truly) spoke briefly about the adoption of the constitution and bylaws for the club, a new visitor information form, and other paperwork to help streamline our communications and record keeping. We also discussed our various goals for LMC growth. Business was kept brief, as we try to keep our business meeting separate from the general club meeting.

Our September meeting was centered around 50% close-up card tricks, along with other effects with special printed jumbo cards by Jerry Koch, dice, coins, and a revolutionary coloring book routine by Evan Farrar. In this meeting I saw more magic in our 90-minute session than I've seen in a single magic club meeting, possibly ever, in my thirty years of going to magic club meetings!

Our club meeting was attended by a total of seven people, including first-time guest Sevil, a master of card and close-up magic from Haiti. Sevil is a freshman at Texas Tech University down the street from our meeting location. Also from TTU fame was Jerry Koch, a sociology instructor who uses magic in the classroom.

Bronson Chadwick

RING 219, LAFAYETTE, INDIANA – Bob Hurt/Ron London Ring

1st Thu., 7:00pm, Faith Community Center, Lafayette, IN
SCOTT STARKEY, President

We jumped straight into performances at our September meeting. Bob began our evening of performances by having us consider how to flip something over. One by one, with just a twist of a packet of cards, the four aces flipped over.

Bob then shared a story with just four cards. He showed two twin brothers, their two twin wives, and the shenanigans they got into with two redheads and two hotheads! He only ever had four cards in his hand, but he changed them to whatever he needed to tell the story.

Without touching the cards, Bob caused two thought of cards to trade places. Going further than that, he proved it could have only been those two thought of cards as the rest of the cards are blank.

People used to be paid in salt, which is how we get the term salary. Bob showed us how to double our salary. He poured some salt into a thimble, covered it with another thimble, and after a magic incantation he separated the thimbles to show twice the amount of salt. He closed the thimbles back up and then produced water from them!

Jordyn had 8 objects placed on the table before her to represent contestants of the annual Hunger Games. After eliminating all but one of the contestants, she revealed her prediction which matched the audience's selected winner!

Jordyn then showed off her ability to track shuffles - blindfolded. She had two cards selected, returned, and mixed thoroughly. From sound alone, she knew one card was 7th from the top and the identity of the other card!

John Whitlock had a volunteer pick a card by thinking of a number and looking at the card at that position. The cards were mixed and John then dealt the cards, some face up and some face down, until the volunteer said stop. Where the volunteer called stop was their card!

Jordyn had a volunteer think of a card and remove that many cards. Jordyn then pulled a card from the pack to predict what the volunteer had selected and it matched perfectly!

Jon Sexson had a card selected and instructed the volunteer to return it to the middle of the pack. Just by feeling the deck he knew that the volunteer got pretty close and that the card was in the 27th spot. The cards were dealt and sure enough it was in the 27th spot!

John Whitlock placed a prediction card on the table. He then had the pack of cards dealt into two piles. One pile determined the card's suit and the other determined its value. His prediction was spot on!

Benji shared a time he was swindled in Virginia City. Three blank cards and one ace were shown. Every time Benji was asked where the ace was, he was wrong and found one of the blank cards. When the question was posed to the audience, the three blank cards were shown to be aces. *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.se.us

George, Harold, Zach, Jamison, Central and Gary all were there by 6:30 p.m., which began picking Harold's mind on his Bachelor/ Bachelorette Party Gigs as to his how, what, who and where. Jamison presented Shooting Bee Bee into nostril out the eye (Wes Baker) plus Dan Sperry's Toss Out Tarot Deck. Central got in two runs of his "rod trick" for Magic at the Beach Competition and the Old Trolley Theatre Show plus the cucumber in the bag too. Of course, much feedback was given for these four effects. Harold preached Mnemonica virtues with major foolers as we took a moment for Juan Tamariz. Zack also threw support via examples of jazzing. George swayed to becoming a convert but his main gig is kiddie audience so he'll stick with a few Si Stebbins effects. Also, the trick to making Jamison's fancy Kirin Dice 2.0 by Classicho box worked was figured out too. Good feel all around. October Meeting time was not decided but with the upcoming Magic at the Beach, Old Trolley Show and the October Lecture it makes sense. We are busy.

George Younts

RING 236, CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS – Don & Dorothy Schultz Ring

Meets 3rd Wed., 7:00pm, (except Nov. and Dec.) at The Salvation Army, 2212 N. Market St., Champaign, IL 61820 (and Zoom).
KEN BARHAM, Secretary
2318 Winchester Dr., Champaign, IL 61821 / (217) 841-5616
E-mail: Kebram@aol.com

Bill Pierce entertained us with a demonstration of one handed Boomerang Card flinging while we waited to start. The meeting began with discussion of recent and upcoming online meetings and lectures. Bill Pierce and Andy Anderson performed a club show for the Salvation Army and everyone had a great time. Thanks guys for representing at the show.

CIMA will be hosting a lecture by Nathan Kranzo on Friday October 23rd at 7:00 PM at the home of Chris Bontjes. The cost is $25. Add it to your calendar now.

CIMA will have a table at the Urbana Farmers Market. Please come promote the club. We will be getting started at 9:00 AM.

Chris Bontjes opened the meeting by passing around a deck of extra-large Jumbo Cards he found at a Ben Franklin store. These were roughly 3-4x the size of a regular jumbo deck and of pretty good quality. Dave Wernick showed us his new set of TCC Color Changing Knives, prompting discussion of different sets we have all had over the years.

Ken Barham opened the Magic with Split Focus and Quarter through the hand to Jumbo Quarter. Dave Wernick demonstrated his color changing knives. Chris Bontjes showed us his Charming Chinese Challenge, Hesham Hassan performed his Coins Across, Matrix with a mat penetration and prompted a quick discussion on Click Passes. Bill Pierce closed us out with Card Math, Dial X, a Ring Chain Escape and Five Cards to Pocket.

The next meeting will be Wed September 16th at 7:00 PM at the Salvation Army on North Market St in Champaign. The topic will be Magic with a Box but anything you want to bring is ok with us. Come early and meet us at Manzella's Italian Patio. I try to get there around 5:00.

See ya at the meeting, *Ken Barham*

RING 243, CANTON, OHIO – Roth-Mills Ring

Meets the last Wednesday of each month (except December) at Mama Guzzardi's Italian Restaurant (temporary site) 1107 N. Main St. North Canton, Ohio 44720
RANDY WEIDENHAMER, Secretary / (330) 933-8787
E-Mail: randy.weidenhamer@sbcglobal.ne

The August meeting was held at Grace United Methodist Church. 15 members and 1 guest were present. 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. Treasurer's report was read by Mike Salvino, Treasurer. All reports were approved as read.

Our Annual Magic Banquet in November was discussed. The postcards announcing the banquet were addressed, stamped and sent out. Randy Weidenhamer announced his retirement from the secretary's position after thirty-eight years due to health issues. He sure will be missed. It was also announced that the Cleveland club Ring 23 is having their annual flea market November 7 from 11-3. Canton Club member John Mayer has started an online magic store, just type in MMP Magic. Instead of the members performing magic, we had Nathan Kranzo come and do a lecture. Nathan is very clever and has invented some very practical effects. I especially liked his Jack repetition and coins through silk. *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

The First Wednesday in September meeting was Teach-A-Trick and Practice in front of Magicians night. Many participants shared their skills to various extents and all had a great time. Congratulations to Bobby Berosini, who was given a tribute plaque and signed the Harry Houdini Scroll for Excellence in Showmanship, Stage Presence and Presentation.

On September 10th the Fantasma Ring 257 Las Vegas had member magicians go to the Sneakers Ball for the Boys/Girls Club of Southern Nevada. Everyone (Spectator and Magician alike) had a great time and the food was fantastic. The Ring also donated a great deal of Disney Magic items provided by Fantasma Magic. Our next October Meeting will have a lecture by Magician and Psychologist Richard Nongard. *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, Secetary / (321) 945-7500
E-mail: rogerreid1114@gmail.com / Website: www.Ring 258.com

We are awaiting confirmation that Scott Humston will lecture for us at our Sept. meeting. In case that does not work out the theme for the Sept. meeting will be Comedy Magic. Already confirmed, we will have a lecture by Dan Sperry at our Oct. meeting. That lecture will be FREE to members and magicians from other Magic Rings, Assemblies and clubs.

President Andy Rohweder has been looking into restaurants where we might hold our Holiday Party. Under consideration are That 716 Pizza Joint and Ski Beach Restaurant. Andy fielded many questions and will return to the restaurant for the answers.

V.P. David Ginsburg brought up the Performing Arts Center at the new South Marion High School as a possible avenue to attract new younger magicians. The Villages High School has similar programs. But a number of members already connected with the school system discussed the security issues that make it nearly impossible to work with students. Coni Solomon suggested that Summer Magic Camp might be a better avenue to new members.

The after-meeting Magic Theme for the evening was Table and/or Walk Around Magic. Sandy Schwartz led off with card effects Two Detectives and Reappearing Card. Regina Schiraldi showed Color Changing Scarves and Bent Coins. David Lyons did Card to Wallet and Color Changing Oriental Coin. Roger Reid performed Lightning Loops, Hopping Half/Sun & Moon and Card Silk. Andy Rohweder made a Coin Penetrate Through a Deck of Cards. George Drake produced Silks from an Empty Magic Box and Niagara Falls with an Electric Deck. Greg Solomon had gags with Who Sucks, Eggcellent and Dice Manipulations. David Ginsburg turned a Coin into a Nun and created Frogs from Nowhere. Jack Drawec closed the show with Ring on Chain. Before the group left for the evening Andy Rohweder asked the members to critique his handling of Dan Harlan's reworked version of Professor's Nightmare. It was done beautifully with new methodology!

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 colour-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 to 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

ING 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 numbers were again a bit low. I was joined by Chris Donohue, Leonil Pepingco and Kieran Taylor.

We started with some sad news. Joe McGrail-Bateup was a member of our club and he had suddenly passed away last month. He was a very colourful character, the local Town Crier, and very loud. Literally: he had recently been recognised by Guinness World Records as the world's loudest voice. We could have had a minute's silence in his honour, but he would have preferred a lot of noise instead.

Joe had introduced Pepi to this club, so Pepi showed us a trick that he had taught to Joe. A spectator selected and signed a card, that was lost in the deck. The spectator spread the deck on the floor. The magician waved his foot over the cards, then stepped on them. Then he removed his shoe - inside was the signed selection! A very good effect. This was Stomp by Adam Rose.

I did a bunch of things, starting with a card trick. A spectator held the deck under the table, cut it, then took a card and put it in his pocket without looking at it. Then cut the cards again. The magician took the cards under the table and said he could partly identify cards by touch. "This feels like a red card", and took out a red card. "This feels like a spade", etc. After a few of these the spectator was asked to touch the card in their pocket so the magician could determine the card using the spectator's touch and the magician's telepathy. And the magician successfully named the card. This was Touch and Telepathy by Ramon Rioboo.

I continued with something a lot more elaborate. This was a real life version of Cluedo (Clue), with just 3 suspects, 3 weapons and 3 rooms. Initially the spectators selected a random suspect, weapon and room (genuine free choices) that were not shown but put aside for later. Then three spectators stood up, each taking a name badge, room and weapon. With the magician's back turned the spectators secretly decided who would be the murderer and swapped their items around. Eventually the murderer was left with, for example, Miss Scarlett, kitchen and candlestick. Then the rooms and weapons were put away. The magician then turned back and, after some fun questioning and byplay, correctly solved the crime. Then the cards that were earlier selected were shown - they also matched the crime! This was my slightly streamlined version of Cluedo by Gabriel Werlen.

I followed this with a similar but much simpler presentation, that was totally impromptu. Again there were 3 people standing in a row, each with a personal item (for example, a wallet, a pen, a credit card). One of these would be the murder weapon. With the magician's back turned, the spectators freely swapped their items, one person was randomly chosen as the murderer and there was some final swapping of items. The spectators then concealed the items behind their backs. The magician then turned back and managed to identify the murderer and the weapon. This was Dracula, again by Gabriel Werlen.

Next was a rope trick. This was a rope through body, with the 2 spectators holding the ends of a rope with the magician in the middle. The spectators pulled on the rope and it passed straight through the magician. This was Hang 'em High by Bob Sheets.

I got back to the card tricks with Double Vision by Simon Aronson. The spectators shuffled the deck, then the magician wrote a prediction, discarded it, and wrote a new prediction. Then 2 spectators selected cards in a very fair manner. One card that was almost selected was shown to match the discarded prediction. The 2 selected cards did indeed match the final prediction.

Chris then did a fun one with 3 coloured turtles and a small box. With the magician's back turned, a spectator put one of the turtles in the box. The magician was able to identify the chosen turtle. A rather different type of 3 shell game. Or a case of turtle recall. Okay, enough of the bad jokes, this was Turtle Trio by Sukeyasu Hirata.

Pepi had a question about the Mercury Card Fold, as he had never been able to do it comfortably or reliably. Kieran showed us his method,

where the fold was done in the action of handing the deck to a spectator. Pepi tried it, and it totally worked for him! So Pepi was very happy to have conquered this sleight.

Next meeting is on 17 September. This year is the hundredth anniversary of Houdini's death, so the theme for the meeting will be Escapes.

Peter Foster

RING 287, PENSACOLA, FLORIDA – Gulf Coast Magicians Guild

3rd Thu., each month 6:45 pm at the Bayview Senior Center
Web site: gulfcoastmagiciansguild.com
ZACHARY READY, Secretary / (865) 719-8357
E-mail: deusso88@gmail.com

We had 18 members and guests present for our August meeting. We had a few members who missed the meeting due to illness, home repair projects, doing a show, and forgetfulness. We trust everyone is feeling better, their shows went well and the needed repairs were finished.

The business portion of the meeting lasted about 3 minutes, where we discussed our upcoming public show and Jamie Williamson's lecture this past Saturday.

We then turned the floor over to one of our guests, Adiline Lyons (and her dad, Josh). Adiline has created and is making a new version of the magician's coloring book. It works like the traditional coloring book; but hers is spiral bound and the cover of it can be personalized with the name of the magician and his or her photo. I saw that Adiline made a few sales (including me). It turns out her dad, Josh, has had a lifelong interest in magic. We may have a new member in the making.

Then we did something different. I talked about a con game called Pigeon Drop. The criminals who work the Pigeon Drop use lying, cheating, deception and props to make the scam work. Sounds like magicians doing a trick. Bruce showed the various props used in it, that he had obtained over his years in law enforcement.

Next it was time for our raffle. There were about 25 tricks, books and props on the table. One of our new members, Fred Lopez, seemed to do very well, winning a good number of things. As always, thanks to all for buying all those raffle tickets.

After a short break, it was time for magic. The theme was Paper Magic. Those performing were Geordan, Bill M, Beau and Bruce. We saw some great magic. Then it was time for other magic. Those performing were John Jr, Perry, Bruce, Rob, Ara Jones (Tom Jones' daughter), Tom, Uwe, Phil and Beau. Again, we saw some really great magic.

After Rob performed, he gave us a report on Magic Live. Thanks Rob! If you missed this meeting, you really did miss a lot!

Zachary Ready, courtesy of Bruce

RING 313, ORANGE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA – The John Fedko Ring

Meets last Tues. of the month, Irvine Valley Water District,
15600 Sand Canyon Ave., Irvine.,
ALAN HANSON, Secretary
Email: AlanHanson15@gmail.com
Web site: www.ring313.org

This month's program featured a presentation by career comedy magician, maestro Robert Baxt. Robert introduced himself as a full-time entertainer performing magic shows for more than 35 years. His magic supports a wife, a thirteen year old son, a house in Los Angeles, and a retirement account. Career success results from Baxt performing whenever and wherever he is asked including many repeat engagements and includes many referrals from happy customers.

Baxt showed us a typical 45 minute show using time between effects to demonstrate the methods he uses and illustrate the show's performance architecture (the reasons for the order and how it affects the audience's engagement with him).

An on stage engagement example was a bright yellow and black sign with both his name and large QR code which links to a Google Testimonial page. Internet social engagement is part of his success formula.

Baxt opens with the newspaper tear. This highly visual effect establishes his credentials as a magician.

Professor's Nightmare is performed with a heartwarming family story line making him more relatable to his audience.

His key is to be personal in his storytelling. In a variation of the eight items in a circle with a three item on ramp where any random number choice is predetermined, he uses a story about his 13 year old son who is a superhero fan. No matter which number the audience selects the final spot is Thor. Baxt then reverses the bag which says, "You Will Choose Thor." Reaching into the bag and retrieves Thor's hammer, a Halloween prop.

Next, a volunteer participates in Baxt's version of the old cigarette ash on the palm bit with a "Voodoo" premise as Baxt elicits positive responses regarding the "feeling it" as he uses a marker on a crude picture of a hand just drawn and shown to the audience. In a climax, he thrusts the marker right through the center of the "palm." Again asking about the feelings, the volunteer then opens their closed fists to reveal the "black Voodoo spot."

Baxt uses another volunteer for a hilarious

comedy bit involving a light and siren device billed a lie detector (under his control of course). Then on to a Miser's Dream performance if performing for young people or a variation of Cards Across using Himber Wallets and paper money for similar effect with adults. (Baxt finds that most audiences make no personal connection with card tricks.)

Baxt continues with a Book Reading from a free choice of six popular titles. He ends his performance set with a clever variation of an Egg Bag using a familiar purple velvet Crown Royal liquor bag and a Tylenol bottle whose validating pill rattling sound reaffirms its appearance and disappearance as needed.

The logic behind Robert Baxt's seven item 45 minute performance set: 1) Big visual establishment as magic person, 2) Personal story creates bonding, 3) Mind Reader with the 1-15 selection, 4) Comedic chops using audience members, 5) Mysterious appearance in hands of audience member, 6) Mentalist with the Book Reading, and 7) Final audience connection with "Crown Royal" Egg Bag "Field Sobriety Test" routine ending with a real bottle appearing in the trademark purple bag.

Many of the props required to perform his show are available for purchase. *Alan Hanson*

RING 324, MIDDLETOWN, OHIO – Middletown Magic

Meets 1st. Fri. 7:00 pm, Tytus Avenue First Church of God, 3300 Tytus Ave., Middletown, Ohio 45042
LARRY HOLLINGER, Secretary
4515 Northglen Court, Englewood, OH 45322 / (937) 836-4359
E-mail: IBMRing324@aol.com

Secretary Larry Hollinger officially welcomed all 10 of us Friday, September 4th. Car trouble kept our President, Vice President and Treasurer from attending. First, in our business section, we reminded our members that Ring 5 will be having a tent at the Popcorn Festival in Beavercreek the following weekend. A BIG Thank You to Charlie Cadabra for bringing pizzas for last meeting. We discussed Trunk or Treat opportunities to improve Ring visibility.

Time for MAGIC! Our theme of the month was Props and Apparatus. First, Bill West presented his version of "3 Card Monte" using jumbo cards. He then taught us the trick and gave us jumbo card packets to keep. This was our "Trick of the Month". Bill continued with "Borrowed Bill Serial Number" from the Scam School videos and "The MacCombical Decks". Next Ron Frank performed his stage version of the "Drills of Death" using volunteer Patrick Dugan. Ron had 5 drills, one of which had a dead battery. Patrick chose drills and drilled holes with the chosen ones. The last drill was put on Ron's head and the trigger pulled. Spoiler: no ambulances were called. Next, Jake Lindsey gave us a very good Gospel Magic routine with "Resurrection Story Silks". Larry Hollinger offered what he considers the best trick for toddler aged kids - "Eternal Rings" from Ickle Pickle. Charlie Cadabra took center stage with a story and card trick about "The ENIGMA Machine" from World War 2. He followed it up with "Magic Button" by Craig Petty, then hit us with the "Possessed Deck". Larry Payne told us a story and brought out three different sized inflated bears from a small fanny pack sized pouch. The largest, Papa Bear, had a CPAP mask on!!! It's a sad day when everyone in the Ring instantly recognizes a CPAP mask! This effect he calls "Un Bearable Journey". To finish, Bill West gave us his "Card Flight" effect with two old, well-built blocks as display/switching devices.

SO, if you are ever in Middletown, Ohio the first Friday of the month, please stop by and join us. From Ring 324 – The Friendliest Ring Around. *Larry Hollinger*

RING 325, BRANSON, MISSOURI – The Tri-Lakes Tricksters

Meets 3rd Sat. of the month atIt's Magic & Joke Shop, 6:00pm, 124 South Business 65, Branson, MO
DR. CHRISTOPHER BECK, President
E-mail: beckibmring325@gmail.com

We had a low turnout this month, but had a great magic meeting. We talked about next month going to a magic show at a theater, which we all voted yes on. It will be a dinner plus a show; each magic member will buy their own dinner and the show is free to our club members. Next month we are also having a lecture by Randy Goodman.

At our July magic club meeting we had visitors from Arkansas. We had a fun time doing magic for each other, and after the meeting was dismissed we went to our local Denny's to have pie and coffee and started doing magic for the waitress. What a fun night! Our magic club is now planning a road trip to Arkansas to visit their magic club. *Yak Williams*

RING 392, BLOWING ROCK, NORTH CAROLINA – William E. Spooner Ring

Meetings monthly at 2:00pm in various locations
DR. JOE MAZZOLA, President
E-mail: jcmazzolado@gmail.com

President Fletcher Roberts called the meeting to order at Joe and Debbie Mazzola's fabulous PT Marvels Magic Theater in Statesville, NC.

The business session began by discussing potential lecturers. It was decided that our September meeting return to PT Marvels Magic Theater and will feature Bruce McLaury's

Karrell Fox lecture he has been working on. Bruce has asked that we provide critical feedback so that his lecture can become as polished as possible.

Dick O'Shea requested prayers for Joe Sabol as he has been hospitalized. In happier news, Fletcher has upcoming shows in Alabama soon. He will be assisted by his lovely wife, Aggie.

Gerry and Cara Hayes shared that they had attended Abbott's Magic Get Together and raved about the event and high quality of magicians there.

Discussion ensued about who wishes to participate in the upcoming matinee magic show. Several agreed to perform. It was decided that some walkaround closeup would be nice prior to the show. We will try to get photos so the show can be featured in the Ring Events section of *The Linking Ring*.

Joe Mazzola is exploring a lecturer for the spring and will keep us informed of any developments in this regard.

With business concluded, Dick O'Shea proceeded to share several effects he may wish to present at the October 11 show. First was a Torn and Restored Newspaper routine followed by lovely color changing silks using an "invisible" die tube. Finally, an amazing optical illusion Dick built was shared! When looking at a "box and mirror" straight on all appeared "normal," but when rotated, it turned out that the box and mirror were a very deceptive optical illusion! He then proceeded to push a silk through the mirror to conclude the effect. Everyone had to examine his prop close up! Everyone wanted one, but it is so difficult to make that it is not likely that will happen! We think Copperfield would be interested!

Next Joe Mazzola performed a classic story based upon two queens and a king. With a little tongue in cheek, we heard the story of Kate and Edith. This was well done, and quite interesting patter was required!

Nelson followed up with the "Fingerprint Trick" he learned from a video many years ago. Cara Hayes selected a card and then placed her thumbprint on the back. The card was returned to the middle of the deck which was cut several times. A few cards were selected at random which displayed what Nelson claimed possibly had Cara's fingerprint on them. Cara was asked not to show any emotion as Nelson showed her a few cards he thought might be hers. After showing several cards, Nelson stated that he believed he had located the card. Using single, double, and triple lifts it appeared that Cara's card had already been placed on the table, but when the reveal came, the card in Nelson's hand was hers!

Fletcher used a coin flip process asking people to choose either heads or tails by either holding their hand in the air for heads, or simply keeping hands down for tails. Everyone participated. People who did not make the right selection were eliminated until finally two people, Sue Ellen Brookshire and Debbie Mazzola, remained. Ultimately, Sue Ellen won and was rewarded with a discontinued Fletcher Roberts Magic Sticker. Somehow, the image reminded us of "Weird Al" Yankovic! Regardless it was a fun trick with audience involvement which is always popular!

Dick O'Shea shared a David Roth effect called "Hanging Coins." Four coins vanished one at a time as he hung them invisibly on a line. This was done very effectively! David Roth would have been proud!

Joe Mazzola concluded the afternoon with a video of Xulio Merino. He is a Spanish magician who appeared on Penn and Teller's *Fool Us* with a very entertaining sponge ball routine. Rather than trying to describe it, check it out on YouTube!

Following adjournment of the meeting, wonderful refreshments were enjoyed by all. Thanks Debbie and Joe for outdoing yourselves once again! *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

Gimmicks, gimmicks, gimmicks! That was the theme of August meeting. Everyone was invited to explore and share the tools that make the magic happen. The meeting kicked off with President Daryl Rogers doing a presentation on the importance of "introduction cards". He recommended that each of us create one so that when being introduced, the speaker says exactly what we want.

Bruce Hetzler then kicked us off with a comedy rising card trick by Francis Carlyle, the gimmick being his thumb! Dr. Lynn Miner then shared an oil and water trick, where instead the reds were "introverts" and blacks were "extraverts", giving a logical reason for them to gather together. The gimmick involved a split red/black card. Daryl performed "All's Fair Rope Trick" an interesting cut and restored rope trick where the rope seemed to magically heal itself. The gimmick was a complex device attached to his arm that provided an interesting topology that pulled the cut ropes into the device as the restored rope is pulled out. Very interesting, even if not totally practical.

Next up, Treasurer Tal Kuhnz wowed us with

a spooky animated box, that opened by itself, lit up, produced a cloud of smoke and then shot a deck of cards into the air! The multiple gimmicks involved were all activated by a remote control built into a wand. Secretary Kevin Koehne shared an effect where the spectator can win 1 of 6 prizes, written on cards. Each card is eliminated by the roll of the dice, and at the end the spectator wins a prize of dubious value. The inexpensive gimmicked dice did all the dirty work.

Mike Destoll shared an original trick, in which he leveraged AI to generate a picture of a man in a setting – all of which are selected by the spectator. Then a card is selected and, without saying anything other than "draw the image described with the selected card", the AI generated the correct image! Marv Roth then shared a card experiment where anyone could cut to a King. He then shared the gimmick that he used to create a very clever set of breather cards. Otis Day entertained us with a very nice Hopping Halves routine with an interesting "perception v reality" script.

Finally, Sergeant-at-Arms Michael Schroeder closed out the meeting sharing a nice and relatively inexpensive portable briefcase/table from Murphy's Magic. *Kevin Koehne*

NEW APPLICATIONS AND REINSTATEMENTS

SEND DUES, CHANGE OF ADDRESS, AND APPLICATIONS TO:
I.B.M. HEADQUARTERS
13 POINT WEST BLVD.,
ST. CHARLES, MO 63301

NOVEMBER 2026
32 NEW MEMBERS

ARROYO, GABRIEL, Banning, CA
CARRANZA, MANUEL, Chula Vista, CA
CARRANZA KIM, MAELYNN, Chula Vista, CA
CARRANZA KIM, DANTE, Chula Vista, CA
JOE, GORTON, Carmichael, CA
LAMONT, ANTHONY, Los Angeles, CA
MANI, LILINOE, Irvine, CA
MORA, EVERARDO, Los Angeles, CA
VILLANUEVA, LUIS, Yuba City, CA
PORTER, JOSHUA, Pueblo, CO
SWEENEY BLANCO, ANDREA, Washington, DC
IRVINE, JORDAN, Marietta, GA
ENGLISH, ALEX, Indianapolis, IN
INTOPPA, JOHN, Medford, MA
FREEMAN, BRANDON, Baltimore, MD
TANGO, PETER, Deale, MD
TUCKER, GRADY, Gaithersburg, MD
MARVIN, JODY, Belding, MI
ROBERTS, JAMES, High Point, NC
LATKA, LEONARD, Norristown, PA
IVEY, JAIMESON, Graniteville, SC
KIRBY, LISA, Myrtle Beach, SC
KOUSHKBAGHI, RAMTIN, Nashville, TN
LEFANCHECK, GREG, Nashville, TN
LEWIS, MAGGIE, Hendersonville, TN
PENDERGRASS, JASON, Germantown, TN
WARDLE, ROBERT, Frisco, TX
KYTE, SPENSER, Gloucester, VA
TAMAN, FRANCIS, Chestermere, Canada
DI NARDO, MICHAEL, Delta, Canada
YAO, XINGE, Valencia, Spain
SEBRING, ANDREAS, Kisa, Sweden

11 REINSTATEMENTS

BRYAN, CHRISTIAN, Skagway, AK
GUERRA, FRANCISCO, Lexington, AL
ROSE, DERRICK, Maumelle, AR
NEAL, COLIN, Vine Grove, KY
SHEPHERD, DWIGHT, Louisville, KY
BARRY, RIVER, Camp Hill, PA
DULTZ, THOMAS, Easton, PA
HAMMER, NEIL, Piedmont, SC
ALBAMONTE, GEORGE, Fairfax, VA
PIPIA, JOEY, Port Townsend, WA
BUZZA, NATHAN, Perth, WA, Australia

Answer to Pictures from the Past – from page 14



His legal name was Boleshaw Lubrant. In the earliest recorded census, the name Boleshaw wasn't on record. What was recorded was Benjamin Joseph Lubrant. Possibly his father took that name when he arrived in America. When his son was born on November 24, 1903, he was given his father's full name, and his father added "Junior." The military draft registration records show Benjamin J. Lubrent joined the Army and in later records. The altered spelling of his last name stuck even after he completed his enlistment, and Lu used that error for many decades. He was known for coming up with new ways to present other magicians' effects. His first trick, "Penciltration Matchik," appeared in *The Sphinx* in 1927. Then in 1928 Lu submitted his creation "Cig-Get-O" to *The Sphinx*. It received a lot of attention from fellow magicians, including A. M. Wilson, editor of the magazine. The effect had the performer produce up to six unlighted cigarettes from nowhere. A year later, Lu partnered with Joseph Skorko, who was also from Camden, New Jersey, and submitted "Silk-Get-O," a method of making a silk appear from nowhere. Lu not only wrote up the ideas but also illustrated them for the magazine. Lu had a regular job in the 1920s as a passer of rivets at the shipyard. He caught the scalding hot rivet and passed it to another man at the other end of the ship, who caught it in a small steel bucket. It was definitely a job where a mistake could harm either person, and as far as Lu was concerned, it could ruin his favorite pastime. He joined the Army in 1921 and completed his enlistment, then went back to creating magic ideas, performing, and keeping a job at a toy factory.

During the 1930s, Lu was living with his family and found a job as an inspector at a radio factory. Lu continued to spread his ideas through other magic magazines, including *The Linking Ring*. As he came up with ideas, he would hone them, work out all the "what-ifs," and then perform the effects for his audiences. Once the ideas were ready, Lu submitted them to the magic magazines and presented them at club meetings. Lu was booked at a few Philadelphia clubs and kept a steady gig at the Club Morocco and then the Chateau Club. His audiences thoroughly enjoyed his unique variety of magic, and both venues were packed nightly. After four weeks at Palumbo's Cafe, the South Philadelphia nightclub and restaurant, his bookings took him west. Lu had time to jot down a few ideas to submit to the magic magazines, including one along the lines of an idea from the 1934 book *Clever Card Tricks* by Maxwell, compiled by Max Holden. Lu's idea was called "Slippery Footed." The card effect worked with bridge- or poker-size playing cards as well as jumbo cards. In 1937, Lu received a good deal of praise for his newest booklet, *Novel Magic*, published by Steen Magic Company. Lu's idea was to gather an assortment of parlor routines and close-up effects and make them available for only fifty cents. The booklet was a popular seller with magic dealers and stores alike.

As the 1940s began, Lu was kept busy performing his new act in numerous cities, such as Wildwood, New Jersey, and getting more effects and ideas published in the magic magazines. He had the "golden touch" for developing useful ideas for fellow performers, such as his 1943 booklet *Five Star Card Effects*. During the early 1940s, Lu and a number of other entertainers found work in Army camp shows in and around Lu's hometown of Camden. When bookings became available, Lu did what he could to grab them, especially when Neil Deighan's Restaurant Night Club and Bar in 1943. The restaurant wasn't too far a drive for Lu, so he could finish the performance and get back home to his family. In

December 1945, Lu was invited to give a lecture to Ring 31 in Madison, Wisconsin. As with his other lectures, he showed the members a number of assorted ideas that they all could easily perform. That was part of Lu's real magic. He was able to get down to the facts and show these members how to perform a number of excellent effects and improve some of the tricks they had been performing (or working on) for years. His creative mind made him a favorite for magic club lectures. By the end of the 1940s, Lu was getting booked on a few television shows and performing on cruise ships. He never stopped finding ways to spread his magic around, on land or sea.



Lu created an original pantomime sketch for laymen and magicians alike called "A Magician's Night Out." Combining his ability to create an act that crossed both sides of the entertainment world made him an important commodity for agents. The advantage was that Lu could book engagements by having a prospective booker watch his performance at a venue. Once bookers saw his work, he received contracts over and over again. Lu's successful performance at the New England Convention of Magicians in Springfield, Massachusetts, showed his audiences he was a skilled manipulator and a suave, soft-spoken gentleman with a reputation for top-drawer trickery and a show for the entire family. As the 1950s got started, Lu was already on a roll, getting booked at various venues and at magic club meetings for his lectures, and writing articles for magic magazines such as *Genii* and *The Linking Ring*. His article "Ideas of Idle Moments" was an ongoing monthly insert in *Genii*, where Lu presented a number of working effects that could be performed by the beginner to the expert and those in between, all of them receiving a nice response from audiences. Another venue becoming more evident in the 1950s, one that would make performing magic more prominent, was television. Lu saw friends getting booked on shows, and he too was given the opportunity. In August 1952, at the sixth annual I.B.M. convention in Kenton, Ohio, Kenton Ring 88 hosted the festivities at the Egyptian Hall. Lu was among the magic cast on the playbill, along with emcee "Senator" Clark Crandall, escape artist Stuart Cramer, illusionist Sir Felix Korim, Raymond Lowe, and others.



In a 1954 article in *Hugard's Magic Monthly*, he offered his thoughts to readers. In part, his comments ring true today: "speaking from personal experience I have found my own appearances on TV have made my name known in many cities where I have never appeared in person and when I appear in a new city I usually find the way has been paved by my TV visits. If a magician is to enter the upper strata of show business it must be on the strength of his personality. You can go just so far with the best act ever devised, but once the public accepts you as a person, the things you do are simply vehicles for your talents." Lu continued to pump out more ideas that could be found at magic conventions, in magic magazines, and in his lectures. He also created and sold effects such as "Blend-O-Bills" and "Bill to Matches" at as many venues as possible. Other ideas Lu produced included "Cig-Ash Trays" in 1954; he wrote a booklet, *Fifteen Star Card Effects*; and he sold "Blendo-Bills" in 1959. It seemed he never really stopped developing magic and getting it to the various places available to him. The 1960s weren't any different from the previous decades. Lu kept rolling out useful, working effects and ideas that both readers and

performers could add to their performances. Abbott's in Colon, Michigan, sold quantities of Lu's popular parlor and stage trick "Diminishing Bills," and it was a hit. Lu also created his effect "Crazy Deck" in 1964 and a book, *Totally Refreshing Ideas and Carefully Kept Secrets (T.R.I.C.K.S.)*, in 1966.

Lu began a series of books in 1969 with *Lu Brent's Best Magic Tricks*, Vol. 1, followed by Vol. 2 in 1974 and, completing the series, Vol. 3 in 1980. One thing you could depend on with Lu: he kept his nose to the grindstone over the decades. Nothing seemed to slow him down. For Lu, the 1980s were just another day when it came to looking through his notable ideas. For a fellow who had been performing for over sixty years and keeping various publications filled with his ideas, being able to continue getting booked and rebooked at local (and not-so-local) magic clubs was nothing new. Other magicians credited Lu with helping them come up with ideas based on his own, like Ali Bongo's 1968 "Bongo Hat." Ali had a successful run of sales for the hat, and whenever he was asked who came up with the idea, he mentioned Lu. When he began selling his "Amazing Growing Clown Hat" in the early 1990s, he once again gave a grateful nod to Lu. Lu stayed involved with numerous sides of magic almost until he passed away in Camden on March 31, 1993, at age eighty-nine. One memory of Lu and his thorough enjoyment of magic comes from Gene Gordon, who wrote to his readers about an observation of Lu at one of the many magic conventions they both attended. He noticed that each time Lu was present, he would take the time to "work the room," meeting and talking to as many attendees as he possibly could. Lu wouldn't just say a word or two; he stayed long enough to find out something about the people he was with, and that said a lot about Lu Brent. He loved the magic he performed, created, and wrote about throughout his life, and he enjoyed discussing it whenever he could

Gary R. Frank

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

I.B.M. YOUTH TRIVIA CONTEST RULES

(Continued from page 63)

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 63.**

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Our readers hail from 88 countries and cover a wide range of skill levels and magic preference, from the hobbyists, to professionals such as David Copperfield and Lance Burton, from the close-up magician, to the bizarre mentalist, and everything in between!

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