



# MAGICURRENTS

SAN DIEGO RING 76 DECEMBER, 2014 VOL. XXVIII #12

## Changing of the Guard

Has it really been that long? It sure doesn't seem like it. It was 2010 when I took over as editor of MagiCurrents. At the time, I knew little of what I was getting into, but I was proud to serve a publication that has been a part of Ring 76 for 24 years.

As I look back on all the issues of MagiCurrents that I had a hand in putting together, I can see that quite a lot has happened over these four and a half years. There have been a lot of changes for Ring 76, and now it is time for one more thing to change.

Due to pressures coming from the non-Ring 76 part of my life, it has become harder to compile each issue of MagiCurrents in a timely manner. Rather than try to continue to soldier on, doing the job badly, I felt it was time to pass the baton to someone else. Happily, a most capable successor, Malcolm Campbell, has stepped forward and has agreed to take on this task.

As I step aside, I would like to give many, many thanks to all those who have contributed articles to MagiCurrents. These articles are the heart and soul of the newsletter and, without them, there is no newsletter. I would also like to give special thanks to Richard Ustick, Bob Meigs, Joel Moskowitz and Jim Whiting for making my job easier in countless ways.

MagiCurrents is in good hands. Please give Malcolm the same abundant support that you have given me. —James Thayer



## President's Message

Hello Hello,

Thanks!



**To James**, for all that you have done — and will continue to do — for Ring 76.

**To all of you** who participated for making the Magic Swap-Meet at the November meeting a great success. I hope that all those who attended made some money or found some great deals on magic.

**To Joe Mystic**, for finding us a new home. I am also happy to hear that many of our members were pleased with our new meeting location. That's good news since it's where we will be holding future meetings and events.

And speaking of up coming meetings, December will be a month chock full of Magic, with our up-coming lecture on December 7<sup>th</sup> and our Holiday Banquet on December 8<sup>th</sup>.

Hope to see you all there.

— Sal Barajas, President



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HONEST SID GERHART RING 76  
EDITOR AND PUBLISHER - MALCOLM CAMPBELL, EDITOR@RING76.COM

## From the Editor

It was an unpleasant surprise to learn that James Thayer was leaving the position of MagiCurrents Editor. James maintained a quality newsletter with quite a reputation within the magic community and we are all sorry to see him go.



When asked to take on the job, I ran hot and cold on the idea, strictly because of the time that would be involved. I'm editing and re-writing 25 or so pages of technical material for most issues of The I.B.M.'s *The Linking Ring* in my "spare time" but the challenge of keeping MagiCurrents the quality newsletter that it has been under James was too inviting to turn down.

My love of writing and editing was instilled in me at a very young age by my father who was City Editor for one of Randolph Hearst's newspapers. He taught me to write to get the point across, and to do it efficiently if space was limited, or to stretch it to fill the white space. He was an editor's editor and had the greatest command of the English language of anyone I've ever known. You did not want to play Scrabble with him or question his use of a verb.

From about Jr. High School on, I would bring compositions home which my English teacher had corrected. Dad would mark up the teacher's corrections and make me take them back. Needless to say, my English grades were sometimes nothing to brag about. But I did learn how important it was to treat the language with respect.

In case you hadn't noticed, MagiCurrents is about the activities of the Ring and things of interest to the Ring within the magic community. But the Ring *is its membership* so the newsletter is about you. I'm counting on you to help me fill the pages of MagiCurrents with what you and the rest of the membership want to see. If you attend a non-ring event such as an out-of-town lecture, see a great show, visit another ring, discover a new source of magic supplies, learn something amazing, read a

good book, hear a good magic joke or have any other experience (good or bad) you would like to share, take notes or write a description of your experience. It doesn't have to be a polished work – that's the Editor's job.

I also need reporters and backups for the various ring events so that MagiCurrents can continue to be a reliable source of information for those who were not able to attend the event.

Please contact me with any suggestions you have on the contents of MagiCurrents, particularly if there is a feature you'd like to see included. Email me at [timeformagic@att.net](mailto:timeformagic@att.net) or [editor@ring76.com](mailto:editor@ring76.com).

Finally, I would like to thank the contributors to this issue — particularly the Board — for their cooperation in getting this out on a very tight schedule which I hope will regularly bring MagiCurrents to you the week before the meetings throughout the year.

*Wishing you happy holidays and a wonderful new year!*

Malcolm Campbell





## November Meeting Report

The November 2014 meeting was held at our new regular meeting venue, the Clairemont Senior Center at 4425 Bannock Ave. SD, CA 92117.

President Sal Barajas called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM, and announcements were made about the upcoming lecture and Holiday Banquet, both to be held at the new location.

The remainder of the meeting consisted of our bi-annual Swap Meet fund-raiser which alternates each year with an auction.

Over 13 full tables and two half-tables were loaded with goodies for sale making for an abundant shopping selection. Our thanks to the following vendors for participating in the Swap Meet: Sherry Luft, Mike Stilwell, Mago Ruly, Tom Owen-Towle, Terry Godfrey, Jeff Sargent, Sal Barajas, Charlie Gott, Greg Wauson, John Cannon, Joe Mystic, and John Hunter.

Members gobbled up the bargains in the first fifteen minutes, then hung out till the last fifteen minutes to see if more bargains would appear. They did! Books, DVDs, effects, props, silks, appearing canes, miniature vanishing cabinets, and a lot of lovely doo-dads from Belinda Kessler’s estate that were formerly table centerpiece decorations all exchanged hands and found new owners.

Between table fees and sales by the Ring, the Ring netted \$350.00

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00, after which, a number of members re-convened at the new Denny’s in the Clairemont Center where the fun continued.

It was generally agreed that the new location — which has plenty of parking — was a good choice .


—Jacques Lord, Secretary

*Photos from the Swap Meet will be included in the next issue.*

## Confessions of a “Gentleman Magician”

Years ago, one of the Ring’s full-time magician members (no longer active) called me a “Gentleman Magician.” I do not think it was meant to be a complement. He was referring to the fact that, as a full-time engineering geologist, I earn a salary sufficient to

## Ring 76 2014-15 Calendar

Dec 7	Rob Zabrecky Lecture
Dec 8	Holiday Banquet
Jan 12	Mentalism*
Feb 9	Close-up Competition
Mar 9	Ice-Breakers & Business Cards*
Apr 12	Daryl Lecture  NEW!
Apr 13	Teach-A-Trick
May 11	Stand-up Competition
Jun 8	Kids Magic
Jul TBD	Installation Banquet
Aug 10	Classic Magic

live a comfortable middle class life and he was conveying his frustration over the possibility that my paid gigs could have .been taking food off his table.

Magic is my avocation, part-time passion, hobby and, incidentally, my way to earn a little extra pocket money. For me, the income is not the driving factor, but it does help pay the tuition bills!

Magic for income, however, is the raison d’etre for the full-timer who, understandably, can get a little resentful of us “gentlemen” while he struggles to get his bills paid.

This is a sensitive topic that has been debated in the Ring for a long time. There are strong, passionate opinions on both sides ranging from the referenced member’s views, to the belief that “there is opportunity aplenty for everyone -- full-time as well as part-time.” While there is no defined correct position to fall back on, there are perspectives from both sides that are worthy of our consideration. Identifying and focusing on them may help us re-assess our own personal circumstances, become better magicians for it and, most of all, find a more comfortable coexistence with our fellow Ring members.

First, the hobbyist may indeed be a skilled and competent entertainer, but he or she will never truly approach the polish and finesse of the successful full-time performer. Doing several hundred shows a

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## LAST MINUTE REMINDERS!

***Rob Zabrecky Lecture!***  
***A Magic Talk on the Exploration***  
***at the Intersection of Magic & Theater***

When: Sunday, December 7th, 2014, 7:00pm

Where: The Clairemont Senior Center  
4425 Bannock Ave.  
San Diego, CA 92117

Admission free to members, \$20.00 for non-members



## ***Holiday Banquet***

Monday, December 8  
5:30 pm

The Clairemont Senior Center  
4425 Bannock Ave., San Diego 92117.

Our annual **Holiday Banquet** will be held on our regular meeting night, Monday, December 8, at 5:30 pm at our new meeting place, The Clairemont Senior Center, 4425 Bannock Ave., San Diego 92117.

The meal will be **potluck** with turkey, ham, drinks and utensils provided by the Ring. **Please bring your favorite side dish, salad or dessert to share.** In addition to the meal, there will be a 50-50 and **prize raffles**

**Music** will once again be provided by our own Mago Rule and his family. The **entertainment** will be comedy magician **Ron Anderson**. As a teenager, Ron was a Long Beach Mystic, then became an entertainer for our troops worldwide. He has performed in comedy clubs and cruise ships and has been a corporate performer for many years for clients including AT&T, CBS, Gulfstream Aerospace, Harvard Business School, Farmers Insurance, Ford Motor Corporation, Pepsi-Cola and Xerox.

Doors will open at 5:30, the meal will start at 6:15 and Ron will perform at 7:30. **See you there!**



# Breaking News!!

**Mark this on your calendar.**

Ring 76 will sponsor a lecture by award-winning magician **Daryl** on Sunday, April 12.

Details will be announced shortly.

## WANTED



### Product Reviews

Purchased a new magic effect lately?  
Want to share your opinion of it?

Send your assessment to [editor@ring76.com](mailto:editor@ring76.com)

### Q&A

**How many magicians does it take to change a light bulb?**

The answer is “three”: one to screw it in and two to make it disappear and reappear when the switch is turned on and off.

**Why did the magician cross the road?**

He was hungry for chicken.

## Shavings from the Board

The Board of Directors met at Bob Megg’s house at 7:00 pm on November 24.



Topics discussed included:

- Swap Meet: \$350. income
- Membership: 100% IBM membership achieved
- Charger Blood Drive: Ring no longer involved
- Up-coming lecture and party: Details finalized
- Newsletter transition and assignments
- I.B.M. Honor Ring: Qualification for \$1000 award to be investigated

The next Board meeting is scheduled for January 26, 2015. Any member of Ring 76 may attend. Please contact Bob at [carshows@sbcglobal.net](mailto:carshows@sbcglobal.net) so that space and food can be planned.

## January Meeting Preview

Since the December meeting is our Holiday Party, our next regular meeting will be on **January 12 at 7:00 pm** The meeting will feature the always popular:

## Mentalism Night



**It will blow your mind!!**

Get ready for a brain-busting experience as the Members of Ring 76 showcase their supernatural mental abilities.

Every member has the opportunity to be part of the show as well as part of the audience. If you have a mentalism effect or routine you would like perform, contact our VP of Entertainment,, Greg Wauson at [socialbehavior@hotmail.com](mailto:socialbehavior@hotmail.com) to reserve a place on the program.



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year versus a couple dozen gives the full-timer a polish, a smoothness, a confidence that we part-timers should find intimidating. Being a full-timer means you are rehearsing and performing almost every day. As every professional is well aware of, there is no short-cut to being a polished successful magician.

Acknowledging the gap between the quality of what the hobbyist and the professional can put in front of an audience can motivate us part-timers to practice and rehearse that much harder! However, even with a professional polish factor to aim for, you may never rival Wally the Wizard or Magic Maury. But, becoming better is attainable. Bob Pozner got me to practice daily, even if only 30 minutes. Rehearse – go through your show as if you have an audience in front of you and tape it!

Watching a tape of your performance for weaknesses such as unnatural movements, movements that are unnecessary, too much talking, weak misdirection and awkward transitions between routines is an incredibly powerful tool to improve your polish – whether you are professional or part-timer. Honestly, I hate it. I hate watching myself and hearing my voice (I sound like THAT? I look like THAT?), but, I have to confess that when I revise my routines based on what I see and do not like, I end up with a better routine! And watching me on a video do a routine after I have spent hour after hour video-polishing it is like....WATCHING A REAL MAGICIAN!

Secondly, as a part-timer, I price myself above what the full-timers typically charge. That way I am not undercutting them, but supporting their price levels. If a customer is willing to hire me at a higher rate, it is likely they read my “Gigsalad” website material or other press release-based content and decided I was a good “fit” for their audience which, for me, is typically scientific and academic audiences. I may get these shows only 6-8 times a year, but the audience fit is good and that makes for a really fun show – they “get me,” and I get a huge rush from their enthusiastic response to my performance that makes the work I put into it all worthwhile.

Thirdly, you can practice and rehearse all you want but you don’t become a performer unless you

have experience performing in front of a live audience. Does this mean part-timers take gigs from the pro? Yes, no question, but that may not happen as often as we think. Professionals are recognized as such and get clients through the websites and more polished marketing and advertising materials *they invest in* as well as referrals and, most often, from repeat customers.

So let me propose a more constructive, less competitive strategy for the part-timer to get performing experience; focus on the non-profits and pro-bono shows. That way you get more performance time in, and are not competing as much with our full-time brethren for limited entertainment dollars. If you do not NEED the income, why not focus on the community fund-raisers in your neighborhood or city? I guarantee they will LOVE you.

I do not do all non-profit or fund-raising shows for free. As Magic Mike Stilwell wrote in his excellent book “How to be a Professional Entertainer,” I do pro bono work for organizations close to my heart, and all others get a steep discount. My first paid show (\$50) was four hours on the streets of Carlsbad for the Street Art Festival in 2004 – Joel Ward referred them to me because he didn’t want to do it! So, full-timers, if you are besieged with requests to do charity freebies, consider referring the requester to a part-timer you trust if you would rather save the date for a more lucrative gig.

Lastly, there is this nagging but important tradition that we magicians are supportive of each other and a tight-knit brotherhood, whether we are full-timer, part-timer, or sideline enthusiast. Seeing each other as competitors is non-productive. Seeing each other as students of the same art form with different levels of skill, polish, and capability is more productive. If we behave like individual playing cards, we are simply a single card of some value and suit. If we cooperate and collaborate with each other, we end up with a deck of cards, and then the possibilities for amusement, magic, wonder, and entertainment are infinite.

— Jaques Lord

*(Editor’s Note: This essay is the sole responsibility of the author who welcomes feedback.)*



## I.B.M. Honor Ring Program

Our parent organization, The International Brotherhood of Magicians, has invited Ring 76 to apply for its Honor Ring Award. This new program recognizes Rings which do an outstanding job of adhering to the policies and goals of the I.B.M. The award carries a \$1000.00 grant to help support the Ring's education programs.

The initial application has been submitted, and comments from the I.B.M. are expected shortly. If granted, Ring 76 will be only the second Ring world-wide to receive the award.

## Youth Stage Competition

Bob Meigs, who coordinates entertainment at the San Diego County Fair, has obtained approval and funding for a youth stage magic competition at the fair.

If you are aware of someone up to age 17 with an interest in magic, Bob — and other Ring members — can help them prepare for next year's event. You can contact Bob at: [carhows@sbcglobal.net](mailto:carhows@sbcglobal.net).



### ***Publication schedule reminder for contributors***

The publication date of each issue of MagiCurrents is the Monday before the monthly meeting. It is identified as the issue for the month in which it is published, even though it primarily contains information about events in the prior month, e.g, the February issue is published and distributed a week before the February meeting and contains information about the January meeting and related events which occurred in January. Submissions from officers, reporters and other members are due the Thursday before the publication date which is three days after the Board meeting.

