



# MAGICURRENTS

SAN DIEGO RING 76

JUNE 2021

VOL. XXXVI #7

## President's Message

I never saw myself as president, of this Ring or any other organization. I was just at the right place at the wrong time. A lot of folks in Ring 76 could do this job better than me but it became mine to do, and I was determined that as long as you put me here you were going to get the very best that I have. I hope you feel that that was the case.

This is my last Message from the President. We had our annual elections and by the Constitution of Ring 76 no person can serve more than two consecutive terms in this office. I will be succeeded by the next president, duly elected by the Ring, and that is the way it should be. New ideas, new directions, and new challenges for the magic community we are all so fond of.

It has been my pleasure to serve you all as President during these most unusual times. I have faced some



## Ring 76 2021 Calendar

Jul 11 - Installation Banquet

Aug 9 - Mentalism\*

\*Opportunity for Members to Perform

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we will not be having physical meetings until further notice. Where possible, we will have virtual meetings on-line. Read this Newsletter and watch your e-mail for further details!

unique challenges, ones none of my predecessors ever dreamed of. I have had the extreme good fortune of being president at this time with a Board of Directors that rose to meet every challenge. To keep the Ring together, with monthly meetings, and keep the content fresh and topical, and judging by the renewed membership figures I have been receiving, you all thought they did an excellent job as well. Ring 76 would not exist today if it were not for the Board of Directors and their imaginative solutions to all of the problems hurled at us over the last year and a half. They deserve congratulations and I hope you let them know that when you see them as we progress back to live meeting.

This month we will have our first live meeting in more than a year. It is our Installations Banquet, traditionally the largest and most entertaining meeting we hold. I will be stepping down as president and our new president will be sworn in. I want you all to join me in wishing him all the luck and skill he will need to face the challenges of this next part of our lives.

-- Richard Ustick

PUBLISHED BY THE INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF MAGICIANS

HONEST SID GERHART RING #78

EDITOR - JAMES THAYER, EDITOR@RING76.COM



## General Membership Meeting Monday June 14, 2021

Secretary **Matthew King**. Meetings held every 2nd Monday, currently via Zoom.

This was our fifteenth ring meeting held on Zoom.

President **Richard Ustick** called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m. There were 26 members online.

**Richard** mentioned this will hopefully our last Zoom meeting. The July meeting will be our first live meeting in a year and a half, and it will be our installation banquet. **Richard** shared the slate of candidates with members, and he asked for members to vote yay or nay for the slate. Members voted, and the slate was confirmed.

**Richard** reminded members to pay their dues, which can be sent via check or by PayPal. **James Thayer** mentioned checks can be sent and his address, which is found in the newsletter. **Richard** mentioned that we need to find a newsletter editor and asked any members to reach out if interested.

**Richard** announced the installation banquet will be held on July 11th, and **Bob Meigs** has generously offered his home to hold the event. Members will receive an RSVP email with more information, and it will be important to RSVP for an accurate head count.

**Richard** reminded members to send in their vote for Ring 76 "Member of the Year", keeping any member in mind who has contributed the most to Ring 76 and the magic community over the last year. **Greg Wauson** indicated he will be sending an email to members regarding voting. **Richard** indicated that membership has been solid for the last 2 years, and the board has worked hard to provide quality magic and lectures to our members. **Richard** thanked **Matthew King** for his work on cataloging and presenting the various magic donations and coordinating the in-meeting auctions. **Matthew** thanked **Richard** and told

members about the auctions, items listed on the magic store website, as well as how to navigate the categories.

**Greg** introduced two-time Penn & Teller "Fooler" magician **Shawn Farquhar**, who was voted the "Canadian Magician of the Year" twice, a World Champion first place winner at FISM, past IBM International President, and has received many other awards in magic.

**Shawn Farquhar** reminded members to get tickets for the upcoming Virtual IBM Convention on July 8th, 9th, and 10th, which includes virtual magic shows, lectures, and more. **Shawn** provided an exceptional lecture to our members, demonstrating effects from his second lecture called "PB&J" (his first lecture was titled "Bread and Butter"). Effects included his C2W Card to Wallet, his award-winning MatriXpress routine, Torn 2 Pieces, a playing card melted through another, he screwed together a deck of cards, magically divined a whole deck, and showed MANY more! He discussed his multiple television appearances on Penn & Teller: Fool Us, and he provided members with valuable information and tips (while he also kept our members laughing). He recommended members check out the Ask Alexander section of the IBM website, and he also recommended a subscription to Reel Magic, both of which have a plethora of magic material. **Shawn** finished with a generous Q&A session, and we continued chatting well after the meeting was adjourned.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

-- *Matthew King*

## What's Coming Up (Article for July 2021 Newsletter)

**July:** Our meeting will be on Sunday, July 11. Especially significant this month, we will actually get together in person, which hasn't been possible for well over a year due to the COVID pandemic. Bob and Mary Meigs have graciously offered their home in



Carlsbad as the venue and, along with top notch food and entertainment from magician John George, this will be an event you will not want to miss. We have now received RSVPs for 77 people, so this promises to be one of our best-ever attended events and a highlight of our year. It will be a time to meet, eat, thank the outgoing officers, install the new officers and celebrate our outstanding members and contest winners.

**August:** The theme of our August meeting will be mentalism. Wikipedia tells us: "Mentalism is a performing art in which its practitioners, known as mentalists, appear to demonstrate highly developed mental or intuitive abilities." So dust off your whiteboards, blindfolds and Mental Epics and get ready to astonish your fellow Ring 76ers. This will be a performance night, so members will vote for their favorites and those votes will count toward the performer of the month as well as the performer of the year.

-- Greg Wauson

## Our installation banquet magician, John George!

John George got his initial interest in magic from his father, who would perform tricks for the family every year around Christmas. At Disneyland, he met Dana Daniels, who was performing strolling magic. In 1995, John George met Johnny Ace Palmer, who would become his lifelong friend and mentor, and he began his magic career that same year. After graduating from college, he worked for Carl Williams at Custom Magic, a designer of illusions for top magicians, including Lance Burton and David Copperfield. He continues to build props for his own use.

He has performed regularly at the Magic Castle throughout his career and is a resident entertainer at Warren and Annabelle's in Maui. He has performed at the private parties of many celebrities, including



*John George*

Nicolas Cage, Francis Ford Coppola, Drew Barrymore and Paul McCartney, and at the red carpet premiers of The Prestige, Maleficent and WALL-E.

John George has competed and won awards in a range of magic competitions, including:

- First Place – 1998 International Brotherhood of Magicians Gold Cups Competition
- People's Choice – 1998 International Brotherhood of Magicians Gold Cups Competition
- First Place – Society of American Magicians Gold Medal Competition
- Silver Medal Award of Merit - Society of American Magicians
- First Place - Florida State Championship for Close-Up Magic

John George became a speedcubing enthusiast after watching Will Smith solve a Rubik's Cube in the film The Pursuit of Happyness. He has participated in World Cube Association competitions with the Rubik's Cube and Pocket Cube. His personal records in

competition are 26.75 seconds with the Rubik's Cube and 12.41 seconds with the Pocket Cube.

John George resides in Southern California with his wife, Devon. Especially intriguing is the fact he constructed an 18-seat theater for magical performances in his home. The theater is accessed by a hidden entrance and features a castle design motif.

This promises to be a fascinating performance by a man of many interests.

-- Greg Wauson

## Shawn Farquhar lecture a big success!

We were looking forward to the Shawn Farquhar lecture and he did not disappoint the 30 people who attended this event. To my knowledge, he is the only winner of the Federation Internationale des Societes Magiques (FISM) world champion competition to ever attend a Ring 76 meeting, and this professionalism showed. He called this his PB&J lecture, Powerful But Justified, so-named by his daughter. He kept us going and on our toes for well over two hours.

Several of the items he presented were his improvements on existing effects. He explained each one immediately after performing it.



1. He demonstrated problem solving when inventing magic tricks, trying to figure out how to change a playing card into clear laser-cut plastic.
2. Poker chip version of 3 Fly
  - a. Attributed Chris Kenner from book *Totally Out of Control*.



- b. Instead of silver dollars or half dollars, he uses poker chips, which can be used anywhere in the world and they make no noise when sliding next to each other.
3. "Bypass" – This is a real fooler with two cards. One is folded diagonally and the other card fairly and slowly melts through the diagonal fold and comes out the other side. Both cards are then fairly shown, with no clue to how it works. Shawn invented this during the COVID lockdown, which was especially harsh in Canada, where Shawn lives. He showed us how it works and said we can find more details on *Reel Magic Magazine*, from Kozmo, for just \$5 per month.
4. Shawn showed us his take on Paul Harris' *Screwed Deck*, which is sold by Palmer Tilden. Shawn bought his entire company, *Palmer Magic*, from him.
5. A mentalism effect was next – *TOXIC*, which is performed with an iPhone. It allows the magician to predict a total after several mathematical operations on the calculator of a spectator's cell phone. Shawn showed us *TOXICO*, his version, which has some nice improvements. This is a sneaky effect which is fun to

do since it utilizes a little-known feature of the calculator function on a smart phone.

6. Shawn showed a piece of paper, folded it into an envelope, then pulled gift cards out of it. It does not look possible, but it is and has been published in Linking Ring magazine.

7. Wallet – This card in wallet effect is very effective and uses moves from the folded paper trick. The aardvark is a medium-sized, burrowing, nocturnal mammal native to Africa.

8. The pseudo-memorized deck trick uses a mini stack of six cards. He recommended we create and print a tiny cheat sheet and tape it over the bar code on



a deck of cards so we can easily refer to it secretly during the performance.

9. Invisible stack – Shawn had a volunteer tell him where to stop when spreading cards and which order to re-stack the cards. It's based on the "Invisible" deck, using a similar pairing of cards.

10. Next up was a nice packet trick with multiple kings and queens, called The Jealous King. This originally came from the mind of legendary Japanese magician, Ton Onosaka, who introduced the magic of Japan to America.



11. He then performed an effect in which four jacks and four 9s change places. It utilizes a utility move called the 13 x 13 Switch, which deceptively switches two packets of cards.

12. He closed with his signature piece, Torn 2 Pieces. Calling it a torn and restored photo effect somehow does not do it justice. This visually-stunning piece is a real fooler, uses only natural moves, and leaves the spectator with a mis-made souvenir which does not look possible. He has performed it many times on TV, including on the Ellen DeGeneres Show. He decided to market it to magicians and has sold more than 40,000 worldwide.

Shawn was happy to field any of our questions. He was asked about the spread pass, so he dived into its





detailed handling. This is a clean-looking version of the pass which provides good visual cover. And when asked about his three appearances on Penn and Teller's "Fool Us" TV show, he delighted us with some wonderful stories.

We magic buffs have more capabilities to learn about magic than ever before. Not only can we attend magic club meetings like this Zoom lecture, with Shawn in Canada, he reminded us as IBM members we have access to Ask Alexander on the IBM's website, [magician.org](http://magician.org). After logging in, we can click "Ask Alexander," to select from a giant database of all things magic. And he shared that his IBM ring in Canada makes available to its members an online streaming service of magic material using the Amazon Web Service (AWS). This is similar to the Plex streaming service available to Ring 76 members, although our library has substantially more content. One Ring 76er also mentioned members of the Academy of Magical Arts have free online access to Genii Magazine.

And we are blessed to be part of a relatively small, but world-wide, community. As a kid growing up in Canada, Shawn had many friends who, like him, also became well-known magicians: Kevin James, Mac King and Greg Frewin. Mike Stilwell shared he was Bumper, the baffling bunny, at the PCAM convention on the Queen Mary many, many years ago. Shawn said he remembers seeing Bumper there and still has some of Mike's promotional material! It is a small world.

*-- Greag Wauson*

## Dues are now Overdue!

If you've been waiting to pay your dues, the time has come and gone. Dues were due by June 30. If you are still intending to pay your dues, the amount is now \$35. Please pay by Sept 30 so that your membership does not lapse.

We have two ways to pay. You can pay by mail: make a check out to "IBM Ring 76" and send it to: Ring 76; c/

o James Thayer; 9556 Babauta Road; San Diego, CA 92129. You can also send your dues via PayPal by sending payment to <[payments@ring76.com](mailto:payments@ring76.com)>.

And, as long as you are paying dues and you have not already done so, please let me know if we can include your phone number and/or e-mail address in the Ring 76 Contact List on Arcanum.

If for any reason, you are not intending to renew your membership this year, we will appreciate knowing this (and in return, we will stop bugging you for dues.)

*-- James Thayer*



## Celebration of Life For Jeff Marcus

This last June 27th friends, family, and a good number of members of IBM Ring 76 said goodbye to a cherished icon of the magic community, Jeff Marcus. A Celebration of Life was held at his Alpine home, put on by his wife, Peg Marcus.

With the help of her family and friends several venues were set up in her back yard, food and drink was provided, and hundreds of people that interacted with Jeff for the last four or five decades took the microphone and told the tales of how this man touched their lives. Inside were pictures documenting the personal and professional travels and showing how broad his influence was. Outside mingled nofile:///C:/Users/James/Desktop/Screenshot (193).jpgt only





magicians and entertainers, but insurance salesman, doctors, craftsmen, and other people from almost every walk of life. They all knew Jeff and all benefited from this association in ways that only became apparent with his untimely passing.

As Clarence, the angel sent to help George Bailey in "It's a Wonderful Life" reminds us, "Each man's life touches so many other lives" and that simple fact was made more apparent this warm summer's day. So many people from so many areas, all came together to tell of how Jeff Marcus touched their lives.

Thank you Peg Marcus for giving us this one last opportunity to show our love and respect for a great man.

-- Richard Ustick

## Newsletter challenge question:

Once again, here's your opportunity for fame and fortune by taking on the infamous newsletter challenge. If you are the first reader to spot the answer

to our question and send it in an email to VP of Entertainment, Greg Wauson (gw83@ring76.com), you will become the proud owner of a \$10 Amazon gift card! Please put "Newsletter challenge" in the subject line of the email. All Ring 76 members are eligible, except board members and the previous month's winner.

Congratulations to our June winner, Craig Blackwood!

Here's our July challenge:

What animal is randomly mentioned in this newsletter?



Have magic to sell, stage equipment to rent? Looking for something to buy or rent? Need a ride or have room for a passenger to an out of town event such as the Magic Castle?

Have a special skill or service another member might use? Need a temporary assistant?

Advertise it at no cost to Ring 76 members in MagiCurrents



HEAT WAVES DON'T MAKE FOR EASY SLEEPING.