

# MagiCurrents

San Diego Ring 76 August 2022

VOL. XXXVII #8

## Installation Banquet A Summer Success

From Food, Ices, Magic, and More, The height of the Ring year was a delight for all.

The July 10<sup>th</sup> Ring 76 Installation Banquet was the height of the 2021-22 Ring year as over eighty Ring members and guests descended on the palatial home of Bob & Mary Meigs to enjoy sunshine, good temperatures, cool water and entertaining magic. Top that off with flavorful ices and a Chili Cook-off and you could not have asked for a

As with any successful event, the proof was in the planning and Mark Booth, Mike Stilwell, Bob and Mary Meigs worked diligently these last few months to make sure the event went off as smoothly as possible. Reservations had to be made in advance so that there were no surprises in the amount of food and drink needed. Parking, always a challenge in Southern California, was coordinated and managed by Mike with the help of parking coordinators, and the Board of Directors (Outgoing) managed the rest.



Meeting location was the home of Bob & Mary Meigs

The highlight of this year's event was the Chili Cook-off proposed by Bob Meigs and coordinated by Mark Booth. Seven participants prepared their best efforts and set them on the counter in warming containers. The audience then sampled each batch and voted on their favorite. The ballot box was then unsealed and the votes tabulated by Richard Ustick, a neutral judge in this event. The top three contestants were awarded the

first annual Ring 76 Chile Cook-off medal: First place went to Mark Booth, Second Place went to Mysti Schubert and Third Place went to **David Chiu**. Congratulations to all the participants. This event was so successful that it may become an annual event.



Aloha Ice Company provided frozen creations to satisfy the attendees while the main meal was provided by Pollos Maria and featured chicken and beef soft tacos with all of the fixings. For dessert (which included the very hard-to-find Tutti Frutti, Shoobie's Microcreamery ice cream bar was set up. A better summer fare would have been hard to find.

See Meeting, page 2

### Ring 76 2022 Calendar

August 8th - Math Magic \*

September 12th - Open Mike Night. \* Feel free to do what you want to do.

October 10th - Halloween & Seasonal Magic\* \*Opportunity for Members to Perform

Direct any questions concerning the calendar to V.P. of Entertainment, Greg Wauson.

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## President's Message

Dear Members of Ring 76,

Thank you for re-electing me for a 2nd term as your President. I'm Honored.

Thank you again to *Bob and Mary Meigs* for providing our location for our 2022 Installation Banquet as well as funding the event.

Thank you to **Mark Booth** for taking on the task to organize the banquet, the Chili Cook-off, and all the other things that made this year's Installation Banquet one of the best we have had.

Thank you to your incredible Board for all their hard work and support for me and your club all year long.

And so the new year begins: sharing, performing, collecting and learning the art of magic that we all love.

As of this writing, the church meeting hall is still mask optional for our meetings. If there is any change in the church or state policy we will email you.

The theme for this month's meeting is *Math Magic* and we will also be having raffle tickets, door prizes, an opportunity drawing, and magic for sale.

See you Monday, August 8th!

Mike Stilwell,

President Ring 76

### Meeting continued from page 1

After the contests and food, the main reason for the banquet, the awards and installation of officers, commenced. With our V.P. of Entertainment needed elsewhere, the task of presenting the awards fell to President Mike Stilwell. The first order of business was the presentation of the award for the Close-up and Stand-up contests the Ring had put on earlier in the year. Voted on by the members present at each contest, the winners for the Close-up contest were: Third place, Michael Johnson, Second Place, Matthew King, and the First place winner was "Mago" Ruly. Next up was the Stand-up winners, which were Third Place, Nick Benevento, Second Place, "Mago" Ruly, and the First Place winner, Mark Booth.

Up next was a special award presented to **Dan Thomas** for all of his years at *The Gathering* restaurant supporting magic and magicians in the San Diego community. For such service and for special considerations Ring 76 presented the "*Tip of the Hat*" award

The next award to be presented was for the **Ring 76 Entertainer for the Year.** Throughout the year members perform at the meetings and each month members vote on who they feel had the best performance. Those votes are tabulated throughout the year

and that is how the Entertainer of the Years is determined. This year that award went to **Matthew King**. Congratulations **Matt.** 



to be presented is the coveted Member of the Year award. Each year the Ring votes on who they think did the most not only for the Ring but for the magic community in general. This

The final award

Chili Cookoff Big Success

year was particularly unusual as it was our first live meetings in over two years due to Covid lock-downs. We had to gear up after a long hiatus and even had to settle into a new meeting location. The membership showed its appreciation for the stewardship of all of these challenges by awarding the Member of the Year to President Mike Stilwell.



With the Awards all presented it was time to acknowledged the passing Board of Directors and welcome in the new board as voted by the Ring membership. We were very fortunate to have the *I.B.M. Territorial Vice-President*, **Cliff Gerstman** with us to officiate the swearing in of the new Board of Directors.

See Meeting page 3





Meeting continued from page 2

They are President Mike
Stilwell, First Vice President of
Entertainment, Greg Wauson,
Second Vice President of
Membership, James Thayer,
Secretary Alvin Revilas\*,
Treasurer Miguel Garcia, Sgt. At
Arms: David Chiu and Members
at Large Mark Booth, Gary
Salisbury, and Misha
Osinovskiy. Welcome to the
new Board and may they rise to
the challenges of the coming
year.

With all the business of the banquet settled, it was time for the entertainment. This year Ring 76 was pleased to present Alexander Great. A corporate and trade show performer, he has entertained not only tens of thousands of people during his career but the likes of Disney,



New Board of Directors for 20222-23 (Not pictured Greg Wauson, VP Entertainment & Matthew King, Secretary)

CBS, E-Entertainment and Medtronic. He was well versed, charming, engaging, and had the Ring members and guests enthralled and laughing. A fitting end to an excellent day of fun and comradery.

Once again, thank you to **Bob** and **Mary Meigs** for opening their home to us and to Mark Booth who coordinated this event so that we did not have to. See you next year.







Alexander Great







Honest Sid Gerhart was recognized with a display of his effects and other memorabilia. His granddaughter, Holly, was a guest of the Ring at this year's Installation Banquet.

## Trick of the Month Club #7 Spectator ACAAN

By Bob Meigs

This is another of *Mike Stilwell's* "regular deck" tricks. It not only uses a *regular* deck, but the deck can be *borrowed* and *shuffled!* 

**Effect:** Have a spectator pick a card from a *shuffled, regular* deck, show it around, and *remember* it. (You wouldn't believe how often spectators forget the card!) You are turned away, so won't see the card. The spectator places the selected card face down atop the deck, which you promptly cut several times, and also allow the spectator to cut (completing each cut).

You then point out that the spectator's chosen card is "somewhere in the middle of the deck," spreading the decks between your hands as you ask. Collapsing the deck, you have the spectator select a number between 6 and 24. (The range can be 1 to 52, but I use 6 to 23 to save time and introduce an unexplained "red herring.").

You then count through the deck to this chosen number, starting by placing the top card face down, followed by the second card, etc. When you have counted to the chosen number, close the packet of counted cards. You will use this packet for the rest of the trick.

Start counting again, placing the top card of the packet face down, followed by the second, etc. As you count, say "Let's see if you've really found your card." When you reach the spectator's chosen number (last card in the packet), hold it in the air without showing the face. Ask the spectator to name their card. After they do, turn the card around and smile. It will be the spectator's card.



The Audience is Watching

Method As the spectator is showing the card around, you notice the bottom card of the deck, which is the "key" card. The spectator places their chosen card atop the deck, which is then cut several times. Cutting the deck changes the starting point, but not the sequence of the cards. The "key card" will always be immediately atop the chosen card. (If the key card is on the bottom, the chosen card is again on top.)

After the "cutting is done," spread the deck from your right hand to your left. The chosen card is now immediately *to the right* of the key card. As you collapse the deck, cut the chosen card to the top position. Now, as you count through the deck to the number chosen by the spectator, you are moving the chosen card to the *bottom* of a packet. Continue the trick as described in the last paragraph of the *Effect* section.

Congratulate your spectator! He (or she) has just performed Any Card at Any Number, often called the Holy Grail of card magic.

# Thank you to all of my Photographers

You will notice that this has been a particularly photo heavy newsletter this issue. The events this month made a "gloss issue" or "color supplement," as it used to be known in the trade, the best way to present the activities and memories to you.

I could not have done it alone and wish to thank Matthew King for

all the great shots he took at the Installation Banquet and thank **Mark Booth** for his excellent work covering the Marie Hitchcock Puppet Theater show (See page 9).

Thank you for all your hard work.





## Installation Banquet a rousing Success for all who attended.



San Diego Ring 76, International Brotherhood of Magicians







# And the Winners Are . . . Award Winners from the Installation Banquet of 2022



David Chiu 3rd Place

Mysti Schubert 2nd Place

Mark Booth 1st Place Chili Cookoff

Close-Up Contest Winners



First Place Mago Ruly



Second Place Matt King



Third Place Michael Johnson

### Stand-up Contest Winners



First Place Mark Booth
Second Place, Mago Ruly (Pictured Above)
Third Place, Nick Benevento (no picture available)

### Entertainer of the Year



Matthew King



"Magic Mike" Stilwell



## What's Coming Up

**August:** "Math Magic" is our theme this month. Any magic effect which involves numbers or owes its method to math, in one way or another, is fair game. So that pretty much includes everything! Get out your Martin Gardner books, old Linking Ring magazines or even online and find something to entertain your fellow magis.

**September:** This is our "Open Mic Night." In other words, whatever type of magic trick you want to perform is fair game. Think of that effect you've been wanting to get performance ready. You'll have a friendly audience to practice on!

**October:** I think it pretty much goes without saying that our October theme will once again be "Spooky Magic." Does anyone remember Glorpy or the dancing handkerchief or floating lightbulb? Those would certainly fit in. And rumor has it that one member traditionally dresses the part for Halloween and actually sings his performance. Come and see if he'll do it again!



# Shavings from the Board

The Ring 76 Board of Directors meets via ZOOM every fourth Monday of the month (except December). Meetings are open to the membership.

The July 25th board meeting was held via Zoom and was called to order at **7:01 p.m.** by President "**Magic Mike**" **Stilwell.** This is the first meeting of the newly elected Board after their installation at the general meeting July 10<sup>th</sup>.

After an approval of the Minutes of the last Board meeting the various officers gave their reports. The general consensus that Ring 76 is doing very well and the outlook for the coming year was positive.

Current Secretary Matthew King gave a magic store update and then he discussed submitting the Superior Quality Ring award paperwork to National and adding the puppet theater shows, the recent TVP visit at the banquet, and adding the correct information from Bob's recent events. "Magic Mike" mentioned we are all set for the Marie Hitchcock Puppet Theater Sunday, July 31th (see article in this newsletter). "Magic Mike" asked Greg about the letter for "Mago Ruly" assisting him with attending the meetings. "Mago Ruly" has been having difficulties crossing the American boarder with his props as the Border Patrol wants to make sure he is not coming across to work. Greg said he wrote the letter indicating "Mago" does not get paid for meetings, and sent it to Alfonso Vazquez to send to Mago. We are indeed an INTERNATIONAL Ring and that comes with some difficulties.

Under New Business: "Magic Mike" asked if masks will be required at the church for our meetings, and they are still optional.

**Richard Ustick** mentioned he has someone who may be interested in joining Ring 76. They are a public service group of pirates who go to schools and they are interested in learning some

magic. **James** mentioned continuing difficulties with payments for the Ring website hosting and was working to correct that. Various other administrative chores were also discussed and the appropriate individual was tasked with dealing with them. The Board then discussed the September meeting and decided on an "Open Mic Night." With that, the newsletter requirements were handed out and the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

As stated before, the meeting is opened to any member who wishes to attend and members are encouraged to talk to any Board members about issues they think the Ring needs to address.

# "Math Magic" is our August Theme



The theme for our next meeting is "Math Magic," which may seem to be somewhat restrictive, but actually it's amazingly open. Many magic tricks have their secrets based on mathematics, and sometimes deceptively so. Math is a foundation to the workings of effects from mentalism to card tricks.

If you've never ventured into magic with mathematics, take on this challenge and see what you might find. Check out some online math magic effects – just use Google or DuckDuckGo and see what pops up. You just might wind up fooling – as well as entertaining – your fellow members! Let Greg Wauson (gw83@ring76.com) know if you're up to the challenge and he'll add you to the list of performers. This is a performance night, so members will be voting for performer of the month and those votes count towards performer of the year.





## Marie Hitchcock Puppet Theater Show a Rousing Success

by "Magic" Mike Stilwell



Steve Taylor, Emcee

Sunday, July 31st, performers from Ring 76 entertained about forty to forty-five people at the Marie Hitchcock Puppet Theater in Balboa Park. Each show made up of kids, parents, grand parents and Ring 76 members, and some of the people paid to see all three shows. "Joe Mystic," "Mr. Funtastic" (Dale Law), "Magic Mike" Stilwell, Greg Wauson, Alfonso Vasquez, and Matthew King all performed that day and Andrea, the Hitchcock Puppet Theater representative was so impressed that she asked if the club would be interested in doing a performance every other month on the last Sunday and I told her I would put it to a vote at the next meeting and get back to her. She said she would have more time to advertise the shows and give the performers more press. Andrea also mentioned that she has some puppeteers that could participate with us as it is one of the requirements for a

magic and puppet show.



"Mr. Funtastic"



"Joe Mystic"

The Puppet theater is a teaching and performing arena, so any one of our members who wants some stage time can participate. You don't have to be a semi-pro or a

professional magician. In fact to get to those positions all you need

stage time. Performing in front of a live audience can help all of us. I would be willing to MC our shows for anyone who want



25th with much more time to advertise. Give this some thought and we will talk about it more at the August 8th meeting.



Greg Wauson



"Magic Mike" Stilwell

Many thanks to Mark Booth who took all of these fabulous photos.

Matthew King



Alfonso Vasquez



## x Libris

Bo Garo D. Salisburo



Welcome to Ex Libris, my monthly newsletter article about your IBM Ring 76 Library in San Diego, CA.

'Ex Libris' (Eh-cks LEE-breese), means 'From the Book'. Generally, you will see this term used on bookplates to denote that it came from the library of its owner, "Ex Libris: Gary Salisbury."

This is where we talk about your library and do book & video reviews. Yes, your library! If you are a Ring 76 member in good standing, then this is your library! So keep in good standing by paying your dues on time.

### WHAT'S NEW AT YOUR LIBRARY?

Funding----50/50 Opportunity Drawing - There was no 50/50 Drawing at the July Installation Banquet.

Library Sales - We made \$135 in library sales at the July meeting's Silent Auction. Someone got some great deals!

Library Donations-----ON GOING Jeff Pearson donated 22 magic DVDs to the library.

Mike Stilwell donated 2 DVDs to the library.

Holly Baker donated some of Honest Sid Gerhart's original magic props to the library. Some will be held in the library and some will be made available to members to own a piece of Ring 76 history.

Gary Salisbury donated a box of magic items to the library that will be sold at meetings to raise funds for the library.

### IBM Ring 76 Media Server-----ON GOING

David Chiu and I are digitizing all our DVDs and VHS tapes to put on the IBM Ring 76 Magic Media Server. The process is slow but we are constantly adding new material each week. We currently have over 1,650 titles there for your viewing pleasure.

How about donating your DVDs to the library so everyone in the club can share them? You will still have access to them through the PLEX server - even on your smart phone!

Do you have a way to convert VHS tapes to MP4 files? We would love to borrow or accept a donation of a device to

Do you have an account on the IBM Magic Media Server yet? Why not? It is the best thing since Netflix!

### IBM Ring 76 Magic Library-----ON GOING

This month I purchased a highly recommended book on Spook Shows called Target: Midnight. (See a review below.)

#### Loch David Crane Estate -----ONI

I am serving as the contact point between Ring 76 and the Probate Attorney for Loche David Crane. Loche's hand written will specified that he wanted to leave the Ring some of his magic books. We are waiting for a Probate Court hearing before proceeding. The current will is being protested by some unhappy family members. This item is ON HOLD until we know more.

### BOOK REVIEWS



TARGET: MIDNIGHT

By: Amy Morris

Target: Midnight performers (which include spook shows, seances, mediums, etc.) have been around since man first walked upright so saving it all started with

the Abbott's Magic Company would be a falsehood. Kellar, Thurston, Blackstone, and many others all did some form of "spook show" magic in their acts but they were simply part of a larger magic act. However, three major catalysts happened in a 5-year period that really led to the conditions being right for the Abbott's Magic Company to have the success it did enjoy (and does to this day) with the Target: Midnight performers.

The first catalyst was in 1926 when Harry Houdini died on Oct 31st. Houdini began a crusade of exposing fraudulent mediums and their methods by duplicating their effects on stage. This generated an incredible buzz and soon other magicians were following suit. When Houdini died on October 31, 1926, his wife Bess began séances to try and contact Houdini in the afterlife. Houdini had given his wife Bess a code word so that if contact was made, she would know it was him and not a stunt. Thus annual séances by magicians to contact Houdini began and were very well publicized. These usually took place each Halloween - the day Houdini died.

See Ex Libris, continued on page 11



Ex Libris continued form page 10

The second catalyst was in 1929, when what many consider to be the first theatre spook show was put on by a magician called El-Wyn. El-Wyn called his show the "Midnight Spook Show" and in the show he would perform some standard magic along with some of the medium methods that Houdini had uncovered. The finale was the entire theatre being put into darkness similar to the seances of the day, and luminous beings and "spooks" would enchant the theatre. The difference between Houdini's seances and El-Wyn's seances was that El-Wyn did not expose the effects, nor did he endorse them as real. He simply did them to entertain the audience and the audience loved it! One thing that would remain constant (through the El-Wyn era to the Rocky Horror Picture era) was that the audience was young, mostly teens and young folks in their early twenties.

The third catalyst occurred in 1931 when the movies Dracula and Frankenstein were released and they generated a whole host of horror movies. Other midnight spook shows began popping up using the same format as El-Wyn, with psychic phenomenon, séances, and even hypnotism being used with standard magic effects. They all ended the same way, with the theatre in darkness and luminous spooks running about the place. It should also be mentioned that many magicians who worked the spook shows did so not because they loved horror, but rather to earn a living. It was the middle of the Great Depression and there were not many jobs for magicians available. Working a spook show was a pretty good way to start a career in magic.

It was in this environment that the Abbott Magic Company was born and while Abbott's was not created for the spook show or seance workers, it would find out very soon that there was money to be made if you could secure a good percentage of the magicians who worked the spook show circuit as customers.

1934 was the year that Percy Abbott decided to open a magic shop in Colon Michigan. This was risky business because the last magic shop to open in Colon Michigan - The Blackstone Magic Shop - had just closed. Percy was determined to make this magic shop different than the last, especially since the owner of the new magic shop - Percy Abbott - was the manager of the now closed Blackstone Magic shop.

To capture the Target: Midnight performers business, Percy decided to print a catalog for \$1,000 and partnered with one of his magic students Recil Bordner (who bought into the company for ... you guessed it, \$1,000) and they put their items on the market through a mail order campaign ... the gamble paid off!

This is the story of how the campaign, the performers, and the magic of the Target Midnight era.

### LIBRARY CHECK OUT PROCEDURE

Members may contact me 7x24 either by e-mail at librarian@ring76.com or by cell phone (voice or text) at 619-569-6035 to let me know what you would like to check out. (If you do not hear back from me within 24 hours, there may have been a technical problem so call me.) I will make sure the item(s) get to the next monthly meeting or you can pick it up at my home in Blossom Valley.

There is a limit of 4 items per month. You will need to sign the library card attached to the item along with your phone number. We ask that you return the items to the library on or before the monthly meeting for the following month (for example: If you check out a book at the July meeting, it should be returned on or before the August meeting). If need be, you can keep the book or video again if nobody else has requested it but you must sign for it again.

Our objective is to build the best magic reference library in the entire IBM organization world-wide but we need your help to do that. Please return over-due books & videos and donate regularly to your library. The library is here so YOU can learn how to perform magic. Use it!

Non-urgent communications will always be done via the Ex Libris-newsletter article while more urgent communications will be done by an IBM Ring 76 Library Gram emailed to:

ring76members@googlegroups.com,

Have a magical month my friends and we will see you again next month. In the meantime, email me with your thoughts about the library. I would love to hear from you. I would love to hear what you want the library to acquire next. Your input is critical for the library working properly for you.

### Gary Salisbury



Email: <u>librarian@ring76.com</u> Cell: 619-569-6035

Objective: To build the best magic reference library in the IBM organization world-wide.

(Disclaimer: Much of this material is my own but I sometimes copy material from other sources, with and without credit, and then merged with my own commentary to give you a better, more thorough source of information. Thanks to all who have knowingly and unknowingly contributed.)



## More Photos from the 2022 Installation Banquet



San Diego Ring 76, International Brotherhood of Magicians



# For the Next Meeting Items that you might be interested in.









