

MagiCurrents

San Diego Ring 76 September 2022 VOL. XXXVII # 9

August Adds up to Math-terful Magic



By Secretary Matthew King

The August meeting was on Monday the 8th and President "Magic Mike" Stilwell got things started promptly at 7:02 pm.

*Magic Mike" asked guests to introduce themselves. Guest David Quesada introduced himself and indicated he was a former Long Beach Mystic. Guest Ron from Florida introduced himself as a member of the Ft. Lauderdale Ring. "Magic Mike" announced the Secretary position is open if any members are interested, and Matthew is filling in. The Marie Hitchcock Puppet Theater was a success. We generated a total of \$321, and "Magic Mike" thanked those who volunteered. "Magic Mike" presented a "Tip of the Hat" award to member Richard Wira for assisting with Ring 76 and our meeting location. Richard could not attend the Installation and Awards Banquet held in July so "Magic Mike" had the pleasure of giving it to him at the first meeting of the new year. Jeff Pearson announced that James Kellogg has opened his warehouse in Escondido and has a great space that members should go check out. Gary Salisbury had guest Nick draw the tickets for the door prizes. Guest David Quesada won, member "Vic Terrific," and member Malcolm **Campbell** enjoyed winning tickets in the drawing. The opportunity drawing reached a total of \$88, which the winner of \$44 was guest Susan Callagy, and she donated \$20 back to the club.

The theme of our meeting was Math Magic. "Magic Mike" then turned

the meeting over to **Greg Wauson** who told members
the rules for the performances.

The first performer was Mark Booth. Mark selected Miguel Garcia. He spoke about math, and then he showed multiple metal pillars with different numbers going down each. He had Miguel position them in any order, then asked him to



Mark Booth & Miguel Garcia

add all digits with a calculator while Mark added them by hand using the "Persian Method." Mark was able to add up all digits by hand in only a few seconds. Then Mark had Miguel add yet another math pillar and was able to add them again. Then Mark did it with a 3rd one, using many more digits, and he was able to speed add them. Finally, Miguel removed one and rearranged them, and Mark predicted the digits on the non-visible side.

Next up was **Bob Meigs**. **Bob** showed an effect which was in our MagiCurrents newsletter twice, the last time in the March issue of this year. He chose **Anthony Spaise** and his son to assist. **Bob** poured out some coins of



different denominations on the table. He had Anthony's son select a certain number of coins. **Bob** showed a whiteboard with 3 predictions. The first was "As much as you", the second was plus "\$.55 cents", which that prediction matched, and the 3rd prediction was "Enough to make the total \$3.14". **Bob** explained it was a Pi effect using 3.14.

See Meeting Page 2

Ring 76 2022 Calendar

September 12th - Magician's Choice *
October 10th - Spooky Magic *
November 14th- Theme to be Announced
*Opportunity for Members to Perform
Direct any questions concerning the calendar to V.P. of
Entertainment, Greg Wauson.

Also See the *Trick of the Month* on Page 6

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Publisher - Richard Ustick, Proof Reader Sherry Luft Email us at Editor@ring76.com



Meeting from Page 1

Next up was **Greg Wauson**. He tossed a beach ball around the audience which landed on Anthony. Greg had Anthony view a list

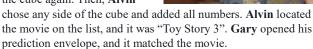
of trending searches online, and asked Anthony to choose a number between 1-100.

Greg demonstrated an effect using a predicted animal.



Our next performer was **Gary Dismukes**. **Gary** showed a 2x2 Rubik's cube with numbers on the faces. **Gary** asked **Sherry Luft** to mix it up, and then passed it to **Bob** to mix, then "**Joe**"

Mystic" mixed the cube. Gary handed Tom Owen-Towle a prediction envelope. "Joe Mystic" added up the numbers in the 4 corners, and Gary dealt down that many cards from the deck. The final card matched the card in the envelope. Then Gary had Alvin Revilas assist, and he showed a list of the top 250 movies. He had Alvin mix up the cube again. Then, Alvin



Michael Callahan was next on deck. Michael chose Sherry Luft

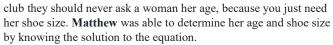


to help. She added some numbers, the year of her birth, which ended up matching a prediction in the envelope, then **Michael** included the number in an effect with a cell phone.

Next was Matthew King. He showed a whiteboard that read

"Etiquette Lesson". He had guest Susan assist. **Matthew** said he would show members an equation other than the classic "Gray Elephants in Denmark". He had Susan enter a math equation, which used her shoe size, and provided the final number. **Matthew** advised the





Next up was "Mr. Funtastic."
He had a guest assist, and he showed an assortment of Bingo cards. "Mr. Funtastic" had her think of a number, and then he put on a blindfold. He blindly showed her the Bingo cards one at a time and asked her if her number was on each of the Bingo cards. He was able to determine the number she was thinking of.



Next up was **Misha Osinovskiy**. He showed members a game they could play with friends which he had seen on Penn & Teller's "Play With Your Food." **Misha** showed three napkin balls. He placed two in his left hand and one in his pocket, but there were still three in his left hand, which he demonstrated again. Then, when he repeated it the last time, all 3 balls disappeared in a surprise finish.

The last performer of the evening was "Magic Doc" Jeff Pearson. He shared an effect from Harry Blackstone Sr. called "Card Trick

without Cards", which was a math equation used to divine selected playing cards. He had members shout out numbers, then shared the method on

using the numbers to enable him to identify the selected cards based on their chosen number.

Greg had all performers come back up and asked members to vote for the performer of the month and get the group picture for the newsletter. The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

IBM Ring 76 meets every 2nd Monday at Immaculate Conception Church in Old Town, San Diego.







August Math Magic Performers

Greg Wauson Matt King Misha Osinovskiy Michael Callahan

"Mr. Funtastic" Gary Dismukes Jeff Pearson Mark Booth

President's Message

Dear Ring 76 Members,

Please welcome our new Ring 76 Secretary, Anthony Spaise!

With this addition, we now have a full slate of Officers and Members at Large.

This months theme is "*Magicians Choice!*" So...If you don't want the Cups and Balls, That leaves the Chop Cup...LOL!

Trying out new material and routines is what our club is all about, do it here before you try it out at your next performance. If you

need help, just ask a fellow member.

See you in September...for Door Prizes, Opportunity Drawing, Fellowship, and Good deals on magic and books from our very own magic shop and Library!

Mike Stilwell

Ring 76 President





Magic Mike presented a "Tip of the Hat" award to member

Richard Wira at the August meeting for assisting with Ring 76 and our meeting location. Congratulations **Richard.**





Membership Changes Proposed for Ring 76

By James Thayer

The Board has been looking at making some changes to rules regarding Membership in Ring 76. Since this changes will require making amendments to the Ring 76 Constitution and Bylaws, these are changes that you, the current Members of Ring 76 will need to vote on to approve them.

In summary, these changes would add two new classes of membership, *Non-Resident* and *Life*, and modify an existing class of membership, *Honorary*. But before getting into the details of these changes, first, a little background on the current situation. As set out in our Constitution and Bylaws, currently Ring 76 has four classes of membership: *Active, Junior, Associate* and *Honorary*.

Active -- This is the default class of membership. Active members are over the age of 18. If they are in good standing, they can vote in Ring elections; and are eligible to serve on the Board and can serve on any committees established by the Board. They have all the rights and privileges that accrue to membership in Ring 76. They currently pay \$30/year in dues.

Junior -- This is a class of membership for persons between the ages of 12 and 18. They cannot vote in Ring elections and are not eligible to serve on the Board or committees. They do however have all other rights and privileges. They pay 1/2 the amount of Active members (currently \$15). Junior members automatically qualify for Active membership upon reaching the age of 18.

Associate -- Associates are persons who are spouses of Active members; designated drivers for Junior members; and bone-fide assistants an Active member. Associate members cannot vote in Ring elections and cannot serve on the Board or as committee chairs. They may, however, serve on committees and they do hold all other rights and privileges. Associate members do not pay any dues.

Honorary -- Honorary members are persons who have "...benefited the magical arts and Ring 76 or otherwise sufficiently distinguished themselves...". Honorary members can be nominated by the Board and must be ratified by the Membership. Honorary members do not vote nor are they eligible to serve on the Board or any committees. Honorary members pay no dues and continuation of their honorary status is reviewed by the Board annually.

The changes that the Board are proposing would add two new membership classes as follows:

Non-Resident -- An Active member of Ring 76 would become eligible for Non-Resident membership if they

move to a domicile that is 100 miles or greater from San Diego's Old Town Plaza. The intention is to encourage members of Ring 76 to stay connected after they move away from San Diego. Non-Resident members are eligible to vote and serve on committees but may not serve as a Board member or as a committee chair. They would retain all other rights and privileges. Dues for a Non-Resident member would be 1/2 that set for Active Members (or currently, \$15).

Life -- Life members is a "class" of membership that already exists informally, but the Board felt that it was time to properly define and codify this class of membership in the Constitution and Bylaws. Eligibility for Life membership is any Active member who has exhibited a high degree of dedication and personal effort to the benefit of Ring 76. Life membership would require nomination by the Board and ratification by the membership. Life membership would be identical to Active membership except in two key ways: first, they would pay no dues and second, they would remain members of Ring 76 until death (unless Life status is revoked through a formal disciplinary action.) Existing "Life" members (of which there are currently six) would be grandfathered into this class of Membership.

In addition, the Honorary Class of membership with be modified as follows:

Eligibility for Honorary membership in Ring 76 would be to those who "...contributed to the magical arts or has otherwise sufficiently distinguished themselves in a manner relevant to the benefit of Ring 76..." They may be nominated by any member, in good standing, of Ring 76 and would be ratified by the Board. (Currently, Ring 76 has one Honorary member, Holly Baker, granddaughter of Honest Sid Gerhart, our Ring's namesake.)

So what's next, you ask? These changes must go through comment period where the members of the Ring have the opportunity to ask questions and comment on the proposed changes to the Constitution and Bylaws. At the end of the comment period, the membership of the Ring must vote on whether to accept the proposed changes. If the membership approves, these changes would then be incorporated into our Constitution and Bylaws.





Magic in Bogota, Colombia

by Greg Wauson

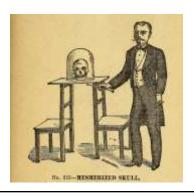
The first time I performed magic internationally was in 2012 in Kathmandu, Nepal, where I performed four magic shows in orphanages. That was also the first time I performed using an interpreter. They say music is the international language, but I found out magic is also. The kids loved it!

Several weeks ago I once again performed magic in a foreign country. I'm a member of Summit Point Church in Mira Mesa, where they announced several months ago a missions trip to Bogota, Colombia for one week in July. They invited anyone who'd like to go out every day to meet people on the street and talk with them about Jesus. I was interested right away and signed up. When they found out I'm a magician, they asked me to be ready to do some magic. I said I can do that, not knowing what the venue would be plus never having done any street performing. Would I be expected to draw a crowd? Also, although I've been studying Spanish on my own for several years, I'm still pretty much a gringo when it comes to carrying on a conversation, so I'd need an interpreter. What was I getting myself into?

With more questions than answers about the venues where I'd be performing, sizes and ages of the audiences, number of performances and whether the shows would be secular or gospel, I decided to go with the packs-small-plays-big approach and prepare to flex. Here's what I took with me: color-changing shoelace, napkins for Dan Harlan's Starcle, ring on rope, Soft Soap, Andre Kole's 3 ball trick, professor's nightmare, hippity hoppity half, a hand-held dye tube, a couple small silks and a few decks of cards for the four-torn-card trick.

We arrived in Bogota at 10 p.m. on Saturday, July 9. Early the next morning, the five of us from Summit Point Church, including Pastor Elisha, arrived at the Vida Nueva (New Life) Church for a team meeting. The Vida Nueva pastor explained we'd be going each morning to the Simon Bolivar Square to engage with people and in the afternoons we'd help with "pet festivals" in parks in big apartment communities.

The reason for the pet festivals is people in Bogota aren't having many babies, but tons of people have dogs. The Vida Nueva leaders decided to host pet festivals where they could meet people who were showing off their dogs on the red carpet or being spectators. The leadership asked us all to flex since any of the plans could change.





Greg and Ronald with a volunteer at a Bogota pet festival

Rather than my performing magic to draw a crowd in the Simon Bolivar Square, it was decided I would present magic for five or six minutes after the people showed off their dogs, while the judges were deliberating. I performed two effects at three pet festivals, which provided some variety and a change from watching dogs. Ronald was my translator each time and he was phenomenal.





Magician's Choice in September

Who says you can't make everyone happy? We may not always have your favorite theme for our meeting, forcing you to perform a type of effect that's pretty far from your sweet spot. Well, we've got good news for you! September is our "magician's choice" night! (Kudos to Mark Booth for coming up with the clever name.) So... anything goes this month. If you want mentalism, silks, cards, coins – you've got it.

We're always interested in having several performers participate and if you haven't done a trick for us for a while, or maybe even since your audition to become a member, consider showing us something at our next meeting. This is a performance meeting, meaning the members will vote on their favorite entertainer. The person who gets the most votes will be awarded a \$20 Amazon eGift card and the votes cast that night will count towards the Performer of the Year, which will be announced next July.

If you'd like to perform, contact VP of Entertainment, Greg Wauson at gw83@ring76.com.



What's Coming Up

September: Whatever type of magic trick you want to perform is fair game. You might even think of this as a magician's choice! Remember 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!

November: TBD – We'll keep you posted.

Trick of the Month Club #8 The Spell-It-Out Trick

By Bob Meigs

I promise this will be the last of *Mike Stilwell's* "key card" tricks. This is much like last month's trick, so both should not be performed in the same show.

Effect: Have a spectator pick a card from a shuffled deck, show it around, and *remember* it. You are turned away, so as do not 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 (and complete the cut).

You then point out that the spectator's chosen card is "somewhere in the middle of the deck." Spread the deck between your hands and sort through it for a couple moments. Collapsing the deck, you say "I can't find your card, but I know another way – we'll have to *spell it out*."

Ask the spectator to name their card (let's say it's the *six of clubs*, as an example). Spell it out, placing one card face down per letter. (S-i-x-o-f-c-l-u-b-s = 10 cards, in our example.) The 10^{th} card *will be* the spectator's chosen card.

Method: Just as in last month's trick, have the spectator select a card and place the card on top of the deck. You remember the "key card," and cut the deck multiple times. As you spread the cards from your right had to left, the spectator's chosen card is immediately to the right of the key card.

Starting with the spectator's card and moving to the left, count 1 card per letter. In our *six* of clubs example, this will be a total of 10 cards. Cut the tenth card to the top (move cards to the left of this 10th card to the bottom), and close the spread.

You can now lay down one card per letter as you spell *s-i-x-o-f-c-l-u-b-s*, and the last (10th) card will be the spectator's chosen card.



Grand Opening! New to San Diego! The Prestige Magic Lounge and Showroom ha

Use Promo Code:

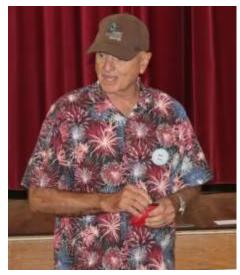
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Add-itonal pics from August's Math Magic



Gary Salisbury holds the opportunity drawing



Bob Meigs brings Pi to the table



"Mr, Funtastic" Unmasked



Mark Booth has Math Magic & he is not afraid to use it!

Thank you to This Month's Photographer

One again the fine pictures that adorn this month's newsletter come from the talented shutter of James **Thayer.** The Editors of MagiCurents cannot assemble this publication alone and thank all the members who contribute. - ed





Shavings From the Board

The Board of Directors for Ring 76 meets every fourth Monday of the month, via ZOOM, except for December. Members are welcome to join the meeting and give their input.



August 29, 2022

The August board meeting was held via Zoom and was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by President "Magic Mike" Stilwell. Also in attendance were First VP (Entertainment) Greg Wauson, Second VP (Membership) James Thayer, Treasurer Miguel Garcia, Sergeant at Arms David Chiu, Interim Secretary Matthew King, Librarian and Member-at-large Gary Salisbury, Social Media Rep and Member-at-large Mark Booth, member Anthony Spaise, and member Sherry Luft.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES & REPORTS

The previous meeting minutes were discussed and approved. The Treasurer, Miguel Garcia shared a spreadsheet with the Board Members. We received multiple PayPal payments for membership renewals, and \$30 in cash from a member. We have an impressive balance including the payment from the Marie Hitchcock Puppet Theater show and a thank you letter saying any of our magicians are welcome to perform there. Sergeant-at-Arms, David Chiu was out, but Magic Mike indicated he was informed there were 24 members and 10 guests at the last meeting. Gary Salisbury then gave the Library Report. **Jeff Pearson** donated 3 boxes of Magic Magazines, Sherry Luft donated 3 books to the Library, Nick Benevento donated a box of magic items, and Tom Owen-Towle donated some protective boxes for playing cards. Gary indicated we need DVD and VHS donations for the Plex server, and he added the teaching magic series At the Table Experience to the media server. He is trying to build up the mentalism portion of the library, and Gary was asked about any books on Seances. **Gary** also purchased DVDs for the Plex server. He showed a chart of the plex server usage. David is working on finishing up the last of the DVDs, and when he's done Gary will bring the server to the library for migration. He mentioned we are going to need more space for backup, and the estimated cost will be \$400-\$500. There are new documents available in pdf on Arcanum. **Gary** said we made \$68 from the opportunity drawing and \$47 in duplicate book library sales.

First VP (Entertainment), **Greg Wauson** indicated we had 9 performers for August's Math Magic themed meeting. **Greg** mentioned it seemed that people had a good time. The theme for September is Open Mic, to present anything, and **Mark Booth** suggested calling it "Magician's Choice." Second VP (Membership), **James Thayer** reported that we finished with 55 members last year, and currently 54 have paid dues which includes some new members.

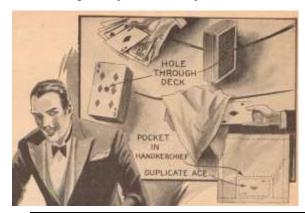
OLD BUSINESS

Matthew King provided a magic store update and shared his store report which indicated we made \$60 in magic sales from the meeting. Matthew indicated he spoke with Bob Meigs, and Matthew said he will start adding the items to the magic store website, and Bob Meigs will place an order if he would like anything returned. Matthew also discussed the Superior Quality Ring award. He will get it prepared and send it to the Board before the next meeting. Magic Mike asked Greg if there was any response to the letter we wrote to assist Mago Ruly with crossing the border to attend the meetings, and Greg indicated he has not heard from him.

NEW BUSINESS

"Magic Mike" welcomed Anthony Spaise as the new secretary. "Magic Mike" indicated he and Gary would be working on a template for the different board positions and job descriptions. "Magic Mike" indicated the templates will be available at the next meeting. James mentioned a few members moved away and still wanted to be members of the ring, and under the Constitution and By-laws we haven't had an issue with it. Ring 76 has more benefits now which were not present in previous years. We have always had a class of an "Honorary Member", but we treated it differently, and we have another class not defined, which is the "Life Member". James proposed to make some changes to the Constitution and By-laws, making six classes of memberships. [See more on this on Page 4 of this Issue] The Board discussed the radius of memberships, Non-resident members being ineligible to hold office, how to treat "Life Members" based on their contributions to magic, and their ability to vote. The Board discussed non-resident members and decided they must have been former active members of Ring 76 to move to non-resident status and decided the rate would be half of the active membership fee. James proposed that both "Life" and "Honorary" members shall receive the newsletter. The Board decided that if a non-resident member moves back, then the rate would continue until the next renewal period. Greg asked if we were going to continue sending a \$20 Amazon gift card for the Performer of the Month. The Board agreed to continue the award.

After **Richard Ustick** made his Newsletter requests from the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.





Ex Libris

Bo Garo D. Salisbury



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?

Library Donations-----ON GOING

- <u>Jeff Pearson</u> donated three boxes of magic magazines to the library.
- Sherry Luft donated three books to the library.
- <u>Nick Benevento</u> donated a box of magic items to the library.
- <u>Tom Owen-Towle</u> donated some card boxes to the library.

Thank you for your generosity in supporting our library. I hope this serves as an example for others.

We need your DVDs and VHS tape donations. They will get put on the Plex server so you will still be able to watch them or check the physical media back out. Please help.

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

We have recently added the "At the Table Experience" series to the PLEX server of 157 teaching videos by world renown magicians. Be sure to check out these excellent teaching videos.



On order: Do Spirits Return Lecture – ArcaneRelics.com



Description:

Do spirits return? Yes, in the same way, magic is real. The eye sees what the heart wants to believe.

CREDES QUOD HABES, ET HABES

(What you believe is real, is real).

So how can you set your seance apart from the others? How do you keep it mysterious, spooky, and spine-tingling, without it becoming a series of tricks and scares? Simple, make people laugh.

Anthropologists know that fear and laughter are both sides of the same coin, that our ancestors evolved laughter to release tension – and it's as strong in us today as ever. When you know how to bring an audience to the edge of their seats, make the hair on their necks stand on end, make them shake with fear... and then burst into sidesplitting, full-voiced, tension-relieving laughter, you'll have them in the palm of your sleight-of-hand. You'll also have them coming back again and again, and bringing their friends with them.

Learn from professionals – John Ferrentino, Joe Silkie, and Chris Sipes – how to skillfully maneuver audiences through the usual doom and gloom of your average seance, and allow them to laugh out loud in their own nervous excitement, building a plateau among the spooky scares from which to reach new heights. And of course, to ultimately build a bigger and better act.

The maestros of spiritual snickering and morbid mirth are Joe Silkie ("The Ninja of Magic") and Chris Sipes ("The Doctor"). John Ferrentino ("John Ferrentino")

This is the utilization report for the past 12 months:



See Library Page 10



Dave Chiu should have the remainder of the last donation of DVDs finished by next month. After that, I will take the server back and finish housekeeping on it then get ready to start the next batch of videos. I have another 200 to 300 videos to rip after we get reestablished back here. I want to thank Dave for all his help.

Future: We need to get the Fat Man server into production. We also need to upgrade the storage capability for all the new videos we are receiving and install redundancy with a Raid drive system in the event of a drive failure. I plan on purchasing either two 8TB or two 12TB drives and configuring them in Raid-1 configuration. The estimated cost of this project would be about \$400-\$500. I think the best way to do that is to install the Raid in the Fat Man server then migrate the data over from the Little Boy server. That would result in minimal down-time during the changeover.

IBM Ring 76 Magical Arts Library-----ON GOING

We have had some books and magazines donated so they will be inventoried and place in the library for member check-out. We also have a number of new magic documents in PDF that will be available on Arcanum.

Funding-----ON GOING

We made \$68 from the 50/50 Drawing & \$47 in library sales at the July meeting, then we purchase a video lecture for the Magic Media Server for \$65 leaving the library petty cash at \$529.15.

Loch David Crane Estate -----ON HOLD

I am waiting to hear from the court. Until then this issue is On-Hold.

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 Librisnewsletter 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 S alisbury



Email: librarian@ring76.com

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.)

