

MAGICURRENTS



HONEST SID GERHARTT
RING 76, SAN DIEGO, CA



APRIL 1989

FLASH - FROM IBM CENTRAL

As of March thirtieth the Sixty First IBM Convention is very close to being **SOLD OUT**. The planners anticipate a total **SELL OUT** by **MAY FIRST**, and the May **LINKING RING** will show a **SOLD OUT CONVENTION**. So -- you got about three weeks to get Registered, or you'll miss the biggest and best yet. Remember, there will be **NO** registrations at the door.

By the way, those of you who have volunteered to help with convention work (Ushers, Information Desk, Close-up Shows, etc.) must be Registered Convention Attendees. The volunteer work is in addition to attending the convention. Not a free ticket in. I have about fifteen folk already signed up on my Master Volunteer List, and could use a few more. Call me anytime at 569-0096 if you want to help make the convention even better.

Remember those Performer Numbers the **PREZ** mentioned in last month's **MAGICURRENTS**? Well, just so you'll have no excuse at the meeting on Monday, April tenth, this month's issue contains your **BRAND NEW** membership roster (one hundred and ten strong) **AND** your performer number, a three digit number in brackets that appears right after your telephone number. **MAKE A NOTE!** Forewarned is forearmed.

And Please, PLEASE, PLEASE, folks, check your address listing on the

roster - every single item - and advise me of corrections. We work darn hard to get **MAGICURRENTS** out, but we can't get it to you without your help. If your **MAGICURRENTS** isn't arriving (locally) by at least the Friday before a Monday meeting (or sooner), something is **WRONG**. Check those Zip Codes carefully; one digit off can cause up to two weeks delay and, unfortunately, our fragile little newsletter cannot survive **TWO** trips through the Post Office's automatic cancelling and shredding machine. **NUFF SAID**. Take a look right now and call me 569-0096 with any corrections.

Don't forget the next **MAGIC CASTLE SWAP MEET** in Hollywood on Saturday, April twenty second. This is always a fun day for lookers, bargain hunters, collectors and magic shoppers

in general. Well worth the trip up there. Doors open at about eight A.M., and it usually wraps up by one or two P.M.

And, lastly, but by far from leastly - **ANNUAL DUES ARE PAYABLE** at the April Meeting on Monday the Tenth. Now just to see if you are paying attention (and reading): At this one meeting only we will offer a **READERS REBATE** on your dues. Annual dues are now Twelve Dollars (see Board Meeting Report), but for this one meeting, and for this meeting only, if you approach our dedicated treasurer and say the magic words, "**READERS REBATE**", you'll get to sign up for the 89/90 membership year at the old rate of only Eleven Dollars. Everyone else pays the new annual dues fee of Twelve Dollars. See you on the tenth. Be Prepared!



Prez's Mezzage

What is the difference between the successful and unsuccessful magician? Talent? Original material? Experience? Maybe. I think that it's something else. It's part chutzpa, part sureness, part belief in oneself, part experience, and -- it is free. It is **CONFIDENCE**. The spectator can sense its presence in seconds.

CONFIDENCE is the sands of time. It is a richness, an improvement, a polish. It comes with reputation. After enough sands have passed through the hourglass people stop messing with you; history is ingrained; meetings, lectures and conventions are attended; the "outs" are automatically in place; there are no more surprises; and relaxation and freedom are present. At last, it's **MAGIC!**

Confidence is paid for with sweat and tears, disappointments, successes and time. And isn't it a great feeling that this is one thing that can't be "borrowed"? That's the difference!

See you at the meeting. A week early on April tenth.

MEETING
ON
APRIL 10th

HONEST SID GERHART
RING 76, SAN DIEGO, CA

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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MAGICCURRENTS

Editor.....J.P.Jackson
Publisher.....Frank S. Syren

MARCH MEETING

---what you missed.

Busy, busy month with the **George SANDS** lecture on the thirteenth and **MEMBER'S MAGIC NIGHT** at our regular meeting on March Twentieth. Longer than usual business meeting announced the official Nominating Committee for up-coming Elections composed of Magicgal **Vi FREE-LAND**, Longest-term member **Jim RILEY**, and ex-every-office **George EDWARDS**. And, by straw vote, we established that our Annual Installation Dinner should come after the IBM Convention in July. A quick official vote indicated that nearly everyone is in favor of a one-time purchase of Name-Tags for the entire membership. A speedy raffle gave away a dozen goodies from **BUMPER'S MAGIC WORKS**, and then the forty four members and nine guests sat back to enjoy **MEMBER'S MAGIC NIGHT**.

Loch CRANE started with a clever **NEEDLE-THRU-HYPNOTIZED-BALLOON** followed by the same needle

through the arm, and a nice Card-Stab with the deck wrapped in paper napkins and the chosen card impaled. **Frank SYREN**, our trusty Newsletter Publisher, arrived with one of his computers, hooked it up and amazed us all with a three-chosen-card-reversed-in-deck effect called **TOPSY TURVY**; while, get this, duplicating the same effect on his computer, accompanied by sound, color, music and a very visual graphic representation of the face-up (then face-down) deck with the chosen cards face up and each chooser's name under his chosen card. Frank (who wrote this program) used a Commodore Computer with a disk drive and would be very happy to provide a copy (plus another great trick and full instructions) to anyone with compatible equipment. Send him a blank disk and postage, care of me, and he'll respond. (He already has your order, Jessie Judge.)

Bob INGALLS, fresh from a very fun weekend at the **DESERT MAGIC SEMINAR XII**, did a **THREE CUP MONTE** using three paper cups, and the ultimate vanish of a half cup of water - Neat! Potential member **Dave SMITH** showed us his qualifications with great close-up work using **PAUL FOX COIN CYLINDERS** to create a very nice Half-to-Sponge-Ball transposition, followed by a nice handling of **PAVEL'S CIRCULATION**, the squares to circles packet effect. **Ruben PADILLA** did a funny version of **Harry ANDERSON's JUMBO MARKED**, and **Don HAL-BACH** with a beautiful **MAGIC HAND'S** re-release of **CUBA LIBRA** (Were you

watching, Buma?) This is a truly bewildering item, and **Don** gets all the credit in the world for having it down smoothly - 'cept for a small hic-up. (I can't get my **Con-radi** version to work at all!)

Michael MOSHER did a quickie slate prediction with our new **SGT-AT-ARMS, Sherry LUFT**. They both drew trees!! And **Chris CASTILLO** came on with a very clever vanishing silk into a previously cored and wrapped apple.

Next **Cal MAYERS** with a lengthy, **JUMBO POKER DEAL & REVELATION** with five spectators involved; and then, for his first appearance, **Stuart ZOLA-MORGAN**, with a very, very young son in rapt attention, did a very **CARD STAB THRU NEWSPAPER** and a very clean **VANISHING QUARTER IN HANK**. Teenager **Danny THOMPSON**, our juniorest member, was right up there with the big guys with his skillful **ACES TO QUEENS**, a sandwich card revelation, and a nice matching prediction effect. **Mike CALLAHAN** closed with a showy, and most professional, **CARD IN ENVELOPE** effect with a nice Hypnotic/Mental theme - a very classy presentation of as basic effect and a nice close to our **MAGIC MEMBERS NIGHT**.

April sixteenth is our Magical Pot-Luck Picnic, May is Elections and June is a get-ready-for-a-fun-first-week-in-July!

BOARD MEETING

The Board (a nice large quorum this time - thanks folks) met on April third with **Dick DALE, Mike STILWELL, J.P. JACKSON, Ed RAYMOND, Sherry LUFT, Ed FORSYTHE, Mark DIMENSTAIN,** and **Harry HARTMAN** present. In accordance with the By-Laws, the Board discussed recommendations for changes to the annual dues. A brief review of the Ring's fiscal year prompted the Board to approve a one dollar increase in annual dues for the coming 89/90 membership year. Effective April Third, 1989, annual dues are now twelve dollars. Members who have already paid in advance will not be charged the one dollar increase. For general information, approximately nine dollars of the annual dues covers newsletter printing and postage costs.

The Board reviewed those articles of the By-Laws concerning Honorary Memberships and examined criteria for such designation. The status and proposed continuation of existing Honorary Members was also discussed and reviewed without

resolution. The topic will be researched and continued at the next Board Meeting.

The Board examined the eligibility of possible candidates for office for the coming elections and discussed recommendations to be submitted to the Nominating Committee at the April Tenth Meeting. Second Vice President **Ed FORSYTHE**, by unanimous opinion, was selected to serve on the Board of Directors for the coming year. His matriculation will create a vacancy in the office of Second Vice President for which there are no known candidates. The Second Vice President is the Ring's Membership Chairman and is primarily responsible for promoting Membership growth. The Board and the Nominating Committee will readily accept the nomination of candidates for this office or the application of members themselves, seeking election to this office. Contact any Ring Officer or member of the Nominating Committee (**George EDWARDS, Vi FREELAND,** or **Jim RILEY**) if you know of a good candidate for Second Vice President, or wish to announce your own candidacy. The next Board Meeting will be on May First at **Dick DALE's** home.

SLEIGHTLY NEWS

☆ **Karl FULVES** has done another great job with his new book, "**SELF WORKING HANDKERCHIEF TRICKS**." Probably the best yet in his "self working" series by **DOVER** which includes "self working" Card Magic, Mental Magic, Number Magic and Table Magic. It offers some sixty one effects with five hundred and four great illustrations by **Joseph K. SCHMIDT**. While not entirely literally "self working" the handling described requires only a minimum of practice but, like anything, a maximum of presentation; and it's all good working material, suitable for any level of performer. Though I'm usually not a fan of the newer "how to" books, this one gets four stars. **Brad** has 'em in stock, and you can't beat the price.

☆ **THE GATHERING** now has **Dick DALE** on Thursday nights; **Craig STONE** and **Mike CALAHAN** on Friday; and **Craig STONE** again on Saturdays.

☆ Alas, good friend **J.C. WAGNER** is no longer with us (in San Diego that is). He has shifted his base to Phoenix, Arizona, in pursuit of new endeavors with his fantastic bar magic. **GOOD LUCK J.C.** Send us your new address when you get a chance.

☆ From **Stan ALLEN's INSIDE MAGIC** there will be a new

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)

thirty minute syndicated TV show, **LIVE AT MAGIC ISLAND**, featuring close-up and stage magic from the Newport Beach, **MAGIC ISLAND**. Four shows will be taped in early May. No air dates are set. Currently at **MAGIC ISLAND** are **Glen FALKENSTEIN** and **Frances WIL-LARD**, April sixth thru Ninth, and again April thirteenth thru sixteenth.

☆ And again from **Stan: Dean GUNNARSON** will appear on the *SPECTACULAR WORLD OF GUINNESS* tentatively scheduled to be shown on April Twenty Ninth and again on May Sixth.

CROSS TALK



- At seven thirty on Monday, April Twenty Fourth, **Jack MARKLEY** will host the first local chapter meeting of the *FELLOWSHIP OF CHRISTIAN MAGICIANS* at WEST COAST BAPTIST CHURCH, 1525 Buena Vista Drive, Vista, CA. This will be primarily an information meeting open to questions and answers about the F.C.M. and Christian Magic in general. Call **Jack MARKLEY** at 724-6558 in Vista for further details. And for those traveling WAAAAAY North, *MASTERMIND SEMINARS* will hold their Second Annual *NORTHWEST COUNTRY*

Personality of the Month

Story by Frank S. Syren



MY DADDY IS A HOCUS POCUS MAN!

Ever since I was the tiniest kid

I marveled at the things Daddy
did.

By just waving his hand in the
air

He'd pick out a Parrot or a
Belgian Hare.

Candies, Lollipops, things like
that,

He could just shake 'em right
out of the hat.

It wasn't long until I found
He was handy to have around.

My Daddy is a Hocus-Pocus
Man!

What a man!

- A. Seymour Brown

That song was written many years ago by *A. Seymour Brown* just for a little girl who was born **Jeanne Jacqueline Willardson** in Caribou, Maine, and who now lives in San Diego, CA. She happened, however, to be the daughter of **Howard Franklin Thurston**, one of the greatest magicians of this or any century, and **Brown** was a famous songwriter whose credits included

MAGIC JAMBOREE AND SWAP MEET-AUCTION on May Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh, 1989, in Brush Prairie, Washington. Thirty Five Dollars gets you three days of impromptu close-up magic, on-going *SWAP MEET TABLES*, an auction, and an "original trick" contest. See me for details if interested.

- Courtesy of **Stan ALLEN's INSIDE MAGIC**: **Dale SALWAK's** fourteenth edition of "STARS OF MAGIC" is at CITRUS COLLEGE in Glendora on April Eighth, and at PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY, Malibu on April fourteenth and fifteenth

J.P. Jackson
J.P. Jackson
569-0096

the 1911 hit song, *OH, YOU BEAUTIFUL DOLL*. JANE ("Jane Girl" as Thurston, her adoptive father, preferred to call her) was born to show business. Her mother, **Nina Leotha Fielding**, had been one of the famous *Florida Sextette* before joining the Thurston show, and Jane had been little more than a toddler when Leotha married Thurston. From as long as Jane can remember Howard kept assuring her "someday, if you like, you can join me in the show." Her entire life was pointed toward that objective.

Of course, at first Jane was too young to travel with the troupe, and she stayed in a convent in Baltimore, a "nunnery" as she used to refer to it. And when she became of school age she was enrolled in *RAYSON*, a private school for girls in New York City. In addition to her regular school work she was given singing lessons, elocution lessons, dramatic lessons and, of course, dancing lessons. One of her dancing instructors was **Bill "Bojangles" Robinson** who taught at his own exclusive dancing academy. She was one of only about five white pupils enrolled there.

Another of her schools was **Ned Wayburn's**. Everyone in show business went there; People like **Marilyn Miller** and **Ann Pennington**. And, of course, when summer came, Howard and Leotha came home. Thurston had bought a house in Beechurst, Long Island, right across the street from the former home of *THE GREAT HERRMANN*, his hero and inspiration in magic. As a boy he had seen the Herrmann show in Albany N.Y. on his way from the *MT. HERMAN SCHOOL* in Massachusetts to the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia where he was going to study for the ministry. He had had an overnight layover in Albany and, after seeing the show, spent the night wrestling with the desire to become a magician rather than a minister. By morning he had firmly resolved to stay with the ministry, gone to the ticket office in the railroad station and asked for a ticket for Philadelphia. However, when it came time to board the train he discovered he'd mistakenly been given a ticket for Syracuse, the destination of the Herrmann company. Responding to destiny, he boarded the train, even investing in a Pullman ticket so he could sit and watch Herrmann throughout the trip. He, apparently, expected the great man to constantly perform magic. Of course, he was disappointed, but his feet

were firmly planted on the path he would follow for the rest of his life. One of the highlights of each summer at Beechurst was a benefit which was held on the Thurston lawn at the end of the season. Many of their neighbors participated: people like **Harry Richmond**, **Ann Pennington** and **OLSEN and JOHNSON**, the stars of the future, long running super-hit, *HELLZAPOPPIN'*. When Leotha and Howard were married the magic in the show was first class, but the staging was old fashioned. With her Broadway experience she gradually modernized the scenery, the lighting and the staging, besides generally tightening up the performance. She set up a two pronged program to catch and eliminate "glitches", stage waits, and other similar defects in the show. At every performance she sat in the audience with a clipboard noting every incidence where improvement was needed. In addition a prop



table was set up down in one with a pad and a pencil attached with a string. Every member of the company was enjoined to note any untoward event on their way off the stage. Immediately after the show a critique was held right on the stage. Thurston would chair the meeting and every note on the pads would be discussed and remedies and improvements were solicited from the entire company. Only then were they free to go out to supper or to bed, as they chose.

Such careful attention to detail was especially important in a large show, and the Thurston show may have been the largest magic show ever to go on the road. Although Thurston advertised himself as Kellar's successor, a privilege he had gained back in 1908 when in a ceremony in the old Ford Theater in Baltimore Kellar had formally "turned the mantle over to Howard, he had retained very few of the original effects. Kellar had featured only four or five major illusions whereas Thurston featured no less than eighteen. The scenery and equipment required three railroad box cars, and there was a company of forty, plus livestock.

Jane made her debut on the show in September of 1928. As she says in a tape made some time ago, she isn't sure who was more nervous, she or her father. Her performance began with the song, "*MY DADDY IS A HOCUS-POCUS MAN*", the first stanza of which heads this article. The first season she did five minutes in each of the three acts, the next season ten, and from then on, in her own words, "a whole lot more". One of her favorite illusions was one that was called the "*CREO*" illusion on the show; the creation of a live woman from a plaster head and a flowing gown, apparently in full view of the audience. Her patter included the phrases, "A rag, a bone and a hank of hair - create the lady who does not care." Another great favorite was "*BLACK ART*", which she did with **Herman Hansen**. One amusing incident about the show which Jane likes to tell is the story of **Lord Pickwick**. Lord Pickwick was a monkey. Not the only monkey on the show by any means, but the pet of the company, particularly Jane's mother. The wardrobe mistress made special clothes for him: little jackets, trousers and hats so that he always looked very "spiffy". He also got the impression that he owned the show. Whenever he made his appearance from his production box (which was his "job" on the stage) he came out chattering, talking as the company referred to it. After having his say to Thurston from the vantage of the magician's arms, he would begin searching the audience for Leotha. Since the glare of the spotlight blinds anyone trying to see the audience he would use his little hand to shade his eyes which would dart all over the theater. When he spotted his quarry he would make a lunge to get out of Thurston's grip, and if he weren't securely held, leap across the stage, scale the orchestra pit with one jump, and take the most direct line to his beloved - even if it included the tops of the heads of members of the audience. The experience must have been quite traumatic for some of the more timid spectators. Once in Leotha's arms he would nestle down contentedly and begin a staccato conversation with her, presumably telling her all about it. There he would remain until an usher was dispatched to capture him and return him to his cage backstage.

Another incident, which was a source of great merriment for the entire cast, occurred at one of the show's Chicago engagements. Werner "Dornie" Dornfield, a well known Chicago magician for many years, was a great friend of Thurston's, and the two loved to exchange practical jokes at one another's expense. One of the illusions on the show was "*THE VANISHING WHIPPET*". (The Whippet was a popular model automobile of the day.) The trick required Jane to drive the car (adorned with a bevy of showgirls) onto the stage whereupon her father would make it disappear. While the car was still offstage Dornie slipped into the front seat beside Jane. When Howard first beheld the car he could see that there was someone other than a showgirl in the front seat, but he couldn't see who it was. In the true show business tradition he wasted no time investigating, but expeditiously vanished the car - Dornie and all.

Despite all the travels and the busy, busy work of putting on such a large show, Jane thinks of the next six years as the happy days. However, in April of 1934 she lost her mother, and on Oct sixth, 1935, Howard had a crippling stroke on the stage of the Kearsse Theater in Charleston, West Virginia. Jane and **Herman Hansen**, Thurston's stage manager, continued the show for the rest of the season, honoring the contracts which had been signed, but it was the end of an era. The show played no more at the end of the 1935/1936 season, and Thurston, himself, passed away on April 13, 1936.

Last minute stuff: "*KIDS WEEK CALENDAR*"

APRIL 22nd, 10 AM Craig STONE Magic Show
San Diego Central Library
830 E St. Info: 236 5838

▼ Tue, April 25th ▼

East San Diego County Clown Alley,
meeting and performance, today. Formed
with the purpose of promoting the art and
skills of clowning for children and adults.
Buck Knives, Inc. 1900 Weld Blvd., El Cajon.
7 p.m. Information: 582-9727.

& 11:00 AM
Sandy Jay-The Sailor Clown
Marketplace at the Grove
Hiway 94 at College Ave.

April 30th, 4:30 P
Save a Child Magic
Show; Scottish e
Center. Info: 277-
2237

IBM RING 76's

FIRST ANNUAL MAGIC

POT-LUCK PICNIC, COOK-OUT & GET-TOGETHER

HOSTED by: **THE STILWELLS**

SUN. APR 16th - noonish

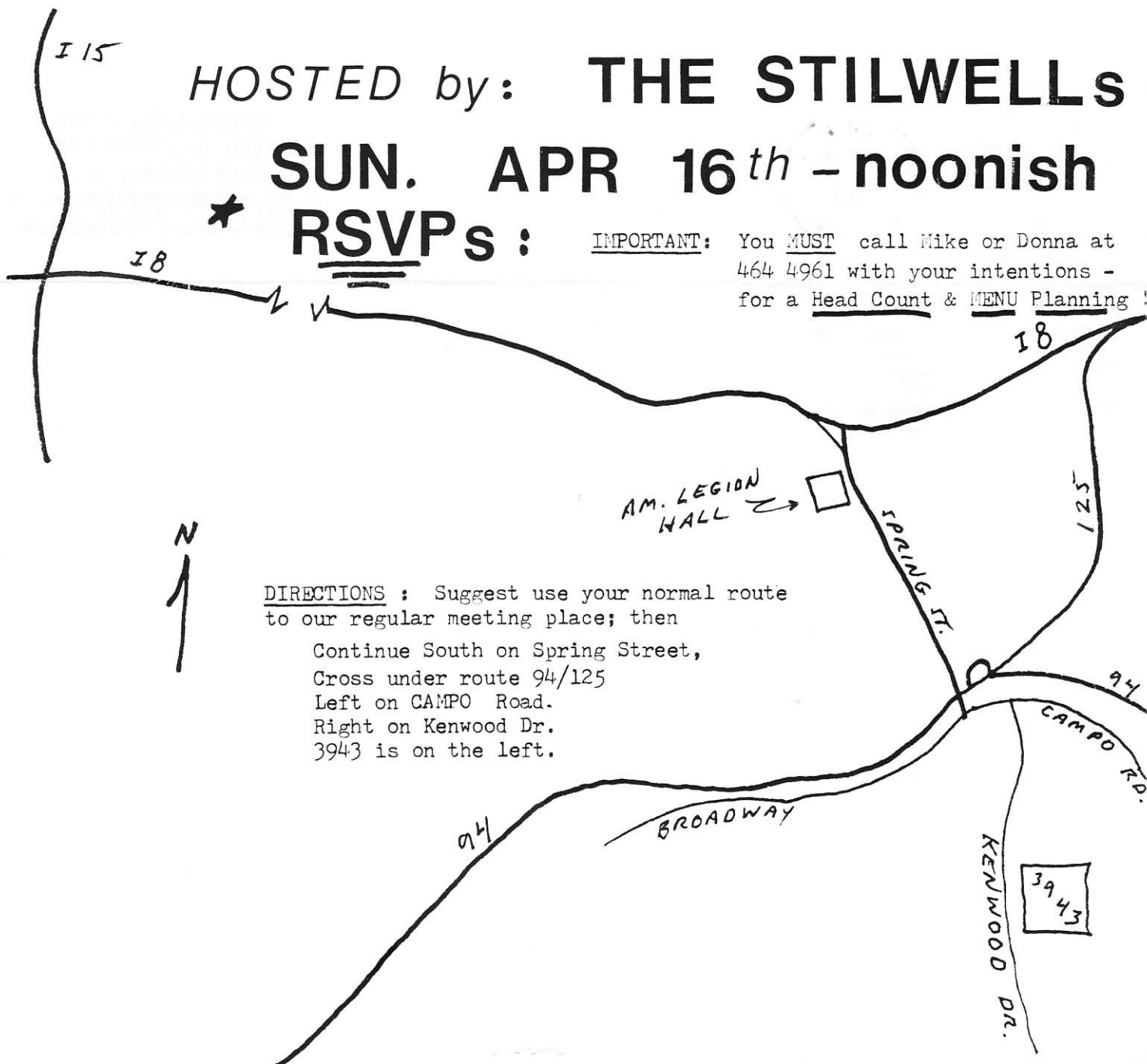


RSVPs :

IMPORTANT: You MUST call Mike or Donna at
464 4961 with your intentions -
for a Head Count & MENU Planning !

DIRECTIONS : Suggest use your normal route
to our regular meeting place; then

Continue South on Spring Street,
Cross under route 94/125
Left on CAMPO Road.
Right on Kenwood Dr.
3943 is on the left.



MAGICURRENTS

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