



# MagiCurrents



## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

**S**ome of you may not even recognize the uncanny resemblance the graphic on this page has to our scheduled lecturer Tom Mullica. Go figure.

Thanks to everyone who helped to make our April meeting's swap meet a success. This includes the folks who offered their magical wares to the rest of us as well as the ones who left with a lighter wallet. Items for sale represented many different types of magic: kid stuff, packet tricks and stage and mentalism effects. There were also lots of books and videos. You never know what you'll find at one of these events so it's best to bring a lot of cash. One guy bought seven videos from the Bill Monroe/Paul Thomey selling team. (But I told my wife the next day and she got over it pretty fast.)

The feedback I received was that the swap meet without the auction worked well. Normally when we feature a swap meet we conclude the meeting with an auction. What we realized from the past couple of auctions was that most of the money had already changed hands at the swap meet before the auction began. But we're not tied to doing something just because it's always been done that way so we

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## RING 76 BOARD MEETING APRIL 15, 1997

by Gary Schwartzwald

Don Soul was kind enough to host the April board meeting. In attendance were **Bill Monroe**, **Don Soul**, **Greg Wauson** and **Gary Schwartzwald**.

The board reviewed how membership renewal went at the April meeting. **Tom and Karen Kasner** did a very professional job collecting dues and providing laminated membership cards. Given time, I am sure that they

will out-do the IBM membership card. A big thank you to Tom and Karen. By the end of the April meeting we had 31 paid members. Not a bad start. Please pay your dues at the May meeting.

The May meeting will have **Tom Mullica** as our lecturer. The meeting time will be at 6:30 as usual. The lecture is free to paid members and will cost \$15 for non-members. The board agreed to charge only \$5 to guests under the age of 18. Please don't make us check I.D.'s at the door. The nominating committee should bring forward a slate of officers in May.

In June the board plans to have a teach-in. Hopefully this will be by one of our local magicians. If not, **Bill Monroe** will once again provide an awesome video teach-in. He really does have some videos left after the swap meet. After the

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as a board decided to forego the auction this time. Let us know your thoughts on not including the auction as well as any other ideas regarding future swap meet meetings. The main faux pas of the evening was when yours truly didn't accept the \$5 per table seller's fee from the several sellers who held it out to me. I remember

saying, "No need to pay now; we'll take care of that later in the meeting." And then I forgot. So, sellers, please pay your five-buck-per-table fee at the next meeting.

Another highlight of the meeting was the audition by Sumit Dua and also the performances by members of the youth magic club headed by Rick Bruce. Thanks to these young men for providing the evening's magical entertainment.

A special appreciation goes to Tom and Karen Kasner. Tom has been doing much beyond his position as sergeant-at-arms. He printed Ring 76 membership cards and then at our April meeting brought a laminating machine to protect them from spaghetti dinners. Notice that your card shows your local member number. Use your card proudly at club functions when needed. The first of these will be at our May meeting.

Speaking of that, Tom Mullica will be presenting his lecture at our next meeting, on May 12. Please bring your card to simplify the sign-in procedure. There will not be a pre-lecture workshop which was tentatively planned. Probably the 4:45 starting time made it difficult for many to

... a special appreciation goes to Tom and Karen Kasner. Tom has been doing much beyond his position as sergeant-at-arms...

attend. The lecture is slated to start at 6:45. It will be general seating so it's first come, first served. This event is free to paid-up members (dues were due at the April meeting). If you have not paid your dues yet, you may do so the evening of the lecture. And if you are not currently a

member but wish to join Ring 76, you may pay the \$20 local dues at the meeting plus \$40 for the first

year's international IBM dues and then get into the lecture for no charge. You will, however, be required to perform a short magic show audition for the club at one of the future meetings we will arrange with you.

We tried but were not able to determine the content rating (G, PG, etc.) of the Tom Mullica lecture. He is a bar magician and some material may not be suitable for children. We do want to encourage young magicians to attend our meetings so your board has decided to charge just \$5 for non-members under 18 to attend the Mullica lecture. (Non-members over 18 will be charged \$15.) But at the same time we encourage parents to be sensitive to this issue. If you bring your child to the lecture and feel the lecture is not appropriate for your youngster please feel free to leave; you will gladly be given a refund.

We want to assist you to become a better magical entertainer. Let us know how we can help you!

Until next time,

*Greg*

*BOARD MEETING from page 2*

teach-in there will be a magician discussing the importance of presentation of your magical effects. In June there will be an election of board officers for the 1997-1998 magic year. As I've said before, vote early and vote often.

July will bring our installation event. We expect to have the details for you by the end of May. If you have suggestions please contact a board member.

Diane Lane is our newsletter editor and board member Don Soul has offered to assist Diane if needed. We look forward to seeing you at the May 12th Tom Mullica lecture.

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## DUES ARE DUE

IT MAY ALREADY BE  
TOO LATE FOR YOU  
TO BE THE FIRST ON  
YOUR BLOCK TO GET  
A RING 76  
MEMBERSHIP CARD

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BUT DON'T BE LAST!

\*\*\*

PLEASE BRING YOUR  
INTERNATIONAL IBM  
MEMBERSHIP CARD  
WHEN YOU RE-UP

## Jargon Watch

*(Ed. note: This is the final installment of an article graciously contributed by Jon Racherbaumer containing descriptions of terms commonly used in magic. We regret the inadvertent omission of this credit in last month's newsletter.)*

**Roxing** -- v. Unethically photocopying of magic books, manuscripts, notes, letters, and other copyrighted material -- especially if the material is rare, limited, and expensive. Like computer hackers, roxers want "information to be free."

**Shade** -- n. In cheating parlance it means "Any kind of cover or distraction for a cheating move." For example, a cheater will peek the top card of the deck as his free hand pretends to look at the face of a tabled hole-card. It capitalizes on the commonsensical notion that spectators cannot simultaneously focus on two, diverse things. In magic, "shade" is a subtle form of physical cover or dissimulation.

**Swindle** - n. In the real word, this refers to deceitful acts or schemes to defraud people out of their money or assets. In cardwork, it refers to a great discrepancy. Paul Curry put it best when he wrote, "To varying degrees, al magic is, of course, a swindle -- a pretense that something is so when it really is not so. However, there are instances when what is pretended is such an outrageous fraud that, from a performer's standpoint, the trick takes on a special charm." A swindle is brazen, brilliant, and deliciously deceptive. A perfect example is Curry's "A Swindle Of Sorts" (Paul Curry Presents - 1974)

**Synergism** - n. A lethal combination of actions or

individual effects when taken together increases the effectiveness of the single actions and individual effects. Not only are the effects enhanced and heightened, but the overall, ultimate Effect is magnified and strengthened. Great magic routines are synergisms.

**Technical Tipoff** -- n. A specific condition or sequence of actions that reveal the sleight, subtlety, or principle being used. Lay people are rarely aware of them, but there are obvious to fast company. Examples: (1) If a retrograde analyst sees the magician perform a Faro Shuffle and then cuts the deck exactly in half and lets a spectator Riffle Shuffle, he's probably applying the Gilbreath Principle. The sequence is a technical tipoff. (2) If the performer inserts a card from the back end of the deck, he's probably performing Tilt. Technical Tipoffs can be Throw-offs.

**Throw-off** - n. (1) A move, condition, or action-sequence strategically designed to mislead or deflect retrograde analysis. These are primarily used to fool magicians, but certain feints will also fool astute lay people. Subtle throw-offs are fake Technical Tipoffs. (2) Any action or procedure that induces the audience to wrongly perceive what is actually happening or to incorrectly surmise the consequence of these actions. Experts often use throw-offs to mislead and befuddle Fast Company. When it is applied to lay people, it is called "leading them down the garden path."

**Tip** -- v. To divulge the secret and modus operandi of any trick, especially one known to only a few. It's derived from the phrase, "Tipping your mitt," which figuratively means "to expose one's hand in a card game." Before it was taken up by the

## SAN DIEGO'S YOUNG MAGICIANS

Mary Brown's after-school magic club for 5th and 6th graders is in full swing! Attendance at the every-other-Thursday group is over 20. A few of the kids entertained us at the Ring 76 meeting in March. Please call Mary at (619) 560-5099 if you would like to check it out or teach the kids a trick. Thanks to Rick Bruce for his recent visit.

\*\*\*\*\*

Also, call Rick Bruce at (619) 299-1875 for more information about a new magic club for San Diego youth. This club is also experiencing excellent attendance by enthusiastic young magicians. Ring 76 was privileged at our April meeting to have several of them magish for us.



magic fraternity, "tipping" referred to "revealing cheating secrets." n. A group of spectators attracted to watch an effect, demonstration, or swindle. The "tip" is your customers.

**Underground** -- n. Refers to magicians primarily known to each other; who are extremely well-informed about the latest trick, sleight, subtlety, idea -- especially if it is unpublished, relatively uncirculated, and rare. They are usually not celebrities or high-profile players, and prefer relative anonymity while cherishing the circumscribed secrecy of what they share. They still communicate through letters and telephone conversations. They were on the cutting edge of Xerox-trading (roxing) in the early Seventies, although the advent of fax machines, E-Mail, and computer bulletin boards make them more visible and easier to access. v. To apply "shade" to the action sequence.

**Vidiots** -- n. Magicians who rely solely on video-tape instruction to learn and understand magic. They are prime players in the business of making illegal copies to trade with other vidiots.

**Wired** -- n. A preset condition where cards are arranged to achieve powerful goals. The card cheat confided: "I was wired going in..." The magician said: "The deck was wired for Stay-Stack!"

- Jon Racherbaumer  
(Joncards@aol.com)

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WHICH HIRE MAGICIANS!



I.B.M. Ring 76

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*SUBSCRIPTIONS to MagiCurrents are \$10 per year for out of the area magicians.*

*MEMBERSHIP QUESTIONS should be sent to the club treasurer, Bill Monroe. All Ring 76 members must be members in good standing with the International Brotherhood of Magicians.*

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Ring 76 Online

<http://www.websmart.com/ring76>

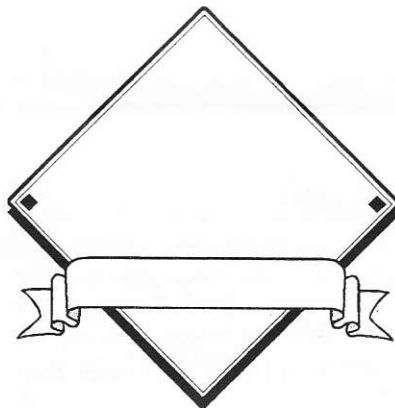
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Support Ring 76 and get a web page too. Contact Greg Wauson at (619)566-5654 for details.



A plaque like this could be yours! Have you considered becoming an officer in Ring 76? We are looking for a few good people to make our magic organization all it can be. Join the team which makes a difference!

\*\*\* Paid Advertisement \*\*\*

# JOHN FEDKO LECTURE

## MONDAY, JUNE 23, 7:00 PM

### \$10 IN ADVANCE     \$13 AT THE DOOR

Greg Wauson's home:  
11007 Red Robin Pl., San Diego  
(619)566-5654

John Fedko will be presenting his recent Magic Castle lecture. Refreshments will be served.

### RING 76'S APRIL MEETING

by Gary Schwartzwald

The main theme of our April meeting was our annual Ring 76 swap meet. Dick Ustick provided us the opportunity to purchase books and videos, while right next door to him Paul Thomey and Bill Monroe sold only videos and lots of them. As expected, J.P. Jackson and Dick Dale each had a table full of a wide variety of magic and books. Marcus Day had a great number of old hardback books for sale. Diane Lane, Roy and Betty Armstrong and Jeff Smith each had a table full of tricks that they were happy to perform and sell. Hopefully sales went well and everyone got some magic to practice with.

President Greg Wauson welcomed members and guests to our swap meet. He then introduced Treasurer Bill Monroe

who presented Gabriel Travers with a certificate for his new Ring 76 membership. Monroe then presented Bonnie Love with her International IBM membership. Rick Bruce announced that the Casa de Amparo is having an event to benefit needy kids and would like Ring 76 to provide magicians on April 27th. The Ring has provided magicians in the past to help.

June is election month for Ring 76. Dick Ustick, Diane Lane and Bonnie Love volunteered to be the nominating committee. Wauson reminded the membership that our May meeting will be a Tom Mullica lecture.

Sumit Dua then performed a membership audition for the Ring. He started out with flash paper that turned into a silk and then had a magic wand magically appear from the silk. He then did a card to the pocket trick followed by a card to the zipper trick

followed by a card to someone else's pocket trick.. This last one he did with his hands tied. It is a pleasure to welcome Sumit as our newest member.

Rick Bruce then introduced some members of our Junior Magicians Club. First was Josh Hall who did a smooth rope routine, an uplifting Zombie act and then he closed with a fine display of card manipulation. Next up was Misha Osinovskiy and his assistant interpreter Joshua Jones. Misha and Joshua did a comical routine which included paper streams from each of their mouths an solid egg bag routine and finally a silk vanish into a real egg. Our last performer was T.J. Gan. T.J. did a great job with a card routine that included Twisting the Aces, Color Changing Aces and a One at a Time Aces trick. We enjoyed all the magicians and hope to see them back performing soon.



## Scott's Thoughts

by Scott Wells,  
A.I.M.C.



### Free For All

To Eat or Not to Eat . . .

. . . That is not always a minor question. When we book shows, we are frequently offered a free dinner. Should we accept them, should we eat them, when should we eat them, and where should we eat them? How one answers these questions is one of the keys to maintaining a professional image.

Aside from your fee, one of the "incentives" that is frequently offered to us when working a banquet show is a free meal. Party planners throw in the meal as if it has real value so they can justify knocking off more from your fee (and adding more to theirs.) The client offers the meal because it has a cost to him and therefore he expects it should have a cash value to us. It is also a nice gesture on the client's behalf to offer the meal; however, they may have other motives for offering the meal. They may want to spend some time with the magician getting to know you or they may just want to be seen with the "celebrity" of the evening.

We as magicians have an aura of mystery about us and we should maintain that aura. That is to say that what we do is unknown and mysterious and always surprising to our audiences (or should be.) Our audiences don't know what to expect. They don't know what we intend to do nor when we intend to do it and most don't even know what we look like. They want to

see us so they can make a first impression and feel more comfortable.

On a related topic, some say that magicians should not display all of their props too early but instead introduce them as we intend to use them. This prolongs the suspense since the audience has no idea of what to expect next nor how many things that we intend to bring out. Moreover, they wonder what we will bring out next. The other school of thought says that if we put out all of our items at the beginning of our show, then the audience (who has naturally short attention spans) wonders what we intend to do with that next piece of apparatus. If they get bored with one effect in mid-presentation (let's certainly hope not!), then they can turn their attention to the other item(s) on your table and wonder what we intend to do next.

Some performers have characters which require make-up or special attire that may take some time to put on. As a result, they obviously cannot socialize with the audience before the show since they have to put on their costume and get into character. If they do have the time and they do choose to mix with the crowd while in character, then their presentation could be diminished. The audience will see the performer not as an actor but as one of the "normal" people just like them. Likewise, even the performer who doesn't wear special attire can be viewed as "another guy who just knows a few cool tricks" rather than a true wonder-worker if he chooses to mingle with the crowd.

I recognize that many performers, particularly mentalists and

pickpockets, prefer to do some pre-show work that involves talking to some of the people whom they may later use during their show. This can't be avoided but it can be done surreptitiously without everyone seeing you mingle. For example, you could ask your host to suggest who to use or you could request that certain people come back stage prior to your performance.

Another performing situation can put you in a position where you do some strolling magic during cocktails and before your after-dinner show. Everyone gets to see you and get a feel for your performing style/personality. This obviously can't be avoided but can work for your benefit as people want to stay after dinner and look forward to your performance. You can also promise to use someone later in your stand-up/stage show or to complete a trick that you began with them during cocktails. Another advantage is that you can later use their names to your benefit. A tip here is not to "lift" something from someone before dinner with the intent of returning the item(s) during your show because they may leave early

***"We as magicians have an aura of mystery about us and we should maintain that aura."***

and you're left with the goods in an embarrassing situation!

The difference in sitting at the head table and strolling (or doing some pre-show work) is that you are doing something as opposed to doing nothing. In one case you are perceived as a real magician because you are doing something fun and/or mysterious. In the other case you are sitting there like everyone else and eating just like them. In both cases you are being pre-judged before your "big" performance. In one case



you can prove that you are a magician before you take the stage whereas in the other case the audience has to accept that you are what the emcee says you are.

If the performer chooses to eat at the head table with the organizers before the show, then the audience has plenty of time to draw conclusions from your appearance on whether they are going to like you. Moreover, you become more "human" as you answer the usual series of questions like "when did you get started in magic?" and "how long have you been doing this?" and "does magic pay a living wage?" and "do you know that guy who made the Statue of Liberty vanish?" In answering these and a horde of other inane questions, you bring yourself into their world and make yourself more human like them and . . . well, fallible. Not only that but you also don't get to enjoy your meal nor possibly even get to finish it before it's time to prepare for you show.

***"... you bring yourself into their world and make yourself more human like them and . . . well, fallible."***

I also found that it's better to work on a moderately empty stomach than full one. It certainly makes the after-show dinner that much more enjoyable and it can be consumed in a much more relaxed atmosphere at my own pace. Furthermore, I don't have to worry about belching during my show. And that brings me to another whole issue about drinking alcoholic beverages at any time throughout the evening.

Having an alcoholic drink in the presence of your client and/or their guests makes it appear that you're on a break or that you are

less professional. Even a soda looks like a mixed drink when served in a glass like those being served to the rest of the group and people will add that image of you holding a drink to their first impression of you. It's kind of like a cop on duty who can't accept a drink because it may impair his ability to react, among a variety of other reasons. Another thing to keep in mind is that the value of each drink often equates to nearly one fourth of the meal so there is a cost to your client. Without getting pious about the virtues of drinking and what it can do your performance, let me say that I do occasionally take a drink but I try to consume it behind the curtain or somewhere out of sight from my audience.

One way of handling a dinner invitation from a party planner is to say that you prefer to accept the money as part of your fee rather than the meal. When being booked directly by a client and offered a meal, you may take one of several options. You could accept the meal but ask to

take the meal backstage or in some remote location away from the rest of the

group. In this case you still have to worry about finishing it before you have to prepare for your show time. In this case you should make it clear to the maitre de that you need to be served first and as early as possible. Another option is to accept the meal after the show and ask that it be put in a take-out container for later consumption. If you must eat with your host, then ask that you be seated near someone who already knows you and who is less likely to ask you a barrage of questions.

My preferred answer to being offered a meal is to request a

voucher or gift certificate for a later date. This can then be enjoyed at your convenience or, if this is an out of town engagement, then you can offer it to a potential client in the area as a "thank you" for considering you for a booking in their area. Of course, a chintzy way of handling it would be to tell your client "no thanks, but you can give me the value of the meal as a tip after the performance." I wouldn't recommend this latter option but I just want to cover all bases for some of those whom I know are reading this column.

So, how have you handled the question in the past and how will you handle it in the future? The answer may determine how professional you will appear.



## ABOUT THE MAY 12 MULLICA LECTURE

- 1. free to Ring 76 members**
- 2. at our regular meeting location**
- 3. planned starting time is 6:45**
- 4. \$15 for non-members (\$5 if under 18)**
- 5. please bring your Ring 76 membership card**
- 6. yes, you can join Ring 76 that night and get into the lecture for no extra cost**

### About Ring 76...

- Members must be at least 12 years old
- Non-members may attend three Ring 76 meetings at no charge (except for special events)
- Local dues are \$20 per year (under 18 years is \$10)
- Membership in the IBM international organization is required. IBM dues are \$40 the first year. You will then receive "The Linking Ring" magazine, one of magic's best publications.
- Prospective members are required to perform a five-minute magic audition at a Ring 76 meeting
- Ring 76 members receive the monthly Magicurrents newsletter and may attend all monthly meetings at no charge.

### What's Happening

**Monday, May 12, 6:45 pm:**  
**Regular meeting. Lecture by Tom Mullica. (Special event... Non-member charge: over 18: \$15, under 18: \$5)**

**Tuesday, May 20, 7:00 pm:**  
**Board meeting at TBD.**

**Monday, June 8, 6:30 pm:**  
**Regular meeting. Annual election will be held. There will be a hands-on teach-in plus a tentative talk by a special guest**

**Tuesday, June 16, 7:00 pm:**  
**Board meeting at TBD.**

**Monday, July 14, 6:30 pm:**  
**Ring 76 installation event. Details are now being arranged. Dinner and entertainment are planned.**

### We Hear to Help

No that is not a typo. Your board values your input and appreciates all feedback. We are currently especially interested in hearing your thoughts about lectures. We desire to bring you the best in magic lectures and want to know who you'd like to see. Also, would you like to have more than the two lectures per year we have had? Bend the ear of your closest board member.

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 San Diego, CA 92126



Roy & Betty Armstrong  
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