



# MagiCurrents

Honest Sid Gerhart Ring 76

Volume XIV No. 6 June 2000

Message from the Julie  
Dale  
President

Okay, it's going to be the month of June which is celebration of Father's Day. Now let's move beyond and clarify father for a magician. Father = mentor?? Father=advisor?? Father=teacher?? STOP!! Who was your magical mentor, advisor, leader, supporter, teacher. Go back with me and remember who is that one person who gave you your initial inspiration?

Have your skills advanced? Have your experiences been enriched? Stagnation is not what we should accept. Bring something skill-reaching to your repertoire. Now take a chance and start preparing for next year's contests. Hey, that's right. We are going to experience some really good magicians who have taken that skill-reaching experience for our stand-up competition. It's refreshing and gratifying when you do succeed. Yes, I am the encouragement if that is what you need. Now go, if you're lucky, to that magical father even if he/she is mythical, and prepare. Seek the challenge that you thought you could never accomplish.

If you need further lessons or instructions, contact a Ring member. But be prepared to show us your wares. Why? Because we like you.

President

## Alphonso and Tyrone's Live Magic and Comedy Show by Don Soul

A comedy and magic show production took place May 14<sup>th</sup> at MCRD spearheaded by Ring 76's own Alphonso Vasquez and presented the talents of local area stand-up comedians and magicians. This first-ever event ping-ponged, ala tag team style, between comedians, most of whom were from Southern California comedy clubs, and magicians from both The A.C.E.S. and Marine Corps magis. The recreation room where this extravaganza was held consisted of half bowling alley (closed for the evening), and half performing area. This housed a nicely decorated stage with the seating ranging from folding chairs to lounge tables and even couches!

You'd better believe it was a tough, though not critical, crowd to play to, considering the two front rows of chairs were occupied by children. The remainder of the audience were military families from all parts of the country. One can imagine what thoughts must

have raced through the minds of Rob Magno, Rich Maryn, Kristen Marie McCarthy, Mark Neuberger and Padie Winters as they tried to adapt their adult stand-up comedy routines on the fly. It was a challenge, indeed.

The magicians, Peter Katz, Andrew, Herb Zuniga, Mr. Magoo (Alphonso) and Eddie, were well received and their magic ranged from videotape prediction to parlor mentalism to a full-blown levitation finale. In all, this free, two hour evening of fun was a great way to spend Mother's Day and, Alphonso, we salute you!

## Board Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm, at the home of president Julie Dale. All Board members were present.

The first order of business was the **June 12** meeting. It will feature the annual stand-up competition. We invite all members in good standing to perform for the Ring. Even if you only have one good trick, or a routine you want to try on the best audience you will ever have. This year we will hold the show in the big room of the American Legion hall, on the stage. **Contact Dick Dale if you are going to participate.**

Jeff Smith has offered the use of his unique portable sound system. Secretary Richard Ustick will contact Jeff to confirm this and make arrangements for its use. This is a wireless mike system that Jeff manufactures and sells. It is light, durable, and easy to operate. Those who are performing in June should find this helps their presentation.

The June meeting will also feature the presentation of candidates for Board of Directors by the Nominating Committee. Those interested in running for any of the elected offices can still contact Sherry Luft, or Roy and Betty Armstrong. Any member in good standing can run for any office. We will hold the election after the presentation. We will also ask members to vote for the "Member of the Year." This is the member who you feel has made the most significant contribution to the benefit of Ring 76 in the last year. All members may vote, so if you are not going to be at the meeting June 12, send your vote to last year's Member of the Year, Gary Schwartzwald (6135 Hass St., La Mesa Ca 91942). Ballots must arrive by June 12. We will announce the winner at the installation banquet in July.

See **Board Meeting** on Page 3

## May Meeting

For this month's pre-meeting, Ring 76 was pleased to have San Diego's A.C.E.S. (Artists Circle of Enchanting Sorcery) This is a very talented group of young magicians under the supervision of Ring 76's own **Rick Bruce**. **Josh Kay**, **Michael Feldman**, and **Chris Wilson**, entertained the audience with a varied selection of card magic, coin magic, and mental effects. **Josh Kay** used this opportunity to audition for membership to Ring 76. He passed with flying colors and was voted in unanimously. Welcome Josh.

The meeting was called to order by **President Julie Dale**. Sergeant-at-Arms **Ralph Mauzy** sent his regrets. The first order of business was the introduction of guests. Among them were **Scott Brunkow**, brother-in-law of treasurer **Gary Dismukes**, and **Augie Arnstein**, from Ring 50, Washington D.C.

The next order of business was the presentation of membership pins and certificates to new members **David Silverman** and **Ismael Sanchez**, by VP of membership, **Tom La Chance**. Ring 76 welcomes these newest members to our organization.

President **Julie Dale** announce the formation of the nominating committee for the upcoming election of officers in June. **Sherry Luft**, **Roy** and **Betty Armstrong**, have agree to be the nominating committee. They will present the candidates for officers at the next meeting. Any member in good standing who wishes to be a candidate should contact the committee.

The American Legion, our meeting hall hosts have asked for entertainment help at their Sunday breakfasts. Magicians who wish to entertain should contact **Julie Dale**.

**Alfonso Vazquez** announced his new Magic/ Drug awareness show at the Marine Corps Recruiting Depot. If this show is a success, Alfonso is hoping to take it on tour to marine bases around the country. Ring 76 wishes him luck.

The final order of business was the treasury report from **Treasurer Gary Dismukes**. The current membership renewal has netted \$400, and with new membership and fund raisers, the treasury stands at \$1200. This puts us on a firm financial footing. With no other business, the business meeting was closed.

Tonight was money magic night. Members were encouraged to bring their favorite monetary magic tricks.

First up guest **Augie Arnstein**. Calling up **Betty Armstrong** and **Lyn Javier**, Augie produced eleven dollars and gave it to Lyn.

Double checking, he asked her to count the bills. Only ten were found. Betty was asked to count her bills and only ten were there also. Lyn gave three bills to Betty, who should have had thirteen, but when Augie counted them, only ten could be found. Now we know why he works in Washington D.C.

Next up was **Jeff Marcus**. He showed us four, very large, one dollar bills. When a twenty was added, they all turned to twenty dollar bills. Remove the twenty, and they were all one dollar bills again. Then with a close-up pad (borrowed) and four quarters (also borrowed), Jeff show a smooth MATRIX.

**Michael Feldman** then took the stage and impressed the audience with a series of coin flourishes, manipulations, and vanishes. Then, with the help of a spectator, Michael show us the invisible Ben Franklin, that vanished and returned at his will.

**Bryan McDaniel** got up and invited the audience to stand in their seats. He informed us that not only would we see better, but it would, "improve his angles." **Sherry Luft** came up and helped Bryan with an impressive display of "Scotch and Soda," with the vanished coin eventually ending up in a covered shot glass.

**Alfonso Vazquez** closed the evenings entertainment by calling up guest **Scott Brunkow**. Scott picked a card and signed it with the ever popular "Sharpie." The card was replaced in the deck but appeared under a wallet on the table. The card was torn into for pieces but then was resorted save for the



one piece held by Scott.

With that the evenings entertainment was closed and the meeting was adjourned.

### *June is Election Month !*

This month we will be electing our new **Board of Directors** AND voting on **Member of the Year!** If you can't make it to the meeting you can still vote for member of the Year by contacting last

year's MOY, **Gary Schwartzwald**. Call, write, or e-mail Gary by June 12.

**Vote today, and Vote often!**



**Julie Dale**- President  
2447 Nielsen Street  
El Cajon, CA 92020  
(619) 562-7379  
DickDale@juno.com

**Tom La Chance**- Membership VP  
447 Nila Lane  
El Cajon, CA 92020  
(619) 441-3747  
Magiccat@Hom.com

**Dick Dale**- Entertainment VP  
2447 Nielsen Street  
El Cajon, CA 92020  
(619) 562-7379  
DickDale@juno.com

Treasurer  
10397 Avenida Magnifica  
San Diego, CA 92131  
(858) 549-8717  
dismukes@cts.com

**Richard Ustick**- Secretary  
6040 Bob St.  
La Mesa, CA 91942  
(619) 463-2407  
rustick@flash.net

**Ralph Mauzy**- Sergeant-At-Arms  
P.O. Box 1224  
Alpine, CA 91903  
(619) 390-7494

**Don Soul**- Member-At-Large

## Board of Directors

10068 Branford Rd.  
San Diego, CA 92129  
(858) 484-3492  
McGefty@earthlink.net

**Gary Schwartzwald**- Past Pres.  
6135 Hass St.  
La Mesa, CA 91942-4312  
(619) 697-9468  
gschwartz@Grossmont.k12.ca.us

# A Broken Wand for Helen Gerhart

"Now don't show me how you did that, it takes all the fun out of the mystery." Those were the words of Helen Gerhart one evening many years ago at a Ring 76 meeting as a magician tried to show her how he did a very puzzling card trick. Helen had been around magic, magicians and clubs for magicians ever since she married her husband "Honest Sid" Gerhart in 1947.

Though she never did a magic trick, or even wanted to know how a trick was done she was the best friend magic and magicians ever had. She never missed a meeting of the Society of American Magicians Chapter 40 or International Brotherhood of Magicians Ring 76. She was the "den" mother to hundreds of magicians who were members of those organizations over the years.

When her late husband was active in the various San Diego magic clubs he demanded that refreshments be served at every function and Helen always seemed to be in charge of making sure there was cake and coffee for everyone. In between those duties she would give some of the newer club members motherly confidence in their performing abilities. She was always there to give a word of encouragement or a suggestion of how to make a trick look better.

Helen Gerhart would spend her entire evening being the audience for a group of magicians who wanted you to pick a card, think of a number or cause a woman to float in thin air. She would laugh loudly at our corny jokes and applaud all of our humble efforts wildly.

This wonderful woman and friend of magic died on April 30<sup>th</sup>. After her first husband Sid Gerhart died in 1972, Helen remarried and drifted away from magic. But every time I would see her at a public function or while doing a news story somewhere in the city she was full of questions about various Ring members and wanted to know if I was continuing to practice my magic? Then she would say: "You know magic is just like playing the piano, you have to practice all the time." Helen Gerhart brought real magic to all that knew her. Though she left our circle of friends many years ago her heart was always with us and her beloved first husband Sid who lived and breathed magic 24-hours a day. Thank you Helen for bringing that special quality that was you to our lives and Ring 76.

**Jack White**

MagiCurrents is published monthly by  
 \$criptions. Ridgely, IL. Editor. All  
 \$ rights reserved. Some images copyright  
 www.arttoday.com.

Membership Questions should be sent to the club treasurer, Gary Dismukes.

All Ring 76 members must be members in good standing with the International Brotherhood of Magicians.

Articles, contributions, and letters should  
be sent to: MagiCurrents  
6040 Bob St.  
La Mesa, CA 91942  
rustick@flash.net

## PEP needs you!

Performance and Entertainment Program for Adult Care Facilities is looking for a few good magicians. PEP visits more than 75 facilities (serving some 1500 residents) throughout San Diego County. With their growing roster of dedicated volunteers, who give their time, talent, and energy, they enhance the lives of many isolated elderly San Diego residents. The faces of these fine people light up like candles, reflecting the joy they receive in your fine performances.

If you would like to help PEP provide quality entertainment and enrichment programs for the elderly give them a call at **(619) 593-7377** or email them at [pep@pepcc.org](mailto:pep@pepcc.org)

**pepadult@aol.com**

# Terry Godfrey and the San Diego

## How much fun can you have?

## June 15- July 5

## Infield Kid's Stage

**11:30      1:00      2:30      4:30**

Come out and support your fellow

Ring 76 members



# Houdini The

# Man Who Sold

# Magic Secrets!

## A history lesson of exposing magic

By Jack White





Today's magic magazines are filled with letters to the editor about a virus called the "Masked Magician" of Fox Television fame and his continuing exploits of exposing the secrets of magic. This kind of exposure is nothing new to our art. Exposure has been going on for years.

Above is the bannerline for a special Sunday supplement that appeared in newspapers across the country in the mid-1920's. Each week Harry Houdini perhaps the most famous magician and escape artist of all time edited a special section of the paper devoted to exposing and teaching magic tricks.

Magicians across the nation were irate because Houdini exposed the popular "Thumb Tie" penetration effect and the "Torn and Restored Cigarette Paper" trick and presented a descriptive view of several large stage illusions and how they worked, effects that were not in the Houdini Show.

The syndicated section on magic was put together by a group of editors and writers for the New York World newspaper. It was simply titled "Red Magic Section" and was printed with red ink thus giving it the crimson name. The New York World would run the section first in the Big Apple and then syndicate it to newspapers across the country.

As this magic section was going together at the "World" newspaper offices someone had the bright idea of why not invite the most famous name in magic to put his

## Houdini

Continued from page 4

Magic as an art form was able to live through the "Red Magic Pages" and it was able to go

name on this new section. The editors thought if only we could get the Great Houdini to become the editor of these pages they would become even more popular. No one was more amazed than the newspaper when Houdini said: "It's a deal". But it turned out to be a deal that Houdini would agonize over for the rest of his life.

After five issues of the Red Magic section edited by Harry Houdini The Exposure Committee of the Society of American Magicians made a call to Houdini's home and demanded that he cease exposing magic's guarded secrets.

The SAM's Exposure Committee was formed in October of 1922 when Mr. Houdini published an article in "Popular Radio Magazine" revealing how mediums used a talking tea kettle to dupe their clients. Houdini then went on to explain in the article how a special radio was build into the teakettle. By putting the spout of the kettle to your ear someone in another room would whisper a message to the listener.

That article especially outraged a performer named David P. Abbott who invented the talking teakettle and was making a very good living performing it. Abbott did more than "whisper" his complaint to the SAM about the Houdini article.

Now the SAM was faced once again with their former founder and past President giving away secrets. The question was asked of Houdini "Why?"

In the fall of 1924, Houdini was looking for new ways of keeping his name in front of the movie and theater going public. To be given the title of "Editor" or the Red Magic Section to be published in newspapers in every major city in the country was too

on long after Houdini and many other efforts to expose the secrets of magic. As magicians we must always be looking for a new way to present a rising card effect, levitation or any magic trick that has been exposed to the public.

much for Houdini to turn down. That is why he did it.

The Red Magic Section was composed mostly of puzzles, brainteasers, jokes, optical illusions and a trick or two. The trouble began when the tricks described were popular mysteries used by many vaudeville artists of the day.

After sixteen weeks of publishing the Red Magic Section Houdini had had enough from his fellow magicians and the pressure from the SAM forced him to withdraw from the enterprise. The New York World had apparently tired of the project as well and it was abandoned.

In the aftermath two things had happened. The secrets to clever magic tricks had been exposed to the general public. The reputation of a famous magician who presented these exposures was tarnished. If anything good came out of the effort it was that the "Red Magic Pages, edited by Houdini" have now become collectors items. In big letters across each page was written: "SAVE YOUR MAGIC SECTIONS EACH WEEK....ANSWERS TO THIS WEEKS PUZZLES NEXT WEEK." Apparently a lot of people saved them because they are still around today.

Its doubtful that video tapes of the Masked Magician and his exposures of magic will become collectors items in the future. But the fall out from his giving away of secrets will be remembered as something magicians will have to deal with for generations to come.

See Houdini on Page 5



7:00pm. As always, we invite all members to information. Or call Dick Dale or Dick attend.

## Board Meeting

continued from page 1

The installation banquet was the next order of business. We will hold it **July 10**, at the American Legion Hall, in the banquet room. The American Legion will provide catering. Terry Lunceford will provide entertainment. Tickets for the dinner and show will be \$15 per person, \$25 for couples, and children less than 15 will pay only their age. Terry Lunceford will also be giving a lecture Tuesday, July 11, at the Legion Hall. This will be free to Ring members with guests paying only \$10. Gary Schwartzwald will be contacting ROP for flower arrangements, and Richard Ustick will check with party stores for "magic" related decorations.

The American Legion hall will need a head count as soon as possible. Members are encouraged to notify Gary Dismukes or Tom La Chance **before July 6** if they are coming, and how many guests they are bringing. You can pay at the door, but reservations are **strongly** encouraged.

The next order of business was the awards to be presented at the Installation Banquet. Dick Dale will make the trophies for the close-up and stand-up performer of the year. Ralph Mauzy will provide the certificates for those who participated in each of the contests. The Ring will also provide plaques for this year's board members, and the Entertainer of the Year.

The vice-president of Membership Tom La Chance reported that Ring 76 currently has 60 paid members. Those who have not yet sent in their dues are encouraged to mail them to Treasurer Gary Dismukes. We will send final notices in the next newsletter.

The final order of business an update on our arraignment with the American Legion to use their hall for our meetings. Dick Dale reported that the arraignment was currently under review by the American Legion and that we may need to look for a new meeting place in the future. The Ring membership will be kept up to date, as events develop. Suggestions for a new meeting site, if needed, will be welcomed.

With no further business, the meeting as adjourned. The next meeting will be June 26, at the home of secretary Richard Ustick, at

**Have You Paid Your Dues?**  
**It is not too late.**  
**Send your dues today to**

**Treasurer Gary Dismukes**  
**Don't let this be your last**  
**MagiCurrents**

Ustick.

## June is Stand-Up Month



June 12<sup>th</sup> will feature our annual Stand-Up competition. This year we will be in the big room of the American legion Hall. Ring 76 will feature a fine roster of talented performers. If you have not sign up yet contact Dick Dale. If you have a great act, or a trick you want to try, come preform. Ring 76 is the best audience you'll ever have.

**Ring 76 Installation**  
**Banquet**

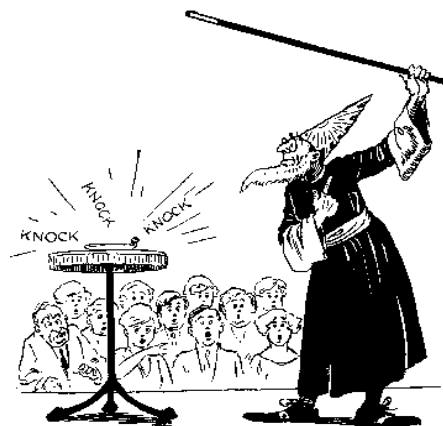
Know a young boy or girl interested in Magic? Grossmont College for Kids may have the class for them. Beginner, advanced, grades 2-8, there is something for them all. Summer schedule starts June 26. Call (619) 644-7653 for more

**July 10  
American Legion Hall**

Only \$15 each, \$25 for couples, and children under 15 pay only their age. Food provided by American Legion catering, entertainment provided by Terry

Lunceford. Will be installing the new officers, and announcing the winners of the Close-up, Stand-up, Performer of the Year, and Member of the Year.

See you there.



## Upcoming Events

June 12

Pre-Meeting: Election of Officers 6:30  
Stand-Up Competition  
Board Meeting June 26 at the home of  
Richard Ustick 7:00 pm

American Legion Hall- La Mesa

July 10

American Legion Hall- Large Room  
Installation Banquet \$15 a head \$25 a couple  
Entertainment by Terry Lunceford

July 11

Terry Lunceford Lecture- American Legion Hall  
Free to all members, \$10 for guests

**See you at the Stand-Up Competition  
June 12**

June 2000

Volume XIV No. 6

**MagiCurrents  
6040 Bob St.  
La Mesa, CA 91942**