



MagiCurrents

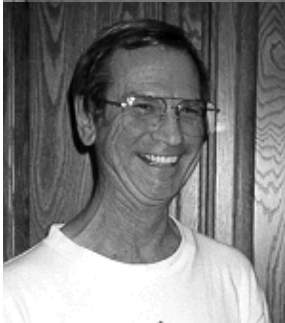
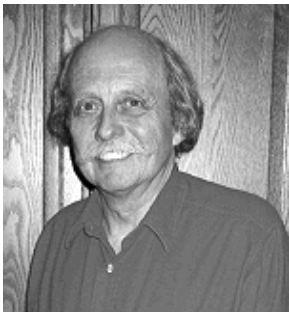
Honest Sid Gerhart Ring 76

Volume XV No. 6 June 2001

Special Election Issue

New Candidates Join Race for President & Board of Directors:

In what can only be called a surprise announcement Dick Dale submitted to the board of directors his list of candidates for President and Board of Directors for Ring 76 for the coming year.



Don Soul

Dick Dale

Dale announced he is a candidate for President and will be nominated at the June, general meeting. In addition Dale issued his choices of candidates for the Board of Directors, stating these people have aligned themselves with his way of thinking and will work well with him as President. Those people will also be nominated at the June meeting prior to members casting their ballots.

Dale has been President of Ring 76 once before in the late 1980's, he has continued to remain active in ring politics and is currently the 2nd Vice President. He believes he is the best person suited to lead the ring in the coming year.

The Dale slate includes his wife Julie Dale as Treasurer, 1st Vice President Mike Stilwell, 2nd Vice President Gary Schwartzwald, Secretary Michael E. Johnson, Sgt at Arms, Sherry Luft, Member at Large Roy Armstrong.

It should be noted that Dale is the current Territorial Vice President of the IBM in Southern California, and will continue in that position whether or not he is elected as President of Ring 76.

Don Soul who was officially nominated from the floor as a candidate for President at the May meeting. Don has served in nearly every job as a member of the board of directors for the past 9-years.

Don views himself as a team player and as such wants to bring change to the ring meetings by incorporating more magic and giving each member more of a voice in ring activities. He told MagiCurrents; "with a strong board I can lead the ring without tension and arrogance, or stonewalling the members."

Don has had much experience in a leadership roll. He was the first Chairman of the Board of Directors of the National Caricaturist Network. As such he has led the way to much innovation for that organization.

Also officially nominated for the board of directors at the May meeting were Jack White, Secretary, Richard Ustick, 1st Vice President, Diane Lane, 2nd Vice President, Sumit Dua, Treasurer, Gary Schwartzwald, Sgt at Arms, Sherry Luft & Bob Pozner, Member at Large.

If Julie Dale is not elected treasurer on her husband's slate, then she will automatically assume the position of immediate past President on the board of directors.

Because the Dick Dale slate of officers will not have been nominated until the June meeting they will all be write in candidates on the ballot. The only printed names will be those officially nominated at the May meeting.

An Editorial: **Issues for our new President of Ring 76 and Board of Directors**

It is imperative that the new President of Ring 76 instructs the Board of Directors to re-write and amend a new set of Bylaws, and for the ring members to receive a draft of those bylaws as soon as possible so they may be ratified by the general membership. To function successfully a set of approved bylaws is essential.

It is a disgrace that the ring has operated without a set of bylaws since 1995 or perhaps even longer. It would be hoped that this issue would be given high priority and as such be presented to the general membership by the August meeting.

One change that has been offered to the new bylaws would be starting our fiscal year with the installation of new officers. In other words membership dues would not be collected until June of each year giving the new president and the board a full treasury to start a new administration.

The treasury of Ring 76 has for years been on the anemic side. In an effort to change that it is suggested that budgets be drawn up for our largest annual expenses. The publication of this newsletter, rent for a suitable hall or meeting place, how much will be set-aside for ring sponsored lecturer's and how much will be allotted for special programs. Living within budgets makes us more responsible to the dues paying membership.

Ring 76, will be responsible for a night before event at the opening of the IBM Convention in San Diego in July of 2002, the success of that event will be insured if the new President and the board begin working on plans for that activity with the entire membership in the immediate future.

With the International Convention coming to our city there is a built in opportunity to attract new members to our ring. It is hoped that our newly elected officials will be aggressive in bringing in new members and offering them an atmosphere in which they want to stay for many years as active members.

The immediate reactivation of the Ring 76 Magic Book Library, putting advertising into the MagiCurrents newsletter to cut down on the expense of producing and mailing are early steps toward building a better ring.

But the most important efforts of our new president and board of directors will be listening to the members and making this their magic club where each member has a voice.

The Editors of MagiCurrents:

<p>The following actions were taken in May by the Ring 76 Board of Directors. (See Board Meeting pg. 3)</p> <p>Floor candidates nominated and seconded at the May general meeting, and floor candidates nominated and seconded in the June general meeting, will be considered candidates for office to be voted upon at the June general meeting.</p> <p>Any person nominated and seconded for more than one office must declare which single office they will run for. This declaration must take place before the elections in June. Anyone can refuse nomination for office. (See Letters to the Editor pg. 12)</p> <p>On a one time only basis, and based upon her election to the office of Treasurer, Ellie Dale would be allowed to forfeit her Past President status. She would, upon election, assume the duties of Treasurer, and be replaced as Member-at-Large, by the candidate for Member-at-Large that has received the highest number of votes without previously being elected.</p> <p>Election ballots will be collected and counted by, Gary Dismukes, Bob Ingalls, and Tom LaChance. Ballots will be retained for purposes of recount efforts, etc.</p>
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What the heck is going on here??

Ring 76 is a magic ring. A fun place to go where magicians can escape the problems of the day, work on double lifts, enjoy educational lectures, good shows, and the comradery of like minded friends.

Lately there have been some problems on the playground and some of you have begun to wonder if the "fun" is over. Let me assure you that it is not. The rumors you have heard of a divided Board of Directors, are just that . . . rumors. There are problems being addressed, but the business of Ring 76 is proceeding. The Board is busy organizing the upcoming Stand-Up Competition, the June election, and the installation banquet in July.

When any group gets together to play, there must be rules. This is to insure that everyone gets a turn, and that everyone plays fair. Over the last few months, some Ring members have been stretching the rules, or have decided that they do not have to follow them like everyone else. When this happens in a game, the ref blows the whistle and the game is halted. If everyone follows the rules, the game goes on. We all have fun.

That is what has been going on over the last few months. Your Board and Committees members have been trying to make sure everyone plays by the rules, and that the rules apply to everyone equally. The games will continue, and everyone will again have fun.

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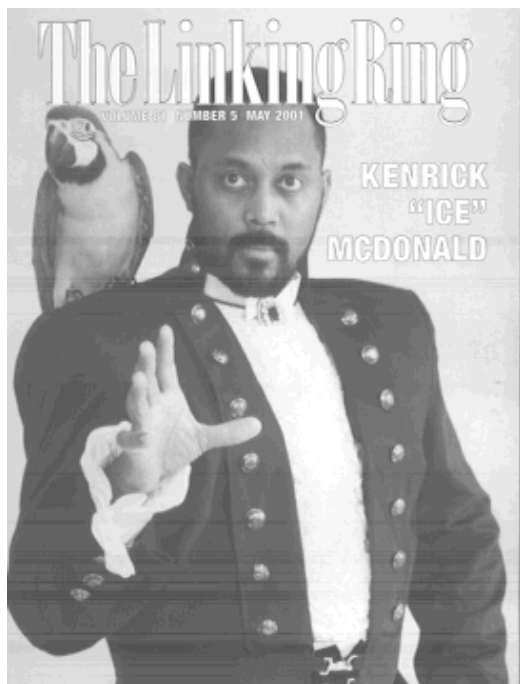
All Ring 76 members must be members in good standing with the International Brotherhood of Magicians.

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

May issue of Linking Ring Magazine features stories on San Diego Magicians

The May issue of Linking Ring Magazine the official publication of the International Brotherhood of Magicians looked like a San Diego periodical.

The cover featured a picture of former San Diego magician Kenrick "Ice" McDonald, while the back cover featured a full-page color advertisement for Terry Lunceford of La Mesa.



Inside the magazine a nice story by Gregory Delahoussay about "Ice" McDonald and his magical journey that began here in San Diego in the

1970's through today and his 90-minute illusion show, that is much in demand.

There is a wonderful picture of Ice and magic legend Channing Pollack, in the article.

Also featured in the pages of the May issue is another San Diego magician Joel Ward who is 17 and a rising star. On page 85 in the Junior Forum, Joel talks about winning the 1999 I.B.M., Junior Stage Contest and where it has taken him since. Joel does about 150-shows a year and has appeared on a Lance Burton Magic Special. He talks about how he gets those bookings and what he wants to do after he graduates from high school in June.

Congratulations to our local magicians who got some national recognition during the month of May.

The meeting was called to order at 19:05. All board members were present.

The first order of business was voting for the upcoming Stand-up Competition at the June Meeting. Voting will be limited to members in good standing, and their spouses. Guests are welcomed and encouraged, but will not be allowed to vote. It is not known if we will be in the big room or the regular meeting room. Dick Dale will find out if the big room is available and report to Richard Ustick by the end of the week [*as of press time there has been no word. ed*] Everyone who is interested in performing at this year's contest should contact Tom La Chance (call him at 619-441-3747).

The next order of business was final details for the installation banquet in July. Gary Schwartzwald will confirm the contract with the caterer, Ranch Catering. The cost to each adult attending will be \$15, with children paying their age. The cost of the dinner will include the show featuring Faulkenstien and Willard, and the lecture the next night at the American Legion hall. Members who wish to attend the lecture only will be charged \$10 at the door, with guests being charged \$15. Richard Ustick will again be in charge of table decorations. He will also be in charge of the awards for "Member of the Year" and "Entertainer of the Year."

Payment to the American Legion is again due. A check for \$150 will be presented by Dick or Julie Dale. Gary Dismukes will issue it.

June is also election month. The official ballot will be printed by Richard Ustick and distributed the night of the meeting. The names on the official ballot will be those persons nominated and seconded by the floor during the May meeting. This year the Board of Directors was not allowed, by President Dale, to provide the Nominating Committee with a slate of candidates before the May deadline. Jeff Marcus opened the floor to nominations and this will

Board Meeting

be the official ballot. Only members, in good standing, both locally as well as Internationally, will be allowed to vote at the June election. Don Soul will confirm membership of each voter.

Dick Dale then presented his personal slate of candidates for offices and asked that they be included on the official ballot as a solid slate. This raised several questions among the Board and guests. The idea of a "slate of candidates," all or nothing, presented by an individual, not on the Nominating Committee, is not provided for by the constitution. The only time a choice was denied was when only one person sought each office. The motion was made that both lists of candidates be presented as "slates." All or nothing lists of candidates for Board positions that the member-ship be forced to accept. The Board voted 5 yea and 3 nay for this. There was then a call to nullify the vote as unconstitutional. The constitution states that floor nominations must be made at the May or June GENERAL meeting, not at a board meeting. No board member can present his/her own list of members as an official list of candidates and require that they be voted in as a group. Dick Dale's list of candidates would have to be nominated on the floor of the June meeting and seconded. They then could be written in on the official ballot. However, no Board member or general member can submit a list of names at his whim and have them entered onto the official ballot. This is clearly unconstitutional as was explained by Secretary Richard Ustick.

See **Board**, page 5

Ring Survey Shows San Diego is not the most expensive for dues!

During the month of April the editors of MagiCurrents sent e-mail to 40 IBM Rings in the United States. We asked for information on dues, membership, meetings and ring newsletters. Of the 40 we surveyed, 23 answered our requests. Here is what we found.



Ring #46 of the International Brotherhood of Magicians
"The Seymour Davis Ring"
Oklahoma City Magic Club

Two of the rings surveyed charge \$30-dollars yearly for dues. One charged \$25, four charge \$20, eight charge \$15 and nine charge \$10-dollars annually.

Many of the rings told us they charge a \$5-dollar fee for their member's spouse or significant other if they are active in attending ring meetings. We found the clubs with the largest membership charge the least per-member and offer the most in services.

Welcome to Houston, Texas
And the home page of
The Bob Blau—Ring #39, Inc.
of

The International Brotherhood of Magicians



Winner of the I.B.M.'s
Ring Quality Recognition Award

At least two rings told us they charge a \$5-dollar initiation fee for new members. The larger rings we communicated with say they have a paying membership of 60 to 80 members and that most meetings draw 40 to 50 members.

Almost all of the rings we talked with said they supplied free refreshments for the members at each meeting. Most had one free lecture per year for their members and charged \$10-dollars per-person for other lectures.

In Lake Charles, Louisiana there dues are \$15 dollars a year, instead of raising dues this year they are raising admission prices to their lectures. Currently they charge 10-dollars a lecture they are thinking about going to \$20-per-lecture and keeping half of the money taken in at the door for the club treasury. Non-members would pay \$25-per-lecture. Lake Charles says they bring in four to five lectures each year.



All of the ring presidents we talked with say they put out a monthly newsletter of four to six pages and all have a club web site that carries pictures and updated information on ring activities.

Most of the rings in larger cities say they have a one-day mini convention that includes magic dealers, lectures, magic auction and shows with a public event in the evening with a separate admission for the general public.

Ring 55 in Tempe, Arizona will hold their annual ring event May 30th. These one-day events draw magicians from out side their area and bring in extra revenue to the ring. These events are a great deal of work for the people putting them on, but pay off by inflating the ring treasury and strengthen the ring by bringing members together in a common cause.



All of the rings we corresponded with acknowledged they are picking up new members in increasing numbers these days, which is encouraging for the hobby.

A New Trend:

Several rings reported they are not forcing their members to be paid up in the IBM. One ring president told us non-IBM members cannot hold office but they can belong to the ring and take part in all activities. That is frowned upon by the national IBM office but seems to be happening in increasing numbers around the country with the IBM finding it difficult to stop.

All of the responding rings told us they were trying to hold club spending down and not raise dues. Most said they did not pay any rent for a meeting space and that their most significant expense was the monthly newsletter and keeping up their web site.

All of this information is food for thought for the new Ring 76 President and the board of directors for the coming year. Each survey we received noted that the membership was working together to get more donated to the ring and spending member's dues only on necessary items for the ring. Cost cutting efforts seem to be on the minds of every officer of an IBM Ring along with new creative ways to do more with less and still have a good time at ring meetings. Now that is real magic!

Board

Continues from page 3

The presentation of Dick Dale's list of candidates presented another problem as he listed President Julie Dale as candidate for Treasurer. Julie will be the immediate past president after her current term in July, and as such stays on the board as a "Member-at-Large." The question of her position was hotly debated. Would she have two votes? Can a Board member hold two positions? Can the immediate past president, with guaranteed Board position, run for another office? Dick Dale suggested that the Board vacancy be appointed by the newly elected president. That idea was rejected. A motion was made and seconded that a special procedure be made for Julie Dale only. That if she wins the election as a write in candidate, she will resign her past president status and that position will go to the next runner up in the member-at-large vote. This was passed by 3 yea, 2 nea, with 3 abstentions. This special procedure will be listed in the June MagiCurrents, applies only to Julie Dale, and will only be in effect for this election.

Several questionable actions by Board members over the past few months were raised, leading to an extended meeting. Gary Schwartzwald took over the chair of the meeting and acted as moderator.

Because of the questionable nature of this upcoming election, and its importance in light of the next year's IBM national convention here in San Diego, special procedures were instituted by the Board to insure fair results. A board of three will count the ballots. These will be Gary Dismukes, Tom La Chance, and Bob Ingalls. The ballots will be held in record for the year should there ever be a question of the results.

It is with sadness we report that 92-year-old Ruth Jackson, mother



of Ring 76 member J.P. Jackson, died on May 12th at her home in Stevens Point, Wisconsin.

For more than fifty years Ruth was victim of her son's request to pick a card or watch this trick. In a way that makes her part of our magic fraternity. Our deepest sympathy to the Jackson Family in their loss.

Gary Dismukes Treasurer for Ring 76 in wrapping up his books for the fiscal year ending June 30th 2002, reports cash on hand as approximately \$1,830.00.

During the current fiscal year our Income included.

Ring dues	\$1600.00
Lecture income	\$ 165.00
Auction income	\$ 370.00
Raffle sales	
	\$330.00

Total Income:	\$2465.00

Expenses during the past year.

Newsletter	\$515.00
Rent on hall	\$465.00
Lectures	
	\$744.00
Awards	
	\$286.00
Raffle items	\$145.00
Misc	
	\$215.00

Total exp:	\$2220.00

This next month brings Gary Dismukes term as Treasurer of Ring 76 to a close. A new Treasurer will be elected at the June Meeting. The membership thanks Gary for his diligent duties of paying our bills and keeping track of our expenses and income.

Board of Directors

Julie Dale- President

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

Tom La Chance-Entertainment VP

447 Nila Lane
El Cajon, CA 92020
(619) 441-3747
Magiccat@Hom.com

Dick Dale-Membership VP

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

Gary Dismukes- 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

Don Soul-Sergeant-At-Arms

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

Ralph Mauzy-Member-At-Large

P.O. Box 1224
Alpine, CA 91903
(619) 390-7494

Gary Schwartzwald- Past Pres.

6135 Hass St.
La Mesa, CA 91942-4312
(619) 697-9468
gschwart@Grossmont.k12.ca.us

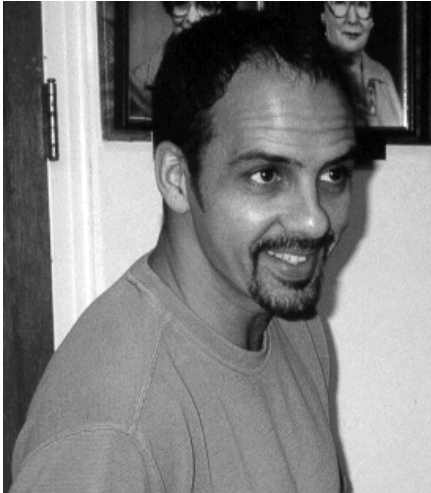
Treasurer's Report for 2000-2001 Fiscal Year:





Greg Wilson magic lecture thrills those who attended:

When young Greg Wilson was growing up in the Point Loma area of San Diego, in the 1970's he never had a thought about the International Brotherhood of Magicians or Ring 76. But during those formative years he was already entertaining his friends and family with everyday objects that came out of his pockets in a very magical manner.



Greg (Gregory) Wilson guest lecturer

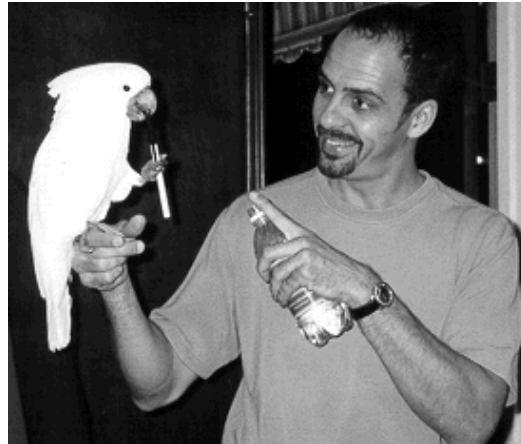
His outgoing personality with fast adlibs brings his impromptu style of magic to life. His presentation is as fresh and exciting as his effects and routines. He began his lecture with a coin move called "Something For Nothing". On the surface it is a simple almost stupid idea. But in performance it is clever, mystifying and something that has a lot of entertainment value with little preparation.

Ring 76 member Bob Ingalls was one of those who quickly saw the potential of the effect and was doing it the next morning for a group of friends at breakfast.

Wilson is one of those people who has a flip personality and his magic is also a little on the flip side. Just when you think he has run out of steam he hits you with something you did not see coming and leaves you with your mouth wide open.

He taught those in attendance his "All Around Coin Vanish". There are no gimmicks just a borrowed coin. He works in the uniform of today's modern younger magicians, tee shirt and blue jeans. The coin vanish designed for people who wear jeans is really a utility move that he has incorporated into a series of effects.

He has the obligatory lecture notes but the real items he vends at his lectures are a series of very professionally produced videotapes. The tapes were made with broadcast quality camera's and editing gear not the industrial equipment that we are seeing more and more frequently in today's magic video's.



Sassi an Umbrella Cockatoo doing a trick with a pen for Gregory Wilson guest lecturing magician.

Diane Lane attended the lecture and brought with her Sassi her four-year-old Umbrella Cockatoo. Wilson was intrigued by the bird and during a brief intermission in the lecture taught the bird his routine with a Bic Pen. In minutes the bird was showing off with the pen. Greg quipped, "that's the best student I have ever had."

Wilson's approach to magic is using as few props as possible. He encourages his students to blend their personality with their magic. He practices what he preaches.

He is an expert card worker and the few card effects he did were clever and gave the audience a brief look at his skill level with pasteboards. His sponge balls trick with paper napkins were ala Slydini and delightfully entertaining.

He gave his audience some wonderful tips on the 100-Dollar Bill switch. A lesson or two in misdirection and lots of comedy.

This lecture drew young and old alike, the veteran magic chef Josef Rennlightner was on hand along with Joel Ward who graduates from high school in June. Dick Dale set the lecture up at the American Legion Hall in La Mesa.



Dick Dale, Joel Ward and Magic Chef Josef Rennlightner.

In San Diego Ring 76 members and non-members all paid 15-dollars per-person. Three nights later Greg Wilson gave the same lecture for the North County magic group where the fee for admission was only two dollars per-person. Several San Diego magicians also made the trip to San Marcos and caught the lecture for a second time. At two-dollars a person the price was right.

2001 A-1 Convention at the Capitol

Greg Wauson

The one magic convention I've attended most of the last several years has been A-1's Convention at the Capitol in Sacramento. It's known as a convention where you can easily approach the performers and lecturers. When I saw the lineup this year I started to make plans to be there.

I like watching magicians who I've heard of but know nothing about their magic. One of these is David Regal. This guy is not only hilarious but is also the head writer for Rugrats and other Nickelodeon kid shows on TV. He performed a mental routine while telling about his grandfather who passionately hated watching David's tricks as David was growing up and finally ran away screaming. Overall entertainment value is the name of the game for him; his very effective closeup and stage magic is enhanced by his strong storytelling ability.

Another guy I'd heard of is Ray Kosby, the inventor of Reusable Ticket, a routine in which a ticket is torn and restored three different ways. He's written at least one magic book and deserves to have more name recognition than he does. The quality of his magic and performance is strong enough to convince me that any of his tricks or books he offers to the magic community would be good investments.

Bob Kohler is known as one of the top trade show magicians. I was sitting just a few feet from him during his closeup show and had a very good view of his rising card trick which totally baffled me.

Three other performers were new to me. I'd heard of Rich Marotta and found him to be funny and most of his material was very entertaining. His closeup show was first class - mostly card effects. I thought his stage performance wasn't up to what he was capable of but I think he was trying out some effects and humor which aren't in his usual repertoire. Alfonso's lecture had some clever ideas and I was impressed with his skill with cards. He's a guy I think we may hear more about in the future. Simon Lovell had some very humorous stories which further enhanced his capable sleight of hand skills. Several times he broke into an Elizabethan soliloquy,

tossed his hair back and then continued with the magic. I think the best visual image of Simon Lovell I can share is to think of Jay Sankey with hair and an English accent, at his wildest, and loudly quoting Shakespeare.

One of the highlights was to again see Lennart Green's performance. He's one of the best card workers in the world and has several effects or flourishes I haven't seen anyone else do. It's incredible to see his sloppy shuffling which drops cards all over the table, if not the floor, which is immediately followed by a blindfolded production of all the cards in a suit one at a time. My favorite is his shooting a single card into his bare hand from the hand which holds the deck, about one and a half feet away.

Jerry Andrus presented a lecture which showed how ingenious people can be. Soon after he started he put on a pair of glasses and got down to work. A few minutes later he started talking about how our brains have been designed to focus on the most important matters, ignoring the commonplace. The point was made when he showed his glasses were just the top part of a glasses frame but no one noticed.

Another of my favorite lectures was John Carney's. It dealt with the psychology of effectively fooling people and increasing the entertainment value of a performance instead of only teaching tricks. Here's a man who seems to be naturally funny and has studied with Dai Vernon and other masters; it shows. He discussed the details of a coins across routine where the coins appear in a glass. Great stuff! I appreciate his encouraging us to raise the bar in magic and give some real thought to present our best to our audiences.

No new magic tricks took the convention by storm, ala D'Light a number of years ago. But Dean's Box by Dean Dill was again very popular and that was probably the busiest corner of the showroom as magicians brought their magic buddies to be fooled. I do know of two Ring 76 members (who will remain nameless) who have invested in this handsome box. Could this actually be shown at one of our meetings later this year? We'll stay tuned.

Another dealer effect - in the form of a manuscript - was 3 Fly, an effect with three silver dollars which magically fly one at a time from one hand to the other, at the fingertips. In the hands of Daryl this is a work of art. What a beautiful routine! (Say, speaking of a recommended slate of officers for the coming year. Marcus then raised the issue of accepting nominations from the floor.

There was much heated debate from the president, and from the floor. After a period of time it was decided that Marcus' suggestion should be carried out and nominations from the floor were in order.

The nominations from the floor are as follows: Don Soul, President, Jack White, Secretary, Sumit Dua, Treasurer, Diane Lane, 1st Vice President, Dick Ustick, 2nd Vice President, Gary Schwartzwald, Sgt at Arms, Robert Pozner, Member at Large, Sherry Luft, Member at Large. Those floor nominations were turned over to the nominating committee.

After the nominations from the floor a raffle was held, the winners were Diane Lane, Doc Blaylock, Lynn Javier then there was a brief intermission of ten minutes.

Entertainment V.P., Tom LaChance called things back to order and began the program for the evening. Performing paper magic was the theme. Members were asked to bring and present their favorite effect with paper.

this, let me ask a question which John Carney brought up - and answered: is magic an art form?) Daryl sold several of the 3 Fly manuscripts and one vendor in the dealer room sold some gorgeous and diabolically gaffed coins which make this even more of a fooler.

Some of my favorite moments were not in the scheduled closeup shows or stage shows but were in the lobby - such as Dean Dill's performance of an examined styrofoam cup which turned into a slot machine which produced 18 half dollars. Several guys also shared their versions of spoon bending and rubber band penetrations.

The banquet on Sunday night was another highlight. Here was an opportunity to wind down after a few days of excellent magic, meet some new people and then have one final shot of magic, of the stand-up variety. After the full meal, Mike Maxwell invited everyone at our table to the seats in front of the stage, since our table was in a corner of the room with poor visibility of the performers. Jeff Marcus, Brenda and I wound up in the front row. I was sure Brenda was a sitting duck to be conscripted as a volunteer.

The show was capably emceed by Rich Marotta. Solid performances were given by Paul Gertner, Daryl and hilarious Chuck Fayne. Then we were ready for the final act: John Carney, a.k.a. Mr. Mysto. Before he started, I was wondering if he still makes a cake in some poor guy's shoe. Turns out the answer is yes. He asked Brenda and me to join him onstage and for each of us to take one of his wrists. Brenda told me later the one thing she kept thinking was whether she should try to steal his watch. Woulda been great - even just trying would have been a very funny situation. He soon asked me to take off a shoe into which he dumped cake batter. Not to worry - he followed this by putting a lit candle into it and pulled out a cupcake.

The A-1 Convention at the Capitol has never disappointed me and this year was no exception. Mike Maxwell again came up with a topnotch lineup of headliners who had something for everybody. Hmm... maybe next year I can squeeze in two conventions by going back to the A-1 in Sacramento and then take in the IBM convention in San Diego.

First to perform was Leroy Armstrong, who folded a piece of the morning newspaper and began making a series of random cuts as he told a clever story about a ship lost at sea. When he finished his cutting he had a ships wheel. Then with a small bag did a very clever routine that turned out to be an origami effect.



Roy Armstrong

Next David Lane, who just returned from a trip to Peru, introduced us to a very clever novelty he found in South America. It was not in keeping with paper magic but was a miniature foo jug where you pour the water in the bottom of the vase. The membership was fascinated with this novelty item..

May Meeting

The May meeting at the American Legion Hall in La Mesa began at 6:30 with the showing of excerpts of three videotapes on magic. Each tape included presentation and how to do the trick. Some members watched and others socialized during this period.

The business meeting began at 7 with President Julie Dale calling things to order. Two guests were present Joel Moskowitz who is becoming a new member and Andrew Satat who is a teenager interested in magic.

In a brief treasurers report by Gary Dismukes, told the membership there is about \$1350-dollars in the treasury with still outstanding dues to be collected from members.

Jeff Marcus, of the nominating committee advised the president and the members that the board of directors had not come up with



David Lane

Jack White was introduced and immediately asked to borrow a business card from a member of the audience. Diane Lane offered one and Jack went into a mental routine where he divined what she had written on the back of her card.



Jack White

Meeting

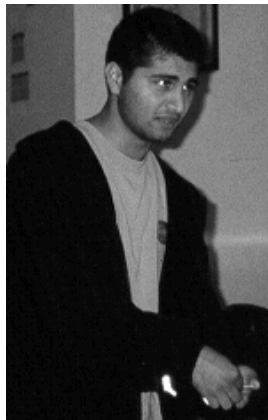
continued from page 8



Jim Thayer

Josef Rennlightner the Magic Chef then moved the table right up to the front row and sat down at the table and produced a roll of bathroom tissue. He had everyone in the front row tear off a piece, then he folded it up and restored the separate sheets of tissue. Josef then produced a raw egg from the wad of paper and broke it into a glass of water and drank the contents of the glass. This routine brought groans and lots of applause. It was a clever and funny routine.

Keeping this show moving was Sumit Dua with two very clever card effects. A very good card location called "Card origami". His second effect with the pasteboards was a very beautiful torn and restored card that is one of Sumits original routines that he has been perfecting for more than a year.



Sumit Dua

Michael Feldman did the first trick he ever learned. A blank piece of paper turns into a dollar bill then the dollar bill is transformed to a 50-dollar bill. Very cleanly done in Michael's smooth performing manner.



Michael Feldman

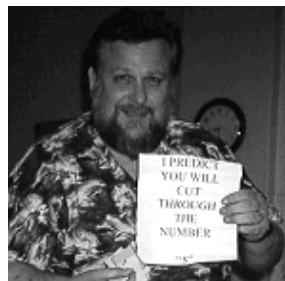
Jim Thayer, who joined the ring earlier this year presented a very clever story of a couple on their first anniversary and they were so poor they presented each other with gifts made out of paper napkins. Jim did a very clean "Sun & Moon" Routine that brought a big round of applause.

See **Meeting** page 9



Josef Rennlightner

Jeff Marcus followed Josef with another clever prediction effect. With free choice a paper is cut and a number is reviled. The number matches perfectly the prediction. Jeff has his own special style of performing and turned a simple effect into a nice interlude of magic.



Jeff Marcus

Doc Blaylock who is now back doing close-up magic Sunday nights at the Gathering Restaurant in Mission Hills did a very clean one and five dollar bill exchange. It differed greatly from the routine presented earlier in the program and was the perfect way to close out our evening of paper magic.

A reminder the June meeting in addition to it being election night will also be the Ring 76 annual stand-up magic competition. It is open to all members and the winners will be announced at the installation banquet in July. If you are a stand up performer this is your opportunity to shine.



This is month's message is short but extremely important. EVERY member

should attend the June 11 meeting. We will be voting on a new Board of Directors and officers. It's important because this Board will lead the Ring to the 2002 IBM International Convention to be held here in San Diego. Please make a sincere effort to attend, vote and then sit back and enjoy the Stand-up contest.

Julie Dale

President

Nominating Committee calls for candidates from the floor

It is election time at Ring 76 and this year the candidates were selected by the membership.

Magic Notes from Jack White:

An Afternoon with the Leroy & Betty Armstrong and memories of 60-years in magic:

When I walked through the front door of Leroy and Betty Armstrong's Fletcher Hills home I knew I was in for a real magical treat. On the coffee table in front of a couch where Leroy asked me to join him was a huge scrapbook.



One of the first items that caught my eye was a Linking Ring Magazine from 1943, in the magazine it noted that Leroy Armstrong was a new member of the International Brotherhood of Magicians, that makes him a member for 58-years. He was a member of Ring 87 in his hometown of Scott's Bluff, Nebraska.

will be the Biggest Meeting of the June 11th Year!

First, there is the Election of New Officers!

The IBM National Convention will be in San Diego next year. The eyes of a nation will be on Ring 76

Then the Annual Ring 76 Stand-Up Competition!

Who will be the "Stand-Up Performer of the Year"?

Why not You?

Contact Tom La Chance and tell him you are going to perform (619-441-3747)

Finally you will Vote on Member of the Year

Who, in your opinion, has done the most to promote Ring 76

Come and Vote

President's Message

On a motion by Gary Schwartzwald, and seconded, the floor was opened to any and all members, in good standing, who want to serve the Ring. The Ring Constitution and by-Laws state that "Qualified Members" shall be entitled to nominate other "qualified members" to fill offices at the May and June meetings.

Don Soul is nominated for President

Jack White is nominated for Secretary

Sumit Dua is nominated for Treasurer

Gary Schwartzwald for Sargent-at-arms

Diane Lane for V.P. of Membership

Richard Ustick for V.P. Entertainment

Robert Pozner & Sherry Luft are nominated for

Member-at-Large

The election will be held before the "Stand-Up Competition" at the June meeting. All members are encouraged to come and vote.



Leroy Armstrong publicity shot 1943:

Like many of us Leroy was bitten by the magic bug at the age of 11 or 12, when his mother sent the box top from a White King Laundry Soap box off to some far away address and received in return a packet of simple magic tricks. After mastering those tricks Leroy's mother sent him to the library where he read all of the books on magic. In those days there were only a few magic books. Magic literature was not what it is today.

When Leroy was a teenager, McDonald Burch brought his big show to the high school auditorium in Scott's Bluff. Leroy got a job back stage opening and closing the curtain for the Burch show and caring for a miniature horse that was caused to vanish. In the course of setting the show up Leroy got to talk and know the famous magician. He asked Burch where he could get good magic props and tricks. Mac, off the top of his head gave out Joe Berg's address in Chicago. Leroy immediately began dealing with Berg's Magic Studio.

In the Armstrong scrapbook is an autographed photo, the program and an old poster from the McDonald Burch show. Mac's stage presence had a profound impact on Leroy and his early years

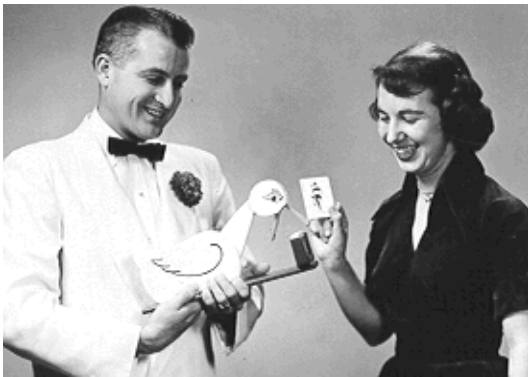
of performing. It was clear to me there were fond memories of those days with McDonald Burch as I watched Leroy carefully refold the tattered poster from so long ago.

1943, was an important year in Leroy Armstrong's life, he became a member of the IBM and a few months later joined the U.S. Navy. This was during the dark days of World War Two, when the allied forces had not yet turned the corner on winning the war.

When Leroy arrived at Navy Boot Camp he did a few tricks for some of his fellow recruits. Watching what was going on was a Navy Chief who was in charge of training the new arrivals. The Chief asked Leroy if he could do anymore of a show? Leroy said yes but his props were in Nebraska. The Chief said have them shipped down here we need you as an entertainer. A week or so later Leroy's dad had packed up every bit of magic he could find and shipped a trunk full of stuff to his son at the Navy Training Center. In addition to his regular duties as a radioman in the Navy for the next four years Leroy was also an entertainer helping to build moral among military and civilian personal alike.

As he turns each page in that now never ending scrapbook of a rich magic history, there is a new picture and another story about how his life touched another famous magician of the past. In the late 1940's Leroy drifted into education and became a school teacher often times using a magic trick to make a point for his students.

In 1950 he met a perky music teacher and asked if she would like to assist him in his magic act. She agreed and a year later they were married, Betty has been his assistant in magic and everything else in his life ever since. Their biggest production together was the birth of their two sons' in the 1960's.



Leroy & Betty Armstrong 1951:

There are photographs of their early magic shows together in Colorado. The toughest show they ever did together was at a Corrections School for boys. These young men had never been exposed to a live show before and were told by their guards to be on their best behavior. The Armstrong's became painfully aware in the first few minutes there was no reaction coming from the audience. They did not laugh, applaud they sat in silence. During a torn and restored card effect apiece falls on the floor. Under most conditions someone in the audience would yell out "you dropped a piece of card!" Here they were silent, Betty recognizing the situation yelled out, "here is a piece you dropped." That corner of course matched the missing piece in the restored card. It was their toughest show ever.

Their worst show happened in Golden, Colorado during this same period. They were booked to do a show for a large group of Colorado Highway Patrol officers. But police officers do not like to be fooled in anyway. They made it very difficult for the Armstrong's to present their stage full of miracles. It is another show that now many years later brings a smile to Leroy and Betty's face as they shake their heads remembering it was something they don't want to go through again.

The Armstrong's moved to San Diego in the mid-1950's and began teaching in the LaMesa School District. Being still active in magic they joined the SAM and the newly re-chartered IBM Ring 76. In fact Leroy performed on the first show for the new ring. He has been an active member of the ring ever since making him and Betty the longest continuing members in our Ring

There have been hundreds of shows by the Armstrong's throughout Southern California over the years. The show grew larger in the 60's 70's and 80's. The most read books in his magic library, Hilliard's "Greater Magic" and the eight volume's of "Harlan Tarbell's Course in Magic." They learned early on to purchase the best props because the road and constant performing was hard on even the best of equipment. Leroy always looked at purchasing magic as an investment. He tried to stay with Thayer and later Owen Bros., P&L, Merv Taylor and Milson Worth. He still uses a Thayer Breakaway Die Box that he purchased in 1946. His favorite trick is the "Mutilated Parasol" he believes that Abbott's made the best version of this trick. He became an accomplished

When the war was over and he was out of the Navy Leroy went to college, but his interest in magic was kept very much alive by performing and occasionally attending magic conventions. In that huge scrap book on the coffee table were pictures of Harry Blackstone Sr., and a story of their first meeting at an Abbott's Get Together. Then a story about J.B. Bobo, who wrote the first great book on coin magic and presented school shows throughout the Midwest.

Leroy paused as he gave silent tribute to a picture of Duke Montague who was his mentor in everything magic in his younger days. He remembered the first time he saw Dante while stationed in San Francisco. Leroy went backstage at the Geary Theater told the doorman he was in the Navy and a magician and wanted Dante's autograph. A few minutes later the doorman returned and said Mr. Dante wanted to meet and talk with the young magician. They spent two hours talking magic in Dante's dressing room. Leroy still has the autographed program from that visit.

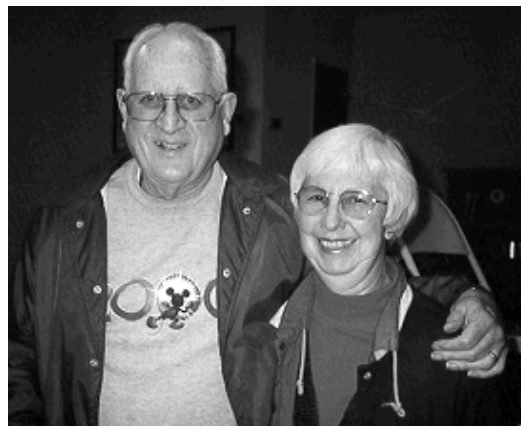
Billiard Ball manipulator and used a set of two-inch billiard balls that were turned by Floyd Thayer himself.



Leroy & Betty Armstrong performing their favorite trick Mutilated Parasol.

In 1983 he retired from teaching and immediately cut a deal to begin doing school shows full time in the LaMesa School District. He and Betty would go into a school do a big show for the entire student body in an auditorium then they would go around and visit each school room and do more magic and teach a few simple tricks to the students. They kept up this routine for five years.

In the scrapbook are photographs of their performance and letters from students who thanked them for the experience of meeting and learning from real magicians. During this period the Armstrong's helped dozens of young men and women get into magic as a hobby and become better performers. For both Leroy & Betty, it has been a rich life in magic. They still continue to perform. Every month they visit the sick and disabled at Children's Hospital bringing a smile to the children's faces with a magic trick or two.



Leroy & Betty Armstrong 2001

They are still active in the IBM and Ring 76. They recently took part in the magic auction night; they present some of their favorite effects on nights when collector's magic is presented and always enjoy attending lectures and watching some of the new trends in magic.

View From the Cheap Seats

Book Review -- In A Class By Himself: The Legacy
Of Don Alan by Jon Racherbaumer (& Don Alan)

This "collaboration" from L & L Publishing appeared some six months ago, and I greedily acquired it immediately. I have been intending to review it for these pages, but inspiration for my other columns this year kept this article on the "back burner."

I have hoped for the last thirty years that a strong book on the magic of Don Alan would find its way into magic press. This large-format tome, more than 300 pages of information on Alan's magic, succeeds on some levels and fails on others. Each individual reader will have to decide for himself whether the book succeeds for his needs and desires. Alan's brand of close-up magic has influenced the whole genre of intimate magic, and the book deserves to be read by any thinking magician on that basis alone.

The book is not a definitive biography on Don Alan, nor does it pretend to be so. This obvious shortcoming is undoubtedly a source of irritation for Alan fans, but Racherbaumer did include a one page synopsis of the highlights of Alan's life and career, and a useful bibliography and filmography. Perhaps nothing more was needed, as the effort was originally intended by Alan to be an instructional book.

The book was delayed in the writing and publishing phase (some say deliberately) until Don Alan's Alzheimer's Disease had progressed to the point that his participation was negligible. How unfortunate; I get the feeling from Alan's two essays, transcribed from a lecture and a private interview/conversation with the author and publisher, that the final book would have been very different had it not been delayed.

The bulk of the magical instruction has no behind-the-scenes views; instead, most of the magic is illustrated by stills from the Don Alan Performance Video (Stevens Magic) and the Don Alan Magic Ranch Videos (available from Bill McIlhenny). Earlier production of the book would have meant Don Alan's participation in crucial reveal photos that would have strengthened the teaching, but, alas, this was not meant to

be. I think that L & L should have hired another pro close-up magician to pose for reveal shots when Alan was unable to do so



The Legacy of Don Alan best suits the intermediate magician with a strong background in close-up, since the lack of "backstage" instructional views limits the book's usefulness for the developing amateur. However, the strong intermediate magician will find little magic here that he does not already know, leaving as the strongest part of the book the examination of Alan's performing approach (more below). On the other hand, the bulk of the book can be watched on the aforementioned videos, which will give the intermediate magician insight into the timing and entertainment value of Alan's magic.

Perhaps the most useful parts of the book are the aforementioned Alan essays, the succinct but delightful checklist of Sneaky Things To Remember (which needs to be read thoughtfully and regularly). In this lengthy introduction, Racherbaumer details Alan's performing approach and system of hooks and interhooks that underpin the routing of both individual tricks and whole shows. Alan wanted his show to be entertaining and mildly humorous, and so he took great pains to engage his audience members in the show.

Occasionally, Racherbaumer gets a bit ridiculous in proving the interhook point, detailing the exact moments (in minutes and seconds) in a given routine in which an interhook takes place. Although Alan clearly states in the essays his intent to build momentum throughout a show, he was much too flexible a magician for the kind of precision which Racherbaumer suggests, and would give-and-take with the audience to make his show as entertaining as possible for the audience at hand.

Still, I find this to be a good book, and I do not wish to leave a negative impression with this review. Despite its shortcomings, The Legacy of Don Alan has much that an aspiring magical entertainer can learn. Alan's message, like Hay's in Amateur Magician's Handbook, is that tricks don't make magic. Presentation, pacing, routing, and audience engagement, coupled with tricks, make magic. Alan's method of combining these vital elements is open for inspection, augmented with the checklist suggestions and tempered by the essays; the result is a book that has something fresh to teach, after all.

Oh, yes; there is some fine magic contained in these pages, too, from the Lean Mean Chop Cup and the Invisible Deck to the Benson Bowlover and the Flying Eagles/Ashes To Hand/Cap and Pence combo. The book is far from perfect, but it is likely the best effort we'll ever get on this close-up trailblazer; for that reason alone, it belongs in your personal magic library.

Jon A. Hand (jonahand@hotmail.com) welcomes commentary and feedback on this review and on any other columns that he has written.

Letter to the Editor

MagiCurrents will always be pleased to offer opinions and information from its readers and other members of the magic community. Letters and articles may be edited for space

The following names will be placed in nomination for the June election:

President: Dick Dale		
Entertainment	Vice	President:
Magic Mike Stilwell		
Secretary: Michael Johnson		
Treasurer: Julie Dale		
Member-at-Large: Roy Armstrong		

Dick Dale

**Local Magic is just a mouse click away.
Ring member Sumit Dua runs one of the
fastest growing magic web sites on the net.**

Check it out at:

Cardmagician.com

And tell 'em MagiCurrents sent you!

Magic

Newsline

Congratulations to Julie Dale who, in late May, applied for membership to the International Brotherhood of Magicians.

Terry Godfried one of San Diego's top all around magicians began his spring and summer fair tour the first weekend in May. Terry says he is not doing as many fairs this year as usual but when he wraps up his tour in early October he will have put an additional 30-thousand miles on his car. On any given day of the tour Terry will perform five to seven shows. He will be at the Del Mar Fair mid-June through July 4th.

Mike Klicman, actor, magician and comedian has been waiting for a liver transplant for more than a year. On the afternoon of April 30 he received a phone call ordering him to the UCSD Medical Center in Hillcrest. A matching donor liver had been found and they wanted to perform the transplant that evening. In addition to a liver transplant he also had a pancreas transplant. We are happy to report his condition is improving with each day and it is expected he will return to a normal life in the near future. Mike is now at home and would love to hear from fellow magicians. He tells us the doctors performed real magic on him.

Longtime Ring 76 member **Jim**

is retiring from teaching in the San Diego School System after spending 40-years instructing gifted students. When the current school year ends in mid June, Jim will say good bye to his students for the last time. He hopes to now do some of the things he has wanted to do for years but never had the time. We in Ring 76 hope that he will be able to dedicate more time to the ring and magic.

Rich Block the producer of the **World Magic Seminar** in Las Vegas January 13th to the 16th 2002, reports that the winter magic seminar will be moved from the Rio Hotel & Casino to the Riviera Hotel and Casino on the famed Vegas Strip. The January seminar will be the 25th Anniversary for this event and is expected to be a sell out affair. The reason for the move is to keep the lecture halls, theater and dealer's room all within close proximity of each other. The Rio was said to be to spread out for many of the delegates.

Jeff Marcus, Diane Lane and Gary Dismukes all attended **"Magic at the Capitol"** convention in Sacramento, from May 17 to the 20th. This is a large convention drawing as many people as a national magic club convention. Jeff Marcus is hoping to share his experiences with us in an upcoming edition of *MagiCurrents*. A-1 Publishing and Video puts this convention together each year.

Penn & Teller bring their wacky style of magic to the Poway Performing Arts Center in September. The Penn and Teller Show, will be followed up in October by Milt Larsen's **"Its Magic Show"** featuring six acts of famous performers of conjuring. Its Magic has for two previous seasons been booked into the Escondido Center of the Performing Arts, but now moves to Poway. Tickets are now on sale for both attractions.

We have learned from **Bev Bergeron** that **Jerry Camarro** died May 8th at his home in Santa Rosa just north of San Francisco he was 54. For many years Jerry was a performing bartender here in San Diego as well as, Miami, Las Vegas and Los Angeles. While he is best remembered for his close-up magic he has also worked stand-up at the Magic Castle in Hollywood and other venues. He and his wife were on a lecture tour across the country in March and April.

The 11th Annual Fern Street Circus set up operation in Balboa Park May 26 to June 3rd. There was a super array of variety arts acts with a few professional circus acts blended into this year's program. **Brad Weston** juggles just about anything and came in from Chicago to be part of this years show. He does his juggling while walking barefoot on a large sword. Brad is also interested in magic though he does not do any finger flinging in this years edition of the Fern Street Circus.

Abbotts Magic and Manufacturing Company had a fire in one of their buildings outside of Colon, Michigan where some of the manufacturing takes place. Abbotts officials say they still have a good supply of merchandise on their shelves in the retail store in Colon. The fire and slowdown in production of new magic will almost certainly increase prices on some items from the Abbotts plant.

Sumit Dua, candidate for treasurer of Ring 76 has come up with a way to put the monthly newsletter online and at the same time other rings in Southern California can also post their newsletter on the same online system. Ring 76 could receive some revenue for this system. Sumit is working out the details and hopes to present the plan to the board this summer so the system can be up and working by fall.

MagiCurrents just learned that **Diane Lane's** cable TV program **Magical Moments** will begin airing again on June 3rd at 8 p.m. on cable channel 24. The weekly Sunday evening program features many local magicians as well as performers from outside the San Diego area. Diane has been producing new programming for many months and is excited about getting her weekly show back on the air.

Loch David Crane takes his **Bafflin' Bill Cody Show** to Europe this summer. He plays a number of military bases in Germany from late July to Mid-August. His first European show is at Spangdahlem Air Force Base, he closes the over seas tour at the Berlin Car and Motorcycle Show. In June his show is part of the Business Expo and Craft Fair in Santee. Loch also begins his library shows in San Diego County in early July. It will be a busy summer for the Bafflin' Bill Cody.

Most magicians don't care to work for teenagers, they can be a difficult age group to perform for, but **Dan Thomas** owner of the Gathering Restaurant looks at doing magic for teenagers as a challenge. He is booked to do a series of Grad-Night Shows the first week of June, one on the historic ferryboat Berkeley on San Diego Bay the others at a bowling alley and the third at an auditorium. Dan says he has found most schools have a hardcore group of magic enthusiasts and they keep coming back to see him perform over and over again. Each stint is three hours of close-up magic. That's a long haul.

Speaking of the **Gathering a restaurant** featuring magicians with each meal, **Paul Thomey** is there on Thursday evenings, **Craig Stone** dazzles the diners on Friday and Saturday evenings and **Michael David** (Doc Blaylock) is there on Sunday evening. Its one of those great family restaurants where magicians gather and perform.

Four San Diego professional magicians have teamed up to form a company called The **California Magic Quartet**. They recently joined together and worked the close-up tables at the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's Man and Woman of the Year Gala. **Michael E. Johnson, Magic Mike Stilwell, Joe Mystic and mentalist David Winston** make up the unique magic quartet. More on this group of popular entertainers in next months issue of *MagiCurrents*.

Upcoming Events

Vote!	
June 11 th	Pre-Meeting: Ring Elections- Come and Vote!
Vote!	
6:30 pm	Meeting Theme: The Annual
Vote!	
	Ring 76 Stand-Up Competition and Voting on Member of the Year
July 9 th	Installation and Awards Banquet
6:30 pm	\$15 per adult, Children pay their age Hawaiian Luau at the American Legion Hall Faulkenstein and Willard on Stage
July 10 th	Lecture by Faulkenstein and Willard
7:00 pm	Banquet attendees free. All other members \$10 Guests \$15

I.B.M. Ring 76

San Diego, CA

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MagiCurrents
6040 Bob St.
La Mesa, CA 91942