

Ring 76 Chartered by the International Brotherhood of Magicians in 1948



# MagiCurrents

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## Election of Ring Officers in June

Ring President Don Soul appointed Gary Dismukes, Greg Wauson and Ken DeWoody, as members of the 2003 nominating and election committee. Their job is to attract Ring members as candidates for the board of directors of Ring 76. The nominating committee's candidates can run against or in place of the current slate of officers. Those nominees will be introduced at the May 12<sup>th</sup> general meeting. The slate of officers as suggested by the current board of directors is as follows: Ring president, Diane Lane; 1<sup>st</sup> vice president, Bob Ingalls; 2<sup>nd</sup> vice president, Dr. Joel Moskowitz; secretary, Jack White; treasurer, Richard Ustick; sgt-at-arms, Sherry Luft; member at large, J.P. Jackson; immediate past president, Don Soul.

The recommended slate of officers is made up of mostly returning board members with the exception of Dr. Joel Moskowitz, who became a member of Ring 76 in 1999, and was active on the committee to write a new Ring constitution and by-laws in 2001. Dr. Moskowitz has also been active on the IBM Convention committee in 2002.

J.P. Jackson, a longtime Ring member and past president, has expressed an interest in becoming active as a board member once again. During the late 1970s and early 80s Jackson was the guiding hand holding the Ring together and building one of its largest paid memberships to date.

Bob Ingalls has said he will return as 1<sup>st</sup> vice president in charge of entertainment for one more year. Bob has served numerous stints as a member of the board of directors over the years.

## Original Ring 76 Charter Has Been Found From 1948

You may have noticed that the founding date of Ring 76 has been changed from 1958 to 1948, in our masthead of this month's newsletter. That is because of a very generous donation by Ring member Ed Estrin during our recent auction night. Ed brought a large package of collectable magic instructions and illusion plans to the meeting to be appraised. Mixed in among this pile of papers was a type written sheet. It was titled: "Temporary Authority to operate as an affiliated Ring of the International Brotherhood of Magicians." It is dated December 6, 1948. Ed presented this long lost document to Ring President Don Soul for permanent preservation in our archives.

The paper grants authority to operate as I.B.M. Ring 76. It is signed by C. James McLemore, Supervisor of Rings, IBM. Charter members included; J.H. Thompson, Ted Angell, Kevin Barry, Richard Roy Stahl, R.W. Hafler, Bill Risling, Thomas Oliver, Howard Chernoff, Edward Harrison and Stewart Wilson. R.W. Hafler was a well-known San Diego businessman, and Howard Chernoff was one of the driving forces behind the establishment of the Zoo's Wild Animal Park in the San Pasqual Valley. Both men died many years ago.

It is believed the charter was entrusted to a local magician who had kept it filed away in his magic collection for many years. His collection was sold or given away following his death and has been lying idle until recently when it was recognized by Ed Estrin as an important document of the Ring's history. We are indebted to Estrin for saving it and giving us an official record of our Ring's

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## April Swap Meet & Auction A Big Hit!

Our Ring 76 annual swap meet and auction in April was well attended inspite of a heavy rain storm that swept through Southern California. Fourteen people were selling at various tables around the meeting hall. Video tapes seemed to be in the greatest abundance at this year's swap meet. Bryan McDanials had many nice props and tricks for sale. Terry Godfrey brought a large collection of used books, as did J.P. Jackson. J.P. also had some very collectable props for sale and most of it sold.

One North County person setting up his table told us he was on the road for more than an hour because of the rain and heavy traffic. Dealers were asked to be set up by 5:30 but many arrived quite late. Members ready to buy were at the front door ready to come in at 6 pm.

We started the auction at 7:30. There were 32 lots of items ranging from packages of video tapes to large illusions to be auctioned off. Treasurer Richard Ustick and Don Soul kept track of each item auctioned as Jack White worked to sell the many items for the best price he could get.

At the April board of directors meeting there was much discussion about having the swap meet on one evening and holding the auction a few months later. Some of the folks selling magic feel that the auction upstages the swap meet itself. That issue is now under consideration by the board. The auction committee has already received several items for our next event from members who were selling at this year's swap meet.

### Bob Sheet Lecture:

Former Ring 76 member and San Diego Magic legend Bob Sheets presented a fast moving laugh-filled lecture the evening following our swap meet and auction. That event brought out a lot of longtime members who were part of the Ring when Bob was just a young man beginning his career in magic.

Many of those longtime members included; Fritz Lotze, Bob Pozner, Jim Riley, Mike Stilwell, Gary Dismukes, Terry Lunceford, J.C. Wagner, Jeff Marcus, Joe Mystic. and Jack White.

Sheets gave his audience what they wanted: some good close-up, mixed with some novel stand-up



**Bob Sheets in the center of the picture, surrounded by friends from the past.**

routines. He tipped his "rope through body" as well as his dice routines and his famous handling of "the Three Shells." There were many other effects that ranged from cards to coins. Once again the Ring made good use of the video projector that was donated by Gary Salisbury, so that close-up action can be projected onto a large screen for all to see.

The lecture for Ring 76 is the only one Bob will give on the west coast this year. He headed from San Diego to the "FFF Gathering" at the Forks Hotel in New York. In May he will be at the Florida Magic Convention. Thanks, Bob, for giving us a great lecture.

### May Meeting:

Our May meeting will be very exciting and will offer a teach-in by five working local magicians. David Eldridge will teach a mental effect. Magic Mike Stilwell will give you the basics in several card moves, so bring a deck of cards along so you can practice. Diane Lane will have a great coin trick for you, so bring a few quarters or half dollars. Bob Pozner will teach an original bit of magic that you will love to do. Jeff Marcus will be on hand to give us a special learning treat. We will have a special surprise instructor, so plan to attend the May meeting Monday the 12<sup>th</sup>.

We will have five tables set up, and the instructors will move from table to table, teaching each group a new trick or move. This is a great learning opportunity for all members.

**Magic notes from Jack White**

**Memories of the Johnson Smith Catalog**

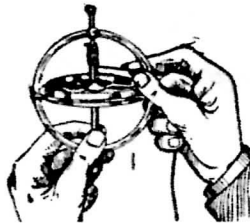
In going through my files the other day, I came across several copies of the Johnson Smith catalogs, one of the more dog-eared and tattered issues was the one I had when I was 9-years-old. Johnson Smith may not be a household name to most magicians today, but when I was growing up in the late 40s and early 50s millions of Americans turned to that company for itching power, magic tricks and Whoopee Cushions.

My reason for writing about this piece of American nostalgia is because the company is about to turn 90 and is still in business as a purveyor of novelty items and magic tricks. As I thumbed through the pages of my old Johnson Smith catalogs, I was transported back to a time when as a boy I was looking for a clever joke to play on that smart aleck kid in social studies class who thought he was so above the rest of us because he could do a couple of card tricks. The Johnson Smith catalog helped me level the playing field between us.



Alfred Johnson Smith left his native Australia in 1914, for Chicago, then the world hub of the catalog mail-order business. Both Sears Roebuck and Montgomery Ward were headquartered in Chicago, and Smith was savvy enough to take a page from their books and call his business Johnson Smith, as if two people were involved.

Smith decided that novelties would be his niche since Sears and Wards had captured the market for clothing, tools, house and farm needs. Alfred J. Smith turned to the novelty market; he really saw himself as a writer. He wrote all the copy for the catalog items himself. One of his timeless pieces of copy was created for the Mystery Top, which still sells briskly today. The copy reads; "Spins for days with no apparent explanation. What makes it go on and on at 2500 r.p.m. with no apparent energy source? A baffling brain buster that bugs the brightest."



It has been widely reported that Edgar Bergen, that master of ventriloquism, learned his craft as a young lad through the purchase of the "Wizard's Manual." For 25 cents, it taught the secrets of magic, black arts, mind reading, ventriloquism, and hypnotism.



Smith advertised his 700-page catalog for 3 cents during the Great Depression, but the price had risen to a dime when I purchased my first copy in 1949. Alfred Johnson Smith operated his company first in Chicago, then he moved to Racine, Wisconsin, then to Detroit, Michigan and also had an office and distribution center in Canada. He died in 1948; his sons, Arthur and Paul, took over the family business and kept it going in the same manner as their father.

When they needed a larger building, they decided to move again, this time to a warmer climate and exchanged the winters of Detroit for sunny Bradenton, Florida; they have been on the gulf coast since 1986.

In all of these years we are told their biggest seller has been item number 2953 "The Whoopee Cushion or Poo-Poo Cushion as it is sometimes called; it is made of rubber. It is inflated in much the same manner as an ordinary rubber balloon and then placed on a chair. When the person unsuspectingly sits upon the cushion, it gives forth noises that can be better imagined than discribed." The original Whoopee Cushion sold for 15 cents; today a new wireless remote control Whoopee Cushion sells for \$19.95. Both the old and the new are in the pages of the current Johnson Smith catalog.

The Johnson Smith catalog spoke to the hearts and minds of farm and small town boys looking for something to spice up their lives, with pages and pages of tricks, gags, jokes, and books to entertain. That wonderful old catalog certainly did that for this small town boy. I look back with fond memories.

**RUBBER TACKS**



# MAGIC BOOK REVIEW

*"Mysterious Stranger"*  
a book of magic by David Blaine

**Reviewed by Joel A Moskowitz, M D**

One hundred thousand dollars still awaits readers of the book of magic, "Mysterious Stranger" by David Blaine. The book was purposefully released on Halloween 2002. Villard Books (branch of Random House) informs that no one has yet deciphered the clues, which promise to lead to the cache somewhere in the United States. The book itself is a treasure. Said by USA Today to be "the hottest name in magic" Blaine, froze himself alive (an antidote to his heat?) and has blended Houdinesque impossibilities performed in public venue with deft street wandering mystifications of incidental strangers. He now has melded his interests in magic and wonder into a book which is enchanting, quixotic, informative, and graphic.

In the parlance of magicians, "It is soon to be a collectable." This is a form of praise, which may not correlate with the item's scarcity. Rather, magic aficionados, by their nature, tend to covet and collect, and this well produced tome (hard back 214 pages, \$24.95) has value.

Historically, the usual suspects appear. For example, Robert Houdin, Max Malini, and Houdini (whom Blaine seeks to emulate). The text tells of the fascination for cards by the well-known such as Johnny Carson, Woody Allen, Orson Wells, and Winston Churchill. Blaine tells: "Fidel Castro made better use of doves than any magician to this day. When he spoke to his supporters at his first triumphant rally, trained doves were released from amid the crowd. When one of the doves landed on his shoulder, the Cuban people perceived it as a sign from above that he was ordained to be their savior."

Anecdotes, photographs, quotations, and colorful and infrequently-seen graphics adorn the text. Spanning subjects as diverse yet related as magic squares, freak show subjects, the earliest fine art representations of card cheats, and some revelations, the pages serve to excite, surprise, and stimulate the reader. It is not a book of tricks or how to be a magician. Rather, the reader shares the breath of the many excitements which bewitch Blaine.

Blaine's thesis is that one doesn't get into magic. Rather, he asserts, "It gets into you." This collection of diverse themes also includes cheating at cards, confidence scams and other deceptions, subjects that are attractive to most magicians. These topics provide, as well, a broad and entertaining foundation for the merely inquiring curious lay person.

David Blaine devotes about one third of his book to his escapades marking his ascent from Brooklyn to Broadway and beyond. Interestingly, he concludes with his personal manifesto: a set of principles to live a fulfilled life. Most are generally accepted themes for living right: avoid over indulgences, learn to interact with those of all walks of life. One admonition is problematic: He urges that no robot should be created, which would be superior to the human race lest it wipe humans out. Is this a glimpse into David Blaine's conflicted psyche? He advocates knowledge (from his manifesto) and endorses wonder. Blaine's energies and art are intended to provoking uncommon thought. How then can one limit the quest for artificial intelligence? This seeming inconsistency aside, mysterious as it may be, David Blaine gets this reader's applause for a stellar addition to the literature of magic.

Be warned that you only have until midnight of December 31, 2004 to solve the challenge. There have been many queries but the treasure remains. Irrespective of one's success in the pursuit of the prize, the "Mysterious Stranger" is worth perusing.

## A MagiToon

**by Jim Whiting & Ellen Friedman**



"Please! Not at breakfast!"





## Magic Pro-Tips

By Brad Burt

### Part I

I have spent literally thousands of hours meditating on "what" makes magic, well, magic? At the **MO-MENT** when the 'magic' happens what happened? Most of you will have read my lessons on the Magic State of Mind. It forms an important part of what I am writing about now.

Imagine the following..no, I really mean it. Follow along with me and **REALLY** do as I ask. Imagine the following: You sit patiently. Silent, content, placid, yet alert, alive, expectant. Your right hand is held out before you palm up, relaxed, empty. Your hand closes into a tight fist. A short and expectant time passes. All your attention is focused upon your closed hand. The hand begins to expand, the fingers still clenched and yet something unseen seems to be filling it up, pushing the fingers out like a balloon expanding. At last you slowly open the hand and there sits a flower, a lotus, perhaps, or a tulip. The petals are closed; the fleshy outside texture is singular in its beauty. Slowly the petals of the flower open and, as they open, they reveal a large diamond. The diamond is real and obviously worth a small fortune. You retreat again in placid yet active contemplation of....

Magic to BE magic must happen, well, magically. Since it is magical, it will have a connection to observation beyond the mundane. Each magic event is both singular and significant in that that magic will NEVER

happen again. Even if you produce the same effect using the same method for the same audience some "thing" will be different, because time will have passed. If you change the audience not only has time passed, but a whole spectrum of things has changed mutating the situation into something different than before.

This **IS** the reason that we can **DO** the same routine, saying the same things, acting the same way and yet the magic can **ALWAYS** and in **ALL WAYS** be **NEW**. Not just for an audience that has never experienced our magic, but for **US**. I tell you from 32 years of experience. This is no small thing. Familiar routines do in fact breed a contempt that comes from an unfocused ennui. But, you see, that is what I want to do away with! If we are bored, then we have **LOST** our focus. We have lost our first love and the **VERY** thing that makes magic so inviting, so lovely, so enriching.

You see...the true value of magic is in that **ONE SHORT SPECIAL MOMENT** when the magic happens. Not the lead-up. Not the presentation, even. The presentation should **ALWAYS** be in service to the final **EFFECT**. All our attention should be going there. It is the beautiful woman at the end of a trip, perhaps not a boring one, but one that is better over for the arriving. If the hand opens and is still empty, your audience should experience a moment of existential despair before you close and open your hand to produce the flower. The **FINAL EFFECT** is all.

Examine your magic and you will see...that magic happens in a split second of time. The hand is empty, then that hand is full and there is **NO WAY** that the hand could have gotten that way except by the controvancing of laws that no one really wants overthrown. What **COULD** a magician **DO** if he could really make gravity go away? The terror as a theatre full of people begin to rise up and never stop, ending their lives in the placid enormity of space?

Magician  
**Terry Luncford**  
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## Brad Burt Continued from page 5

FECTION.)

FOCUS and THINK. The Zen of Magic is that point where the overt skill of the magician has so fallen away into obscurity of the techniques perfection that the magic seems literally to happen of itself! We are the alchemist's vessels of containment. We assist and provoke and, in the end, stand with the audience in awe of the unexplained. And, here's the good part. The part that should make all of YOU, no matter what your level of expertise feel invigorated and enabled....most of the work is really done in YOUR head. Trust me on this....take the easiest trick you have. Decide exactly WHAT the effect IS and WHEN that effect occurs at its strongest. Now, simply DECIDE that the effect is, in fact, important, stunning, interesting, and use every argument of patter and internal conviction to sell the effect to your

audience. But, and here is the ZEN principle....LET THE MAGIC HAPPEN! Don't hold back in fear of being "caught." Don't hold back because, in fact, you are stingy with life and thus stingy with your "magic." DON'T HOLD BACK! Let the magic emerge and BELIEVE in it. Make of the smallest, the shallowest trick a subtle forest of meaning.

FOCUS on the effect. If you have to think of the method at all, you are not at the point of the Zen of Magic. To achieve the most you can from your magic, practice until the method falls away and all that is left is the appearance of the magic at the end. I have seen the question arise a hundred times online and off: When am I a magician. The answer? When you can do just one trick so well that you no longer think of the steps leading to the conclusion. At that moment magic happens. It happens if the trick works by mathematical principle. It happens if the trick is composed solely of sleights. It even sometimes happens on stage. (But, much less in my opinion as the size and obvious manufactured nature of; Illusions somewhat divorces them from any real possibility of achieving that same overall AF-

## Part II

Ahhhh...I see it now. Unleashed hoards of you running from your homes and workplaces doing magic like bad used car salesmen! All smarmy honesty and fake conviction as to the value of your wares. Oh, my.

Don't fake it. Just do it. Don't have a magic trick to show. Be a magician and let the magic happen. Let it escape from "you" if you will. Don't own the process. BE the process. Nailing the technique or method of ANY trick down will ensure that you do it honestly, by the way.

This will take practice. Be honest, open, transparent. Do your magic like a child does it, the outcome uncertain and a joy when achieved. SEE! Look at the wonder of this thing that I have done. The Zen of Magic is the honesty of YOUR joy in the doing thereof. Share the joy. In life you want to focus on the journey itself. In magic you want to focus on the end result of each short journey. That very series of "effects" IS the journey for the magician. He, she, we are the practitioners of an arcane and wondrous craft. What do we apprentice ourselves TO if not the JOY produced by our efforts. What else is worthy of the journey?

## Part III

When magic happens, when it culminates in the final effect, what is happening is happening primarily in the mind and then the emotions of the spectator. It is the perceiving of the effect that produces the emotions. Wonder and/or perplexity becomes joy.



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## View from the Cheap Seats



By Jon A. Hand

### Exploring the Allied Arts, Part Two

Last month we explored the Allied Arts of Clowning and Juggling. In this month's installment of VFCS, we shall take a look at Con Artistry Demonstrations and Balloon Twisting (Sculpting). Either of these subjects could add a new aspect to your magic performances.

Con Artistry, like Clowning and Juggling, dates back centuries. The earliest woodcuts of the medieval period show magicians, clowns, jugglers, and con artists plying their trades with the local inhabitants. Often all four professions show in the same woodcut, along with itinerant musicians, and pickpockets taking advantage of the crowd's interest. Of course, being the honest citizen that you are, you will learn these cons purely for entertainment purposes....

Con Artistry includes Card Cons and Non-card Cons. Card Cons include Three Card Monte/Find the Lady, Poker Deals, Ten Card Deal, and Proposition Bets (swindles), while Non-card Cons include the Chain Con, Dice Propositions, and the Three Shell Game. A mixture of Card Cons and Non-card Cons holds the most interest for the spectators, in my experience. Many such demonstrations require little actual finger-flinging skill, and they pretend to expose the secrets of true con artists. Actually, few secrets are exposed, but a good line of patter showing just how easy it is to fleece the unaware will keep the audience intrigued.

An easy and broad beginning in Con Artistry Demonstration can be found in several mass-market magic books past and present (try *Amazon.com* and *Biblioind.com*). Karl Fulve's **Big Book Of Magic Tricks** devotes an entire chapter to easy Cons, Poker Deals, and Proposition Bets (including two unusual ones using dice). None of them require any sleight-of-hand skill, requiring instead only a bit of knowledge and a solid presentation. A few of them require a stacked deck, but one can easily change to a non-card con, and then ring in the stacked deck for his finale. George B. Anderson's **Magic Digest** has

a whole section on the Chain Con, plus Find the Lady, 31 (a card swindle), and a nice introduction to the Three Shell Game (which is admittedly difficult to do well). Jon Tremaine's **Amazing Book of Card and Magic Tricks** has an easy double-faced-card version of Find the Lady. Finally, Henry Hay's durable **Amateur Magician's Handbook** has several pages teaching sleight-of-hand methods for Three Card Monte with a good explanation of the Mexican Turnover.

Insider magic books abound with good routines, some of which require a bit more skill. The Erdinase classic **Expert at the Card Table** also has fine coverage on Three Card Monte (Hay's source material?). Lewis Ganson's **Art of Close-up Magic, Vol. 1** has an entire chapter on cons, including two completely different versions of the Chain Con with full routining, detailed instructions for Three Shell Game, and a delightful English con called the Purse Swindle (with a magical ending). Bruce Elliott's **The Best in Magic** has a useful fake second deal demonstration and a full workout of possibilities on the Ten Card Deal. Ganson's **Dai Vernon Book of Magic** has a solid Poker Deal demonstration that makes a wonderful finale to any Con Artistry Demonstration. Bound periodical volumes such as Jim Sisti's **Magic Menu**, Harry Lorayne's **Apocalypse**, and Bruce Elliott's **Phoenix** (to name only a few) have significant contributions to the literature as well. Dealer catalogs abound with current wrinkles on the subject, including instructional videos and specialty monographs.

Finally, I note that a good many standard magic tricks can be adapted to the gambling theme with a strong patter story. For example, a basic single cup & ball routine with a final load has been given a "cheating at dice" patter in Ganson's **Vol. 1** mentioned earlier, as the dice change color and size with a final load of a shot glass of "whiskey." Cutting to the four Aces, assembling the Aces, and even many packet tricks using sleight counts can be adapted with some thought. Just remember to keep the spectator from being the brunt of the con; most routines suggest a "this happened to me/to someone I know" approach.

If you find that you enjoy Con Artistry Demonstrations, you may want to devise your own character for a whole close-up act. My character is loosely based upon the appearance of *Maverick*, an old west riverboat gambler. Since I sport a mustache and naturally heavy eyebrows over my sincere baby-blue eyes, it takes little more than a toothy grin and the occasional wink to the bystanders to complete my character's period costuming. Other possibilities might include a Dealer (1850s western, 1950s Vegas, or contemporary Vegas) or a Bartender (same date

Cont on page 9



## MIND OVER MATTER

By David Eldridge

If you are looking for a diabolic display of card magic, move on. If, on the other hand, you like whimsical card plots, keep reading. This is a kind of "Packet Triumph."

Have a card selected, and returned to the deck. Learn the identity of the card by your favorite method. I control it to the bottom of the deck, get a glimpse, and cut the deck. Hand the deck to the spectator, and tell her to remove any five cards from the deck, one of which must be the card she is thinking of. When this is done, place the deck aside. Pick up the packet, and casually cut the selected card to the top of the packet, thus, when the packet is held face down, the selection will be the top card.

Explain that the cards will be mixed into a face up/face down arrangement. Hold the packet face down, and deal the top card to the table. Flip the packet face up, and deal the face card on top of the tabled card. Flip the packet face down and deal the next card to the table. Continue dealing the cards in this fashion, revolving the packet between each card until the packet is exhausted. By the way, the last card is flipped face down before being placed onto the tabled packet. So, position check: spread the packet. From left to right the cards should be "face down, face up, face down, face up, face down."

Pick up the packet, and flip it over. You should now be looking at the selected card. Deal it to the table, and repeat the process described above. If the cards were spread left to right, the positions should be thus: "face up, face down, face down, face up, face up."

Pick up the packet, and flip it over. Repeat the process once more. At the end of this third revolving deal, the only face down card will be the selection.

## Ring Member gets E-mail and Tabasco from fans

Recently, IBM Membership Chair, Robbie Willmarth sent an e-mail to Ring 76 member 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt. Alfonso Vazquez, who is serving with the United States Marine Corps., in Iraq. Robbie writes: "News reports stateside say the Marines received a shipment of Tabasco sauce to go with their rations. The report says you were supposed to have a miniature bottle of Tabasco in your MRE packet as well. They have records going back to the Civil war of providing Tabasco to service men to help make rations palatable. I am a Tabasco fan myself. I'm curious, does it make your rations taste better? Take care of yourself, Robbie."

Alfonso wrote back; "Well let me tell you. Yes! The Tabasco does make a lot of difference in the (MRE) which stands for meal ready to eat. But after a while they all taste the same, but they do fill you up. I can't wait for a big juicy hamburger. The worst is over, and now we have changed our tactics and we are enforcing rules and regulations over here."

We remind our members that during the heat of battle, Sgt Vazquez managed to do a few card tricks for his men to keep up morale. He said he wasn't able to carry any props but did manage to fit a deck of cards into his gear. We are, of course, all very proud of Alfonso Vazquez as a member of our Ring, and we salute him for his sacrifice overseas and look forward to having him home soon. If you would like to drop him a line his e-mail address is [VazquezA@3mawdm.usmc.mil](mailto:VazquezA@3mawdm.usmc.mil) We know he would like to hear from his friends at Ring 76.

### June Lecture Planned

Henok Negash, is bringing Bill Goodwin to Jack's Magic Place, June 4th, for a 7 pm. lecture. Goodwin is famous for his card magic. For information, e-mail Henok at [hnegash@hotmail.com](mailto:hnegash@hotmail.com).



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## Cheep Seats Cont from page 7

ideas, but different costuming; the Bartender could be advising the "potential players" to stay out of the game, for example).

Our final Allied Art is Balloon Twisting/ Sculpting. Due to the relatively recent development of the latex from which balloons are manufactured, this is a strictly modern allied art. All of the following references were written after 1950, and most are more recent than that. There seem to be two schools of thought: single-balloon "sculptures," and larger, life-size multi-balloon creations.

In the mass market, you can simply walk into your city's Books-a-Million or Barnes & Noble bookstore and find complete introductory kits teaching basic techniques and standard animal "sculptures" in photographic instructions, with a supply of the correct balloons and a balloon pump included. This is a quick and painless way to get started in this often lucrative sideline.

Moving deeper into the field, one finds that opinions differ widely on the "best" manufacturer and model of the "correct" balloons, as well as on the correct way to inflate a balloon. Some writers insist that one must inflate each balloon by mouth, as the warmth and humidity of the breath make the balloon less likely to break during the twisting process. Others say that mouth inflation is not only unnecessary, but downright impractical if one is to make dozens of balloon animals at a single sitting (say, for a birthday party, an outdoor carnival, or as a mall concession). I note that inflating a balloon with the breath is not as easy as one might think, and that a hand or foot operated pump can allow the operator to pre-inflate a number of balloons to speed up production at the venue. I suggest transporting pre-inflated pencil balloons in the type of box in which large numbers of 4' fluorescent light tubes are shipped. Read and experiment for yourself.

Beyond the mass market, some books have emerged as classics in this new field. In the field of large multi-balloon animals, Don Alan (of close-up magic fame) wrote a 1950s book that remains available today, **Rubber Circus**. In the area of single-balloon animals, Jim Davis **One Balloon Zoo** and Roger Seigel's **Rubber Ark** probably teach more than you will ever need (or be able to remember!).

Entertaining with your balloons is much more fun than merely making a profusion of animals for people as they wait in line. Books such as Jim Sommer's **Blow by Blow**, Jack Dennerlein's **New Twists for Balloon Workers**, and compiled idea books such as **Balloon Side Show** contribute magic tricks, prop ideas, balloon races, and contests. Jim

Sisti's bound periodical **Magic Menu, Vol. 2** has a series of articles on balloon sculptures, including some ideas on doing balloon portraits (caricatures).

The most modern books go beyond animals, making hats, framework structures, and more from multiple balloons. Do a search at *Amazon.com* or look around in your local bookstores for books which stretch the boundaries of balloon thinking (pun intended, thank you very much).

Whether you become interested in Clowning, Juggling, Con Artistry Demonstrations, or Balloon Twisting, you can be assured that you will add a new dimension to your abilities as a performer. Happy exploring!

*Jon A. Hand welcomes your commentary or feedback on this or any other column which he has contributed to*

**MagiCurrents**; email him: [jonahand@hotmail.com](mailto:jonahand@hotmail.com), and put VFCS in your subject line.

## Ring History continued from page one

founding. The Ring was active from 1948 until 1951. It is believed the Korean War was one of the reasons for deactivation. It was rechartered in November of 1958 and has been an active Ring in the IBM ever since.

The board of directors of Ring 76 is taking appropriate steps to have the document preserved and placed on display with other historical artifacts of Ring 76's past. There will be an official presentation at our installation banquet in mid-July.

## Loch David Crane

### Says "Thank You"

To everyone at Ring 76 who helped him through his recent illness and troubled times.

## Mark's Magic by Mark Stone

### COSMAR PASS By Mark Stone

This vanishing pass is designed to vanish small objects or retract them while dressing casual, specific when wearing jeans.

You'll notice that the jeans pants has pockets cut different to regular pants; in the jeans, the pocket openings are facing up while in the regular pants, the pocket openings face to the sides.

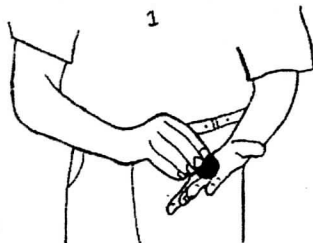
Taking advantage of this difference, is the principle involve in this pass.

#### LEFT POCKET VANISHING:

This pass is done in one continuous movement, but in order to explain it in detail, I'll will break it into parts.

Standing with your right foot forward, your body will be slightly at an angle with your left side of the body kind of natural, hidden from the front view; this creates for a person in front of you a kind of almost blind spot in the zone of your left jean pocket.

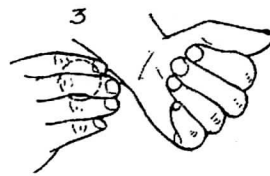
Standing in the position described above, take a coin with your right fingers and make a false deposit over your left palm, the coin retracts in your right hand



where it is held, hidden between the right thumb and fingers.

At the same time the left hand closes pretending, it is holding the coin, as is shown in fig 1, 2, 3.

Immediate, the left hand, pretending to be holding the coin, is rubbed against your right arm, at the same time, bend your head and gaze to the rubbing spot while the right hand



falls to the side and secretly drops the coin inside the jean's left pocket fig 4, 4A.

Continuing the movements the right

hand after dropping the coin inside the pocket, goes under the left elbow, and upon contact with the elbow, the left hand opens, revealing that the coin has suddenly vanished fig 5, then make a step forward with your left foot and at the same time open the right hand confirming the miracle.

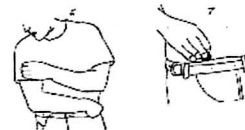
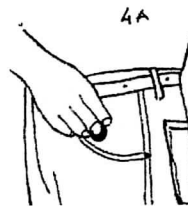


#### RIGHT POCKET VANISH:

In this case we reverse the foot position and the hand roles, the only difference in this case and advantage is that will use the jeans's coin pocket located only in the right pocket. Because the top

location of this small coin pocket makes it a little more easy to drop the coin inside the pocket.

If you are wearing regular pants, you still can use the same principle. Use the same body posture and steps but in this case hiding the coin or small object under the pant's waist fig 6,7.



(Editor's Note) Again, we thank Mark Stone for sharing with us another of his coin moves. This is a special series which Mark has been working on for many years.

## Election cont from page one

Jack White returns as secretary and editor of the Ring newsletter, MagiCurrents, for a third year. Richard Ustick who has held down nearly every job there is on the board of directors, returns as Ring treasurer, his second year in that position, while Sherry Luft announced she would do another year as Sgt-At-Arms. Sherry has also been a longtime member of the board of Ring 76, including past President of the Ring. Don Soul will remain on the board as a member at large, the result of being the immediate past president.

Leaving the board will be Bob Pozner, who has been an important part of the of the committee making the rules and carrying out the practices of the directors. Bob was also very active in the planning of events at the 2002 IBM Convention here in San Diego, as well as keeping the monthly Ring reports up to date in the Linking Ring Magazine. He has promised the board he will continue to be an active member and will volunteer his services when needed. We all thank him for his dedication. Bob is also a past President of Ring 76, who returned to serve again.

Diane Lane has expressed an interest in assuming the job as president. She has been active as a performer, producer, clown and has deep ties to a variety of charitable groups in San Diego County and Mexico. Diane says she is putting some of her

charity programs on hold for a while as she devotes more of her time to Ring 76 business.

In addition to hosting and producing a weekly cable television show featuring magic, she also does magic at several restaurants and at fund raising events throughout the county. Her work with San Diego Clowns is also well-respected.

Diane has been a member of Ring 76 since 1995, and member of the board of directors since 2000. As 2<sup>nd</sup> vice president in charge of membership, she has signed up more than 30 new members in two years. She was also an active member of the committee for the 2002 IBM Convention here in San Diego.

If elected president of Ring 76, Diane hopes to bring more magic learning sessions to the membership, as well as continue the mentoring programs and traditions already well-established by past Ring presidents.

Members running for office within Ring 76 are asked to make a commitment of attending 12 general meetings and 11 board of directors meetings during the year ahead. They are also asked to attend all exchange programs and take part in all special activities sponsored or hosted by Ring 76. Because this is a volunteer organization each board member is asked to pay his or her own way in all activities.

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## Message from the President

Our Performer of the Year has been determined. Who is it? You'll find out when you attend the officer installation banquet in July. Due to scheduling problems, the venue and date of the banquet are still being negotiated, but we'll have our act together very soon.

As my administration draws to a close, I want to thank everyone who pitched in and made it work. The efforts of those members should have been noticed by all, and if someone stands out in your mind as giving a little more than the rest, you'll have a chance to show your gratitude by voting for that person as Member of the Year at the June election.

And we must thank our nominating committee of Greg Wauson, Gary Dismukes, and Ken DeWoody for putting in the time to search for officer candidates for the upcoming election. I expect a large turnout in June if, for no other reason, than to vote for our new board. But let's not forget this month's meeting. We've got some excellent instructors this time, so bring your cards, coins, and ropes and get ready to learn.

Don Soul

President Ring 76

## Classified Advertising

**Famous John Dahmas Die Box** in kit form. All parts and hardware assemble yourself. Four inch die. A nice workshop project. Call J.P. for details. \$75.00

**For the Tenyo Collector. Color Fantasy Early Tenyo:** vintage 1975, Tenyo stage trick. Jumbo cards change into colored square's. An amazing effect; Very rare these days, \$65.00 Call J.P. Jackson at 858-569-0096

**Notice to all Ring members:** If you have something to sell, trade or if you are looking for a certain trick, book, video or illusion. Use this column to get the word out. It is free to all Ring 76 members.

**Wanted:** Genii Magazines from 1948 to 1953. Please contact Jack White, with condition and asking price. 619-299-9037.



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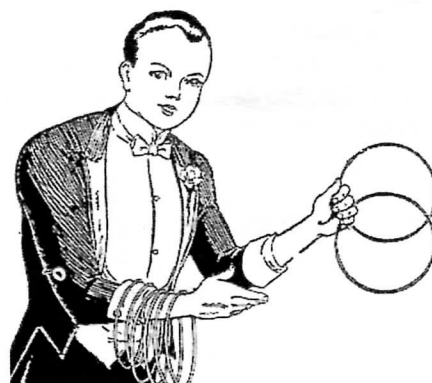
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## Ring 76



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## MagiCurrents:

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## News

In case you missed it **Robert K. Miller** reviewed **Sumit Dua's** "Remnant: Torn & Restored Card" in the April issue of **Linking Ring magazine** (page 132). Miller told his readers the 13-minute DVD is "Highly Recommended." The tape was shot at Jack's Magic Place by **Diane Lane** about a year ago. Sumit edited the tape himself during his spring break from college and is distributing the DVD through **Murphy's Magic Supplies Inc.**

The Ring 313 Installation Banquet was also written up in the April issue of **Linking Ring magazine**. Ring 76 was given a nice mention for supplying the program for that event. (page 145)

If you are missing some recent back issues of the **Linking Ring Magazine**, member **Myron Joseph** has made a nice donation of his **Linking Ring** magazines to the club. If you need some issues to fill-in your collection, let us know; we can probably help you. They are free and all in excellent condition.

**Brad Burt** reports the server he was using to distribute his **Mini Magic** course online has mysteriously gone down and the people who operate it will not return his calls. Brad has been sending out via e-mail, free of charge, an excellent magic program. He has been writing and sending the course to the server, but they have not been forwarding the bi-weekly programs to subscribers. Brad now has the system up and going again. If you are not receiving your free subscription, let him know. **Brad Burt's Magic Shop** is giving all **Ring 76** members a 10% discount on all new magic,



books, and videos. He has a huge collection of used magic, books, and videos for sale right now, so drop by the shop and check out what they have.

Our Magic Chef **Josef Rennleitner** has a new hobby: wind sailing. He recently took part in the Americas Cup of Wind Sailing at Primm Valley near Las Vegas. These wind sail vehicles are on wheels and can hit speeds of 90 miles per hour. The highspeed sailing is done on a dry lake bed in the Nevada desert across from Whisky Petes Hotel and Casino near stateline. After a day of wind sailing, Josef spends his evenings doing a few card tricks for his fellow wind sailors at the hotel.

**Vince the Magic Man** is now back at the Galley Restaurant at the Marina in Chula Vista, doing his strolling magic on Friday and Saturday evenings. After an absence of several month's management at the restaurant, said they needed him back.

It was no April Fool's Day prank for **the Rubin Padilla family**. Their daughter **Knight Gilb Padilla** was born on April 1<sup>st</sup>. Dad was so proud he was circulating the photograph, at the top of the next column, at the **Shoot Ogowa** lecture a week after his daughter's birth. Mom

## Briefs

and baby are doing fine; dad's still a little rattled.



*Knight Gilb Padilla*  
April 1, 2004

Ring member **Terry Godfrey** made a special appearance on **Diane Lane's "Magical Moments"** cable television show in April. Terry also had a very nice story and two large pictures in the **Tri-Valley Dispatch** newspaper in Casa Grande, Arizona. The article quotes Terry as saying: "To be a good magician you have to be willing to spend a lot of time by yourself practicing." Godfrey was one of the name performers at the Pinal County Fair as part of the grand stand show for 5 days in late March. Terry's fair season started early this year.

**Lee Jacobs** of Pomeroy, Ohio, died on Good Friday, April 18th, of a brain tumor. Lee is best remembered for his magic poster reproductions. He operated a new and used mail order magic business for many years. His wife is looking for someone to purchase his business.

**May 12th Ring meeting presents a special mentoring program. We will have a special teach-in with guest instructors presenting a variety of new effects. These workshops have been a big hit in the past, so don't miss this program.**

**June 9th meeting: Election of new officers and the Ring 76 Stand-up Contest. This contest is open to all members, with cash prizes being offered. Polish up your routines and plan to be part of this contest! Ring Dues are payable in June!**

**July 20th a Sunday afternoon has tentatively been set as our Installation Banquet and program. The event will be a catered sitdown meal at the Shrine Auditorium on Kerney Mesa. Details in the next issue of MagiCurrents.**

**May 26th Board of Directors meeting 7 pm. Jack's Magic Place. All board meetings are open to members.**

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