

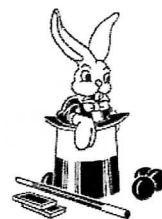
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MagiCurrents

San Diego, California

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Honest Sid Gerhart Ring 76

Website
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Volume XVII 11 November 2003

Diane Lane named "Magician of the Year"!

At the Ring 76 Board of Directors meeting October 27th members other than the board began drifting into the meeting. At first no one paid much attention, then Michael E. Johnson stood up and announced he was there to make a special presentation. A fellowship of Honorable Magicians was recognizing Diane Lane for her ongoing contributions and volunteerism with magic.

In honor of her efforts, the group that is made up of Ring 76 members named Diane Lane, "Magician of the Year." The award came with many honors. Magic Mike Stilwell produced a huge trophy with Diane's name engraved on it. The engraving noted that Diane was being honored for her vigorous support of charities and worthwhile causes through the art of magic.

Next came the presentation of a proclamation from United States Senator Barbara Boxer, who noted that "through Diane's, creativity and enthusiasm she has inspired all ages with her example of compassion and generosity." Congresswoman Susan A. Davis said: "Diane's lifelong commitment to volunteerism in San Diego is admirable; her dedication to service is greatly valued by our community."

State Senator Dede Alpert commended Lane for "her inspiring and charitable contributions to the community." San Diego Mayor Dick Murphy gave Lane a City of San Diego Special Commendation, which stated, "Your time and enthusiasm for helping

those in need will have a lasting impact and deserves special recognition."

Harry and Trudy Monti of the Society of American Magicians called Lane an "exemplary role model, both personally and professionally." Dale R. Hindman of the Academy of Magical Arts praised

Lane's special accomplishments and her leadership to the local magic scene.



In a surprise action Magic Mike Stilwell presents Diane Lane with "special" Magician of the Year trophy.

In addition to the many kind words to and for Diane, there were also some special thanks in the form of \$1000 in cash and certificates. Those gifts came from Better Deal Tuxedo of LaJolla, Mike Stilwell, Brad Burt's Magic Shop, the Gathering Restaurant, The California Magic Quartet and several of San Diego's Veteran magicians. The Fellowship of Honorable Magicians is a service

organization whose motto is "Give Magic." Michael E. Johnson organizes its efforts.

Attending the event for Diane were: Richard Ustick, Bob Pozner, Joe Mystic, Michael E. Johnson, Jack White, Mike Stilwell, Sherry Luft, Bob Ingalls, Terry Godefrey, J.P. Jackson, Jeff and Peg Marcus, Don Soul, and Loch David Crane. Thank you, Diane, for all that you do and all that you have done for Magic in San Diego.

Continued on page five:

Ring 76 Pro's present show for Ring Members in October, bringing high praise for entertainment

The October meeting with a Halloween theme was well attended with 55 members and many guests. One of the guests included longtime past member and supporter of Magic in San Diego Vi Freeland. Ring 76 President Diane Lane, who returned after spending the past two months in the hospital, called the meeting to order. Diane thanked all of the Ring members who took part in the annual Magicians Day at the San Diego Blood Bank. Diane also talked about her recent illness and announced her health is improving and she is now back on track.

The meeting was then turned over to 1st Vice President Bob Ingalls, who was in charge of the entertainment for the evening. Our guest

performers for the most part were all members who earn their living by performing magic full-time. Setting the stage for the "Pro's" was Richard Ustick and his daughter Christina

(12) The Usticks are not full time magicians but their presentations of musical magic numbers presented in a very professional matter are eagerly anticipated by Ring members.

Richard was outfitted in Count Dracula garb and Christina was in a cat costume. Together they sang their way through the 60's song "Monster Mash" while performing magic to go with the words and the music. The Usticks spend untold hours choreographing music, magic and the words to the song for our pleasure and this was another stellar hit and a wonderful way to open our evening's entertainment.



Richard Ustick singing
"Monster Mash"

Professional magician and manipulator Terry



Terry Godfrey and his
thimble routine

Godfrey was our next performer. Terry has worked just about every venue of magic you can think of, from circus sideshows to fairs, business meetings to full stage shows. He

has just ended his fair tour for the season and will be appearing at Seaport Village in San Diego through the holidays. Terry presented his very clever routine with thimbles, and then did a marvelous color change with a deck of cards and a four ace production. Terry kept our attention with the use of a simple whistle that he would blow as thimbles



appeared at his fingertips. A very clever and entertaining act.

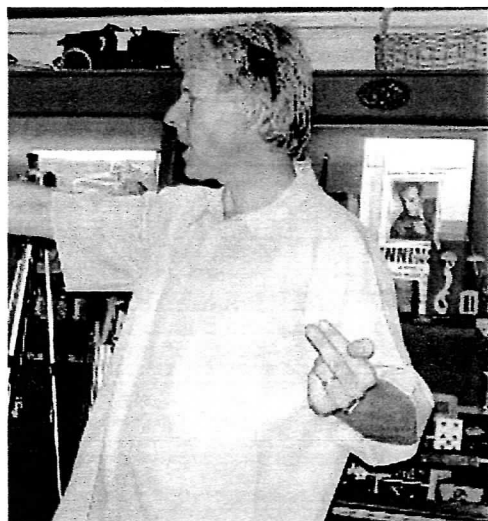
Joe "Mystic" McGrievy is another longtime professional performer in San Diego. If there is a large gathering of people at an organized event in San Diego, you are

Joe Mystic

almost certain to find Joe Mystic performing somewhere in that group. His work throughout Southern California is well respected. If you want a treat visit his Web site at: His animated opening page of a card rising from a deck is unique.

Joe wore his long flowing wizards robe and high pointed hat, and his white beard offers a commanding appearance on stage. Joe opened with a very clean silk to egg routine that was a work of beauty in his hands. He followed up the egg effect with a very nice triple prediction effect that left the audience with their mouths open.

Following Joe Mystic is the always-busy Michael E. Johnson, who just finished a series of theater shows



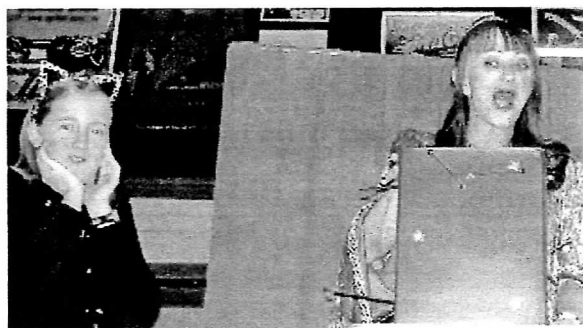
Michael E. Johnson like's to go out and work in the audience

in Escondido. Michael amazed the audience with a book test using six books. One of the publications was a regulation San Diego County telephone book with more than

1200 pages. At the end of his act Michael tore the phone book in half. It was an exercise in pure strength; it was not a phone book that had been baked in an oven.

Michael's strong points are his eternal optimism for his magic and his audience. He truly cares about what he does and it shows in every routine he presents. He can take a small bit of business and turn it into something big in his act.

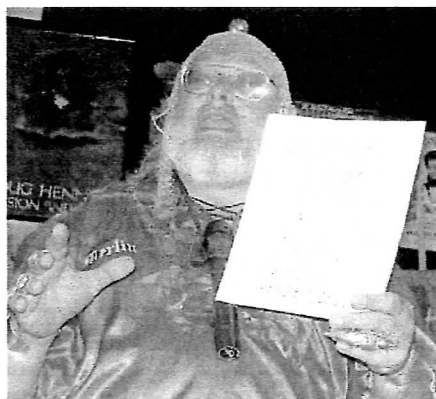
Ring 76 President Diane Lane, with the assistance of Christina Ustick, was the next performer. Diane is another longtime performer doing everything from clown magic shows to full stage productions and close up magic in restaurants. Most of her time these days is taken up with hosting and producing San Diego's only fulltime television magic show, "Magical Moments." On both Time - Warner and Cox Cable stations.



Christina Ustick & Diane Lane

Diane was costumed as the medieval enchantress Gwenivere, wife of King Arthur. She changed an inky, murky container of liquid into a crystal clear bowl of water with a live fish swimming around in the water. Then, with the assistance of Christina, did the needle box routine where a balloon fills a large box, yet when six long knitting needles are pushed through openings in the box the balloon is unharmed. A nice interlude of medieval magic from Diane Lane.

Loch David Crane is another of our hard working professional magicians in San Diego. Though Loch



Loch David Crane reading his poem to Siegfried & Roy

is well known for taking his shows on the road and working in many areas around the country and in Europe. Loch's latest character is Merlin the Magician. He appears in a very professional

costume with chain mail armor and headdress. He presented a poem that was dedicated to the Las Vegas Superstars of Magic, Siegfried & Roy. Loch wrote the poem himself and made copies available to our members. The poem was written after the tragic attack on Roy by one of his white tigers while performing at the Mirage showroom October 3rd.

Closing our program was Kenny Shelton whose primary occupation is college student but works as a magician when ever he has time away from his studies to squeeze in a show. Kenny asked for two numbers from random members of the audience. The numbers were added together, the sum of the numbers was dialed and amazingly the number rang a cell phone held by a member of the audience.

Magic Book Review

By Dr. Joel Moskowitz

A Review of "The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay" by Michael Chabon

A literary cake studded with chocolate chip references to magic and magicians makes good reading for conjurers. Add the whip cream of the era of comic book heros. Mix in the dough of life experiences and values struggling for economic and individual security. Season with bitter evil forces of Nazism. Transfer from the shaking society of Prague into the cultural mixer of our United States. Flavor with nostalgic references to the third decade of the last century. Bake slowly and what has been produced is a Pulitzer decorated book, "The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay" by Michael Chabon.

Now available in soft-cover encompassing 658 delectable pages from Picador USA press: the whole cake being \$15.00, it is well worth the calories the reader will expend in moving his/her eyes across the narrative. It is a mystical novel, a tale of the struggle against the devil and his SS minions, of the development of a national passion with the comic book superperson, of the shoals young writers encountered in being justly compensated for their inventions.

This reviewer ventures that if a survey of aficionados of magic were taken, those whose vintage is from 50 and beyond, a high percentage would affectionately admit to their earliest pleasures in reading/collecting and admiring comic books. Almost all will express regret that their mother, the dog, and unknown forces discarded, lost, ate or otherwise destroyed these now precious documents. Chabon is a young man but he knows and writes of Kavalier and Clay, pseudonyms for two young Jewish artists and creators who disguise

their names in Christian garb. Remember those two fellows who created Superman?

One of them, the artist, had been mentored in Czechoslovakia, by a European escapeologist, Houdini. It is by shortening the nails in a coffin that Joe Kavalier smuggles himself out of the Nazi invaded Prague. The coffin is loaded with a Golem, a clay, mystical alive, human-like morph which serves to distract the nazi border checkers. And so the adventure begins. Studded along the way are references to Hofzinzer, Chung Ling Soo, and themes instantly familiar to us who are obsessed with magic, sweetening the reading. The comic book hero is the Escapist!

You won't want to read this in the hopes of learning new schemes to dazzle the uninitiated. It is worthy of your attention if you wish to recall with bittersweet melancholy the earlier enjoyment of the pictorial story of the combat between good and evil, of ambition and growing pains, and all presented in a masterful confection on paper.

Getting More Than You Paid For in Magic

This is something you hear about but don't think it can really happen. But it did, to Ring member Bob Pozner.

In October Bob decided to have his new Johnson Cups chrome plated and at the same time had his three small 2 inch in diameter, linking rings plated as well.

He went to pick them up a week later. He inspected the cups and they were beautiful. Then he began unwrapping the rings. The first one was fine, the second ring was beautiful, the third ring, the key ring was fine but the plater thought it was defective so he spot welded it shut and plated over the weld making it a seamless ring like the other two. Bob explained what had happened and went back the next week to pick up his freshly cut and plated key ring.

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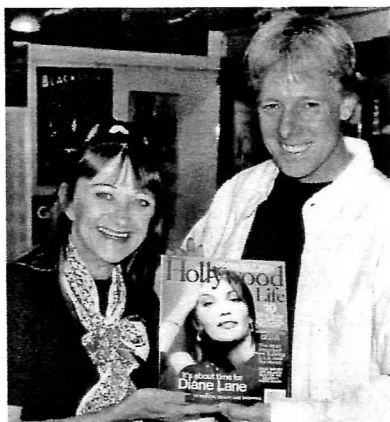
Magician
Terry Lunceford
supports
The IBM & Ring 76

Never a dull moment in magic!

Diane Lane Continued from page one

Diane Lane was overwhelmed by the outpouring of kindness and admiration. Diane has been hospitalized numerous times in the past six months, and after each stay in the hospital, has bounced back, volunteering for more organizations and helping more groups. As she recently noted in her President's Message column in this newsletter, she may be out of service for a while, but she will be back as soon as she can get on her feet.

Michael E Johnson, who himself gives much to the community, presented Diane with a magazine titled: "Hollywood Life" on the cover is the headline "It's About Time for Diane Lane." Michael noted that the headline means its about time we recognize this lady of magic in our community.



Diane Lane & Michael Johnson



(Back top:) Richard Ustick, Bob Pozner, Joe Mystic, Diane Lane, Mike Johnson, Terry Godfrey, Mike Stilwell, Bob Ingalls, Sherry Luft, (Front) J.P. Jackson, Jeff & Peg Marcus Don Soul, and Loch David Crane.

Blackstone Props being auctioned online in Nov.

Magician Harry Blackstone's famous sawing-a-woman-in-half illusion, including the whirling 30-inch buzz saw blade, will be offered at a "Monsters & Magic" auction November 15th. The sale is being conducted by Julien Entertainment of Hollywood. (www.JulienEntertainment.com) In addition to the Blackstone Collection, the auction includes classic special effects equipment, plus famous props, posters and paraphernalia from numerous "Frankenstein" movies and other horror, fantasy and sci-fi favorites.

For additional information visit the above Web site or you can phone (310) 836-1818 for details on the 400 magic items to be auctioned off.

"MagiToon"

by Jim Whiting & Ellen Friedman



"This is not what I had in mind when I agreed to do a sponge routine after dinner!"



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View from the Cheap Seats



By Jon A. Hand

On October 24, 2003, Eugene Burger lectured for a crowd of 30 people in a small classroom in Nashville, Tennessee. The lecture ran two full hours plus a ten-minute break. It was Burger's first visit to Nashville, and he seemed to enjoy the "laid-back" atmosphere of the south.

Mr. Burger's lecture centered around the theme of making magic about something other than itself. "It is simply not enough," he stated, "to build your magic on the idea of 'I can do something that you can't do.' Magic must arouse the emotions without raising the analytical intellectual factor." I would describe his underlying concept as "theatrical magic," not in the sense of its being in a large theater, but rather in the sense of having a narrative dramatic structure to which the magic was almost incidental.

The lecture opened with a performance of Al Baker's Rising Card from Hat. Although it was a simple effect using it, Burger's performance focused upon the hat rather than the cards. Since hats are not as vogue as they used to be, Burger advised getting a really interesting hat to build a story around, such as a cowboy hat, or an old top hat. One could claim the hat was one from an old Wild West gambler, or from a famous deceased magician, for example. Such a fabricated storyline would be quite believable today, thanks to the existence of Ebay and similar auction sites. Placing the presentation upon the hat not only takes the heat off the cards, but also makes the trick

emotionally satisfying.

Each trick in the lecture had a unique storyline or presentational hook. "Observo" was a trick build around the fact that witnesses to a crime never see the same thing; two participants saw differing numbers of cards in the magician's hand, as well as differing numbers of red and black cards. Burger then routined some old "chestnuts" ("acrobatic matchbox," "out to lunch", and "Glorpy the ghost") into a very entertaining spirit writing trick; the cumulative effect of the routining plus the strong storyline made powerful magic, indeed. It was interesting to see that the under-age-30 segment of the crowd had never seen Glorpy, and they were really intrigued with it.

Two of the strongest routines were dealing with larger scale issues. A stirring version of Gypsy Thread was performed to a story of the East Indian gods, with the thread burned into short segments and restored as representational of the destruction and re-creation of the universe. Next, a purported dream segment was performed with 10" tall tombstone-shaped cards; shown blank on both sides, the cards eventually showed Burger's name on a tombstone (his recurring dream) and the dates of his birth and death (a further elaboration of that dream). Perhaps these two tricks leaned to the macabre, but Burger felt that nothing is a stronger emotional hook than life and death.

Burger did say that one good effect of "magic for its own sake" worked well in a setting of emotional hook magic, due to the contrast factor. He then showed and explained his favorite two such effects from his restaurant days. The first was a wind-up toy robot that found a chosen card by walking onto a row of cards and stopping exactly on the right one. The other was a tiny, flat square of shiny metallic paper,

which, when opened into a small gift bag, was found to contain a 2 oz. jigger of Frappacino, which Burger happily consumed in front of the audience.

Burger displayed open disdain for the model of the 1950s/1960s type of close-up exemplified by Don Alan, stating that Alan's style was perfect for that time period but is very dated now. He felt it a sad commentary on the state of close-up magic that Alan's act and character remains the model for so many close-up magicians.

Burger's underlying message is not new, of course. Henry Hay's 1950 book, **Amateur Magician's Handbook**, makes much of the fact that "tricks do not make magic; presentations make magic. Most magicians would profit more from a course in theater than from their umpteen studies of sponge ball routines." Maskelyne and Devant's 1911 epic **Our Magic** devoted more than a third of the book to discussions of how to make magic more memorable by making it more theatrical and more emotional; Maskelyne even concluded that magic would never become a serious art until it achieved this high emotional status as a consistent aspect of performance. Other contemporary magicians are also stressing this aspect; Docc Hillford's lecture was remarkably similar in its overall impact and total message, for example.

Somehow, though, the word is just falling on deaf ears. Too many hobbyist

magicians are still hung up in the technique and the secrets. Secrets and complicated technique aren't that important; every trick that Burger did was easy of execution, and many were self-working. The toughest sleights used all evening were an Elmsley Count, a momentary palm of an object, and a simple billet switch. The presentations were the magic, and the ease of execution made the presentation easier to deliver.

Musicians know that technique and ability are means to an end; the emotional impact of the music is what counts. Most magicians still have this lesson to learn, and Burger is "preaching the word."

Highly recommended.

Many Ring Members Homes Threatened by Brush Fires!

At this writing it appears that no Ring 76 members lost their homes to flames during the fire storm that swept through San Diego County in late October. However, many members were evacuated from their homes. Gary Salisbury reports that 22 homes on his block were lost to fire, his and his neighbors were saved. J.P. Jackson, left a life time of collecting magic behind as police ordered him to evacuate. Jackson said when you have a house full of magic, what do you take? It was two days before he knew if his home and collection were safe.

Jeff Marcus opened the front door of his home and began video taping the flames as they roared toward his house. Gary Dismukes and his wife were evacuated, as were Jim Thayer and his wife. Flames burned to their backyards but their homes were all saved.

Loch David Crane

Says:

Thank You

for your support during his recent illness and troubled times.



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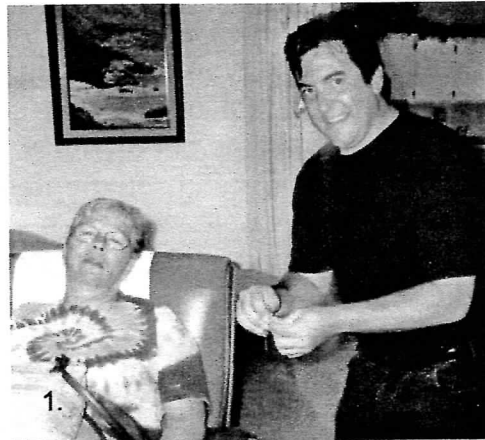
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Magic Notes from Jack White**Magic Day at the San Diego Blood Bank
a huge success. Thank you, Ring 76!**

San Diego Blood Bank officials say Magicians Day at the five blood centers in San Diego County made a big difference in having adequate supplies of the gift of life on hand for emergency situations. Twenty performers gave an hour or more of their time to entertain people who showed up to donate blood. This event was the largest public show Ring 76 has presented in many years. On Saturday, October 11th the following people took part: Bob Pozner, Diane Lane, Ted Dunning, Ed Estrin, Loch David Crane, Kenny Shelton, Charlie Gott, Roy & Betty Armstrong, Alphonso Vasquez, Phil Tuttle, Lou Heck, Michael E. Johnson, Jack White, Bob Ingalls, Terry Godfrey, Joel Ward, Ken DeWoody, Len Cardoza, and Jim Thayer

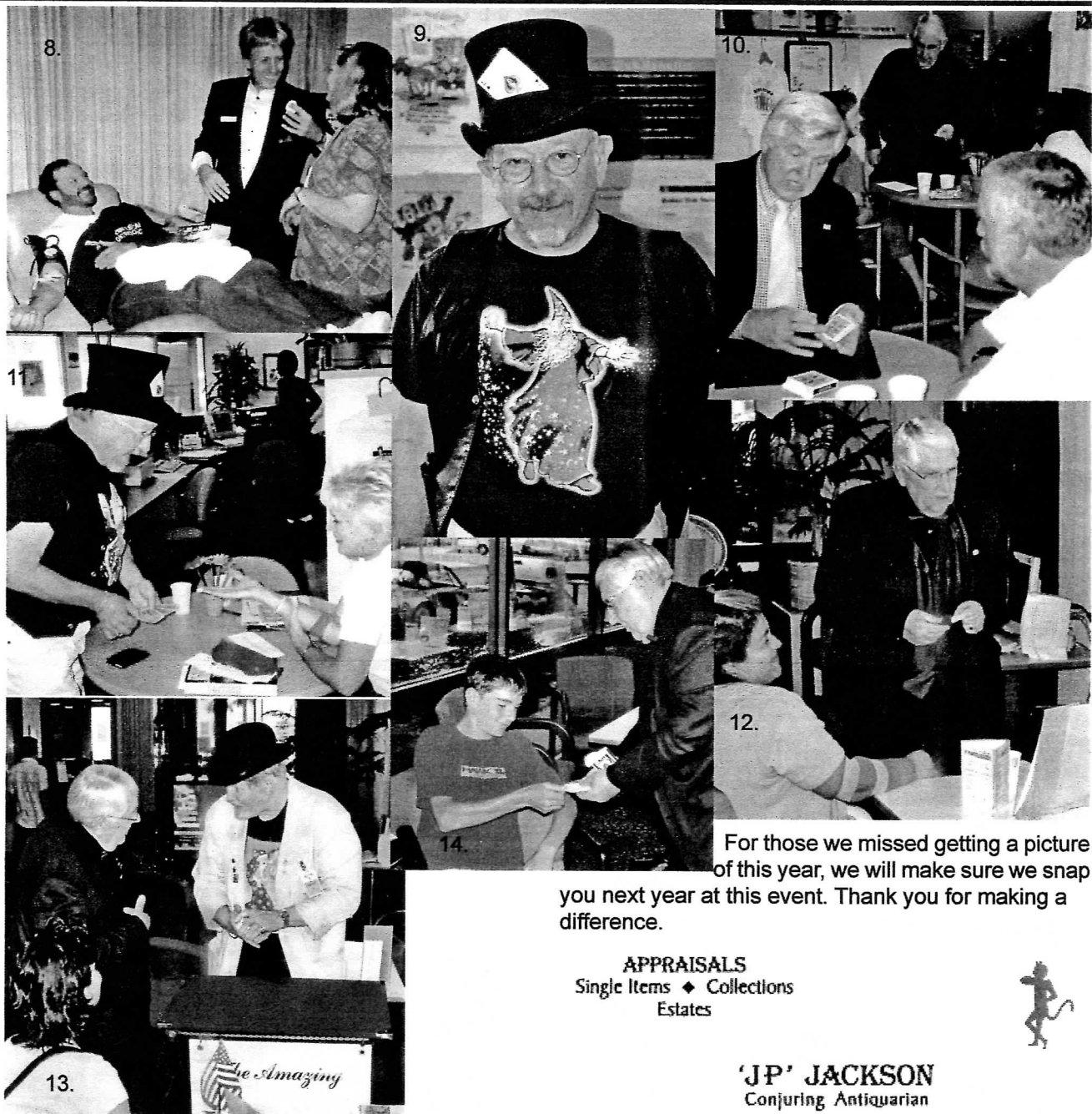
Many people told workers at the San Diego Blood Bank they came just to see the magicians; one lady came because after reading about the attack on Roy Horn by one of his tigers, she knew the importance of having blood on hand for emergencies. Often times parents brought their children, and magicians kept the youngsters occupied while mom and dad donated blood.

Here is a look at some of our Ring members as they entertained Blood Bank visitors.



1. Ken DeWoody, 2. Len Cardoza, 3. James Kellogg Jr.
4. Joel Ward, 5. Len Cardoza, 6. Terry Godfrey,
7. Lou Heck





8. Michael E. Johnson, 9. Phil Tuttle, 10. Jack White
11. Phil Tuttle, 12. Bob Ingalls, 13. Bob Pozner,
14. Bob Ingalls.

For those we missed getting a picture of this year, we will make sure we snap you next year at this event. Thank you for making a difference.

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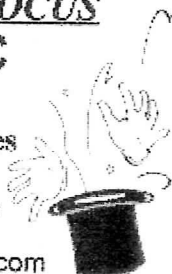
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Message From the President



I do hope that the newsletter finds everyone safe and sound in their own homes! It has been a rough few weeks since the outbreak of the fire. I know that we have a few members that came very close to losing their homes! It was wonderful to see the brotherhood in action while the fire was at its worst. Some of our members that were evacuated from their homes went to stay with other magicians in the group. Now that's the kind of magic that makes a great club! Looking out for each other at times of need. It's really great to know that we are here for each other. Feel free to call me if you have anything that you might need assistance with. I'm happy to coordinate the teamwork efforts. 858 278-1669 or e-mail me at dvlane@san.rr.com

I had said at the last meeting that the one goal of mine that I'd like to see happen while I am the president is for our group to become much more active in the community on a volunteer basis. I had no clue what our great city was about to endure. Now, after so many people losing their homes, it gives all of us ample opportunities for volunteer work. It's time to come together as a club and go to the community with our wonderful magic.

In these serious times, we need all need a little magic and fun in our lives. It has been proven time and again that laughter heals the soul. Write some more comedy routines for your act. Do volunteer your services wherever you can. We are very special people with a very special skill. Share this skill with everyone you can.

That leads to the "Charger Blood

Drive" to be held at the "Town and Country Hotel" in Hotel Circle. The date is Nov. 25th. They need volunteers to do some strolling magic for those that come down to donate blood and their family members that accompany them. It's a lot of fun too! You will be strolling in the large banquet room that is full of radio stations doing promo's and food vendors giving away food and drinks. The hours are 8am to 7pm. If you can come for a short time that's ok too. Please let Jack know if you are planning to attend. Let's see a big turnout from Ring 76! Now that's teamwork!

Diane Lane
Pres Ring 76

MagiCurrents:

MagiCurrents is published monthly by Ring 76, San Diego. Editor is Jack White, editorial offices are at 4275 University Avenue, San Diego, CA 92105. All submissions and letters should be sent to the above address or e-mailed to prestooone@cox.net,

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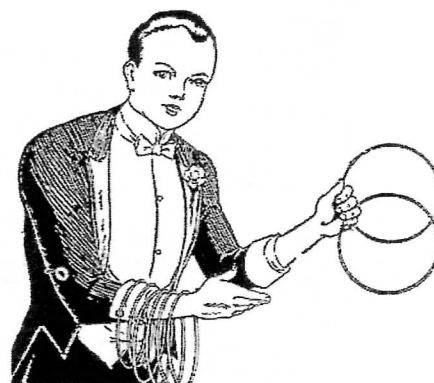
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News

It became clear by mid October that the **Siegfried & Roy** Show in Las Vegas would not reopen following Roy's attack by a white tiger. **Kenneth Feld**, owner and producer of S & R Show, told reporters, "It would take a medical miracle to reopen the show." Signaling that Roy's injuries and strokes are far more serious and debilitating than at first reported. Meanwhile, down the street from the Mirage home to Siegfried & Roy for the past 13 years, a new magic review opened for business. The "**World's Greatest Magic Show**" opened October 10th at the **Sahara**. The variety-style format, of the World's Greatest Magic Show, will feature between eight and 10 different magicians who will each perform their best tricks or illusions. Performers scheduled to appear include **Kevin James, Sylvester the Jester, Jason Byrne, The Majestix, Joseph Gabriel, Zieda Lavavootnish – the Latvian Mistress of Magic, Billy Ferguson and Kenneth Harvard.** **Jeff Hobson** will be the master of ceremonies. The show will include illusions with exotic wild animals. Ticket prices start at \$55.95 for this show. Show times are 7 and 9:30 pm Saturday through Thursday evenings. Those appearing in this show will change from time to time. Early reports call the show high-energy, fast paced and well received by audiences. But as one critic wrote, "It ain't Siegfried & Roy."

Joel Ward and Kristi Toguchi have signed on to be featured performers in two of **Milt Larsen's** "It's Magic" shows making appearances throughout Southern California. They appeared at the October 12th show at the Cal Poly Theater in San Luis Obispo, and they will appear at the Norris Theater in Rolling Hills on



November 1st. **Joel and Kristi** have a wonderful act and are now being recognized for their hard work and talent. The October 26th "It's Magic" Show at the California Center for the Arts Escondido, did very poor business as it was upstaged by some of the worst brush fires in San Diego County history which closed roads into the Escondido area.

The Magic Festival in Tijuana is now scheduled for Saturday, November 16th. Begins at 12 noon and runs until 2 pm. All Ring members are encouraged to attend this special magic event across the border. A number of very fine magicians and allied acts will be taking part in this program including Ring 76 member **Paul Rivera**, better known as **Magoruly**, will be one of those featured in the program along with **Armando Torres**. The Magic Festival is located in a fun zone known as Zona Rio, Jose Ma. Velazco 2578. Between Via Rapida and Paseo de los Heroes, near the Lucerna Hotel.

We received the news in late October that **Phil Tuttle**, a longtime active member of Ring 292 in the North County and a new member of Ring 76, has been hospitalized and has undergone heart surgery at Palomar Hospital. Phil has suffered with heart problems for several years and recently his condition has become more

Briefs

acute. Phil's home address is 1501 E. Grand #3108, Escondido, CA. 92027, a note or card of good cheer would be most welcome at this time.

We are happy to report that **Stu McKinley**, magician and all around good guy, is being given a new experimental treatment for his debilitating lung condition. McKinley lives in Riverside County and has always been supportive of magic groups in the North County and San Diego. Ring 76 sends their best wishes.

A new group of volunteers are now supporting **Fred Kaplan** in his efforts to broaden his magic program for young people wanting to learn more about magic and its allied arts. Kaplan and his new batch of instructors are now gearing up to open a new program with bilingual teachers in the greater San Diego area after the first of the year. Fred, by the way, just graduated from the **Chavez School of Magic**. He has actively been studying under the watchful eye of **Dale Salwak** for the past year. Kaplan says he amazes himself with the things he can do since taking the Chavez course.

Bob Ingalls and Jack White for the third year have been rebooked to present their magic act for the La Mesa Optimist Club's Youth Appreciation Awards Program, November 19th. Jack & Bob are already working out a new act for the group.

Magic Mike Stilwell and Terry Godfrey both worked a giant Halloween Party in Palm Springs, October 31st. The party was given by the **Houston's**, considered one of the most prominent families in social circles in that desert community.

Coming Attractions



November 10th meeting at Jack's Magic Place, 4275 University Avenue, is favorite trick night with a holiday theme. If you do a holiday show, bring your favorite effect and present it at the November meeting. See Bob Ingalls for your spot on the program.

December 8th meeting will be the Ring's traditional Holiday Potluck dinner and a special show featuring past Presidents of Ring 76, who will receive their official IBM Past Ring Presidents medal.

The January meeting will be the third Monday of the month, a week later than usual to accomodate our many members who will be attending the World Magic Seminar in Las Vegas. The January 19th meeting is the evening we officially install new Ring members.

November 24th, board of directors meeting 7 pm. Jack's Magic Place. All board meetings are open to members. This will be the final board meeting of 2003, as the board does not meet in December. All pending business should be presented at the November meeting.

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