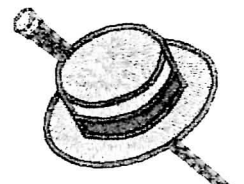


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Volume XVIII 5 May 2005

## May meeting includes nominations & stand-up contest

The May 9<sup>th</sup> meeting will include nominations for president and the board of directors for the coming year. In the next column over Donna Greenbaum will tell you more about this year's election and the search for board candidates. Monday's meeting will also feature the Ring 76 annual stand-up contest. Our stage will be in place and the winners of this event will be announced at the July 10<sup>th</sup> installation and awards banquet at Dave & Busters in Mission Valley.

Important: This year this event will have some special judging and Bob Ingalls, our 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President in charge of entertainment, asks that everyone who will be performing and taking part in the contest contact him before the Monday night event. Bob's phone number is 619-990-6822; his e-mail address is [bailysgp@san.rr.com](mailto:bailysgp@san.rr.com). If you just show up at the meeting expecting to be part of the contest you may be disappointed. It is very important for the judging that Bob and his staff know who is on the contest program before the evening of the event. So please notify Bob before midnight, Sunday, May 8<sup>th</sup>.

The winner of the stand-up contest will receive a gold medal and \$50 dollars in cash. There will also be a second and third place medal and \$25 and \$10 dollars in prize money. Contestants will be judged on their overall appearance, their skill in presenting a smooth running act and entertainment value of the material they present.

We are encouraging all members to take part in this contest. Present the routines you do most often in shows you are asked to present.

## Nominating Committee report on elections

by Donna Greenbaum

It is that time of the year...Ring 76 Elections! Are you interested in being an elected officer? If so, contact Alex or Donna Greenbaum at 858-793-0785 or Loch David Crane at 619-222-2849. We are acting as this year's nominating committee for Ring 76 will also over see the election and counting of the ballots in June. You can also see one of us before the May 9 meeting so we can add your name to the list of candidates. The office on the Ring 76 board of directors we are looking to fill is "member at large." We remind all candidates there is a certain commitment to being an officer in Ring 76. You must set aside 23 evenings a year to attend general membership meetings and board meetings. This is a volunteer organization, and you must pay your own way.

The current Board will suggest the following slate of officers:

President: Bob Ingalls  
1st Vice President (of Entertainment): Terry Luncford  
2nd Vice President (of Membership): Kenny Shelton  
Secretary: Jack White  
Treasurer: Richard Ustick  
Sgt At Arms: Sal Barjas  
Member at Large: Open  
Member at Large (past President): Diane Lane

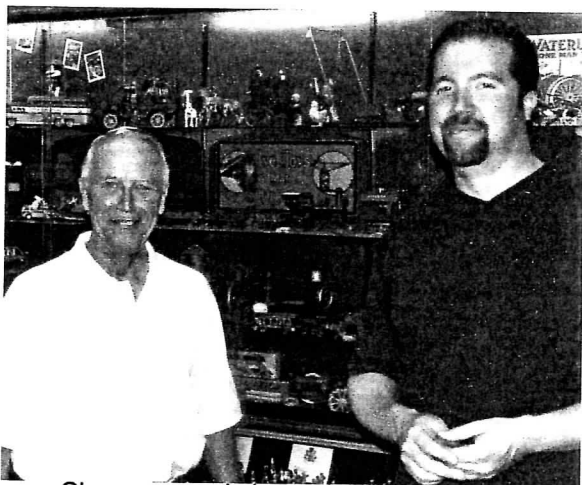
If you are interested in the open position but have questions about it, see any of the board members; they will be happy to talk with you about being a member of the executive committee.

Continued on page 11

## April swap meet attracts many members & nonmembers to the annual selling event

Our April meeting was a little bit different from our usual events; it was the Ring 76 annual magic swap meet. We drew many members and nonmembers to this evening of selling magic, books, videos and DVDs.

There was one bit of business conducted at this event, a nominating team was appointed by Ring President Diane Lane. The committee will search for nominees for board member and oversee the actual election in June. The nominating committee is made up of Donna and Alex Greenbaum and Loch David Crane. Nominations will be made at the start of the May meeting, which will also include our annual stand-up contest.



Close-up magic legend J.C. Wagner visits the dealer table of Doug Brewer at the April swap meet

Everyone was happy to see the King of close-up magic, J.C. Wagner, at the swap meet and to have another talented finger flinger, Doug Brewer, there with a dealer's table. Michael E. Johnson offered several nice Lance Burton magic sets that were produced by Marshall Brodean and are now very collectable. Michael also was offering a set of silhouettes that were cut many years ago by Dai Vernon and are now quite expensive; he found them on eBay.

We were also happy to welcome home from a tour of duty off the coast of Iraq Jim Spellman, who has been gone for the past eight months. Jim was excited to be part of an organized magic meeting

again and renew old friendships. Ring 76 froze his membership in the Ring during his absence.

There were many exciting magic effects, both new and used, being offered on the various tables around the room. As usual all of the tables were filled with dealers selling effects, props and memorabilia they no longer wanted. Several people who were selling said they had spent more money on other people's tables than they had taken in at their table. That, of course, is the nature of magic swap meet.

Richard Ustick had the most unusual table: he was selling old radio shows on CD, and there were some shows that featured magic and magicians. Mike Stilwell had one of the most popular tables with more than 100 soft cover magic books that were being sold at very low prices. James Kellogg Jr. from Vista brought a lot of big magic including a beautiful vanishing dove cage build by the late Carl Owen. He had a number of other very nice small illusions for sale.

If you were unable to take part in this year's swap meet, put it on your calendar for next year because it is an exciting event. Here is a look at some of the excitement in pictures.



James Spellman home from U.S. Navy duty in the Mideast



Early buyers searching for bargains at the swap meet

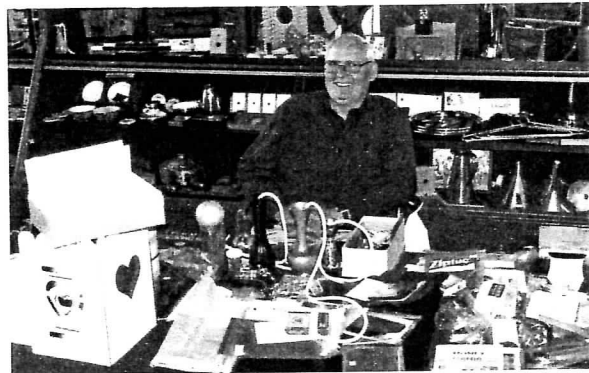
## The swap meet 2005 in pictures



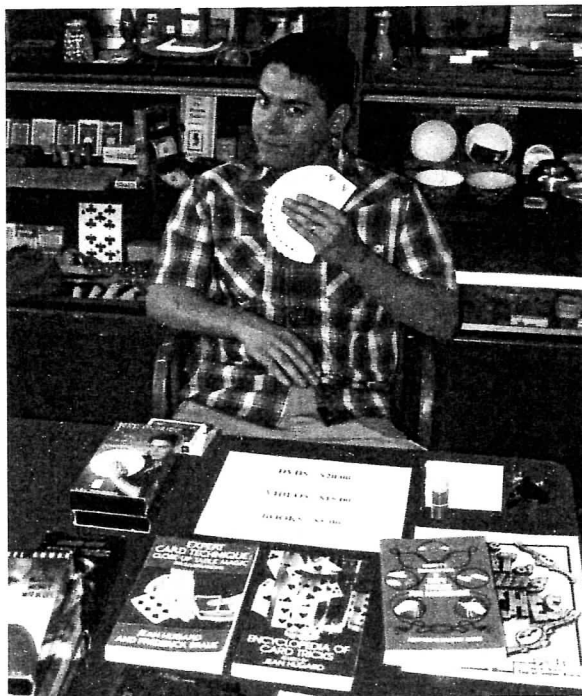
Belinda Keasler with a table full of her magic trinkets of her own design.



Bob Ingalls demonstrating his Las Vegas deck called "Beat the Dealer."



Charlie Gott with a wide array of props, tricks, books, you name it. It's here!



J.P. Jackson taking a little rest after setting up two large tables of better used magic and books. J.P. loves a swap meet.

## Magic notes from:



## Hearing from old friends

It's always nice to occasionally hear from someone who is a good friend and moves to a far away place or is transferred in his or her work to a different area. With that said, this past month I heard from Ring 76 member Bryan McDaniel, who retired from the Marine Corps a few years ago and went to work for the SAIC a government agency. Earlier this year, Bryan accepted an assignment in Iraq for SAIC as the manager of the Science Applications International Corporation's Mobile Vehicle and Cargo Inspection Systems. What his group does is use a radioactive device to x-ray entering military bases throughout Iraq. A very important and at times very dangerous job in that war torn country.

In a recent e-mail Bryan told me that when his surveillance system goes down, and it does from time to time, it is his job to send one of his team of

nine technicians to repair the broken system. He also trains the military in ways to operate the x-ray system in an effort to discover contraband hidden in vehicles.

I thought I would share with you this month one of Bryan's notes to me. You will see that he has incorporated a little of that zany magic he has become so famous for at Ring 76 into his work in Iraq. Here is part of a recent e-mail.

Dear Jack,  
My wife recently sent me a care package, which included the latest month's versions of both the Linking Ring and MagiCurrents. I am always anxious to read the happenings at Ring 76, and being on the other side of the globe makes any taste of home hold special meaning. I have been in Iraq about seven weeks now, and for the first time I broke-out my doctor's bag of magic tricks just a few days ago at a gathering/barbecue. Either I'm a great magician, or the audience was starved for entertainment. (I defer to the latter.) My magic was a big hit.



The huge throne Bryan McDaniel is perched on once belonged to Saddam.



Bryan McDaniel standing in front of the Al Faw Palace, one of Saddam's many homes.

Contrary to what the media may portray, the Iraqi people are friendly, caring, and appreciative of our presence, which makes being here all the more meaningful. I work out of a safe location in the middle of a U.S., controlled base (Camp Victory). There are guards and checkpoints everywhere. I have not witnessed any hostility and am eager to keep it that way. My office is a doublewide trailer where I store parts to repair the systems that I am supporting, as well as office space for what will be eight technicians.



I have attached a few photographs of my surroundings that I thought you and the gang at Ring 76 might get a kick out of. Please let everyone in the Ring know my thoughts are with them.  
Bryan McDaniel

Bryan tells me his tour in Iraq will last about a year then, he will return to San Diego County; that should be in February or March 2006. On the upside of things, he is making plans to meet his wife in Rome,



Bryan McDaniel on truck surrounded by some of his close personal friends who he calls "Big Shots."

Italy, in November for a little break before the holidays.

Should you want to drop Bryan an e-mail, his address is: [bryan.mcdaniel@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:bryan.mcdaniel@iraq.centcom.mil). I know he will be happy to hear from you and perhaps exchange an idea or two about magic.

I have told Bryan that the Ring will be happy to send him any magic supplies, books or videos he might need. But he tells me he is well-stocked for now but will send up a red flair if he needs something.

The best part about having magic as a hobby; it is portable, and you can take it with you wherever you go to entertain friends. Having had the opportunity to see Bryan in action entertaining, I am sure the people in his unit in Iraq are having a ball. Hang in there, Bryan, our thoughts are with you.

## A surprise:

As many of you know by now, Dr. Joel Moskowitz is currently in Scripps Memorial Hospital recuperating from colon cancer surgery. Before he entered the hospital, he sent me the following message; I though you would enjoy reading it as well.

Magic has always been a source of pleasure and comfort. A chance meeting

even in a stressful situation confirmed my experience. Facing, as I am, some serious surgery, the conjuring art has gone to the back of my thoughts. As required, I presented at Scripps Memorial Hospital for the obligatory EKG, Chest X-ray, and blood tests prior to surgery. Anticipating a less than enjoyable set of procedures: Sign this, fill out this...on and on, I expected to be manipulated on the hospital system conveyor belt with little personal attention.

Resolved to alert admitting and laboratory staff that I was not just another subject for dissection, I approached each person with humor, accompanied by a quick close-up effect. Mostly the vanish and reappearance of a coin. Their time pressures left little opportunity for anything else.

In the admitting office, crowded with other nervous patients and their families, I noticed a family of Latinos in anxious conversation. Accompanying them were two pre-teens who remained ignored by their older relatives. With a smile, I approached the youngsters and using unused Spanish and coinjuring, lifted their spirits.

When the pretty and friendly nurse called me into the pre-admission office, I attempted to show her a coin effect but this was eclipsed by my noticing her name tag! An infrequently encountered last name. Chance that she might know Bob Ingalls? My father-in-law, she proudly explained. Are you a magician friend?

Absolutely I replied, certain that my connection with magic would, once again, be a source of pleasure and comfort. Stacey Ingalls R.N., like her father-in-law, emitted a warm, caring manner. Another benefit of being a member of Ring 76, I decided.

We all send our best wishes to Dr. Moskowitz and look forward to his return to our meetings. Get well quickly, we miss you.

**Loch David Crane**

**Says:**

**Thank You**

***for your support during his recent illness and troubled times.***

## More April swap meet pictures



James Kellogg Jr., unwrapping the Owen Vanishing Bird Cage.



Loch David Crane displaying some magic and showing off his Ann White Photo sheets.



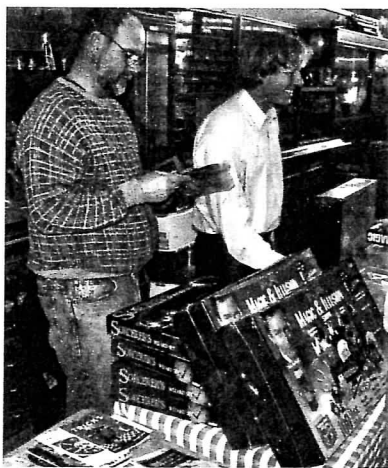
Sal Barjas welcoming everyone who dropped by his table and purchased something.



The Owen Vanishing Bird Cage set up. It sold!



One of the best shopped tables was Mike Stilwell's. A very large selection of softcover magic books at true bargain prices.



Mike Stilwell & Michael E. Johnson and a couple of Lance Burton magic sets.



Ring members and guests shopping for bargains at the various tables at the April swap meet.



Shopping for that special magic book you have been looking for.



This man is not half as mean as he looks! Richard Ustick, selling old network radio programs.



A rare set of silhouettes done by Dai Vernon in the 1930s.



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## Gregory Wilson "In Action"

By Matt Bartz

Recently I had the opportunity to interview one of magic's greats. His name should be familiar to everyone, but for those who are unacquainted with Gregory Wilson, allow me to give you some background.

Greg has been a professional performer for the last 13 years. He is two-time FISM award winner with a number of best selling instructional videos including: On the Spot, Off the Cuff, Ring Leader, Hundy 500, Double Take, Pyrotechnic Paste Boards, and Card Stunts. Greg has just finished a 12-month run at a top hotel casino/resort in Lake Tahoe doing his stand-up comedy magic act. Most recently Greg can be seen in his soon-to-be-released DVD series titled "In Action." If you'd like to see him in person, he will be coming to San Diego on June 7<sup>th</sup> to promote "In Action" at a lecture in Downtown San Diego.

**Matt Bartz,** Greg, let's start by giving our readers some background on you. How old were you when you got interested in magic? I got into magic relatively late by most standards at 17 years old, in 1978.

**Gregory W**ilson, Well, 17 doesn't seem that old, lots of magicians have gotten started later than that. What was the first magic trick you learned? I saw a guy in my junior year of high school do a one-handed shuffle and I was hooked. It was the coolest thing I ever saw. It had that James Bond in Monte Carlo feel.

**MB** Did you play any sports in high school or college?

**GW** Tennis. In fact, I was a teaching pro in high school.

**MB** When did you decide to turn magic into your profession?

**GW** Being a day late and a dollar short as usual, I went pro 14 years after I got into magic in 1992. In otherwords, I needed the money.

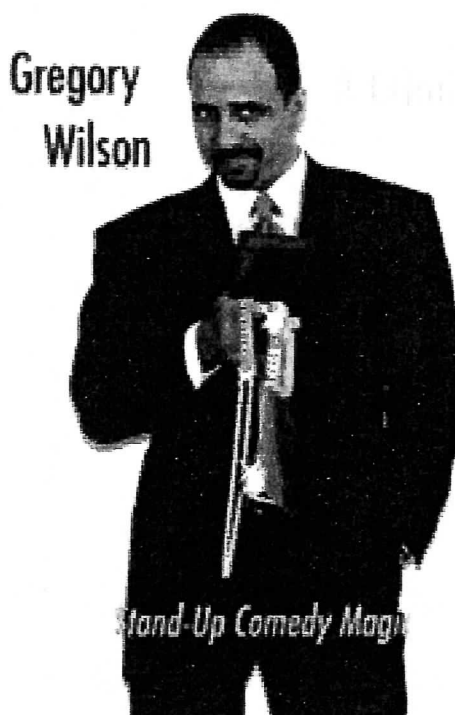
**MB** Who doesn't? What was the last job that you had before becoming a full time magician?

**GW** I was a waiter in fine dining restaurants for 10 years, which should be mandatory training for everyone to gain people skills, service

consciousness and efficiency and grace under pressure.

**MB** Alright, so what countries has magic taken you to?

**GW** I've been very fortunate in this business having traveled and performed in almost 40 countries since 1998. There's a great book that says it all: "Do What You Love And The Money Will Follow." In other words, God has blessed me with the unique ability of getting paid to play. When you can transform your passion into your profession, it's extraordinarily gratifying!



**MB** Do you have any personal ritual you go through before performing?

**GW** Yes, I always pray.

**MB** You have a unique personal style; has a spectator ever gotten mad at you?

**GW** What a sweet way to say that I perform a bit more assertive than the average magician. For starters, I am NOT a fan of the overly-polite-eager-to-please-hyper-little-puppy-or-the-Joel-Bauer-in-your-face-please-notice-me performance style. You don't need to be rude or discourteous to grab people's attention. I simply work in a way that makes me stand out and be remembered. And most



importantly, it's NEVER foisted upon anyone unwillingly. My performance is presented in a way that makes people reach for what I have to offer. Ask me in my lecture about a very powerful psychological technique called "Reach & Withdraw."

**MB** I've heard that you're a "health nut," is that true? What type meal do you start your day with?

**GW** Health nut, of course, is a pejorative term to say that I am very health conscious regarding exercise and nutrition. This reminds me of a pithy and powerful ad that I saw in a "Muscle and Fitness" ad: "Obsession is a lazy man's word for dedication."

I'm back from my digression, to answer the question I get most often when being interviewed about magic—breakfast! 6 egg whites, 1 yolk, oat groats (a fresher form of oatmeal that I grind myself), and fruit, plus a ton of supplements.

**MB** Okay Greg, let's get back on track with questions about magic. Who were/are some of your role models in magic?

**GW** Paul Harris and Michael Weber really helped shape my way of magical thinking. Paul was a role model from his entire collection of books (consult *The Art of Astonishment* Vol. 1 to read my tribute to him). And Weber, being a close friend for 25 years, was not a role model per-se, but being around the most creatively brilliant magician on earth tends to rub off on you.

**MB** You're going on a lecture tour this summer; where are some of the places you'll be?

**GW** Chicago, and about 10 other places in the Midwest. Sorry it couldn't be more exciting than that. Frankly, for the most part, I've given up on doing lectures. But, since my new DVDs just came out, I thought I'd do a few more to promote them, but nothing grandiose anymore. Too busy with corporate work and side projects.

**MB** What can you tell us about your new DVD set "In Action?"

**GW** Right from the copy on the slip covers: Segments of these DVDs are encore routines re-filmed from some of my best-selling videos over the last ten years. These are the definitive versions. Other segments are previously published material from the select pages of books, magazines, and lecture notes that have never been on video. And

the last segment is my closely-guarded material that is being revealed for the very first time.

**MB** What would you say are your favorite effects from the set?

**GW** Personally I like them all or they would not have been included in the collection. But if I had to narrow down my favorites they would be, for various reasons: Cut Throat (a trick with a casino cut card that looks more like a gambling demo than a card trick); Chip on Shoulder (for sheer deception and how it whips an audience into a frenzy for the big finish). Flat Out Monte (a five-phased Three Card Monte routine without bending my precious pristine pack of playing cards); and finally, The Slot Machine Scam. (You'll book a trip to Vegas immediately after learning this).

**MB** Are you looking forward to coming to San Diego?

**GW** To answer that loaded question: Of course. I get a chance to catch up with friends and family and an always-appreciative crowd of caring magicians.

If you want to hear and see more of Gregory Wilson, pick up his new DVD set "In Action" and come out to one of the few lectures he will be giving this year. The lecture is on June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2005, 7:00 pm at 350 Cedar St., San Diego, CA 92108. For more information on the lecture contact Syd Segal (619)300-1344 Blt6380@aol.com or Matt Bartz (619)920-3456 mwbartz@law.cwsl.edu.

*(Editor's note: We want to thank Matt Bartz for meeting our deadline and getting the above interview to MagiCurrents for the May issue. Greg Wilson is an active IBM member and has lectured for Ring 76 in the past. It is a pleasure to include his thoughts in our newsletter.)*

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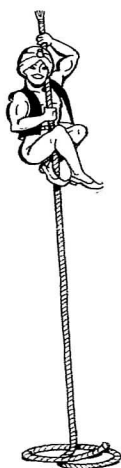


## Magic Book Review

By Dr. Joel Moskowitz

### Unknotting a Mystery

Hardly anyone interested in magic has not heard of the Indian Rope Trick. A Yahoo search indicates 235,000 references. Despite the instant recognition even among the public, curiously neither David Copperfield, nor Lance Burton, nor any other famous prestiditators include it in their repertoire. David Blaine, who has brought street magic to TV, defies death but doesn't get a boy to climb a vertical rope, unattached even to a sky-hook and dismember himself for the amusement of onlookers. Thurston advertised the miracle in a famous poster. Penn and Teller went to India hunting for adepts but came back without evidence. In my travels to India, the practicing magicians with whom I spoke never heard of it! Yet this ancient urban legend has remarkable staying power.



Peter Lamont describes how a spectacular hoax became history: ***The Rise of the Indian Rope Trick***. Thunder Mouth Press, New York, January 2005, pp 263, \$22.00. This is a book that won't attract the attention of finger flickers or any who want to know how it is done. Except that historian and magician Lamont does offer his theory about why and how this false belief arose despite logic. To the extent that humans are frightened by the unknown, knowing too much is even more threatening. With science exceeding science-fiction, a counterbalancing upsurge in interest in the mystical arises. What follows is an eagerness to report and accept that which depends on faith alone.

This is not a book about religion or an attempt to debunk an ageless story. It is an entertaining travelogue of a tall tale. Along the way, we learn that Charles Dickens performed as a magician in black (or perhaps brown) face (in the Oriental mode). Eastern jugglers was what

magicians were once called. Given how some modern magicians manipulate pasteboards and coins, the name may still be appropriate. The lack of internal consistency is even to be noted—that the dress was Chinese but the trick was alleged to be Indian.

There were a slew of performers, truly Anglo, who masqueraded as being from the Orient. This was not Occidental. Success, as occurs today, is often predicated on copying another's identity. A New Yorker, Billy Robinson, admired a Chinese performer, Ching Ling Foo. He dressed in costume and became Ching Ling Soo. He outdid Foo, who retreated to China. Soo added a bullet catching effect and, as if by poignant justice, was shot dead on the stage.

Fascination with the wonders of the East presented in the first detective story, ***The Moonstone*** by Wilkie Collins. Here an Indian juggler youth is clairvoyant. Note: Wilkie happens to be the name of the cub reporter, who in 1890, reported the marvels of the Indian Rope Trick (later he confessed he lied and still later, he became a spook for the British government, in charge of disinformation, etc.

Those who have an interest in the history of magic know the name of John Nevil Maskelyne, a British illusionist, who established Egyptian Hall, a theater for English magic (1873). Few know that he invented the pay toilet. Scatological puns are not welcome here. But this bit of trivia is one of the many digressions that punctuate author Lamont's very well referenced book. It is suggested that the reader turn to page 234. Here the author indicates that he wondered whether this documentation was necessary, but if you showed your interest, this, he says, places you among 10% of all readers. What that means, he doesn't explain. I did not find a reference to the extensive researches of Milbourne Christopher who traced the history of the Indian Rope Trick down to the travelogue of Ibn Batuta, the Moroccan traveler from the 14th century. Lamont does, though, write about Batuta. A Chinese story, "Theft of a Peach" circa 1640, includes a description where a rope is thrown to the sky, a youth climbs up to get peaches of the Gods, parts of him come crashing down, and then all is restored. As recently as 2001, the BBC reported (and we can trust the media can't we?) that at an Indian Magic Convention, the Indian Rope Trick was performed.

The genesis of elements of stage spiritualism, mesmerism, the Theosophical beliefs of Madame Blavatsky, and levitation are knotted with the Indian Rope Trick. Besides the need to believe the unbelievable, mentioned above, contemporary wizards know that audiences seldom recall with exactitude the miracles to which they have been subjected. Eyewitness accounts are frequently mistaken. The ability to beguile, mislead, misdirect, confound, bewilder, and deceive are basic ingredients in the recipe for entertaining wizardry. Leaven it with a story, an anecdote, humor, and crowds will kiss your ring and propose a religion in your name. I liked this book, and you will too.

## Blackstone comics now available on CD-Rom

Lybrary.com, Chris Wasshauber's wonderful company which puts magic books and magazines out on CD-Rom and DVD, has just released a new CD that holds electronic facsimile versions of the popular comics featuring "Blackstone, Master Magician," "Blackstone The Magician Detective," and "Pennzoil Presents Blackstone Master Magician." Follow Blackstone on his daring adventures to save lives and catch the bad guys, using his knowledge and skill as a magician. This ebook is PDF only.

This very collectable electronic edition of the Blackstone comics has been prepared from originals in James Kleefeld's collection. If you would like more information, go to Lybrary.com.

The Blackstone comics were first published in 1946, and continued through 1949. They are very rare and to find a complete set of all the various titles is a real find. Single editions of the magazine have recently sold on the Internet auction house eBay for hundreds of dollars.

Magician  
**Terry Lunceford**  
supports  
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## "MagiToon"

by Jim Whiting & Ellen Friedman



"What do you offer in health benefits and 401K?"

## Nomiating Committee Report Cont

This year two members are leaving the board Sherry Luft, who has been a past president and served in nearly every capacity on the executive committee, is currently the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President in charge of membership. Sherry is stepping down because of other commitments in her busy life.

J.P. Jackson, a current member-at-large and is leaving the board. J.P. has served as president, newsletter editor and a variety of other positions over the years at Ring 76. He is leaving his post because of health reasons.

It is important that we find a qualified person to fill the member-at-large position at our May meeting, so his or her name can appear on the ballot in June.

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## View from the Cheap Seats



**By Jon A. Hand**

I am a semi-regular contributor to online magic bulletin boards, being a registered member at Genii Forum, MagicTalk, MagicBunny UK, the Magic Café, and a co-administrator at Conjuror Conversation Corner. Recently an amateur magician of a few year's experience came to Conjuror, asking how he should prepare to turn pro. I responded as best I could, and I thought that I would throw out my ideas here, asking for your further suggestions. What follows is my lightly edited and somewhat augmented response to the young man's query.

As a longtime amateur and occasional professional performer, I can offer you some suggestions to preparing to become a pro. You didn't indicate if you were interested in restaurant/close-up performing or stage/platform/banquet hall performing. However, my suggestions should be helpful regardless of your intended venue.

Working in front of other magicians for their suggestions is almost worthless. Most cannot, or will not, let their attention be directed like a lay audience, so they cannot tell you if your material's presentation is working or not. They will not pay attention to your patter, either, unless they find it good enough to steal for their purposes. Also, they will either rip you to shreds or tell you that it was great, when your performance was probably somewhere between the two.

Only a true pro (or a very experienced amateur) who enjoys working with developing magicians will be much help to you.

So, what do you do?

1. Don't just practice. **REHEARSE!** Practice is for learning how to do the mechanics of a trick. Rehearsal is for learning to **PERFORM** the trick. So, say everything you will say in performance, make every move, do everything you will actually do in performance. Leave nothing to chance. You don't have to actually script your patter, but you must say it aloud in rehearsal enough times that you are completely comfortable with what you are going to say and when you are going to say it.

2. After rehearsing your individual tricks, rehearse your whole show! Over, and over, and over again! Nothing says "unprofessional newbie" more than getting lost in your props, lost in your show order, or looking unprepared.

3. Videotape the rehearsal of each individual trick, and study it. Watch the tape with a critical eye, looking for "tells" in your eyes or voice that give away crucial moments in the trick. It is very easy to get into the habit of blinking during sleights, or forgetting to look at the clean hand instead of the dirty one. Talking and looking at your spectators while doing the dirty work is especially effective. Using video tape shows you all that, and you can fix it. Video the improvements, fix more, and do it again. And do it all again. And again as necessary. As a comparison, theatrical plays use hundreds of hours in preparation. You are doing a one-man play in the role of a wonder-worker, and it must be thoroughly prepared.

4. Video tape a rehearsal of the whole show, and study it. Are there long stage waits, or time drags, where your preparation in



getting from one trick to another seems too long? Are you having to clear too much debris from the previous trick and/or set up too much gear for the next trick to hold your audience's attention? Are the tricks in the show varied enough for interest, or are they too much alike? Is the show too long (very likely it is, as you have not rehearsed your audience interaction yet. Audience involvement takes much time, and it lengthens your show considerably). Find the weakest trick in the show and delete it, which automatically insures a stronger show.

5. Volunteer to perform your show at a hospital children's ward, or for an assisted living care facility (not a nursing home). This allows you to practice your audience interaction while having a non-critical, non-paying gig. If the show goes well, you can have the supervisor write you a letter of recommendation that you can show prospective clients. Have your show videotaped by a friend, so that you can study it for errors, time drags (stage waits), patter stumbles, audience interaction ideas that you can build upon (audiences can come up with great stuff that you can use in future performances), and more. Hire a good local theater director to watch your show, and he or she can make strong suggestions for improvement in your stage presence and presentation, even without having any first-hand knowledge of magic.

6. Make a packing list for every trick, its time of performance (easily done with a stopwatch or checking your video tape for time of each individual trick), its needed props, etc. Put this list on index cards, one card for each trick in your repertoire. As you add new material over time, make a new card for each trick.

7. After much experience, you will need to

assemble a new show, say for a return engagement at a venue. Pull cards as needed, assemble the show props as listed on the cards, and rehearse the show in order. Type the list of the show effects as titles only, and tape it to the rear edge of your table so that you don't get mixed up when performing a newly assembled show from your repertoire.

Professional performing is as much a business as it is doing magic. You must advertise to get work (a 1" by one column ad in the local newspaper society page, left in place on a regular basis for months on end, will get you calls, and word of mouth will either get you further calls or sink you). Working close-up in restaurants is a good part-time income, but its real benefit is your meeting hundreds of people who might hire you for events or private parties in the future. You must adjust your prices to compete with other kinds of entertainment in your area but not undervalue your huge time and prop cost investment, and much, much more. Going pro is far more than just doing the magic well, and you see from my suggestions above how much time that is going to take. Doing the business end, soliciting performances, keeping records of what you spend and how much income you make for tax purposes, etc., takes as much time as learning the magic.

I certainly hope that I have not discouraged you. If you love performing magic, go for it! Just realize that you must be thoroughly professional if you are going to get regular bookings, and this means planning ahead for everything.

\*\*\*\*\*Those of you who are working pros, or retired pros, please send a letter or email with your further suggestions or ideas to Jack White for publication here, or to me as follows: [jonahand@hotmail.com](mailto:jonahand@hotmail.com), or P.O. Box 1300, Pulaski, TN 38478 .

## Message from the President



I want to begin this message by noting that several of our members are or have been in the hospital this month. To each of these folks, Joel Moskowitz & Jeff Marcus, who are both facing a health crisis you all are in my prayers, and I send along to you wishes for a speedy return to a healthy life. I know personally about the seriousness of health issues.

It has been pointed out in an article on the front page of this newsletter by Donna Greenbaum that we have an opening on our board of directors. We need a responsible person to step up to the plate and become part of the executive committee. Please let Donna, or Alex Greenbaum or Loch David Crane know that you are interested in serving, so they can place your name in nomination at the May 9<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Richard Ustick and Greg Wasson are the committee putting together this year's installation and awards banquet, which takes place on Sunday, July 10<sup>th</sup>. It will be at Dave & Busters in Mission Valley and to be sure that everyone has a complete dinner, enough to drink and desert we will be serving each of you at your table. With this service we hope to overcome any of the difficulties we had last year. Bob Ingalls has booked magician Randy Pryor from the Magic Castle in Hollywood to be our special entertainment. For those of you who attended the MagicLive event in Las Vegas last year, you know Randy is a sensational performer.

Next month is our annual Ring 76 auction; you can bring some of your better items to auction off at this event. Our auctioneer, Jack White, has told me that he is assembling several special lots of magic and videotapes for this event. It will be very exciting,, so don't miss the June meeting.

I remind you it is dues time again. We have held the line and will not raise dues, they are still \$25 dollars for the entire year. Many Rings are raising their dues to \$35 for the coming year, I am very happy to say our dues will not change.

Finally, Congratulations to Jim Swogar, who is celebrating 60 continuous years in the IBM. That is quite a milestone. Jim now becomes our only "Merlin Excelsior" member in Ring 76.

*Diane Lane*  
President, Ring 76



Resident Magician &  
Goodwill Ambassador at  
the Corvette Diner  
1987 - 2002



Member of Hollywood's  
Prestigious "Magic  
Castle"  
Since 1981



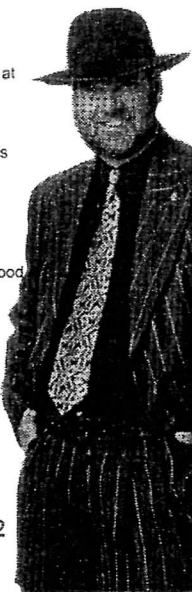
Member of  
International Brotherhood  
of Magicians  
Since 1976



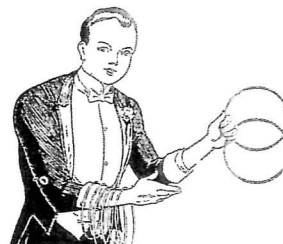
Member of  
Society of American  
Magicians  
Since 1974

"Magic"  
Mike Stilwell  
(619) 660-9662

P.O. Box 1166  
Rancho San Diego, CA 91979  
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## Ring 76



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\* denotes past Ring 76 Pres.

## News

**Dr. Joel Moskowitz** was admitted to Scripps Memorial Hospital in mid-April for colon cancer surgery. Doctors say the operation was successful and the stage one cancer had not spread to other areas of the body. The surgery is painful and requires the patient to spend a week in the hospital. Joel is still in the hospital at La Jolla at this writing and is feeling better; however, his recovery is expected to take several months. He welcomes emails and phone calls from friends and Ring members. His phone number is 858-587-8951.

A new Hollywood movie about magic is being filmed in Prague with magician writer **Ricky Jay** as the technical advisor on the film. The movie titled the "Illusionist" stars **Jessica Biel, Rufus Sewell and Edward Norton**. It is a turn of the century drama featuring a streetwise magician who uses his dark arts to win **Princess Sophia** away from **Crown Prince Lepold**. The Illusionist is being adopted from a **Steven Millhauser** short story titled "**Eisenheim the Illusionist**."

During their visit to Las Vegas and the "Magic Collectors Weekend," **J.P. Jackson, Marcus Day, and Jack White** toured the **David Copperfield** museum of magic. The tour was part of the Magic Collectors Weekend, April 7 to 9. More than 250 magicians and collectors were given a rare tour of a giant warehouse, museum, and living quarters for Magician **David Copperfield**. David was appearing at the MGM Grand Hotel and was on hand to mingle and talk with those attending the Collector's Weekend. **Marcus Day** said; "It is everything I thought it would be and more. I



still can't believe all of the one of a kind magic artifacts in the collection."

**Syd Segal** is bringing another magic lecture to San Diego, June 7<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m. **Gregory Wilson** will present his high-energy audience involved show and lecture at 350 Cedar Street, downtown San Diego. Tickets to this event are \$20; for more information, call Syd at 619-300-1344 or e-mail him at [BTL6380@aol.com](mailto:BTL6380@aol.com).

**Sebastian**, who earlier this year attended bartending school in San Diego, is now a regular fixture behind the bar at the Magic Castle in Hollywood. Sebastian says he does not get to do much magic behind the bar, most of his work is mixing drinks, but he hopes that will change in the future to include working a little performing into his efforts as bartender. Still a member of Ring 76, he spends time in both Hollywood and San Diego. Says he is enjoying his work at the Castle but on some weekends he puts in 13 hour days.

Distressing news in a story in the Los Angeles Times on Monday April 18<sup>th</sup>. Last December a fire in an underground power chamber spewed smoke and dangerous PCBs throughout the Society of American Magicians Museum in the basement of the Washington Mutual Bank Building at the corner of Sunset and Vine

## Briefs

in Hollywood. The deadly PCBs have forced the museum to close and remain "off limits" to everyone since December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2004. No one is allowed in until it can be professionally cleaned at a cost of 220,000 dollars. Bank officials say once everything is cleaned up, the museum will have to move to a new location, an additional projected cost of 250,000 dollars. A number of prominent Los Angeles magi are banning together to come up with the funds to do the job and find a new home for the museum. Much of the late **Sid Gerhart** magic collection went to the SAM Museum and is affected.

**Milt Larson** announced that his "It's Magic" show will play the California Center for the Performing Arts in Escondido in March of 2006. Meanwhile, the illusion show "Dizappear," a free attraction, is coming to Kit Carson Park in Escondido at 7 p.m., May 7<sup>th</sup>, the show is open to everyone free of charge. For more information call 760-744-1150

At press time we learned that our Territorial Vice President **Jeff Marcus** is in Kaiser Hospital with an attack of cellulitis. Doctors are treating the infection, and Jeff hopes to go home in the next few days. We send our best wishes.

**Don Soul**, who is designing the IBM Convention program, pointed out there are 14 people who will become "Merlin Excelsior" members this year, having given 60 years of continuous service to the IBM. One of the 14 is our own lifetime Ring 76 member **James Swoger**. Jim, all of us at Ring 76 say congratulations on this very special honor. We all wish you many more continued years of service.

## Coming Attractions

**May 9, meeting at Jack's Magic Place, 4275 University Avenue; meeting begins at 7 p.m. Nomination of new officers and the annual Ring 76 Stand-up contest. Start getting your act together; cash prizes will be awarded for the top performers. We will have a panel of judges scoring each act. Please let Bob Ingalls know if you plan to take part in the contest by Sunday, May 8. Bob's phone number is (619) 990-6822 or e-mail him at [bailysgp@san.rr.com](mailto:bailysgp@san.rr.com). If you are going to perform, Bob must know in advance of Monday evening.**

**June 13, Ring elections, dues are payable and the famous Ring 76 auction. Mark your calendars for this exciting evening. Dues are \$25; if you cannot attend the meeting send your check to 4288 Arguello St. San Diego, CA 92103. All checks should be made out to "Ring 76." Several new collections of magic and video tapes have arrived for our auction, making it a very special event.**

**July 10th, which is a Sunday, our Installation and Awards Banquet will be again held at Dave & Buster's Restaurant in their showroom. The evening will include a sitdown dinner, (everyone will be served at their table, avoiding last year's problem of running out of food) installation of new officers, awards presentation and special entertainment. Details are coming.**

**Next Board of Directors meeting Monday, May 23rd, at Jack's Magic Place at 7 p.m. sharp. These business meetings are open to all members interested in attending.**



MagiCurrents is published monthly by Ring 76 and is edited by Jack White; Associate Editor is Jim Riley. We encourage articles, stories, and news items. All material should be submitted to Jack White by e-mail at [prestooone@cox.net](mailto:prestooone@cox.net). or written manuscripts may be submitted to Jack White, 4288 Arguello St., San Diego, CA. 92103.