



MagiCurrents



San Diego, California

Celebrating Sixty Years of Service to the Magic Community

Honest Sid Gerhart Ring 76

Website
www.ring76.com

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Board Nominations Take Spotlight Stand-Up Contest to be Full Card

Prior to this month's Stand-up competition, officer nominations for the upcoming election will take place. Terry Lunceford has announced he will seek a second term as President of Ring 76. Elected for his first term as president of the Ring in June of 2007, Terry has worked hard to guide the club through a most successful Installation and Awards Banquet, a series of difficult board meetings and planning for 2007-08. Additionally, he is looking forward to the Ring's 60th Anniversary and has put together plans for its celebration.

During the past year, Terry has made an effort to upgrade the standards for various contests within the Ring and the quality of teaching sessions at various meetings. He has worked closely with his two vice presidents, Kenny Shelton and Michael E. Johnson, in the planning of the holiday party and the creation of our new membership roster. Building the membership of the Ring is one of Terry's goals as well as bringing quality meetings and activities to veteran Ring members.

Nominations for Ring 76 officers will take place at this month's meeting with elections to be held Monday, June 9th. At this writing all officers have expressed a desire to return to the board in their same positions with the exception of secretary. Jack White will leave the board after serving eight years as secretary. Jack intends to remain active in the Ring but will need more time to prepare for his duties as International President of the I.B.M. Ring 76 past-president Don Soul will accept a nomination for secretary.



President Terry Lunceford

Our Monday May 12th meeting will be the annual Ring 76 Stand-up Contest. Those wanting to take part in the content can sign up with Kenny Shelton at the door. We will limit the program to 12 contestants each doing an act to run no longer than 12 minutes. The membership will vote for their favorite act and the winners will be announced at the July 13th Installation and Awards Banquet. 1st prize is \$50, 2nd place is \$25 and the 3rd place winner receives \$15. The three top winners will also receive a gold-colored medallion in recognition of their efforts.

The various acts will be judged on appearance, originality, verbal skills, and execution. We ask that the audience take this contest seriously and vote for the person they feel does the best work, not just for friends or personalities.

This year we are setting up an area both behind the stage and a wing area next to the stage for the various acts to set-up and get ready for their act. This is always a fun evening for performers and audience alike. Entertainment director Kenny Shelton will assign the appearance order of the contestants on the program.

Just prior to the contest, President Terry Lunceford will, in keeping with the constitution and bylaws, present the Ring 76 Board of Directors' proposed slate of officers for 2008-2009. For more information on the candidates running for office see our story on elections in this issue of MagiCurrents.

Nominations are welcome but it must be remembered that the board of directors of Ring 76 each makes a commitment to serve at 23 meetings a year and are often asked to do the work that others will not do. The I.B.M. and Ring 76 are all volunteer organizations and, as such, do not receive any pay or are they reimbursed for money they spend often times out of their own pocket.

Magic Bargain Bonanza at April Swap Meet

Our April Swap-Meet was a big success. We do not have an exact count on the number of people who attended but we believe it was a record crowd. Almost all of our members who were selling magic reported record sales. We had 16 people selling new and used magic with everything from pocket tricks to small stage illusions. This year's buyers were early and the members who were set up and ready to sell when the doors opened at 6:30 p.m. did the best business. By 8:30 most of the sellers were either packed up or were in the process of packing up and heading home or over the Denny's Coffee Shop for conversation and a look at what others had purchased.

We were most excited to have J.C. Wagner on hand with a table selling some of his magic materials. J.P. Jackson had three tables filled with used and like-new props, books, videotapes and DVDs. J.P. reports brisk sales of close-up magic effects. Toni Perrine took over the bar area of the room and offered a variety of interesting items for sale. Mike Stilwell arrived with several large boxes of used magic and in the beginning gave many items away to anyone who was interested in obtaining them. He donated several boxes of props to the Ring for future raffles and auctions.

Mago Ruly's table received a lot of attention from buyers. Several of his friends from across the border contributed merchandise to the mix of things and there were all kinds of used magic effects for stage and parlor performance. Most of the people selling were interested in moving merchandise and were willing to deal. As a result, those buying left this year's swap meet with many good bargains.

Bob Ingalls and Ralph Mauzy had a table. Ralph cleaned out his magic closet and brought some nice treasures to the meet. Later he told friends he was taking more home than he sold. Bob was demonstrating a very clever trick deck that he has been showing off for several years. He says this is the last of his supply of decks and the doubts if there will be anymore when this supply is gone. His flying monkey was a big seller as well.

The Trick Shop, located in Temecula, was well represented and had some very nice items for sale, both new and used. If you were looking for back issues of Genii and MAGIC Magazines there were good supplies to add to your bound volumes. Brad Burt arrived a little late but once he was set up he was wheeling and dealing with a nice selection of magic.

The buy of the evening went to new member Sidney Franklin, who purchased a regulation Straightjacket. Sebastian gave Sidney a quick course in escaping from a Straightjacket and the sale was done.

These evenings can be a lot of fun for both sellers and buyers alike. The Ring 76 swap meet goes back many years in our history. At one time, the Ring had a swap meet during the early part of the evening and an auction for the last hour of the meeting. Over the years it was determined that the swap meet was being diminished by the auction portion of the evening so the auction was moved to another meeting. This year however, the Ring has not scheduled an auction. If you have thoughts about having an auction you should talk to Terry Lunceford and Richard Ustick.



The Blakenships from The Trick Shop in Temecula

The swap meet brought out a lot of familiar faces we hadn't seen in a while. Check out the photos.





top-left: J.P. Jackson tried to sell-off the Ring 76 flag

top-right: Sebastian curbs Jeff Marcus' enthusiasm

center-left: Mago Ruly & his U.F.O. power unit

center-right: Tom Owen-Towle being read his rights by Dick Ustick

bottom: Ralph Mauzy unloading decades of dealer room "gotta-haves"

Magic Book Review

by

Dr. Joel Moskowitz, M.D.



The Professional Life of a Famous Magician. Revealed "The Magical Life of Marshall Brodien" by Joel A. Moskowitz M.D. April 19, 2008

What is astounding is the precise almost day to day detail described in "The Magical Life of Marshall Brodien" subtitled "Creator of TV Magic Cards and Wizzo the Wizard". The book, published by McFarland Press, (\$35.00 271 pp softcover) was written and/or compiled by John Moehring, Editor of MUM. Moehring acknowledges his "forever" gratitude to Marshall's wife, Mary Doyle Brodien who it seems made the impossible possible. She is said to have assembled boxes of news clippings, letters, documents and photos to create a time line and to make rhyme and reason from the collection of numerous facts. This reviewer wonders how many persons, whether performers or not, would have saved their history over several decades so as to enable a biographer to compose narratives which give precise descriptions, conversations, happenings of even the most casual sort as are presented in this book. As an example, in 1958, while in the military service, Marshall Brodien had an encounter with a superior officer. Moehring is able to describe, literally, the quotes of all the players, and a photo of the event is included!

Beyond being mystified about the precision that led to craning these fine-pointed particulars of a most successful magician's life, readers will learn what it took for one determined and perserverant conjurer to become a household name. It is to be suspected that few, growing up in the Chicago area during the period when Wizzo played on TV, are unlikely not to have heard of him. Marshall Brodien aka Wizzo the Wizard performed on WGN-TV's Bozo Circus from 1968-94 making semi-regular appearances. TV was the medium that Brodien exploited to disseminate and succeed taking the familiar Svengali Magic Deck and marketing it to the viewing public. Over 17 million were sold!

A pitchman, Brodien, who had with his sideshow spiel experience at the 'World's Largest Amusement Park' circa 1967, was well equipped to hawk these time-honored pasteboards. He went on to offer TV magic sets which, it is to be suspected, rivaled the A.C. Gilbert Magic sets in being the fodder for nascent young and future magicians.

Brodien's experiences not only as "Seller of the Secrets" but as entertainer in a variety of venues is available to the diligent reader. Regretably, the person behind the grease paint remains a mystery. Readers wishing a roller coaster ride through the phases of a life of a most successful magician (and there aren't many) may learn what ingredients and serendipity makes for achievement. For them, the story of Marshall Brodien is recommended.

Nominations *Continued from page 1*

Any bonafide Ring 76 member can be nominated to any board position. Nominations will be accepted from the floor at our May meeting. All board members pay their own way to all Ring events and are required to attend 11 board meetings each year in addition to the 12 scheduled general membership evening meetings. The Ring 76 board is an all-volunteer organization and there are no perks or entitlements for being a board member. If you want to assist the board and believe your input as a supportive contributor would be valuable, don't hesitate to run for one of the offices.

"MagiToon"

by Jim Whiting & Ellen Friedman



"Sometimes I wish you'd just pay with cash!"



Message from the Ring 76 President

I hope you had as much fun at last month's Swap Meet as I did! It was a great event for all of our members and an exciting meeting. This might be the time to remind each of you to begin putting aside a special box of magic that you no longer use for next year's event. Turn your old magic cast-offs into a little cash for some new magic that fits into your act.

Of course I am hoping that many of you found some magic that will become part of your stage act and that you are going to present that act at our May 12th meeting. Each year we present our Stand-Up Contest and each year I am amazed at the unique acts that take part in this presentation. I know of one lady who has been working on her act for several months and will be part of the contest.

Music is an important part of stage magic. If you are going to be a contestant, try to keep things simple for the audio person. Put your music in the order it is to be played on one CD and give the audio person a "cue sheet" so they will know exactly when you want your music to be played. Take the time to go over that information with the audio person before the program.

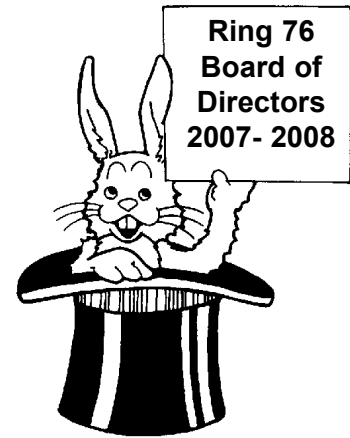
We will be using our spotlight during the Stand-Up Contest so make sure you have special lighting cues, if necessary, for our lighting person. If you want the house lights off during levitation or some other important part of your act let the lighting people know in advance. For this meeting Jack White is coming in early so that contestants can actually run through their acts on stage before the audience arrives. Jack will be in about 3 p.m. for anyone wanting a stage rehearsal.

I also want to remind our membership, who will be voting for our top performer, how important it is that they watch each act, judge carefully, look for originality, routining and pacing and the skill levels of each performer. Each of our contestants has put considerable work into his or her act – let's give them all our respect for their efforts.

This month I will be asking for nominations for the Ring 76 Board of Directors. If you would like to be part of the Ring's decision-making Executive Committee there is a story elsewhere in this newsletter outlining the demands for those jobs.

See you next Monday evening. Please be on time because I will call the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

Terry Lunceford
Ring 76 President



President

Terry Lunceford

1st Vice President

Kenny Shelton

2nd Vice President

Michael E. Johnson

Secretary

Jack White *

Treasurer

Richard Ustick

Sgt-at-arms/Librarian

Donna Greenbaum

Member-at-large

Belinda Kaesler

Member-at-large

Diane Lane *

Immediate Past President

Bob Ingalls *

Territorial Vice President

Jeff Marcus *

*denotes past Ring 76 president

For information on membership or Ring events contact secretary Jack White by e-mail at prestooone@cox.net or by phone at (619) 299-9037



Manaus, Brazil
April 15, 2008

Past-president Diane Lane and her parents, Bill and Vira, travel down the Amazon river accompanied by assorted monkeys, crocodiles and guides. It appears to be a bit more risky than the jungle boat ride at Disneyland.

NEWS

Longtime San Diego Magician, **Craig Stone** and his family are packing up and leaving this area in late August or early September. Their new home will be Charlotte, North Carolina, where Craig plans to set up as a magician and businessman. Craig did a trade show in that area a while ago and fell in love with North Carolina. He came home and began doing some research on living conditions in that state then decided it would be a good area to reestablish himself as a performer. He says property is much less expensive, traffic congestion is non-existent and the school system is rated very high for his young daughter. Craig says he would leave today but he has a full schedule of bookings for the summer months ahead and will say in San Diego until those commitments are filled. We all wish him well in his move!

A story in the San Diego Union-Tribune in late March tells of a fired Sycuan Casino card dealer who subsequently went on to organize the largest casino cheating ring ever brought down by U.S. authorities. The dealer has been identified as Phuong Quoc Truong, known in San Diego as John Truong or "Pai Gow" John and also known as a very skilled magician in sleight of hand with a deck of cards. John has pleaded guilty to organized crime and theft charges and admitted in court to founding a ring that eventually hit more than 16 casinos and made more than \$7 million during the illegal gaming spree. The penalty phase of the trial is yet to be scheduled. We are happy to report that Mr. Truong has never been a member of the I.B.M. or Ring 76.

Diane Lane has checked in via e-mail and tells us that she and her family are having a real adventure cruising down the Amazon River in South America. On April 15th she and her family went on a tour in a small boat through the Rain Forest. They



saw alligators, monkeys and other wild life. Their guide was a 13-year old boy who spoke 7 different languages and was very well versed in the history of the Rain Forest. Diane adds that the ship she is sailing down the river on is tiny, but very quaint and cute. She has been doing a little magic for some of the other passengers on board this cruise. She will return home with many stories in time for our next meeting in May.

Brian Cole, a former member of Ring 76, who conducted a very successful magic lecture tour in the late 1960s and lived in San Diego until the mid 1970s, has been visiting his daughter who lives in the South Bay area. Brian now lives in England and remains active in magic. He attended our April Swap Meet and the Ickle Pickle lecture the following evening. Brian was very happy to see many old friends including **J.C. Wagner** at the Ring meeting. Brian and Jack White had a couple of sessions at Jack's Magic Place; they talked of old times and past members. It was good to have him back in the Ring 76 family for a few weeks.

The Southern California Fair at Perris, California, will be holding a magic competition on October 6th. It will be open to magicians from throughout Southern California, amateurs ages 7 to adult; and semi-professional magicians 16 and older. The competition will be held at the Fairgrounds between 5 and 10 p.m. This competition is for close-up, parlor & platform style magic. For more information and application forms e-mail to: magic_contest@mac.com. They will get you more information on the

BRIEFS

event itself. By the way, the number of contestants will be limited so if you have an interest in taking part don't wait too long to sign up.

There are a lot of people traveling to magic events in late April and the first week of May. **Bob Ingalls**, **Kenny Shelton** and **Len Cardoza** are headed for Las Vegas and the Orleans Hotel & Casino for the World Magic Seminar. It was recently announced that Rich Bloch has sold this magic seminar to Glenn Farrington. This magic event was started 29 years ago by magic dealer Joe Stevens and was known as the Desert Magic Seminar. In 2003, Rich Bloch took it over and has operated it ever since. **Jack White** and **J.P. Jackson** are on the road in the mid-west for the Magic Collector's Weekend in the Chicago suburb of Schaumburg, Illinois. The special guest of honor at this year's Collectors Weekend will be Harry Anderson.

Southern California, I.B.M. Territorial Vice President **Jeff Marcus** has been putting a lot of miles on his car visiting the various I.B.M. Rings in Southern California. In April, the San Diego based TVP was in Riverside, Palm Springs, Hollywood and Long Beach and that was just the beginning of his annual Ring visitations. At nearly \$4, a gallon it is an expensive commitment being a Territorial V.P.

Past International President **Tony Wilson** in New Zealand tells us a new movie titled "The Last Magic Show" will be released to theaters in the United States May 29th. The film produced in New Zealand, is about a magician who believes he can do real magic. It is being billed as a romantic-drama. The film is coming to the United States with good reviews. Watch for it at local theaters. Tony, by the way, was magic consultant for the 2000 film *Magicians*, the negative of which was cut by **Don Soul's** cousin.

Coming Attractions

Monday, May 12th, Stand-Up competition and a chance to perform your stage act. Be creative - 7pm at Jack's Magic Place.

Monday, May 26th, Ring 76 board meeting at Jack's Magic Place.

Monday, June 9th, TBA

Monday, June 23rd, Ring 76 board meeting at Jack's Magic Place.

Sunday, July 13th, Officer installation & awards banquet at the Cottonwood Country Club. Ring Members & their guests only.



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MagicCurrents is published monthly by Ring 76 and is edited by Don Soul. We encourage articles, stories, pictures and news items of interest. All material should be submitted to Don Soul by e-mail at dsoul@san.rr.com or written manuscripts may be submitted to Don Soul, 10068 Branford Rd., San Diego, CA 92129-3223.