



# MagiCurrents



San Diego, California

**Celebrating Sixty Years of Service to the Magic Community**

Honest Sid Gerhart Ring 76

Website  
[www.ring76.com](http://www.ring76.com)

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## Bag Night Set For August Meeting

Our August 11th meeting will feature one of our special events allowing members who wish to take part in the evening's performances to select a brown paper bag - contents unknown - and create an impromptu effect. There may be directions or there may not and it's up to you to come up with something off the top of your head and entertain the membership. It sounds like a daunting challenge but it's not, really, and it's all done tongue-in-cheek for a laugh.

It's been a year and a half since our last bag night when Richard Ustick kept us enthralled with an odd gathering of this and that and turned it into one of the most interesting presentations of the evening by adding a large portion of his own personality and showmanship. You can do the same. With such an abundance of new, talented members Ring 76 is looking forward to an enjoyable night of magic. This will also be the first vote for Performer of the Year so it's your chance to get in on winning that award next July just by participating.

In the past, members of the board have put bags together for the evening but this time we'd like to ask that the membership respond by digging out an effect, grabbing a paper bag and help put our surprise packages together. It could be something as simple as a deck of blank-faced cards or an old Adams pea can. There can be just as much creativity on the part of the bag donor as the member who performs it. Of course, you will get your effect returned at the end of the evening. So, please, let's have all members bring a bag. It will not be necessary to perform but don't be surprised if you get the urge to join in the fun.

This is always an evening of fun and gives members a chance to hone their improvisational skills; a necessary ability when performing magic. Start off our new year of meetings by joining us Monday the 11th. As usual, monthly meetings start at 7 p.m. at Jack's Magic Place, 4275 University Avenue in City Heights and east of I-15.

## Ring 76 Turns 60 This Year

This being the 60th anniversary of Ring 76, it's important to know a little bit about the history of our Ring and the man for whom the Ring is named.

After World War II, Navy veteran Cecil "Sid" Gerhart and his new wife settled in San Diego where he opened a neon sign business but magic occupied all his spare time, collecting, teaching and performing. "Honest" Sid's comedy magic act was that of a traveling medicine show pitchman. Many of the props he used are on display at Jack's Magic Place.



Honest Sid Gerhart

In 2003, Ring member Ed Estrin presented then-president Don Soul with a long lost document of historic significance. Among a pile of papers containing magic instructions and illusion blueprints he had collected was a typewritten sheet titled "Temporary Authority to operate as an affiliated Ring of the International Brotherhood of Magicians." It is dated December 6, 1948. The paper grants authority to operate as I.B.M. Ring 76 and is signed by C. James McLemore, Supervisor of Rings, I.B.M.

The Ring was active from 1948 until 1951. It is believed that deactivation was most likely a result of events related to the U.S. involvement in the Korean War. In November, 1958 the Ring was rechartered, being active ever since.

# Installation Banquet Bestows Honors & A Great Show

July 13th marked the changing of the guard as the new board of directors was installed at the annual banquet, held once again at the Cottonwood Country Club. Territorial Vice President and Ring 76 member Jeff Marcus formally presented the new board for 2008-2009: Terry Lunceford – president, Kenny Shelton – 1st vice president/entertainment director, Michael E. Johnson – 2nd vice president/membership director, Don Soul – secretary/newsletter editor, Richard Ustick – treasurer, Donna Greenbaum – sgt-at-arms/librarian and three members-at-large – Diane Lane, Belinda Kaesler and Bob Meigs.

Our previous secretary, international vice president Jack White, then had the ring recognize two new Order of Merlin Shield inductees Gary Dismukes and Jeff Marcus, honoring them for 35 years of continuous membership in the I.B.M. This was followed by a special presentation of lifetime membership in Ring 76 awarded to Len Cardoza who, in 1950 as a working professional, joined the ring and has attended meetings over the years as often as his schedule allows.

After that, performance awards were issued to members as voted upon by the entire Ring throughout the year. There

was a tie for second place in the Stage competition and that award went to Toni Perrine and Michael E. Johnson. First place was captured by José Sanchez for his brilliant dove act. In the Close-Up competition there was, again, a tie for second place and the honors went to Mago Ruly and Michael E. Johnson. The first place prize was taken home by Craig Stone. Our Performer of the Year, as established by numerous presentations throughout the year, went to Michael E. Johnson and he also walked off with the Member of the Year award as the Ring 76 member who had contributed the most to the ring in the past year as acknowledged by its members.

With official business concluded, Ring 76 was treated to a really special evening of magic as our Stage winner José Sanchez reprised his now-famous dove act. That paved the way for the spectacular Steve Spellman illusion show. It was a first-class performance featuring his full cast and crew. With an attendance of approximately 90 people including about eight kids, this family-oriented show featured ducks, doves, a dog, a rabbit and even a gorilla... well, maybe it was one of his cast in the costume but who cares. The dazzling show seemed to end too soon because of its energy and we all appreciated Steve's appearance.



**Ring 76 President Terry Lunceford, left, and his board: Kenny Shelton (behind Terry), Michael E. Johnson, Richard Ustick, Don Soul, Belinda Kaesler, Donna Greenbaum, Diane Lane and Bob Meigs.**



**Left: Lifetime Membership Award winner Len Cardoza and his wife, Jane.**



**Right: Territorial Vice President Jeff Marcus inducts the new Ring 76 board of directors.**







# **Magic Book Review**

by

**Dr. Joel Moskowitz, M.D.**



## **SUCOP SUCOH**

**Thru the Mirror of Time** by Paul Kieve

A review, by Joel A, Moskowitz M D

July 01. 2008

Not to be confused with the book of the same name published in 1634, this Hocus Pocus authored by Paul Kieve is a Scholastic Press publication (2007) targeted for the nine to eleven years old, which is when many magic obsessions begin. Daniel Radcliffe, in his introduction, praises Kieve as one who taught him some tricks. Kieve may be less widely known than the stage name of Radcliffe, Harry Potter. Now that is impressive credentials! Kieve also assisted with the special effects wonders in the Potter movie Prisoner of Azkaban and has provided magical effect support for myriads of theaters world wide.

Norm Nielsen, famous for his magic poster collection and source, receives Kieve's gratitude. Some of the Nielsen collection of famous magicians adorn the outside cover, as well as the inside front and back cover. A bonus packet of three postcards each are reproductions of a few of the posters of the great magicians of the past, and three illusions. Beyond this 'gravy' there is the romantic tale where Kieve writing as a young enthusiast is mesmerized as a poster of Alexander, morphs into life.

Kieve muses "What might it be if the posters on his walls mutated into such as The Great Lafayette performing with his menagerie of animals; What joy to see Robert-Houdin demonstrating his famous mechanical man? Houdini, manacled and handcuffed suspended upside down in a tank of water escaping. Ching Ling Soo astounding audiences with his bullet catching effect. And for the purposes of this story, they do!" And much more!

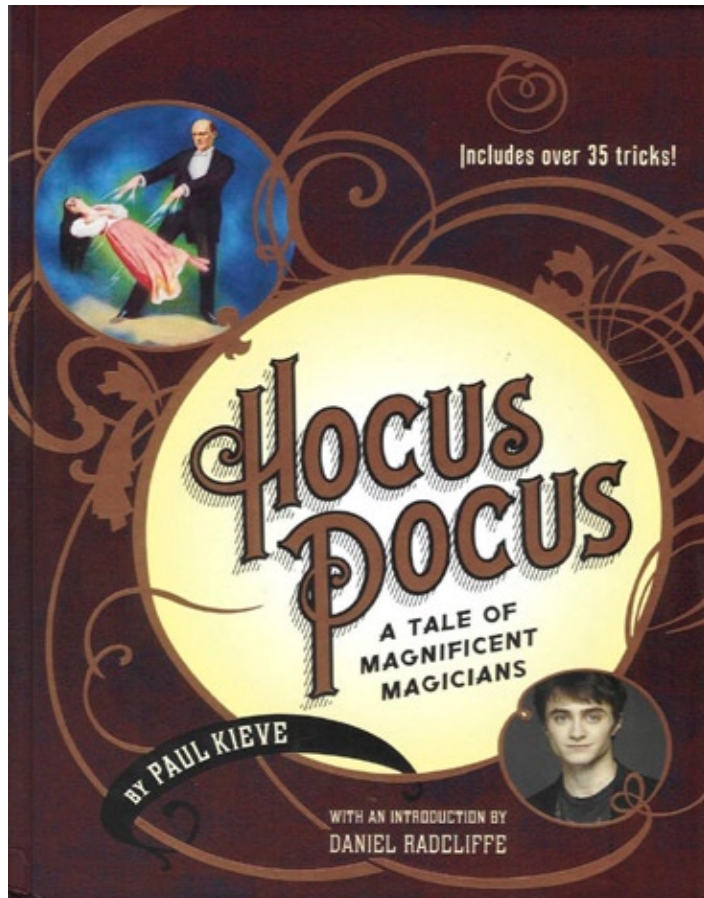
Paul Kieve loves magic and you, the reader, forever young, will smile at the refreshing verbal illustrations and pictorial representations (Peter Bailey, Artist) which enchant and educate the student wishing to become a magician him/herself. The interchanges while fictional reminds those who are of sufficient vintage of the TV show, "You Are There". The theme of that much watched show was that viewers were presented with notable interchanges between luminaries of yesteryear. Kieve does it in this book.

Professor Hoffman, famed authority of early magical texts, disputes with Alexander, the mentalist who represented himself as "He Who Knows". David Devant enters the fray. As the novice who tells the story (and you the reader) trav-

el though the pages you learn that Alexander, a mentalist with a turban, might these days have been dismissed as simply a fellow with a concealed Blue Tooth in his head wrapping from which he was able to 'divine' messages. The Great Lafayette, described by some contemporaries as 'unsociable to the point of rudeness', we learn, poured his affection on his dog, Beauty, in whom he invested some superstitious attachment. These personal anecdotes and descriptive accounts of performances satisfy Kieve's childhood wish that he could have seen and known the master magicians of the past. Within the narrative are some revelations of the methods (Ooooo).

Also included are simple time honored tricks similar to those which litter the pages of beginners books found in most public libraries. These add little but presumably the author/editor felt an obligation to teach some magic along with the historical fictional albeit fascinating tales. Most of these bonus tricks have been much repeated and might well have been 'old' at the time of publication of the original Hocus Pocus. But that they persist may be some evidence of their appeal.

Would you believe that this hardback tale, published by Scholastic Press (2007) 301 pp, is a mere \$14.99. This is not simply a recipe first book for wannabee magicians. It is a loving fascinating story of the personalities who delighted the public. The reader is promised to be delighted as well. It is not only for 9 to 11 years old.





Stage competition runners-up Toni Perrine and Michael E. Johnson.



Stage competition winner José Sanchez.



Close-up competition runners-up Michael E. Johnson and Mago Ruly.



Michael E. Johnson takes home the Member of the Year Award presented by President Terry Lunceford.



"I think you've given me the wrong jacket!"





### *Message from the Ring 76 President*

This month I'd like to start off by saying thank you to everyone. Your involvement and support make this club what it is and I'm proud to be a part of it. The board of Directors all wish to thank you for your confidence and support. I can't believe you let me be Prez again.....

The Installation dinner was a rousing success! Special thanks to Steve and his crew at Spellman Magic for putting on such a wonderful show. Everyone involved with the banquet worked overtime to

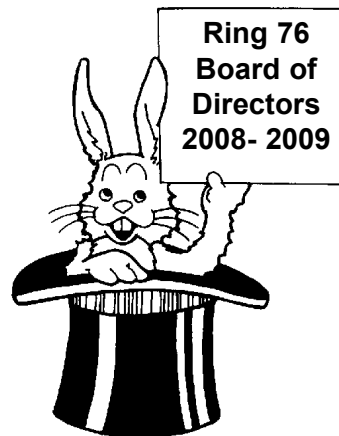
make things work and I think the effort showed!

I think the coming year will hold a few surprises for everyone! Don't quote me yet but I think our lecturer in November will be Paul Green! Winner of 2002 close-up Magician of the year and last year taking Lecturer of the year at the Magic Castle, this will be one not to miss.

Looks like it's time to dust off some of the old props and bring them to the Auction in September. I can't wait to see you all there!

Sorry for the short letter this month but I've got to go dig through my closets for stuff to put in bags.

*Terry Lunceford*  
*Ring 76 President*



#### **President**

Terry Lunceford \*

#### **1st Vice President**

Kenny Shelton

#### **2nd Vice President**

Michael E. Johnson

#### **Secretary**

Don Soul \*

#### **Treasurer**

Richard Ustick

#### **Sgt-at-arms/Librarian**

Donna Greenbaum

#### **Member-at-large**

Belinda Kaesler

#### **Member-at-large**

Diane Lane \*

#### **Member-at-large**

Bob Meigs

#### **Territorial Vice President**

Jeff Marcus \*

\*denotes past Ring 76 president



The hard-working Ring 76 banquet staffers:  
upper left - Terry Lunceford donates his Viper Basket to the raffle.  
above - Sal Barajas & Belinda Kaesler organize the raffle prizes.  
left - Kenny Shelton & Dick Ustick check in the 90 banquet guests.

For information on membership or Ring events contact secretary Don Soul by e-mail at [dsoul@san.rr.com](mailto:dsoul@san.rr.com) or by phone at (858) 484-3492

## NEWS

**Michael E. Johnson** has started a committee to explore the possibility of putting Mark & Nani Wilson's name on the famous Hollywood Walk of Fame along Hollywood Blvd. in tinsel town. So far Michael has picked up a lot of support from the magic community, including Milt Larsen who is on the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors. The stumbling block is the necessary \$25,000 dollars that is the cost of getting a person's name on the walk of fame. Michael says he has always enjoyed wrestling with a challenge, so he will continue his efforts, at least for the time being.

**Diane Lane** returned from her Alaska Cruise in early July. She had been told to prepare for cool weather and took heavy clothes but found temperatures above 70 everywhere she went. Her ship cruised past the "Dawes Glacier" and according to Diane was a sensational experience. She taught a class onboard the ship for beginning computers and did a little magic. She has several more cruise ship events scheduled for later in the year.

**Magic Mike Stilwell** has his "Zoo Nights" program off to a good start at the San Diego Zoo for the summer months. Like all working professionals, Mike reports that business has been off this spring and summer but he still manages to keep busy with shows. Recently, he worked for a high roller in Orange County and the audience enjoyed his work so much the host of the big party asked Mike if he could extend his time an additional two hours. Of course he did!



A large group of Ring 76 members attended the combined I.B.M.-S.A.M. Convention in Louisville, Kentucky, July 21st to July 26th. Included on the convention's list were:

**Jeff Marcus, Joel & Arlene Moskowitz, Diane Lane, Toni Perrine, Sherry Luft, J.P. Jackson** - who had a table in the dealers room - **Bob Ingalls**, and **Jack White**. Bob & Jack drove to the convention and visited every magic shop between Southern California and Louisville.

The I.B.M. Site Selection Committee gave San Diego hotels and theaters a very thorough look over as the possible site for the 2010 Convention on their visit to this city July 7th & 8th. Prices for hotels and renting theaters locally have risen significantly and none of them are willing to make any deals. **David Sandy**, the site selection chairman, will present his report to the I.B.M. Board of Directors in Louisville later this month. It will no doubt be January before a determination about San Diego is made. Keep your fingers crossed for our hosting the convention of 2010.

If you were an admirer of the late **Billy McComb**, who gave up a medical practice in Ireland to become a magician, you will be interested in a unique auction cel-

## BRIEFS

brating Billy's extraordinary life in magic that will take place September 6th & 7th at the Magic Castle in Hollywood. A selection of his personal property spanning several decades - including photographs, letters, manuscripts, ephemera, magic tricks, awards, rare magic books, inscribed photographs from top magicians and personal effects - will all be on the auction block. More information on the auction is available at <http://www.themccomblegacy.com/>.

Librarian **Donna Greenbaum** reports that the Ring 76 library has been cataloged and is once again open for Ring 76 members to borrow books, DVDs and VHS videos. The multimedia items remain in Donna's custody and stored at her home. If you would like a DVD or video you must let her know prior to a general evening Ring meeting and she will bring it with her to loan. If you'd like a full listing of currently available library items contact Donna and she will e-mail you a PDF of our inventory. Her e-mail address is: [dmgreenie@yahoo.com](mailto:dmgreenie@yahoo.com) or call her in advance to submit a media request at 858-793-0785.

Thanks to Ring visitor **Tyler**, who attended our Stage competition, several Ring 76 magis are now appearing on You Tube. Follow the link below to see Michael E. Johnson, José Sanchez and Armando Torres (Mago Rafat) perform in videos captured at Jack's Magic Place and elsewhere. [http://youtube.com/profile\\_videos?user=tylernothing](http://youtube.com/profile_videos?user=tylernothing)

## Coming Attractions

September 8	Auction
October 13	Halloween tricks
November 10	Lecture: Paul Green
December 7	Holiday party pot luck
January 12	Teach-in
February 9	Close-up competition
March 9	Lecture: TBA
April 13	Swap Meet
May 11	Stand-up competition
June 8	Dues/Election/Favorite trick
July 12	Installation banquet



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MagiCurrents 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](mailto:dsoul@san.rr.com) or written manuscripts may be submitted to Don Soul, 10068 Branford Rd., San Diego, CA 92129-3223.