



# 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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## Ring 76 Holiday Party Takes Place Sunday, December 7th

Our annual holiday party is being readied for Sunday, December 7th at Jack's Magic Place with a start time of 5pm. Because space in the building is limited and has caused inconveniences in the past, we are asking that only Ring 76 members and their significant others attend. It would be appreciated if children, friends, doves, rabbits and others be omitted from the festivities. It was a tough decision for the board to make but, based on comments in previous years, the elbow-to-elbow gathering has made some feel uncomfortable.

This party will replace the regular general meeting for December. There will be entertainment, beverages, turkey and other meat items as well as the generous salads, entrees and desserts furnished by the pot luck committee: YOU the membership. If you didn't receive your assigned dish to bring please contact Dick Ustick: 619-589-1913.

Enjoy these pics from previous holiday parties.





# Paul Green Lecture Pleases Yet Again

52 members and guests were at the November meeting for the Ring-sponsored lecture by Paul Green. Two of our visitors, Ed Goldberg and Gerald Castle from Vancouver, BC Ring 92, got wind of the meeting and attended. Paul's theme: "Learn to think like a layman." He commented that we're entertaining laymen, not magicians and certainly not ourselves, and that we all need to present our magic geared toward the onlookers to keep them mystified.

He opened with his version of Professor's Nightmare then proceeded to explain the nuisances and his personal spin, as he did with each effect. Next was Cutting the Competition, a presentation of the Bi-Koehler Cut that he uses at trade show exhibit booths. It was quite clever. After that came Buyer's Remorse, formerly called the Paul Green Opener, the name changed when he added Tom Vorjahan's Comedy Wallet. The deck set-up can also be used in variations that he showed us.

A very captivating trick was then shown. It was a two-card stab, the audience assistant pushing a knife blade into the deck at a point where two previously-selected cards happened to be. This was followed by a "Jeopardy" (TV game show)-style treat using principles by Simon Aronson and the Hummer Cancellation with predictions for the number of face down card plus red and black cards in a Triumph mixed deck. That was a puzzler.

Then came out the Floyd's Magicians Insurance Policy that also employed a long card followed by Signed Card to Wallet and the cute Pygmy's Paddle. He then finished with his new Card Warp Finale and the Book of Days (Fate's Date Book). There was a feeding frenzy at his product table afterwards. Paul always has something for everyone and is a crowd pleaser wherever he performs, be it for the public or doing lectures. It's no wonder, having been Lecturer of the Year at the famed Magic Castle in Hollywood, CA.



top: President Terry Lunceford opens the meeting.

above: 1st VP Kenny Shelton sells raffle tickets for the big prize!

center: Jim Whiting wants to buy the winning ticket.

top, center & right: Paul Green's nightmare is entertaining and informative.

above: Gary Schwartzwald wins the jackpot donated by Mr. Green.

left: I.B.M. members from Vancouver, British Columbia, Gerald Castle (l.) and Ed Goldberg

# Magic Book Review

by

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



Willard - A Life Under Canvas

A family of magicians and their Real Life Experiences - Not a Dime Store Novel

by Joel A. Moskowitz M.D.

Why do magicians buy books about other magicians? A generic biography of most conjurers might read like this: At age 7 - 12, a young boy (more recently also girl) was enchanted by an uncle/grandfather who pulled a coin out of his/her ear. Or said youth received a magic set or became the proud possessor of a Svengali deck, etc. Mesmerized and addicted, the next several years is a seesaw of attention to matters legerdemain.

Everyone's life is a novel. Reading a good book which tells how an admired personage experienced life's adventures may provide lessons. But as with reading a description of the method of doing a magic effect, "time and date" biographies are sadly similar to books which may be called 'mathematics of manipulation'. There is no spice.

Why is "Willard - A Life Under Canvas" distinctive and worth your eyesight? As with an enjoyable theatrical performance a book's entertainment derives from an interaction between performer and the reader/audience. Excitement, awe, fear and identification with the actors are some of the vital ingredients in pleasing the crowd. Many biographies are written many years after the person is no longer available to be interviewed. They are merely chronologies. The writer can't inquire about motivation, or explanations for behavior. Such biographic tales are like a travelogue of Paris or Rome...from 30,000 feet.

David Charvet's book is different. A proven masterful biographer, he offers the saga of the Willards, masters of the tent magic show. In "Willard A Life Under Canvas", published by Mike Caveney's Magic Words, 2008, the author (also of The Great Virgil, Jack Gwynne and Alexander - The Man Who Knows) strives to reveal the humanity of a family of master magicians' personal, sometimes tragic, always dramatic history. The story of the Willard dynasty dates back to the Civil War with Henry Willard, maestro of the traveling tent magic show. Descendent Francis Willard (the popular mentalist - not the suffragist) continues the legacy of Harry Willard, the most recent Wizard of that name. Curiously, her act (with husband Glenn Falkenstein) is performed behind a non-decorative curtained cabinet.

Charvet's weighty tomb (\$85 plus shipping or \$17 per pound) of 370 pages is illuminated with sepia style antique portraits of the Willards, the show, the stage, the tents, the animals, the assistants, the family and topped with color

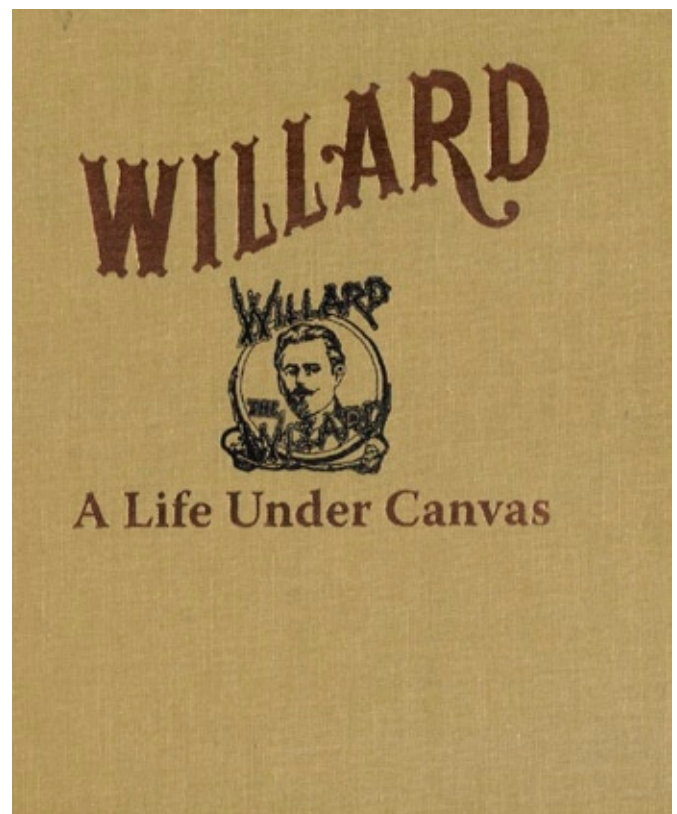
plates of apparatus and the performer in action. The adventurous lives of the Willards covers their ups and downs, their acquaintance with contemporaries and competitors, spiritualism, suicides, and slayings, publicity and obscurity and tragedy and joy. Covering about 15 months of history, the story of a legendary family makes for exciting reading.

News clippings (1913) report that Robert Maloney, a magician who registered....under his stage name of J.R. Willard.... shot and killed his wife and daughter. While his defense attorney asserted that he could have proven him insane, the prisoners 40 foot dive onto the stone floor of his cell block ended further legal action. To avoid the consequent negative publicity, James Willard elected to prefer the name, Frederik the Great - a name of a failed magician. He obtained the right to use it in only the Southern states. The pseudonym was licensed to Harry Bouton to be used in the Northern States. Anti-German sentiment in WWI induced Bouton to abandon "Frederik" and switch to Harry Blackstone! Interesting historical anecdotes are sure to delight readers.

If the price is too much or the subject yet not demanding, experience the narration of the author where he generously offers a pictorial sample of the Willards:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EWkO6WAWzr8&feature=related>

Alternatively, you can order a personal hard bound copy from Mike Caveney's Magic Words, 572 Prospect Boulevard, Pasadena, CA 91103, [www.mcmagicwords.com](http://www.mcmagicwords.com). You won't be disappointed.







## *Message from the Ring 76 President*

Well, Paul Green's lecture turned out to be amazing! There was something for everyone from the beginner to the advanced student. Judging from what I've been hearing from all of you, he lived up to his reputation of being one of the best on the lecture circuit. Paul is going to be hard to top.

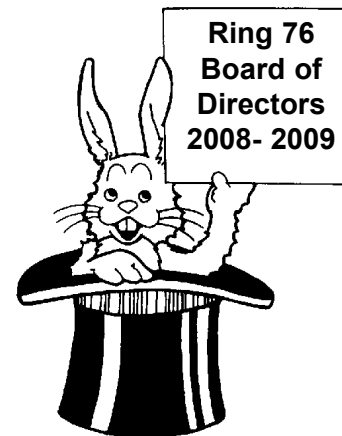
That being said, it puts the pressure on to find someone of the same caliber for the upcoming March lecture. Looks like Shoot Agawa might want to do it so keep your fingers crossed.

My favorite meeting is almost here. Looks like we'll have Mago Ruly on the guitar again this year! Our Holiday party is the best attended meeting (along with the installation dinner) and most crowded (when we hold it at Jacks Place). Good food, good com-

pany and a great holiday spirit, make it a place you want to bring everyone you know but please, remember, only members this year. Last year there just wasn't enough room. People had no place to eat. There was a huge line at the...well, you get the idea.

I look forward to seeing you all there!

*Terry Lunceford*  
*Ring 76 President*



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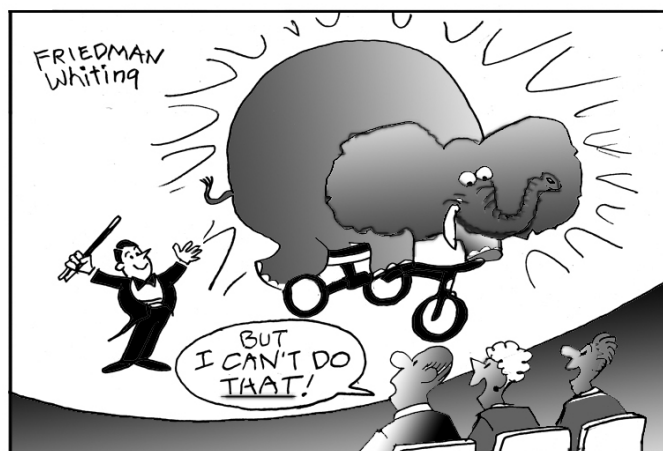
### **Territorial Vice President**

Jeff Marcus \*

\*denotes past Ring 76 president

## *"MagiToon"*

*by Jim Whiting & Ellen Friedman*



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

The Chargers' Blood Drive, November 15th at the Town & Country hotel in Mission Valley, was a huge success. Taking part were Ring 76 magicians **Magic Mike Stilwell** (who brought along **Vic Ballesteros**), **Charlie Gott** and **Kenny Shelton**. The magicians were able to do strolling magic and entertain those who were waiting their turn to donate the gift of life. **Lynn Stedd White** is one of the founding members of the annual Blood Drive celebrating its 30th Anniversary. To celebrate her work at this event, the San Diego Chargers made her an honorary member and presented her with a Chargers' jersey bearing the number "30" signifying 30 years of Chargers Blood drive.

The downturn in the economy is affecting performers in all sections of show business. Locally, most everyone we spoke to says they are keeping busy but not as busy as they hoped it would be this time of year. **Michael E. Johnson** flew over to Arizona to do a gig in late November. Magic supply companies are offering big discounts on books and DVDs in an effort to stimulate sales. In November, L&L Publishing would give anyone who purchased \$100 dollars worth of product a free set of the Royal Road to Card Magic on DVD, which is a \$100 dollar item.

**J.P. Jackson** and **Jack White** were seen at the New England Magic Collector's Conference also known as the "Yankee Gathering" in Westborough, Massachusetts, November 13-15th. Special honoree was **Dr. Eddie Dawes**, magic historian and author from England. **Cesero Pelaez**, the grand patriarch of the show, fell down a flight of stairs a week earlier and was not able to perform in the show. He did manage one brief appearance to greet the many magicians in the audience who had attended the Yankee Gathering.



Ring 76 magician **Jacques Lord** has been doing magic to help in fund raising efforts for his daughter's high school band. You will remember Jacques lost his home two years ago in the firestorm that swept through Rancho Bernardo. Now funds are badly needed to keep the band playing in Rancho Bernardo and once again Jacques is there with his magic trying to help raise the necessary funds for his daughter and her fellow band members.

**James Kellogg Jr.** gets the award for best publicity of the month with his effort to hypnotize a member of the 91X Radio morning team. 91X, a popular morning drive time radio station, asked James to give one of his demonstrations of hypnosis on the radio. Jim is hoping it brings him some holiday bookings. Radio is a great way to get your name in front of a lot of people; nice job, James.

**Criss Angel** is receiving only so-so reviews from the Las Vegas media on his new show in his own new multi-million dollar theater at the Luxor Hotel and Casino. However, comments from magicians who have seen the show and writing in the online Genii Forum are even more critical than the published comments by Vegas reviewers of various shows. One magician commented he would be surprised if the show lasts until spring of next year! You will find a complete write up of the show in the December issue of MAGIC Magazine.

Speaking of Las Vegas, on December 1st **Sherry Luft** was seen at the Fantasma Ring 257 tribute to **Marvin & Carol Roy** for their many years of

# BRIEFS

entertaining. On the program were **Jeff Hobson**, **Mike Caveney**, **Luna Shimada**, **Les Arnold** and **Dazzle**, **Stan Allen**, **Jorge Blass**, and **David & Dania**. In the audience were dozens of the top names in magic. **Jack White** and **Don Greenberg** represented the executive committee of the IBM. **Roger Dryer**, owner of Fantasma Magic, produced the show that is designed to bring in funds for Ring 257.

The new edition of the Ringling Bros.-Barnum & Bailey Circus is now in rehearsal in Florida getting ready for a December 26th opening at the St. Petersberg Arena. The new show will feature magic as a theme. The star of the new Ringling show will be **Alex Gonzales**, who attended a Ring 76 meeting when he was on tour with the Disney Magic Show that was playing Symphony Hall in San Diego. He is now part of The Greatest Show on Earth coming to town in early August.

**Patrick Albanese**, actor, professional hand model and magician from Des Moines, Iowa is blaming a Martha Stewart-branded lounge chair for cutting off a bit of his livelihood. In a lawsuit filed Monday against Kmart Corp. and Martha Stewart Living, Omnimedia, Albanese said he was moving the Martha Stewart Everyday lounge chair on a deck. The front tubular legs collapsed, crushing his right index finger between one of the chair legs and a tubular bar on the base of the chair. His fingertip fell beneath the deck but was later retrieved by a relative. While the injury has not ended Albanese's work as a hand model, it has affected it while he has been recovering. The injury has had a bigger impact on Albanese's work as a magician. Albanese, who served as the master of ceremonies for Hollywood's Magic Castle for 15 years, has some sensation in the fingertip but has decreased dexterity and function. Kmart Corp. and Martha Stewart Living declined to comment.

## Coming Attractions

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.