



HEART OF THE RING

I.B.M. Ring 129 - Kansas City, Missouri

December 2007 Newsletter
Volume 20, Issue 12



LAST MONTH'S RING REPORT



By Ring Reporter, Stu Lewis

We've had lots going on this past month. On October 19 we had a lecture by J. Scott Berry, featuring close-up work with silks and sponge balls. The next day he led an advanced class with a small number of magicians who wanted more hands-on instruction. Though I did not have the opportunity to attend. I heard he was very well received.

The ring also put on a couple of Halloween shows, in Roeland Park and Blue Springs. Kirk DeWeese, who has been one of our ring's workhorses in recent years, organized the program and served as master of ceremonies. Opening the show were Duane and Janie Fields, with a dove act that used a season-appropriate "Phantom of the Opera" theme. Among the others who performed were Terry Elton, Kyle Scheel, Steve Steiner, Dale Huffman (dressed as Frankenstein's monster), and Terry Magelssen, whose illusion act closed the show.

(Continued on Page 4)



Inside This Issue

Page

Mark Your Calendars	2
Ring 129 Board Members	2
Last Month's Winners	2
December's Teach-a-Trick	2
Dues Reminder	2
News and Announcements	3
Member Profile - Tom Burgoon	5
Website of the Month	6
Letter to Ring Members from St. Louis Ring	7
Mike Super Wins NBC's Phenomenon	7
Magician of the Month Winners	8
From The Editor's Desk	8
Sorcerer's Circle Information	9
Our Web Page	10
Dealer Booth Policy	10
Newsletter Policy	10
Lecture Review - Tom Craven	11
Scott's Thoughts	12
What is it that Makes Children Laugh?	13
Picture Spread	15



NEXT MONTH'S NEWSLETTER

In next month's newsletter we will feature the annual Stage Magician of the Year Contest and Banquet including articles about the history of the event and information about this year's contestants!

Mark Your Calendars!

Thursday, December 6th

December Ring Meeting, 7:00 pm,
Radisson Hotel, 95th & I-35, Lenexa, KS.

Thursday, December 20th

December Board Meeting, 7:00 pm
Denny's Restaurant, I-35 & Shawnee Mission Parkway

Thursday, January 3rd

January Ring Meeting, 7:00 pm
Radisson Hotel, 95th & I-35, Lenexa, KS.

Saturday, January 12th

Stage Magician of the Year Banquet & Contest
Roeland Park Community Center

Reminder to Pay Dues

Ring 129 members are encouraged to pay their 2008 dues at the December 6th club meeting. Dues are \$20 per year and, if desired, may be paid by mail to ring treasurer, Kirk DeWeese, 634 SW Walnut, Blue Springs, MO, 64014.

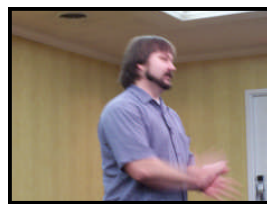


If a member pays his dues by the completion of the December 6th club meeting, he will qualify to attend the first 2008 Ring Lecture for free!

The local club dues do not include the dues and other fees required by the national I.B.M organization. Club members are also encouraged to keep those dues current as well.



CONGRATULATIONS!



Eric Woods - November's Close-up Magician of the Month!



Roger Miller - November's Stage Magician of the Month!



Teach-a-Trick

November's Teach-a-Trick will be taught by Kevin Emerson. It is titled "Snowstorm in China" from pages 208-209 of the book: *Encyclopedia of Practical Magic*, aka *The Art of Magic and Sleight of Hand*, (Nicholas Einhorn).



To sign-up to do a "Teach-a-Trick", contact Mike Melito at mmelito@kc.rr.com
Teach-a-Trick qualifies for Sorcerer's Circle Points!

Ring 129 Board Members

President - Mike Blum	913. 383. 2586
Vice President - Julia Clark	816. 478. 9787
Secretary - John Hicks	913. 334. 1392
Treasurer - Kirk DeWeese	816. 224. 5000
Sergeant-at-Arms - Mike Melito	816. 459. 8314
Board Members:	
Rod Sipe	816. 916. 3655
Ken Reedy	816. 734. 1484
Eric Woods	913. 709. 1606
Past President - Chuck Macan	913. 681. 0368



NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS



2008 Board Positions - The annual elections for Ring 129 took place at the November 1st ring meeting: The club wishes to thank the following individuals for serving the board positions in 2008: President - [Julia Clark](#), Vice President - [Rod Sipe](#), Secretary - [John Hicks](#), Treasurer - [Kirk DeWeese](#), 3-Year Board Member Term - [Ken Reedy](#), 2-Year Board Member Term - [Steve Steiner](#), 1-Year Board Member Term - [Eric Woods](#), Past President - [Mike Blum](#), Sergeant-at-Arms - [Dale Huffman](#).

Halloween Show Report - Ring 129 was presented \$415 in shared gate receipts from the Blue Springs City Theatre this past month for the production of the October 13th Halloween Magic Show. Thanks once again to show producer, Kirk DeWeese and all the performers and helpers that made the event a success!

Put your Videos on Ring 129 Webpage - You can now have videos of your magic performances placed on the internet and linked to the Ring's Website. Videos are uploaded and stored on youtube.com, and then linked to the Ring129.com website. Several videos have been uploaded for viewing this past month including; [Terry Magelsson](#), [Roger Miller](#), [Larry Poague](#), [Ken Reedy](#), [Danny Mahar](#), [Stu Lewis](#), [Larry Warshaw](#), [Steve Steiner](#), and [L.C. Collier](#). To have your video uploaded, contact ring webmaster, Ken Reedy. Ken asks for videos to be sent to him in either VHS or DVD format for uploading.

Annual Contest & Banquet Tickets - Tickets for the annual Stage Magician of the Year Contest and Banquet to be held at the Roeland Park Community Center on Saturday, January 12, will go on sale at the December 6th monthly ring meeting. Banquet seats are reserved and sold on a first-come, first-served basis. Costs for tickets are \$17 for regular members and \$15 for Sorcerers Circle Members.

Last Chance to Qualify! - December will be the last opportunity to qualify to compete in the annual Stage Magician of the Year Contest in January. (For a list of qualified contestants, see page 8.)

Note Concerning Club Dues - If you think about it, the annual club dues of only \$20 is quite a bargain! Members' dues helped to pay for the monthly hotel meeting facility, monthly newsletter, and subsidizing seven guest lectures this past year!

IBM-SAM Convention - If you are planning to attend this summer's historic IBM-SAM Combined Convention and have not yet registered, you might want to do so by December 31st. The price will increase by \$100 after the first of the year!



Larry Poague Suffers Stroke - Long-time ring member, Larry Poague, suffered a stroke while on vacation in Florida this past month. He was life-flighted to a local hospital and then transferred to a Menorah's Medical Center for further care. He was scheduled to return to Kansas City this past week and undergo several weeks of rehab at Menorah's Medical Center. Our prayers go out to Larry and his family. Cards may be sent to Larry Poague, Sr., 34221 W. 90th Cr., DeSoto, KS, 66018.

LAST MONTH'S RING REPORT

(Continued From Page One)



Our November meeting, with over forty members and guests present, opened with kudos to Kirk and the others who worked on the show. We also thanked

Steve Steiner for the work he has done in transforming our newsletter into a small magazine (about thirty pages a month), including several pages of photographs. Since most of the members receive their newsletters via email, he is able to do this without killing trees. Roger Miller reported on the plans for the 2008 international convention. In our one contested election, Dale Huffman was chosen to be next year's sergeant-at-arms. Other officers were reported last month.

Roger Miller opened our monthly stage contest dressed as a swami. He showed a number of ribbons tied to a rope and had the spectator secretly choose one of four colored cards. Then he made the ribbon of the matching color jump off the rope. He also performed a mental effect with a mechanical dancing bear.



Harris Deutsch followed with an act in which he impersonated his mother (think of Norman Bates). The magic involved ropes, silks, and coin transpositions.



Joe White was the first of two entrants in the close-up contest, with a well-themed series of ESP-card effects.



Eric Woods did a parody of the six-card repeat, followed by a one-in-pocket, two-in-hand sequence. To conclude, he got into the spirit of Halloween by doing a paddle-move routine

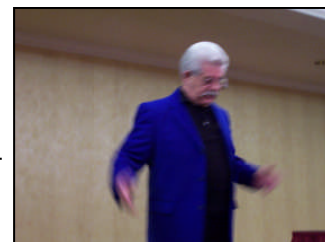
demonstrating a vampire whose reflection could not be seen in the mirror. Unfortunately, Joe was disqualified for going overtime, so the Board will have to determine if Eric can be considered the winner, our usual practice when a contestant is unopposed. Roger was voted stage magician of the month.



Six magicians performed in the non-competitive, open segment of the meeting. Barron Stringfellow did a Tom Craven routine in which a spectator inflates a balloon inside a coke bottle

and the air is retained until the magician pours it out.

Terry Elton followed with a book test. John Hicks presented a card routine involving an odd-backed card.



Dale Huffman did a coin transpo in a spectator's hand. Jason Dean treated us to some of his amazing card work, including a routine in which a selected card changes into not one ace but the four aces.



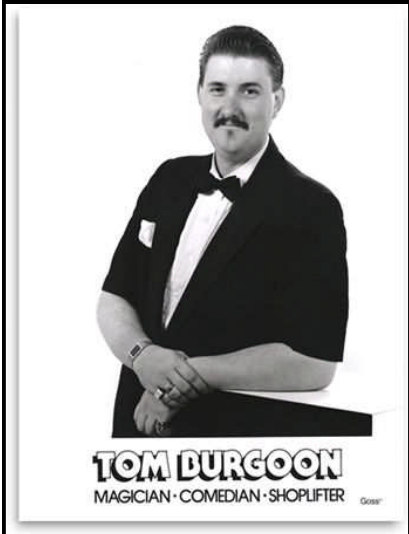
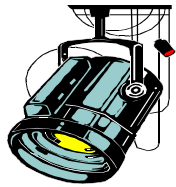
Shaun Rivera performed an impossible looking torn-and-restored card routine. All in all, we got to see an amazing number of routines which left us both mystified and entertained.

The Monthly Ring Report is also published monthly in the I.B.M. "Linking Ring" Magazine.

To contact Stu Lewis you can email him at ANDIAM@kc.rr.com

Member Profile

By Eric Woods



Tom Burgoon was born in Pittsburgh, Kansas November 13, 1958 and grew up in the town of Osawatomie. Like most magicians Tom was influenced by the magicians of television, from various appearances on the Ed Sullivan Show to Doug Henning specials. Tom was always on the look out for anything magic-

related. He would dutifully watch Mark Wilson's show every week and he has since become good friends with him. Tom has had a rare behind the scenes look at the illusions and props that Mark used in his shows over a life time of professional performances.

In the years he was building his act, one of Tom's closest magic friends was Claude Enslow. Claude mentored, collaborated with and built props for Tom. Having a real professional to discuss his material with, who believed in his ability to entertain, helped Tom immensely in building his act. Bill Watson, who had a show in Toledo, also played an important role in helping him develop into the successful performer he is today.

Richard Ross, who is well known in the magic fraternity for his classic stage act, was also a major influence in Tom's development. In the beginning Burgoon envisioned himself putting together an act such as Richard Ross', performing serious magic to music. Though he found his niche in the comedy market, it was through studying Ross' material that he became aware of the important aspects of timing, pacing and stage presence.

Tom Burgoon was one of the true child prodigies performing his first magic show at the age of five years old. While attending high school in the late 1970's Tom started honing his skills working for various magic shops and went on to work for 9 years at US Toy Magic Shop - the largest magic shop (sq ft.) in the United States. When he graduated high school he began performing school shows and private and public kid shows. Then he started working a few comedy clubs and helped to start Stanford and Sons, what is now the most popular comedy club in the Kansas City area.

Working at the comedy club not only helped shape his comedic character, but also provided real magic in his life. During one of his shows, a lady in the audience told her friends, "that's the guy I'm going to marry" and her prophecy came true. Irene, at the time of this writing is a Training Coordinator at Stations Casino in Kansas City, MO, and has an innate ability to connect with people. She has proven to be the real magic in Tom's life, aiding him with her insight and business sense.

Stanford's Comedy House, which now has locations in New Orleans and St. Louis, was developed through Tom Burgoon, David Naster, and other comedians during the late 1970's. They would work five nights a week for no money. At the time there was a large caboose out in front of the club that had a stage in front of it. Tom performed on that stage in the streets of Westport for about five years, before heading to the East coast to work on cruise ships.



This is the second installment of "Member Spotlight". From time to time we will use this column to feature different Ring 129 Members and share biographical information about them, including their history and interest in magic.

To contact Eric Woods you can email him at ewoods20@hotmail.com

Check This Site Out!

Website of the Month

By Steve Steiner



This month's website of the month is *Magic Auction* (magicauction.com). It is a site completely dedicated to auctioning magical tricks and apparatus. Most all of the items are used, or as a car salesman might say, "Pre-owned"!

I stumbled on to this site several years back when I was looking for some used magic items. Within a couple of months not only had I purchased several items, but I had also auctioned several of my older items through the site as well.

Creators of the Magic Auction developed their auction site for one basic reason. They knew many magicians that had boxes and rooms full of used magic tricks they had purchased through the years and for whatever reason, were no longer using them. They

decided to start an auction site to deal only with magical items.

The service is simply run and is different in many respects to using eBay. To sell something through Magic Auction, you simply box up the items and send them to the site along with the prices you want to get for them. On Wednesday of each week a new auction begins and runs only one week. Should one of your items sell, Magic Auction contacts the buyer, collects the money, sends them the item, and you a check. If no bids are received for your items, then the items automatically continue to be listed the following week. The only way something is sold is if someone bids at least the minimum amount listed for your item.

There is no fee for using their service. You simply tell Magic Auction what you want for the item and they will add on a 10% listing fee. They recommend that you list your items at half of what it would cost new. Then, they will add their 10% to the item. When selling larger illusions, you do not send Magic Auction the illusion, but rather wait until it is sold and send it directly to the buyer. Magic Auction will collect your money and hold it in escrow until the buyer emails that he has received the item.

The main differences in Magic Auction and eBay is timing and pricing. With eBay your sale will more than likely be completed in a couple of weeks. With Magic Auction the sale may take several months to complete. However, you will get the value you are seeking with Magic Auction where in using eBay you do not always get your asking price.

It is an interesting experience to look through the listings on Magic Auction. Who knows, you may find something you have been looking for at a greatly reduced price!

Stage & Platform	Beginners Magic	DVD'S & Videos
Illusion Builder Known	Manipulation Stage	Close Up Magic
Illusion Builder ?	Comedy & Kidshow	Magic Books
Illusions Outside USA Known Builder	SILKS	Magazines
Illusions Outside USA Unknown Builder	Rope Magic	Close Up Magic
Stage Accessories	Dove Magic	Coin Magic
Illusion Plans etc.	Magicians Utilities	Card Magic
Stage Lighting	Magic Tables	Mentalism
Sound Systems	Collectibles	Vent, Marionette, Puppet
Escape Artist	Magic Sets	Sponge Balls
Special FX	Costumes	Tenyo
FLOWERS		Posters

Steve Steiner can be reached by emailing him at steves7@microdsl.net

Letter to Ring Members

From Steve Zuehlke
Ring 1, St. Louis, Missouri



My name is Steve Zuehlke from Ring One, St. Louis, Missouri. I am sure many of you have heard of the *Linking of the Rings*. Our Ring puts on this annual fund raiser with the monies going towards our membership.

This year we are doing THREE shows with the first being Friday evening at 7:30, February 15, followed by two shows on Saturday, including a matinee and evening show.

These shows will be in two different locations. While we generally pull our talent from our Ring, I was wondering if you had any STAGE performers who would be willing to make a road trip for the weekend? We could offer rooms for Friday and Saturday, a gas allowance, lunch and dinner as well as a small per diem. In exchange Ring One would be happy to reciprocate for any event that your Ring may have. Please let me know as soon as possible so I can line out the details. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact me.

Look forward to hearing from you soon,
Steve Zuehlke
314-514-0215
VP Ring One
Spring Show Talent Coordinator



David Sandy to Appear at Crown Center



As part of Crown Center's Holiday Entertainment Series, Ring 129 member, David Sandy will appear on Saturday, December 1st, for a day of "Magic, Music, & Marionettes".

Shows are scheduled for noon and 2 p.m. on the Crown Center Shops Atrium, Level 1.



Mike Super Wins Phenomenon Contest

Just to let those know who may have missed it, magician Mike Super won the grand prize, \$250,000, on the recent NBC's Phenomenon TV show series finale. He did a "Super" job each week, and I think he deserved to win.

All the other contestants did a great job too. It was a well produced show, and brought attention to the field of mentalism, and magic in general. Thank you, NBC.

If you voted for Mike, why not drop him a note of congratulations: mikesuper4@comcast.net I know he appreciated your voting for him, and I know Mike would enjoy hearing from you.

Three cheers for Mike Super!!!
Walter Blaney (US)

Many of the performances from Phenomenon can be found by searching youtube.com

Magician of the Month Winners

The following monthly winners have qualified to compete in the **Stage Magician of the Year Contest**

Month	Winner
January	Rod Sipe
February	Steve Steiner
March	Dennis Burks
April	—————
May	Joe White
June	Marty Isenberg
July	Jonathan Atkinson
August	Gene Kean
September	Kyle Scheel
October	—————
November	Roger Miller
December	

The following monthly winners have qualified to compete in the **Close-Up Magician of the Year Contest**

Month	Winner
July	Jim Hager
August	Josh Chaikin
September	Marty Isenberg
October	Harris Deutsch
November	Eric Woods
December	
January	
February	
March	
April	
May	
June	

Reminder for all members that would like to compete in the monthly contests and open performances:

- ◆ Please make sure that your performances are within the allotted time of 10 minutes.
- ◆ Make sure that you are aware of the fire policy.
- ◆ You can find all the details for performance rules on the ring website.



**FROM THE
EDITOR'S DESK**
By Steve Steiner

Over the past several months a committee, led by Larry Warshaw, has been meeting to discuss ways to improve our annual Stage Magician of the Year Contest. The contest is one of the long-standing traditions and club highlights each year. This past month, after a thorough discussion, the ring board of directors unanimously approved several changes to the annual event.

The changes will place less emphasis on the *performance of magic* and stronger emphasis upon *entertaining with magic*. Depending upon your magical background and schooling, you will either welcome these changes or find that they deviate from performing “pure” magic.

The first change is in the makeup of the judges. The contest will now be judged by two magician judges and three non-magician judges. According to long-time club members, through the years the contest evolved to its current format of three magicians and two non-magicians. For those competing in the contest, this change will have a slight impact on how their performance is judged.

Performing magic in front of magicians is completely different from performing magic in front of a lay audience. Most magicians are hard to fool because they have seen it all and know how most of the magic effects are done. On the other hand, the non-magician is pretty much amazed at even the simplest of magic routines. Now the majority of judges will consist of people that probably have never seen the tricks before.

The second, and probably most significant change to the Stage Magician of the Year Contest, will be in how the judges evaluate the performances. No longer will the judges use a point system that forces them to rate specific aspects of a performance such as an opening, closing, strength-of-effects, technical skills, originality, costumes, appearance, and demonstration of skills.

Continued on next page - (see “Editor’s Desk”)



SORCERER'S CIRCLE

The Ring 129 Board of Directors reminds all club members that December is the month to fill out your applications to become Sorcerer's Circle Members.

The objective of the Sorcerer's Circle is to recognize and honor those members who exemplify the term "Active Member of Ring 129". The special award is made up of members who through word and deed support Ring 129 and its activities and promote magic wherever they go.

In order to make application for membership in Sorcerer's Circle the candidate must be over 18 years of age, a member in good standing of both Ring #129 and the International Brotherhood of Magicians for three consecutive years, and accumulate the required number of Sorcerer's Circle Points which are issued through the accumulation of points, which are issued in several different areas of club participation. The number of points needed in any given year to achieve the Sorcerer's Circle award will vary based on the number of Ring #129 activities planned for that calendar year. Points can be awarded through the following areas:

- Attendance – Club Meetings, Lectures, Board Meetings, Auctions, Banquets
- Monthly Performance – Close-up or Stage contests or Open Performance
- Special Performances – Club Shows, Mini Lectures, Teach-a-Trick, etc.
- Encouraging new membership and inviting guests
- Conventions – Local, International, & Others
- Charity Shows
- Publicity – Mentioning Ring 129 and/or IBM in publications.
- Serving as a ring officer or committee member



The Sorcerer's Circle Medallions and Stars will be awarded at the annual Stage Magician of the Year Banquet. Benefits of Sorcerer's Circle Membership include:

- Priority seating at the Ring's meetings, lectures and special events
- Reduced rate on published ticket price for lectures and other special events
- Special sessions for Sorcerer's Circle Members only
- Dining with guest lecturers
- Special receptions and outings
- Recognition among your peers that you are actively helping Ring #129 be the finest Ring in all of the I.B.M.



Members interested in applying for Sorcerer's Circle status may download the application by logging on to the club's website: ring129.com. Ring Board Members are available to assist individuals in filling out the application forms.

"Editors Desk" - (Continued from previous page)

Now, this criteria will be lumped together and judged on how entertaining the performance was. At the end of the night they will simply hand the chairman of the contest a list with their overall rank of each performer; 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc. Those rankings will be given point values and averaged to pick the evening's overall winners.

Some may argue that these changes give the comedian-magician an upper hand in the competition. It very well may, but it doesn't mean you *have* to be a comedian to be entertaining. Personally, I welcome these changes. I have competed in the competitions the last two years and have felt that it was wrong for one to give a very entertaining performance only to be discounted over some technical issue. As magicians I believe we need to remember that our true audiences are the non-magicians that are looking to be *entertained* more than they are to be *fooled*.

**Steve Steiner can be reached
by emailing him at
steves7@microdsl.net**

Newsletter Policy



The following basic principles will serve as guides in the Ring 129 Newsletter.

The Emphasis will be Local and Personal

The publication will concentrate on local news and club members.

If it is Local Magic News, Then its Fair Game!

We will attempt to promote all local magic news.

Club News First

Since this is an I.B.M. Ring 129 publication, the club news will have top priority.

Disclaimer

We reserve the right to *unintentionally* omit events, pictures & news, and misspell individual's names without notice.

The Heart of the Ring is published monthly as a service to the members of IBM Ring 129. Views and comments do not necessarily reflect the opinions of Ring 129 officers, the IBM, or the Editor.

Members are encouraged to submit articles and comments for publishing and earn additional Sorcerer's Circle Points.

Articles should be emailed to the editor by the 20th of the month.

steves7@microdsl.net

**PICTURES-
PICTURES-
PICTURES!**



Check out the photos from magic events this past month!

Picture Spreads

November Ring Meeting Pics

Page

15

Our Web Page



Much helpful information can be found on the Ring 129 Web Page:

www.ring129.com

The following passwords are needed for members to access special areas of the website:

User Name: ring129

Pass-

word: aj



If you have questions concerning the ring website, contact Ken Reedy at **816-734-1484** or email him at ...

Dealer Booth Policy

In order to set up a dealer table at Ring 129 Meetings, the board of directors have established the following policy.

A dealer is considered legitimate provided they meet one of the following criteria:

- ◆ Operate their business out of an actual magic storefront or building.
- ◆ Have an actual magic dealer's I.D. or business license.
- ◆ Have a Sales Tax Number



Remember: Individual club members may also bring and sell their items at regular club meetings, but may have to share a table with others depending upon the number of dealer tables being used during that evening.

Sick and Convalescent

If you know of a ring member or their family member who is hospitalized or has passed away contact:

Carl Macan

913-648-1465

crm130@aol.com (if e-mail is sent please contact Carl by phone to let him know to check his e-mail account)

Tom Craven Lecture Review

By Barron Stringfellow

Guest Column



Tom Craven writes a column for the Linking Ring...He has been doing magic since 1962 when he was 28, and he single sleight-of-handedly blew away the small group (which included several of the fine folks from the Columbia IBM ring) that came to see his lecture at the Fairmount Community Center on October 27th!

Let's just start with the Lecture...Tom was really on, full of energy and performed and taught in top form. He opened with his "Bottled Air", where you blow up a balloon – (inside of a Coke bottle; try this one at home!) thus capturing air inside a balloon, inside a coke bottle – and it stayed that way until Tom chose to pour the captured air into a glass! You could see and hear the balloon deflating! Really awesome...

Tom went on to perform Miracles...no tricks were done, and this was no dealers lecture, either. Oh, Tom has his miracles for sale, but there was no feel of "pushing" or "hard-sell" to it, in fact, the stuff pretty much sold itself. "Blue Collar Aces" is all it purports to be – An ace assembly with no sleights, no specially printed cards...and by golly! The Aces do indeed assemble!

On to a Workable, Usable Magic Square with Dice and Coins that I am sure Phil Franklin will be using in his performances from now on! And Larry Pogue will definitely be doing the "Groby" Effect and probably the "Six Glasses"...not to mention the after-lecture lecture (we'll get to that!). Athena was enamored by "Glass Backwards" and I personally liked the "Silk Monte", although the effect Tom calls "Jailbird Jack" will probably be one of the ones that make it's way into my standard gambling routines, as Athena really likes it as well.

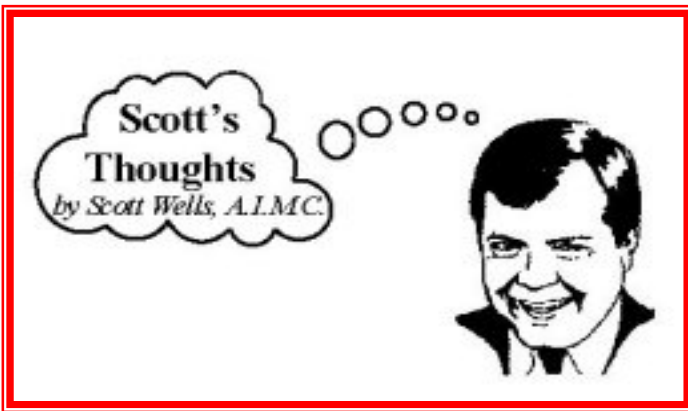
The "Houdini Deck" not only came to us with an amusing Fox Lake anecdote (Their version doesn't...CAN'T... work!) but really created a wonderful moment with a punched deck and a ribbon. Very well presented...and I cannot believe we were all fooled by such an old sleight! Way to go, Tom! Tom's "Visible Ring Release" is a must for any ring on whatever worker! I shudder to mention the "Naked Mental Poker". I will be adding this to my naked deck routine, suffice it to say this made the lecture worth every penny (and then some!!!).

During the Lecture, Tom kept doing things from other lectures...so we got several "Bonus" effects, and he was very freely dishing out the little bits-of-business and psychological musts that make anyone a better performer.

End of lecture...Lecturer makes his sales, packs up and goes home...right? WRONG! A group of us went out for dinner/breakfast. And that is when the true Lecture began. You don't get a blow by blow, but it is a given that the "Invisible Principle", "Biphony" and the "Klein Keeper" are going to pop up when Larry Pogue, Mike Melito, Dale Huffman, Barron and Athena Stringfellow Session or Perform or Practice...and those 3 pieces may be worth all 5 of those folks' weight in Platinum! (And if you know a couple of those names, you know that's a lot of Platinum!), not to mention the fantastic tips for "The Hangman's Noose" we all got in the parking lot around 1 in the morning!

Don't tell us that the greats of magic are gone, or boring or never give us anything new...we know Tom Craven!

To contact Barron Stringfellow you can email
him at barronofmagic@yahoo.com



Restaurant Etiquette

Where did you learn your manners for going out to eat? Perhaps from a book on etiquette or in school but more than likely you learned them from your parents, grandparents and/or your friends. How about tipping when you're out? Here again the answers may be the same. But are you properly equipped to know how to interact with the magician who performs at your table? How will you treat him? What is the proper procedure for getting the entertainer over to your table, what do you say to him, what do you not say to him, how much do you tip him?

As a magician perhaps you haven't thought about these questions. But as a restaurant patron who is unaccustomed to being personally entertained at the table (except by the occasional Mariachi band), these questions and many more must race through their mind. As an entertainer in a restaurant you need to be keenly aware of your audience. They are not necessarily there to see you but rather to have an enjoyable, uninterrupted meal. You need to choose your time wisely when to approach the table, if at all. Maybe they are engrossed in a personal or business conversation that defies interruption. There have been many articles and books written about this field and detail how to approach a table. If you are a restaurant magician, then I just want you to be conscientious of your audience and their feelings.

If you are a magician visiting another working magician in his restaurant, then the same rules of etiquette apply to you as they do to the other patrons. Let's go over the major points. When coming into the restau-

rant to watch a fellow magician perform, be seated like the other diners, place your food order then ask your waitperson to have the house magician visit your table when he is available. When he is able to get to your table, introduce yourself as a magician if you have not yet met. If it's a slow night or he is on break, then you can spend a bit more time talking with him. By introducing yourself to him, he may show you his regular routine but more than likely he will show you something special that he has ready to show his repeat customers. Since he is treating you like one of the regular patrons, then you should treat him like you would if you were a regular . . . specifically, that means you should tip him. The amount of the tip is up to you, but shouldn't you tip him as much as you would like to receive if you were on the opposite end of the wand? Then, on your way out, be sure to thank the management for providing such fine entertainment to the diners. This would be polite restaurant etiquette for visiting magicians.

On the other hand, let's go over improper etiquette. When coming into the restaurant to watch a fellow magician perform, rather than be seated you immediately go looking for the magician. Once you locate the performer, stand beside him or look over his shoulder, because after all, you are a magician too, you know all this stuff and you're just as good as him. And by standing beside him you are subliminally telling the other patrons that you are his equal. No doubt he will end his routine short with his current audience in order to acknowledge your presence. By the way, this ensures that he won't be getting a tip from that table. You can spend a lot of time with him by introducing yourself, then telling him the kind of magic you do, where you have worked, who you know, where you have been, and most importantly showing him some of your moves. You can do this because you have, of course, brought along a "few" things just in case he might need someone to help him out if they get too busy. While you're talking with him, be sure to talk rather loudly so others know that you too are a magician.

Continued on page 14 - See "Scott Wells"

What is it That Makes Children Laugh?

By Kyle Peron



As a family oriented performer I have often wondered exactly what is it that makes children laugh? What is it that they respond to that generates this rush of laughter and good times? It is interesting to research and I found out things I never knew before. If a magician understands what makes children laugh, then they can apply it to the routines they create. After all we are entertainers first. So allow me to dive in a bit on this subject and share some of my findings. Keep in mind that some of this may not be new to you but I wanted to discuss it here so that it might inspire and help others.

The first item that caught my eye when I first started researching this topic was about the relationship between how often children laugh and how often adults laugh. It does not take a rocket scientist to realize that children laugh much more frequently than adults do. But why is this? I found out a statistic that really shocked me. Children laugh on average of 400 times in a course of a day where as adults tend to laugh around 25. That is a staggering difference. So what is it that causes this laughter. I wanted to list some of the things I found through research as well as through my own personal experience.

Treating an Object Like Something Else: It is important to realize that children live in a fantasy world at a young age. Everything to them is magical. Turning on a light is by magic. But often-times they also start showing at an early age the idea of pretending. You see this a lot in their play. One object can suddenly become another object. This can be used by us entertainers. Because the child does this naturally, having one object become something else is funny to them.

Calling an Object or Person by a Different Name:

As children start to talk they become very vocal. They use their new found communication skills and start to use that in their humor as well. If we know that children early on are fascinated with speech and with wanting to verbally tell you things, we can use this to our advantage. Children themselves will often naturally call something by a different name and find doing so hilarious.

Name Play: This is a concept that as children get older and start using their new found vocal skills, they like to name play with the sounds of names. This could mean a word like boat could be boat, coat, soak, toat, zoat etc. Even if the words are not real words, the sound of the new silly word is funny to them. As magicians, we can use this in our performances and possibly create funny magical words that play off this idea.

Made up Sentences: This goes along with the vocal concepts mentioned above. The idea is as children develop their skills with words, they often like to make up sentences that really have no meaning to them. To children, this is exploring and having fun with the new tool of communication. As a magician I can use this idea in the storylines I create or the magic words I have the children say. If I know that this makes children laugh, I can adapt my routines to use this principle.

Things That Don't Belong Together: As children develop in their learning capacity, they start to associate the words they say with physical objects that represent them. Saying cat now is not just a sound but they know what a cat is and what the cats do and the sounds they make. What is interesting is that children now find this new found power as empowering to them. If a magician can get something wrong that the child knows is right, they feel empowered to correct the magician and they also find it funny. If I state that a cat goes MOOOO, the children will laugh and want to correct me.

Continued on page 14 - (See "Kyle Peron")

“Kyle Peron” - (Continued from page 13)

Physical Comedy: No one quite knows for sure why it is that children tend to laugh at things that physically happen to the magician or anyone. If I accidentally hit myself on the head with a funny magic wand, children will find it funny. If I suddenly get my finger caught in the zipper of a change bag, kids will laugh. I think part of this stems from their own play world and from cartoons they see on TV. Knowing physical comedy is funny to a child can open the doors to possibilities in your own routines.

There are certainly a lot more that I have come across in both research and personal experience that I could share with you. However, I will leave it at this for now. This should give you a good idea of not only what makes children laugh but some of the reasoning behind it. If we know what makes children laugh, then we can strive to be better children's performers.

As always I encourage you to let me know your own thoughts on the subject. If you have any ideas, thoughts or suggestions for future articles please e-mail me at magic4u02@aol.com.

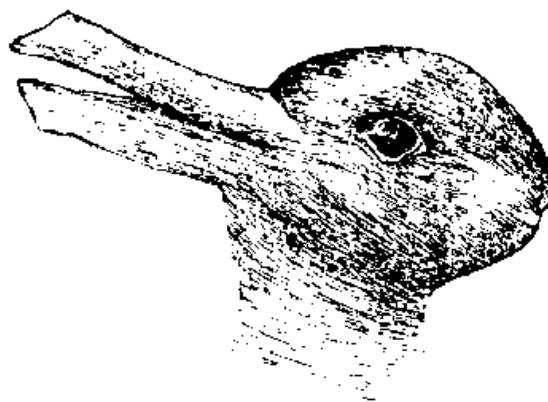
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“Scott Wells” - (Continued from page 12)

Once you have made your initial contact, try to be seated near the middle of the restaurant so you can watch him work the room. While you're sitting there for a couple of hours, you can save money by just ordering a soda pop or, better still, coffee because you get free refills. If there is someone with you, then be sure to loudly critique his routine and detail how each effect is accomplished. You might even want to duplicate it for your companion. Then you can perform your own magic at your table, because your stuff is much better. If some of those at the surrounding tables are watching, then so much the better . . . show them, too.

When you're ready to go, leave the waitperson about a 10% tip for your beverage (a quarter ought to do), no need to tip the magician since he didn't fool you. While you're checking out at the cashier, ask for the manager on duty. Since management obviously supports live entertainment, then why shouldn't he hire you? Give him your business card and tell him that you would like to fill in when the house magician is off or, better still, replace him altogether. After all, you're better than the guy he has now and you can prove it. You may even want to prove it right then . . . dueling magicians. Just let you work a few tables and allow the customers to choose who they enjoyed the most. If you try this ploy, then be sure that you've got your best stuff with you so you can really blow them away. Oh, don't forget to wear your winky blinky rabbit lapel pin.

**Which is it?
A Duck or a
Rabbit?**





PHOTOS AND PICS

Photos from the November 1st Ring 129 Meeting

