



# MAGICURRENTS

SAN DIEGO RING 76

MARCH 2013

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## *Swap Meet*

Fellow magicians and collectors, it is the time of year to start your Spring Cleaning. Time to take out all of those fabulous magic affects you bought years ago but never got around to learning. Time to take those extra set of Billiard Balls you knew you would need someday, but never did. And all those cigarette tricks and gimmicks you use to use before smoking was all but outlawed, well, it is time to get rid of those also.

Yes, it is time for the Semi-annual Ring 76 Swap Meet.

This year the Swap Meet will be held at our regular meeting day of March 11th at the North Park Lion's club, our usual location. Tables are available for members at the cost of \$10 for a full table and \$5 for a half table. Nonmembers are welcome to sell their wares also, space permitting, for \$20 a table.

Sellers should reserve their tables by e-mailing Richard Ustick, Treasurer, at [rustick@flash.net](mailto:rustick@flash.net). We also ask that sellers get to the Lion's Club early to set up as selling usually begins at 6:30. The doors should be open by 5 pm for sellers to set up, but we ask that members come no earlier than 6 pm to allow time for everything to get organized.

Any questions, contact a Board Member, or Richard at [rustick@flash.net](mailto:rustick@flash.net).

— *Richard Ustick*

## *Now That Was Close (Up, That Is)*

It was that time of year again - our Close-Up Competition! Ring members entering this competition perform their routines four times - each before a

different group of Ring members, and this year – for the first time – before a different judge. These judges evaluations, along with the vote of the membership, determine the contest winners. As usual, the winners will be announced at our Awards Banquet in July.

The winners of past competitions have been determined by a vote of the membership – basically a “peoples choice” competition. This year, we had four judges, who evaluated each competitor based on criteria including technical skill, showmanship, entertainment value, routining, and originality. The judges scores were augmented by members' votes, so contestants' total scores were a combination of the judges scores and members' votes.

Last month, Syd Segal, our 1st Vice President with responsibility for entertainment, announced he would be unable to attend Ring meets for the foreseeable future. President Ostovani appointed Sal Barajas as Acting 1st Vice President, and Sal started his new duties by running the Close-Up Competition. Sal was also instrumental in determining the judging rubric. Our judges for the event were Lou Heck, John Hankins, Happy Elliott and Joel Moskowitz. Joel was originally scheduled to be an alternate, but enthusiastically stepped in as a substitute for Stu Greenbaum.

The contestants and their routines, were Orangello Bell (Bob Meigs), with a mentalist routine; Charlie Gott, doing his Gospel Routine; James Kellogg, III, doing a series of card and finger ring effects; Cary Shaffer, with a card routine called Disney Magic; Kenny Shelton, performing the Charming Chinese Challenge; Timmy Qafiti, doing both coins and cards; Mago Ruly, performing with dice, cards, fire, and an umbrella; and

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**HONEST SID GERHART RING 76**

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## President's Message

Hello and welcome to the month of March! Thank you for all of you who competed in the Annual Close-up Competition! Everyone did phenomenal and I am so proud of all of you!!! I think we all can confidently say it was a close competition! But nonetheless, we must all wait till July for the results at our Installation Banquet! We really liked the format of our new judging system and we will tweak anything necessary come the May Stand-up competition, so get ready for that!!!



Speaking of the Installation Banquet, we have already started to discuss plans for it; as far as the date, time, location, entertainer, and type of food. As always, it is our job to make it as affordable as possible so as many members and family can join us for this event! We will disclose all our decisions as soon as they are made!

This coming month will be our Swap meet, we have opted to alternate between having a swap meet and an auction. So let us know if you want a table to and dont forget, \$5 for half and \$10 for a full table and \$20 for non-members half or full! We will see you all there!

DEREK OSTOVANI

Greg Wauson, performing an original routine called Lottery Ticket, along with several other effects.

This reporter was a contestant, and is therefore didn't see most of the magic. Judging from the applause arising from the tables, however, I conclude the evening went well.

Following the competition, we had our first 50/50 raffle, which provided \$68 for both member Joe Mystic and for the Ring, and also a raffle of a half-dozen donated prizes. And following the formal meeting, of course, we adjourned to our favorite

coffee shop for another hour or so of mirth and magic.

— Bob Meigs

## Keep Them in Your Thoughts

As many of you have know, our member Robert Gordon had a heart attack at the last Ring meeting. He had a major blockage which they were able to somewhat fix with a stent. He's doing pretty well now but will have to go in for surgery soon.

More recently, our member Belinda Kaesler collapsed with an aneurysm. She had to have very extensive surgery and will be in rehab for a very long time. She is in ICU and can NOT have any visitors or flowers. We will have a card at the next meeting for everyone to sign. Her husband, Ed keeps me informed when there are any changes in her condition but has asked that people don't try to call her (or him). If you really have to call someone, call me (619) 562-3434 and I will pass on info when I talk to him. Please and respect his and Belinda's wishes.

Please keep both Robert and Belinda in your thoughts and/or prayers.

— Jeff Marcus

## Elections Are Coming Soon

Ring 76 is one of the largest I.B.M. Rings in the country. Each year we advance the art of magic through shows, lectures, community events, and personal comradeship. While all this looks effortless and somehow self-achieving, in actuality it is through the dedicated efforts of the Ring's Board of Directors that the Ring keeps being the magical organization you enjoy.

Each year the Board is elected by the members from the membership. Any member in good standing is

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## *Photos from the February Meeting*



*Bob Meigs (r)*



*Charlie Gott*



*James Kellogg III (r)*



*Cary Schaffer*



## *Photos from the February Meeting*



*Kenny Shelton*



*Mago Ruly*



*Greg Wauson (r)*



*Timmy Qafiti*



## *Photos from the February Meeting*



*The Panel of Judges  
John Hankins, Joel Moskowitz, Happy Elliott, Lou Heck*



*The Contestants*

## Harlan All Purpose Show

Reviewed by Joel A Moskowitz M D  
January 28th, 2013

Here is one DVD that mentors novices, advises learned magicians and trains professionals. Contact L&L Publishing to purchase (Dealers should contact Murphy's Magic Supplies)

Dan Harlan, is an inventor i.e. Cardtoon and many others, in this presentation he is a teacher. With deliberation, Harlan explains classic effects. Step by step, he counsels how to mystify and entertain your audiences. In a 'suitcase' he has all the apparatus for an All Purpose Show. He explains his pre-planned schedule and sequential presentations - with anticipated psychology to maximize audience reaction. Of course, one suit doesn't fit everyone. His dialogue themes may not fit to all personalities.

The opening effect entitled "Starcle" is napkin tearing where he confounds the audience by tearing a circle and having a female audience member to whom he had given the 'part removed' miraculously a star! Dan's story line, about the moon and the stars, to some will be seen as charming; others will criticize.

"Hold it Buster" a 'monte' effect with jumbo cards is accompanied with Dan's personal patter about his father challenging him in order to swindle him to do his chores. That it might be believed by sophisticated audiences is dubious. But the 'magic' is detailed. Students have the opportunity to construct their own story line.

Next, Dan's Cut and Restored Rope is a traditional favorite by many magicians, less so by audiences who frequent magic shows. The convincing moves are well taught. Devotees of C&R will learn careful, convincing maneuvers.

Modifying and improving the oft worn 'egg bag', Harlan's Tee Bag (he does produce a tea bag) but the

Tee is a golf tee, and a golf ball, pennant, score card and ....wallah...a golf club, capping it off by having the bag become a tee shirt emblazed with references to the golf theme.

Next a billiard ball routine (Dan names one ball 'Herman'— unnecessary) but his demonstration of the sleights employed to cause the balls to multiply,

disappear, travel up his arm and to the other side are clear.

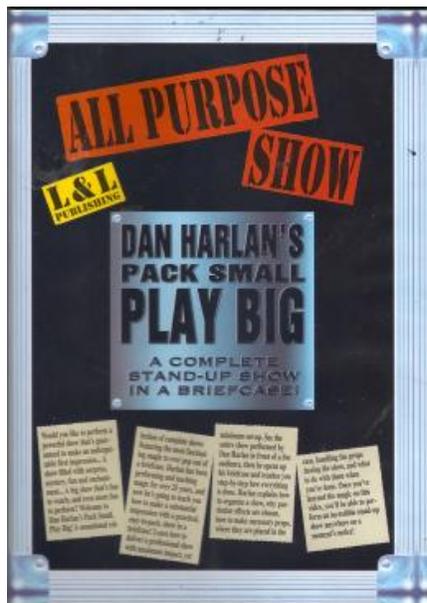
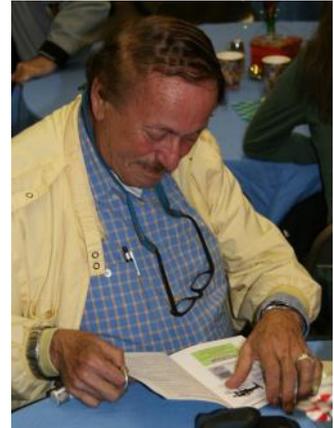
"Linking Rings" - another classic Dan teaches the moves to convince the spectators that he can melt metal through metal.

"Lester" is Dan's name for his quasi misers dream effect. He finds a penny on the floor and using the theme that finding a penny will yield good luck. He modifies luck to have wishes ...for more pennies...and more pennies. A gimmicked glass jar enables him to multiply the coins within. Suddenly the jar is seemingly packed with pennies. The coin filled jar is draped with a black cloth and instantly with whip of a hand, the

many coins have disappeared. This to this reviewers was the most clever mechanism of the DVD. It is a Show Stopper.

Dan recommends another effect entitled "Its Not the Size:.. Props being a tiny magic wand, a gimmick coin purse, a giant magic wand, also gimmicked, and returning to the tiny magic wand and all that you have to do is bow.

This instructional collection is prescribed/ recommended for novices, and professionals who wish to have the thinking of a successful magical entertainer. Rx Rx Rx Rx (4/5)





*(Elections— Continued from page 2)*

invited to run for a position on the Board of Directors. Service involves not only attending the regular meetings, but the Board Meetings, held once a month. Being a Board member is not a arduous task, but it is an important one. Without the Board, the Ring could not function.

Right now the Nominating Committee, as required by the Ring’s Constitution, is soliciting members interested in running for one of the many duties on the Board. If you are interested in serving your Ring, contact Jeff Marcus, or any other Board member, with any questions or for any information. Elections are in June so please make contact soon.

Ask not what the Ring can do for you. Ask what you can do for the Ring and its members.

## "MagiToon"

by *Jim Whiting & Ellen Friedman*



“Frankly, Mr. Presto . . .making a come-back is very tough if you’ve never even been there.”

## Installation Banquet

The year is flying by and before you know it, it will be time for the annual Ring 76 Installation Banquet and Awards Ceremony. Held in July, usually on a Sunday around the meeting date (no date set yet) this is the event of the Ring Year (and no, we have not asked Seth McFarlane to MC it).

The question the Board has at this early time is how the Ring members felt about last year’s event. Did you like the food and accommodations? How about the prices and selection? The Entertainment? Who would you like to see perform at the Banquet this year?

The Board would like member input on this special occasion. If you have a venue that you have used before, that will easily seat 80+ individuals, and provides space for an entertainer, we would love to hear from you. Contact the Board as soon as possible as plans have to be made this early to get the best location and the best prices.

— *Richard Ustick*

## Magic Castle Trip

Your Board of Directors has realized that many of Ring 76 members are not members of The Magic Castle. Castle members get to go there anytime they want but non-members don’t often get to go.

Therefore we have decided to have our Castle members take those that want to go to the Magic Castle on a special trip. That trip will be on Thursday, March 28. We selected that day because the lineup of entertainers that week is great. The Palace Stage will feature Mark Kalin and Ginger (yes they figured out that I want to go because of Ginger). The Close-Up Gallery will have Andost, a FISM micro magic winner and Eric Jones. The Parlor of Prestidigitation will feature George Schindler and his 50+ years of magical experience and one of my favorites Joe Monte.

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*(Magic Castle— Continued from page 7)*

Since we will be traveling in multiple vehicles, the departure times will vary. Yes, invite your spouses, invite your sweethearts, but don't invite both.

We will need to know of your intentions of going by March 21st. We will discuss more about eating arrangements (I know that I am going to Pink's for hot dogs) however many may want to eat at the Magic Castle.) Remember, going with a Castle member means no door charge, which is currently \$20 per person when you go without a member. Also no reservations needed unless you want to have dinner there. You will want to kick in for gas to whoever drives and maybe a buck for valet parking.

If you don't know the dress code and rules, ask one of the members or go online to [www.magiccastle.com](http://www.magiccastle.com) and look it all up.

Needless to say, it will be a fun night filled with some of the best magic you will ever see in person. AND maybe you get to have a picture with Ginger. OOPS, sorry no pictures allowed inside the Castle. Maybe we can coax her outside without Mark.

— *Joe Mystic*

## ***Could Cinco de Mayo Become a "Magic Day"?***

Every year, Old Town holds a large street fair in celebration of Cinco de Mayo. This year, the celebration will be a three day event, running from Friday evening (May 3) to Sunday afternoon (May 5). This street fair is now in its 30th year, and is the largest Cinco de Mayo celebration north of the border.

Bob Meigs is exploring the possibility of Ring 76 making magic one of the major themes of this street fair. Our participation probably would center on Sunday, May 5, and could include both stage shows and strolling magicians. The extent of our participation would depend upon the number of members interested, and what they want to do.

## ***Ring 76 2011-12 Calendar***

Mar. 11	Swap Meet
Apr. 8	Teach-A-Trick Night
May 13	Stand Up Competition*
June 10	Money Magic*
July TBD	Installation Banquet
Aug 12	TBD*

\* Opportunity for Members to Perform

Participation would be open to any and all members of the Ring – amateurs and pros, strolling magicians, stage performers, close-up performers, assistants, stage hands, and spectators. Perhaps we would all get together for margaritas and a Mexican dinner after the event. You can learn more about Cinco de Mayo in San Diego Oldtown at <http://www.oldtownsandiegoguide.com/cinco.html> If you are interested in participating – in any way - please contact Bob Meigs at [thehauntedhotel@sbcglobal.net](mailto:thehauntedhotel@sbcglobal.net). If these is an interest, this might become an annual Ring 76 event!

— *Bob Meigs*

## ***Levent's Ultimate Guide to the Linking Rings***

4-DVD Set 7.6 hours total running time (available from <http://leventmagic.com/>, as well as from various magic dealers.)

Have you ever wanted to perform the Linking Rings as well as Jeff Marcus did at the January meeting?

Then get this DVD set (and practice a \*lot\* to be as good as Jeff) - it's a superb resource for learning the history, technique, and routines for the Rings. I learned more from watching this set of DVDs than I have from I-don't-know how many years of reading magic books with chapters on the Rings.

*(Continued on page 9)*



*(Linking Rings — Continued from page 8)*

"Levent's Ultimate Guide to the Linking Rings" is a 4-DVD set covering all the aspects of the Chinese Linking Rings effect - history, tools, techniques, and routines of all sorts and sizes.

Just as for his other DVDs sets (Billiard Balls, Miser's Dream), once Levent has gone through an enormous amount about tools and technique, he recreates routines from famous magician, based on writings, photos, and videos. In this case, he starts with Robert-Houdin and Chung Ling Soo, moving onto more modern performers such as Odin (of the famous 'Odin Count' for the rings), Cardini, Dai Vernon (early and late routines), Roy Benson, Paul Potassy, Jack Miller, Richard Ross, and ending with multiple routines Levent himself has performed during his lifetime.

The DVD set is divided into logical sections:

- history of the rings
- a discussion of ring props
- a variety of techniques - counts, links, multi-ring and keyless moves false links, special ring handling, and much more
- ring figures, with chains of 3 and 4 rings
- a discussion of comedy techniques with rings
- performances of historic routines and explanations

In discussing the rings props themselves, Levent shows rings ranging from 4" to 15" diameter, along with mentioning the weights of the rings and how the size and weight can affect a routine. He even discusses special rings (oversize and undersize) and their uses (shown in routines later). He goes through the common types of sets of rings, detailing the combinations commonly found. He has a thorough discussion of the types of key ring - open, closed, locking, and others.

One problem in teaching (and watching) the Linking Rings is that all the rings look the same - it can hard to see which group is where in a teaching situation. Levent solves this by used color-coded rings in his

explanation; for instance, the chain of 3 is always colored yellow, etc. This makes it very easy to understand how a set of rings is being held and manipulated.

Next, Levent explains ways to handle the key so as to give the impression it's a regular ring. Some of the methods (such as the well-known Vernon spin) use 2 rings, to mask the presence of the key. There are some good deceptive variations here of well-known maneuvers.

Following this, Levent explains various count and display techniques used to show that a group of rings is made up of individual, separate rings; e.g. various drop counts, the Odin count, the Ken Brooke count, etc.

He also shows various counts using the special rings mentioned above.

This section shows the benefit of using color-coded rings (mentioned earlier) for explanations, as it makes it much easier to see which group of rings are where during the count sequences. Levent's explanations are always impressively clear; he goes to great lengths to be sure we can see the needed positioning of rings and fingers, and his color-coding of the rings plays a big part in enabling us to see what's being done.

The next section covers a multitude of linking and unlinking moves for regular keys and closed keys. Following this is a separation section on the crash link, multi-ring linking, and the 'toss link' where you toss a ring in the air and link it as it descends (this can be hard on your hands and head; I know this from personal experience ...)

Following this is an extended section on keyless openers - that is, opening sequences that use no key ring at all. This allows the performer to hand out the rings without holding one back. Included in this portion is a discussion of methods to 'ring in' a key ring from a hidden location, unknown to the audience.

Another extended section goes over false links - that is, methods to make the audience think you've linked some rings, when in fact, you've done something else



*(Linking Rings — Continued from page 9)*

(switched in other already-linked rings, etc.). There's an interesting section showing fake links with an oversized ring. The next section shows techniques for "Jacob's Ladder" moves - that is, moves where a ring travels up or down the chain visibly.

Levent teaches a few figures (i.e., the 'chair', the 'globe') with 3 rings and with 4 rings. It isn't a major part of his teaching effort (he says he doesn't do figures in his own show), but he wants to illustrate some of the more common figures folks make with the Linking Rings. Levent even discusses comedy with rings - well-known and lesser-known gags, such as funny figures and bent rings - even using a hacksaw in your ring routine!

Performances: Just as for the Billiard Balls DVD set I reviewed in Dec., some of the performances are done in period dress and music. The Chung Ling Soo 12-ring routine (!) is performed in Chinese dress, with appropriate "Chinese style" music from the music halls of Soo's time, and even uses stand-ins for Soo's assistants (also in Chinese dress).

The Dai Vernon 4-ring routine from 1938 is from his "Harlequin act", where Vernon wore an ornate harlequin outfit to present his magic. Levent recreates both the outfit and the exact music from the act (shown in black-and-white), wonderfully choreographing some of the moves to fit in with the music. Of course, Levent also covers the well-known "Symphony of the Rings" by Vernon, a 6-ring routine.

Levent reconstructs a lengthy and complex Jack Miller routine from existing books and videos. It uses a unique oversized key, and contains a number of moves not used in other routines. It's a long routine!

Since Levent authored a book on Roy Benson ("Roy Benson by Starlight"), it's natural for him to present the 11-ring Benson routine, which contains some tricky ideas I hadn't encountered elsewhere.

The Richard Ross routine is presented elegantly with Levent in tuxedo and using the same music that

Ross used. Ross published two different ring routines, but not the 4-ring routine he generally performed onstage. Here Levent presents and explains the 4-ring routine.

Levent's own personal history with the rings, and the multiple routines he presents and explains, are fascinating. At first, he shows how he merely juggled rings and linked one for a comedy effect. He then presents a stage effect using a ring and rope, with some excellent prop preparation to achieve some very magical effects. This is followed by a 3-ring routine, a 'simple' 8-ring routine, and the final routine is his 11-ring routine as he performs onstage and in the audience. Just as for his other routines (billiard balls, coins), Levent commonly uses gimmicked devices in his act to enhance the magic and his explanations of these, along with the prop management required, is a real lesson in presenting magic onstage.

You want to be sure and sit to watch beyond the credits - Levent always adds some extra tidbits of knowledge in a humorous way. On this DVD set, along with some tips and tricks, he explains a very puzzling and visual link that he uses to introduce the Linking Rings, in the very first moments of DVD 1. He also discusses his method of doing 'floating' Linking Rings.

Finally, after all the lights are off, you can hear him mutter, "Next time, I'm going to do a 10 DVD set on Hippety Hop rabbits ..." And, you know - I'd watch it! He's that good a teacher.

— *Larry Samuels*

## ***Correction***

Last month, a notice was posted for Ken Kent, magician and past Ring member who like to attend out meetings but is unable to drive at night.

Unfortunately, the contact number in last month's newsletter was incorrect. If you can help Ken by giving him a ride to our meetings, please contact him at (319) 429-0836.