



MAGICURRENTS

SAN DIEGO RING 76 NOVEMBER 2013 VOL. XXVII #11

Here Ye! Here Ye!

Ring 76 Auction

This November, Ring 76 will be having its Annual Magic Auction at the regular the Lion's Club of North Park. The date will be November 11th. All members in good standing are encouraged to clean out their closets, pull out their old books, empty their close up cases and bring these rare treasures to this meeting.

The rules are simple:

- Only members in good standing can place their items up for auction, however, anyone can bid and we encourage members to bring guests who may be interested in magic.
- Each member is allowed to place up to five lots for auction. A lot can contain as many items as the member wants, but the lot will go for one price. Please arrive early between 6:00PM & 6:45PM to get situated.
- You will need to provide the auctioneer with a list of what is in the lot, a brief description of any tricks you think you need to explain, and your starting bid, if any. The auctioneer will start the bidding at that price, and will not go lower. If it does not sell at that base price, he will move to the next lot.

- It is strongly suggested that you include the instructions for any illusion you wish to sell. Most are obvious to a seasoned performer, but in the past some great deals went unsold because no-one knew how to use the apparatus. It also helps if the item is clean and well maintained. A few minutes polishing your treasure could mean a few extra dollars on auction night.



- The Ring will take 10% of the selling price and this year we will be able to take Credit and Debit cards. The debit cards must have a Visa or MasterCard logo on them in order to be accepted.

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**HONEST SID GERHART RING 76
EDITOR JAMES THAYER – EDITOR@RING76.COM**



President's Message

Well, this year is progressing rather fast, isn't it? Its almost time for our Christmas Banquet. But not yet! We still have one more month to go! Once again, thank you to all who performed for our traditional Halloween themed Magic, you all did a terrific job! Although I think its safe to say this year was different since we didn't have a singing Dracula (ahem, Richard Ustick)!



But nonetheless, we move on to next months traditional auction! That is always a favorite amongst our nights. And if I'm not mistaken, at times it seems too get a bit aggressive and competitive! So lets get pumped to be the highest bidder of the item(s) you want! You can't put a price on a good effect (despite what your wife says or if she lets you come home that night)! We will have our very own Sal Barajas and Kenny Shelton auctioning off the items, and be prepared to quickly demo your product to the group so they get an idea of the effect. Also, you don't have to worry about having enough cash, because this year we take credit cards too!

I also would like to remind all you of the annual Chargers blood drive on Tuesday November 26th at the Town and Country Convention Center in Fashion Valley, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Everyone is welcome to come and perform some walk around Magic during that time, and we may have a booth to represent our club as well. You can hang out at the booth and do some Magic there as well!

Last but certainly not least, Id like to tell you about our featured performer for the Christmas Banquet. He was the FIRST real Magician I saw in person and he inspired me! This performer earned the title of World Champion Magician in 1988, he was the first close-up magician in history to receive that award, called the Grand Prix. He received the award at the International Federation of Magic Societies' convention, where competing magicians from 47 countries

witnessed his award winning act. The Grand Prix is awarded once every three years. In addition, he was voted Best Close-Up Magician at the Magic Castle in Hollywood two years in a row (1987, 1988) and Lecturer of the Year (1996, 1999). He is also the only magician to receive both the International Brotherhood of Magicians' Gold Cups Award of Excellence (1983) and the Society of American Magicians' (SAM) Gold Medal Award of Honor (1986). This performer is no other than Johnny Ace Palmer. Trust me, you WONT want to miss his performance.

DEREK OSTOVANI

(Continued from page 1)

So mark your calendars for November 11th, and again we encourage members to invite any guests who may be in the magic market. The auction will start promptly at 7 o'clock to be sure that everyone who wants to sell has time to. If you have any questions please contact Sal Barajas, V.P. of Entertainment, or any Ring Board Member.

— Sal Barajas

THEY'RE COMING TO TAKE US AWAY, HA, HA!

In October, Ring 76 suspends its façade of normality, and our macabre nature comes to the fore. The theme, (un)naturally, was Halloween Magic. Apparently, our dark side has widespread appeal, as we had a most unusual number of guests for this most unusual evening. The guests (and inviting members) were (and probably still are) Ty Smith; Lewis and Monica Parker, and Lynne Hunter (John Hunter); Phyllis Roeder (Malcolm Campbell); Thor and Joy Almag (Joel and Arlene Moskowitz); Giovanni Conte (Eric Martindelcampo); and Jason Burke and A. Gutierrez (Greg Wauson).

(Continued on page 8)



Photos from the October Meeting



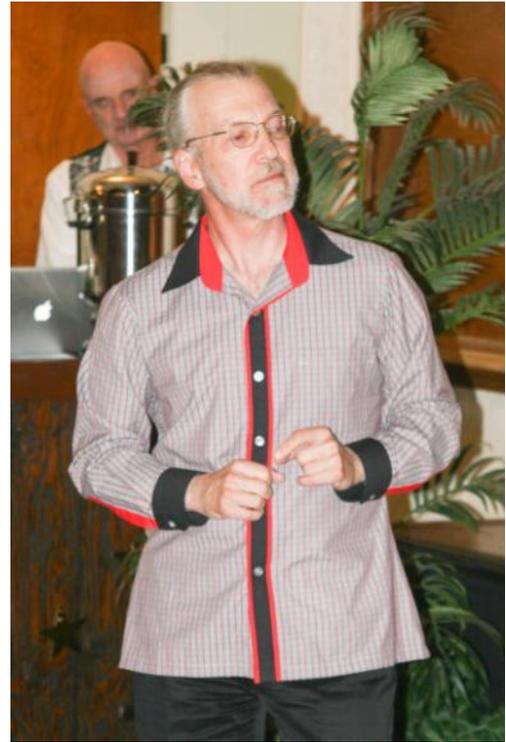
Leif Erickson



Bob Meigs



Malcolm Campbell



Larry Samuels

Photos from the October Meeting



Charlie Gott (r)



Chuck Cook (l)



Mago Ruly



Photos from the October Meeting



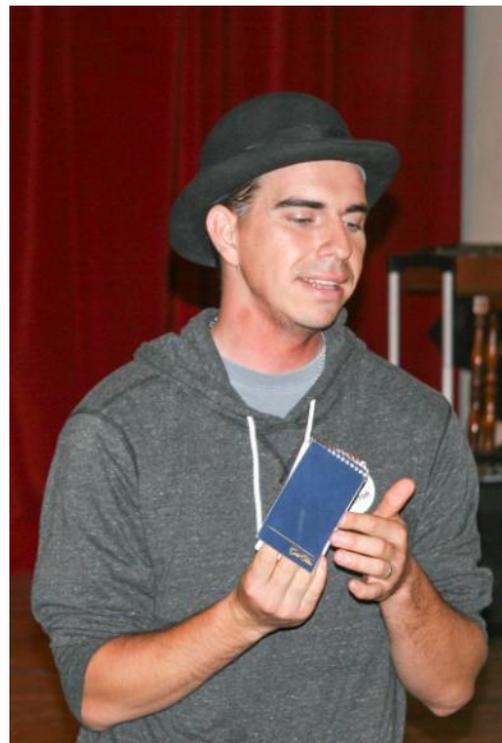
Cary Schaffner



Jeff Marcus



Alfonso Vasquez



Kenny Shelton



Photos from the October Meeting



Jacques Lord



Bob Posner



October Performers

MORE SECRETS OF HOUDINI

***Metamorphosis by Bruce MacNab
Reviewed by Joel A Moskowitz M D
October 21, 2013***

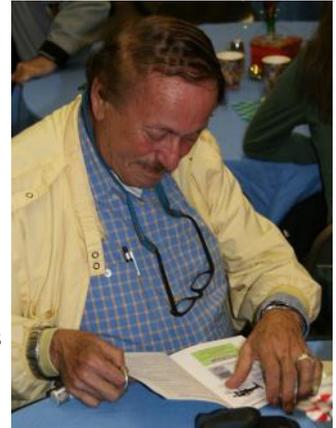
There is a story (unconfirmed), that when asked what was his greatest escape, Harry Houdini snapped "From Appleton Wisconsin." Many laymen who know of Houdini, may think that aficionados of the conjuring arts will know everything about Houdini (his life, his effects). If your audience is so possessed, this book will enlighten you to some areas which have not been in the parlance of Houdiniana.

Did you know that Houdini, who so admired Robert-Houdin that he crafted his name after the first modern magician, called his former idol a liar and a fraud. In 1908, after extensive research, Houdini published a book *The Unmasking of Robert-Houdin*: that R-H claims that he invented automata and other effects which had been in existence for years. In exchange for this loss of adoration, Houdini would hold that his first name, Harry, was in homage to Harry Keller. On the subject of names, in 1918 he registered for selective service under the name Harry Handcuff Houdini.

These and many other anecdotes are revealed in the pages of *Metamorphosis* by Bruce MacNab, 336 pages of well researched, documented first book. Goose Lane Publishing is to be congratulated for this exciting tomb. Notes begin with a reference to Houdini *Unmasks Spiritualism* which appeared *The American Hebrew*, 1924. The reader will be amazed at the , new details, inside commentary, photos which many will have never seen before. MacNab is situated in Nova Scotia - would you be surprised that Houdini had spent some times in the Maritimes.

Houdini died at age 52. Few will oppose the theory that he was a master showman. He was as adept at mystifying the public as maneuvering the media/press - especially in his latter days. The time when he was

finding his way to a star was minimally recorded. MacNab devoted an industrious to unearthing what happened in almost a decade 1891 forward when Houdini was perfecting his skills. MacNab in his prologue shines the light on Houdini's theory from his introduction to *Miracle Mongers* and their *Methods* the premise that should we not have anything to wonder about life would not be worth living.



Do you know who Marco the Monarch of Mystery was and how he fit into the life of Houdini. Edward James Dooley, a confirmed bachelor, organist but he was actually obsessed with magic. He, performing as Marco the Monarch of Mystery, employed Houdini as stage director and to perform onstage twice. The link was Boston to Nova Scotia via boat despite Houdini's legendary sea sickness.

The development of the handcuff act as told by MacNab is like a novel. This is not a dry history. The reader will feel as though Houdini was actually interviewed. MacNab writes that Houdini told a Boston reporter how he was able to escape from handcuffs: Houdini would conceal bits of rubber under his tongue or between his fingers and drop the rubber bits into the mechanism so the lock wouldn't close. Alternatively a piece of bread could be used. In his 1910 book of *Handcuff Secrets* Houdini lectured that it was not the method but rather the style and manner in which it is presented.

The history of *Metamorphosis* illusion, how it was acquired, the improvements throughout the years is a fascinating tale told charmingly by MacNab. Houdini and Bess performed this amazing three second

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(Halloween Magic — Continued from page 2)

Derek Ostovani, our President, convened the meeting with the normal array of announcements, which included a couple of the Ring's upcoming annual pro-bono events – a Halloween Joe Show at Father Joe's Villages, and both stage and booth magic at the San Diego Chargers' Blood Drive.

The nether world was put on hold as the Ring was treated to an audition by a handsome young man with the iconic name, Leif Erickson. He did some excellent close-up card management, and was voted into the Ring unanimously, without even the most irascible of our tribe abstaining.

Then, the lights dimmed, and a sometimes headless Sal Barajas introduced the inexplicable. As might be expected, there were 13 performers. (If you count only 12, someone – or something – is playing with your mind.)

Igor opened the evening with Aqua Deorum, a routine from Ancient Egypt, which ended with Igor's transformation into a Vampire. Malcolm Campbell then conducted a Houdini Séance, the first, to this reporter's knowledge, to successfully

"MagiToon"

by Jim Whiting & Ellen Friedman



"Obviously, he still lacks confidence."

contact Houdini's spirit. Then Charlie Gott attempted to keep us from the abyss with a Gospel routine.

Chuck Cook followed in the séance theme, resurrecting the spirit of his favorite uncle, using grisly remains to alternatively unnerve and amuse his volunteers. Larry Samuels performed occult card divinations using a Trot Deck, and Mago Ruly performed a cross between Cube-A-Libre and a Mis-made Skeleton. A Faceless Phantom, said by some to be Cary Shaffner then performed a Zombie Ball –

(Metamorphosis — Continued from page 7)

wonderment throughout their career. Houdini studied his contemporaries.

Few present day magicians would know the name Samuel Baldwin (Samri Baldwin) who performed all over the world - and was known as Mahatma. Would you be surprised that Baldwin would escape from handcuffs three years before Houdini was born! Baldwin liked to scare his audiences - they were led to think that he would be decapitated or worse. Houdini appreciated this stunt - he would in his water escapes - have the public thinking he was likely to drown before their eyes. But he is quoted as saying "It isn't fun to take your life in your hands."

Author MacNab is to be congratulated for what must have been an arduous pursuit. He expresses his indebtedness to a myriad of people (they are thanked at a rate of single space for three pages approximately). He doesn't write about the time it took to write this book. Perhaps it is because it was a labor of joy. Magicians, who have a wider than the secret of that trick mindset will en-joy this immensely.

Current magic magazines devote consistently a lead article to the history of a prestidigitation personality, If this is your fare, you will be glowing at Bruce MacNabs creation. Dr. Moskowitz prescribes Metamorphosis for all who smile at wonderments.

Rx Rx Rx Rx Rx (5/5)



but only after killing and resurrecting a passing volunteer.

Jeff Marcus performed a Vampire Block Penetration, and, (to his regret?), a comedy card divination in a mousetrap. Alfonso Vasquez performed with a Voodoo Doll, then tried to raise his standing in the competition by bribing the audience with a bucket of treats. Kenny Shelton, fresh from the ScreamZone's House of Horrors, performed some close-up transpositions in the spectators' hands. Bob Pozner did some remarkable card rises right from the card box, and Jacque Lord closed the evening divining cards by reading the spectator's pulse.

After these harrowing experiences, survivors retreated to Denny's.

— Bob Meigs

Holiday Potluck

Complements of the Season Ring Members. As the holidays fast approach it is time for Ring 76 to have its annual Holiday Potluck.

This year we will be at the Lion's Club, as we were last year, on Monday, December 9th, our usual meeting night. Doors will open at 6 o'clock so that everyone can have time to set up the hall and warming trays. Members are free to bring immediate family to our joyous celebration.

This year's entertainment will be the incomparable Johnny "Ace" Palmer, and there will be pre-dinner entertainment and a raffle as well. We will also have Santa Claus for the members and guests to take pictures with.

As previously stated, this is a pot luck with the Ring providing a Turkey, Roast Beef, drinks and dinner rolls. What we need from the Ring Members is a side dish, salad, or dessert, enough to feed eight to ten people. We will have plenty of warming trays to keep hot food hot but do not have refrigeration so

Ring 76 2013-14 Calendar

Nov 11	Auction
Dec 9	Holiday Banquet
Jan 13	Anything But Cards (ABC)*
Feb 10	Close-Up Competition*
Mar 10	Mentalism*
Apr 14	Teach-A-Trick Night
May 12	Stand-Up Competition*
Jun 9	Money Magic
Jul TBD	Installation Banquet

* Opportunity for Members to Perform

please no ice cream. Any other holiday specialty you have is more than welcome.

One important request: Please provide a card with the ingredients on your holiday favorite in case we have remembers with food allergies. Make whatever you want, just tell us what is in your creation as a courtesy to others.

If you have any questions, please contact Richard Ustick at rustick@flash.net.

Happy Holidays and we all look forward to seeing you and your family at the Ring 76 Holiday Pot Luck Monday, December 9th.

— Richard Ustick





Performing For Charity

Non-Profit & Charities are not necessarily the same thing!

There has been quite a few shows proposed to the Ring to get free or very discounted magicians. Most, if not all tell the Ring that they are a non-profit organization. They may or may not be a charity. Regardless, that may be true but that doesn't mean that they don't make any money. Nor does it mean that their staff doesn't get paid for their services. Many times these organizations have money to spend and/or they are raising money at the event. Often, these events have been announced at a ring meeting and one of the members (usually a part timer or hobbyist) offers to do the show.

Full time professionals, (who make their living by performing) have often been paid by these or similar organizations. These organizations will change staff and the new people may feel that they shouldn't have to pay for something as "lowly" as a magician and attempt to get the services for free or as low as possible. Many of the pros have had experiences where he/she was actually booked for an event and then they called to cancel because they were able to find someone that would do the event for free! This is not a good feeling when they are trying to feed their family.

When discussed with some of the people who do magic on the side or for a hobby, they often didn't realize what they did. Sometimes they will try to justify it by saying that they are a non-profit or charity and don't have any budget. That is often wrong. Many organizations have professional fund raisers or event planners (who are often paid) to get what they can for free or really cheaply.

For instance, all the pros have done Blue & Gold dinners for the Cub Scouts and gotten paid for them. True, they are a non-profit organization but they do have money to spend. Then they get the idea to contact either individual magicians or the Ring and see if they can get someone for free or very little money. Some part-timers or hobbyists will do the

event for free or for a free dinner, again with the concept that "They certainly wouldn't have any money" and it would be fun to perform for someone. Even truly charitable organizations often have budgets for events even such as The American Heart Association or American Cancer Society.

Although the Ring can't "stop" anyone from doing a show like this directly nor would they want to try to stop anyone. However, from now on, as a Ring, we need to set rules for which "charitable" shows can be announced, endorsed or promoted to the membership. For this reason, if you have a show that you want promoted or need entertainers, you will need to contact Derek (or any future person put in charge of this) for approval. Please don't try to just announce a show or "performer(s) needed". It must fit the criteria set by the board.

Understand, if you have an organization that is very close to your heart and want to "give" that's fine. We understand but do consider that you are possibly cutting into someone else's income. We also expect that anyone that belongs to a church or synagogue would donate their time to that group but it doesn't mean you have to donate to every other church that may call you.

That being said, we're not suggesting that you never do a charity event. A bunch of the pro magicians just did one together recently. But please consider what events are deserving of a "freebee".

As a Ring, it has been discussed as to what is a legitimate group that the ring can endorse, giving out information to the membership and ask them to donate their time. We also think that these guidelines would also be a good reference for individuals to use when deciding whether to offer their services for free or close to it.....

Here's a list of things to consider.....

1. Is the organization making money for this event? For instance, is it a fundraising event? (Churches are big on that. One pro got a call where a church who said they would ALLOW them to pass out their business cards (wow really) and they should get a lot of business from it since they raised over \$40,000 at



(Charity — Continued from page 10)

the last event (but couldn't afford any stipend to cover the performer's expenses). IF THEY ARE RAISING MONEY AT THE EVENT, YOU SHOULD PROBABLY BE PAID.

2. Is the event a commercial event? (Case in point, the Kool Jazz festival called for free entertainment. When asked if the bands were all donating their time, the guy said "Of course not." They were in fact, getting paid A LOT. IF OTHERS ARE GETTING PAID, SO SHOULD YOU.

3. Is it really a charity or just non-profit? Lots of organizations are "non-profit" but that doesn't mean they are a charity. For instance, even Ring 76 is a non-profit organization but we have a treasury. We pay our expenses such as the Lion's club and the parking lot... AND we hire entertainment for our big events. *(Charities are classed as 501(c)(3) organizations. Ring 76 is a 501(c)(6) organization. — Editor.)*

You can always, at least ask if they have a budget and often negotiate it. "Trade-outs" can be part or the whole compensation if it's of use to you but not mandatory.

We welcome your thoughts and comments.

— Jeff Marcus

Halloween Brings Magic to Father Joe's Village

Ring 76 did another show at Father Joe's Village for those that are currently staying there. These are people who are temporarily given shelter and meals. Most are normally homeless. We get the opportunity to entertain them. This night there was a costume contest so the children were decked out in costumes. Malcomb Campbell was our MC and performed magic bits between each performer. Joe Mystic opened with his color changing canes and silks routine and did a 5 card repeat where the card end up vanishing. He also did a tube and can effect and a die box. Mike Stilwell was second with his fire wallet, Pom Pom Pole and a 20th Century Silk. Our

newest member Leif Erickson performed a nice Invisible Deck routine. Jeff Marcus did Professors Nightmare and Linking Rings. Last was Bob Meigs who brought out the spooky stuff. He performed with his Ju-Ju Men and reanimated a dead bat. He ended with a mental effect – The Human Phone Number. That brought up about 10 volunteers. The show ended with Bob Meigs bringing and passing out Halloween cookies. Thanks Bob. Kudos to all the volunteers but a special thanks to Leif Erickson for being a bold new magician and volunteering at 15 years old. The more shows you have under your belt, the better you get.

— Joe Mystic

New Shop in Old Town

On November 1st, 2013, Patrick Abney and his wife MaryJo Abney opened up a "Magic Kiosk" in Old Town, San Diego CA, located between San Diego Ave and Twiggs Street. Patrick is often seen dressed as a pirate while MarJo is busy doing face paintings for the tourist. Also helping out with the kiosk are his three sons (two are shown in the photo). So if you are ever in the area stop by and say hello and why not pic-up a few tricks while you are there. Or if you are ever in a pinch and in need a thumb tip or some sponge balls, "ASAP", just give Patrick a call. (619) 417-3688

— Sal Barajas

