



MAGICURRENTS

SAN DIEGO RING 76

MARCH 2015

VOL. XXIX #3

President's Message

Good News!

Hello Fellow Members,
I am pleased to announce that the Board and I have been successful in cutting our annual rental space expenses in half. Hooray!!!

Also, with the number of new members joining and former members rejoining, our Ring is on the up swing. Soon, we will be up to 70 members. These ongoing efforts are geared to help insure that our membership dues stay as low as possible for as long as possible.

In other news:

We had a great turn out at the close-up competition this February. I'd like to acknowledge all those brave members who participated in this year's event and to those who helped judge the competition.

Thank You!

At the next meeting, we will have a few things to look forward to, such as:

- Library Night - Books & DVDs
- \$2 Dollar Magic Sale by Kenny Shelton
- 50/50 Cash Prize Raffle



- Ice Breaker/Business Card Magic Night

Hope to see you all there.

Salomon Barajas

President of Ring 76 - IBM

Ring 76 2015 Calendar

Mar	9	Ice-Breakers & Business Cards*
Apr	12	Daryl Lecture
Apr	13	Teach-A-Trick
Apr	19	I.B.M. JAM, Burbank
May	11	Stand-up Competition
Jun	8	Kids Magic
Jul	TBD	Installation Banquet
Aug	10	Classic Magic

*Opportunity for Members to Perform

San Diego Ring 76 meets the second Monday of the month at the Clairemont Senior Center, 4425 Bannock Ave, San Diego, CA 92117 at 7pm

Our **next regular meeting** will be on **March 9 at 7:00 pm** and will feature business card and ice breaker magic. Please see the details on Page 8.

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HONEST SID GERHART RING 76

EDITOR AND PUBLISHER - MALCOLM CAMPBELL, EDITOR@RING76.COM



MINUTES OF MONTHLY RING MEETING FEBRUARY 9, 2015

The meeting was held in our (now-not-so-new) meeting location, the Clairemont Senior Center. Members and guests began to gather starting around 6:30 and the meeting was convened at 7:00 pm on the dot by President Sal Barajas. Seventeen guests were introduced by President Barajas.

Jeff Marcus and Kenny Shelton were introduced for some announcements. Jeff had a get-well card for everyone to sign for I.B.M. President Emeritus Jack White who is in long-term convalescence. Kenny asked for a moment of silence for the passing of Rene Lavand and Dean Dill.

Then V.P. of Entertainment, Greg Wauson, took the floor and explained the resolution of issues resulting from a performance during last month's Mentalism Contest which some members considered to be "over the top" and offensive. The member involved had formally apologized to the Ring and to the volunteers involved.

It was noted that I.B.M. standards to which the Ring adheres are real and we need to be aware of them and hold ourselves accountable for enforcing them.

With that out of the way, we got back to the fun of magishing!

The feature of the meeting was the annual Close-Up Competition, a judged event which awards points toward our annual Entertainer of the Year award. Greg went over the Rules and introduced the judges. The rules and judging had been revised by the Board since last year's contest. Eight performers competed in the contest: Malcolm Campbell, Tamer Kafiti, Alex Greenbaum, Kenny Shelton, Joe Mystic, Jacques Lord, Eric Stevens, and Cary Schaffner. They were judged on skill, entertainment value, and appearance by an individual judge at each table. The membership also got a say by voting for their favorite performer with their vote to be combined with that of the judges. Results will be announced at the July Installation Banquet.

One competitor quipped "I must have done well

because some other magician members came up to me afterwards and told me how I could have done things better."

After the competition, it was 9:30 PM and the Ring either went home or to the new Denny's in the Clairemont Center where the fun continued.

..... jacques lord, secretary

Shavings from the Board

February 15, 2015



REPORTS

Treasurer's report: The reduction of the cost of our meeting space and other expenses plus an increase in memberships have resulted in the Ring having sufficient funds to fulfill its financial obligations through the end of the fiscal year (June.) However, additional sources of income and further reduction of expenses will be necessary to prevent the predicted deficit for the following year. A number of options, including further reducing meeting expenses, are being studied by the Board.

Library report: Sal and Kenny reported that some materials from the library will be available at the March meeting.

Magic sale: Kenny will have some magic items for sale and will split the proceeds with the Ring.

Membership report: 69 current members; 10 are Lifetime. Two or three are pending auditions.

OLD BUSINESS

The February meeting: Attendance was good with >30 members and seventeen guests! The Close-up Contest had eight performers.

Honor Ring status: IBM to award Honor Ring status in March 2015. This comes with a \$1,000 stipend to be used for "Youth

(Continued on page 13)



ANNUAL CLOSE-UP COMPETITION

Eight contestants threw their hats into the ring to compete for this year's Ring 76 close-up magic crown. The contest took place during our February meeting, and a good crowd of people showed up to be amazed and entertained.

Before the meeting began, Vice President of Entertainment, Greg Wauson, explained the judging rules to the four judges: Nicholas Gentry, Bhavika Joshi, Marieke Thayer and Brenda Wauson. They were given scoring sheets with spaces for three scores: from one (lowest) to ten (highest), for each of the contestants, in the areas of overall entertainment value, technical skill/handling, and attire/demeanor.

Four tables were set up, each with seating for approximately eight spectators and one judge on one side and one chair for the contestant on the other side. A few minutes after the meeting began, Greg explained the contest rules to those in attendance.

Four of the eight contestants performed at a time, one at each of the tables. At the end of nine minutes, Greg called out, "One minute!" to signal them it was time to wrap up their acts. This was important, since, according to the rules, if any contestant continued to perform after ten minutes, he would be disqualified. At the end of ten minutes, the contestants left the tables and the other four took their places, with the audience and judges remaining in place. This gave each group a 10-minute break before their next performance at the next table in line.

When the next performers were all ready to start, Greg called, "Ready, perform!" or "Ready, go!" Somehow it seems a little humorous to command magicians to start performing. But that's what they did, and here's a thumbnail description of each act:

Malcolm Campbell performed a short, clever routine with coins which came from an invisible coin purse and disappeared into a portable

hole. Alex Greenbaum entertained with a selected card which appeared under an audience member's chair and a coin effect with three coins which magically made their way into his pocket. Jacques Lord demonstrated his version of coins across, then cups and balls which ended with colorful round quartz-like balls and little dinosaurs. Joe Mystic mystified the crowd with a two ones-to-a-two bill trick which morphed into a \$100 bill, and a chop cup with tiny baseballs which culminated in the appearance of two full-sized baseballs.

Tamer Qafiti showed us a rope routine which included his version of Professor's Nightmare and then performed a card trick which featured a multiplying ace of spades. Cary Shaffner showed us a touching effect and a card effect performed with a deck which he keeps in a straight jacket, followed by a coin routine. Kenny Shelton produced a glass of liquid which appeared when taking off his coat, and entertained the crowd with a bottle caps matrix, a coins thru table routine and the sudden appearance of two bottles of Pepsi. Eric Stevens demonstrated a prediction effect and a topsy-turvy card effect which ended with the cards in the proper order.

There was a lot of variety in these performers' personalities, styles and patter. I heard many positive comments about the quality of the performances. This contest had something for everybody.

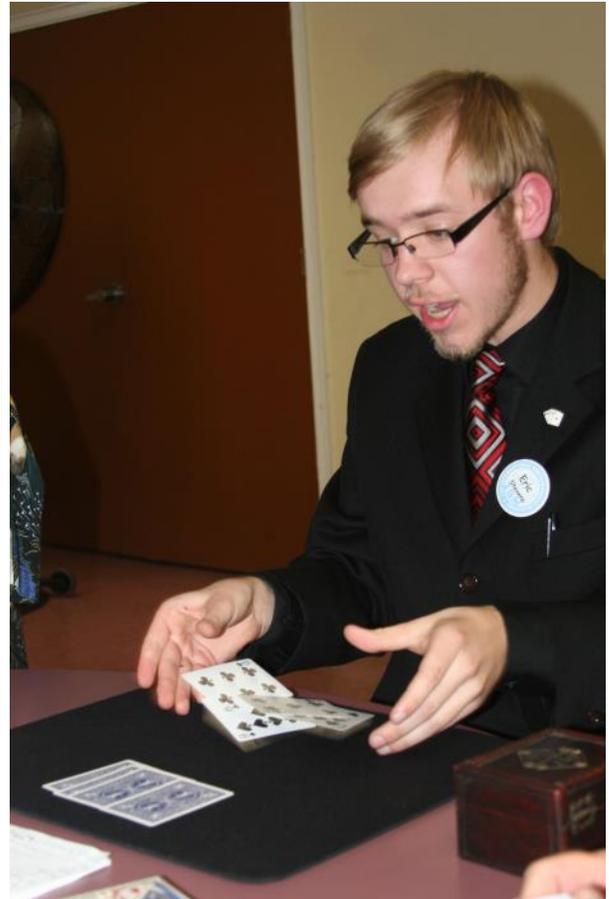
The winner will be the one who gets the most points from the judges, weighted at 60%, and the Ring 76 members' votes, weighted at 40%, and will be announced at the Installation Banquet in July.



THE CONTESTANTS



CLOSE-UP CONTEST CONTESTANTS



JACQUES LORD

ERIC STEVENS



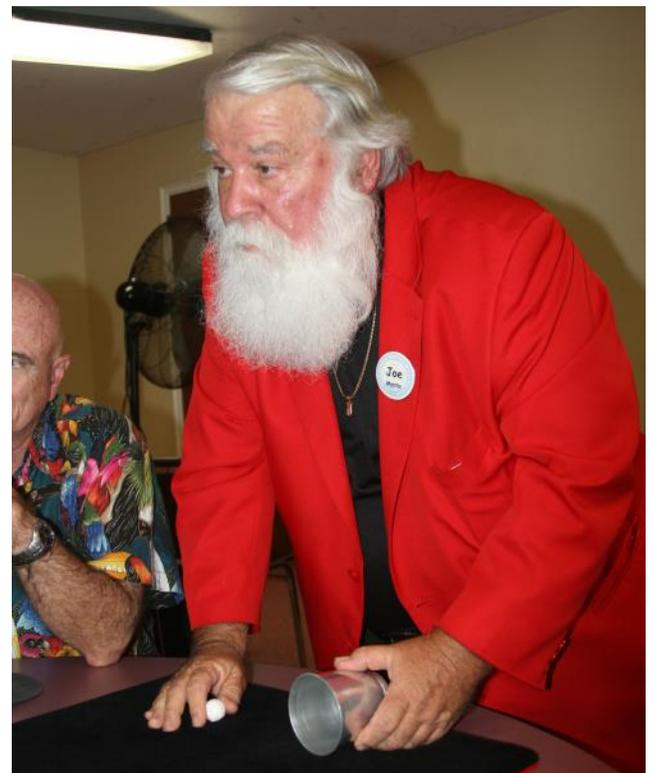
ALEX GREENBAUM

MALCOLM CAMPBELL



CARY SHAFFNER

TAMER QAFITI



KENNY SHELTON

JOE MYSTIC



MARCH MEETING PREVIEW

THEME: Ice-Breakers and Business Card Magic

Would you like to know a good way to strike up a conversation with a stranger? Or would you sure like to change the topic from your friend Bernie's guess of how long it will take this time for his rash to go away? Or how would you like to liven up the next cocktail party you attend

No, we're not talking about your Uncle Melvin's stunt of putting a lampshade on his head. An ice-breaker is just the thing for all these situations! This is good stuff which instantly adds fun, or, as Paul Harris puts it, possibly a piece of strange to an otherwise ordinary social situation.

But that's not all. Let's switch gears...

Everyone is familiar with business cards. They're ordinary objects that people have been giving to their friends, business associates and clients for decades. But handing someone your business card doesn't have to be ordinary! Do you want to know how to make your business cards extra-ordinary? How would you like to give away your business card in a magical way that could really get people's attention? This could not only impress others but set you apart from the competition! And they will remember you.

Yes, the March meeting of Ring 76 is all about ice-breakers and business card magic. Come and learn some fun magic tricks that you will be able to perform! Or, if you already know some quick, impromptu magic and want to showcase your talent, your fellow Ring 76ers want to see it! To sign up please contact Greg Wauson at socalbeliever@hotmail.com.

LIBRARY

Selections of DVDs and books from our library will be on display and available to be checked out for you to use. Take a close look. We have some outstanding materials available.

50/50 DRAWING

A 50/50 drawing will be initiated in March. The winning ticket and the Ring will split the proceeds. This will be a regular monthly event.

\$2.00 MAGIC SALE

Kenny Shelton will have a box of magic items for sale. Everything in the box will be \$2.00. The proceeds will be split 50/50 with the Ring.

A REVIEW OF THE ANCIENT CHINESE ART OF FACE CHANGING

By Dr. Joel Moskowitz

Attending the Chinese Lunar Festival at the Bower Museum was a real treat. We were astounded by the performance of Master Wei Qi Zhong, the master of Bian Lang (Face Change.) He studied and perfected his routines in China and won China's National Face Change Competition as well as International competitions. He has entertained for nearly three decades all over the world – sometimes performing over eight times a day.



Rapidly changing beautiful painted masks has been associated with Chinese opera from Sichuan Province for 300 years. In graceful moments, the artists raise their hands, rotate their heads, and, voilà, a new mask appears over their face.

Arlene and I had an unexpected encounter with the ancient art of Face Changing while traveling in China. We were supposed to have transportation to our hotel but the arrangements had not been made. In response to our inconvenience, we were given the “gift” of an invitation to a Chinese opera. There we viewed the excellent sequence of the artists who would have many masks changed so rapidly that the source and method were undetectable.



We remembered seeing Jeff McBride, who incorporated the Japanese theater form of Kabuki into his stage act, also doing Face Changing. I don't know where Jeff learned the mystery. It was a much concealed dramatic art. You could only learn from father to son; master to apprentice. Girls were not taught the art as they might marry and reveal the secret to their new family. However, in 1998, a master, Peng, took eight girl students but most Bian Lang is still practiced by men only.

The connections between Bian Lang and magic are strong. Both are entertaining and mystifying, with moves only the results of which, not the process, can be seen by the audience. Both require exquisite timing developed over a long period of time. The flawless Bian Lang performances should be an example to magicians that polishing a routine should be done off stage and not in front of their audiences.

If you can't find a live performance, look for “Face Changing” on You Tube. You'll be amazed.

Dr Moskowitz's prescription for enjoyment, marvel (Rx Rx Rx Rx Rx) 5/5



Just About Magic

The International Brotherhood of Magicians invites you to JAM
on Sunday, April 19th in Burbank, California.

A FREE DAY OF MAGIC FOR ALL IBM MEMBERS

If you are a member in good standing of the I.B.M., you are welcome to attend a FREE one day magic event unlike anything before. It's a day where you get to share your magic, watch lectures and see a show, all for FREE.



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SAM National President & IBM Member

Shawn Farquhar
IBM International President & SAM Member

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If you are interested in car-pooling, contact Greg Wauson at
socalbeliever@hotmail.com



Handling Hecklers

The heckler is one of our hazards of the business, our paper cut, our poison ivy, our mosquito. You get out there and perform often enough and you will be the object of a heckler's attention. This can kill your show. The heckler will be in the audience or the volunteer you selected. How you respond to their verbal jabs is critical in the eyes of the audience and to their memory of your performance. They want to be entertained and not made to feel awkward, and you really would like to avoid reducing yourself to the Heckler's level if you can avoid it, but sometimes you can't.



Hecklers typically want attention, and they want everyone to know they are smart and not fooled by you. They want to be on stage and admired by your audience without doing any of the work you did, and they are jealous of the applause and laughter you are getting so they make their own jokes hoping to "steal the show".

So, first off, when you face a heckler, you are facing someone with serious delayed development problems that you cannot solve, but you want to get them to sit down and be quiet! I do not know if there is a panacea for this problem, a one-size-fits-all approach to controlling the heckler and getting your show back on track. But I do know you can 1) take the approach of using snappy insulting comeback lines hoping to embarrass them into submission, 2) appeal to their better self and persuade them to behave, 3) scold them like a parent to shame them into cooperating, 4) punching them in the nose (not recommended even though it feels wonderful for an instant), and finally 5) shut down and stop entertaining explaining Mr. Magic will be back once the misbehaving little boy/girl cooperates.

One advantage you have is that the audience is also unhappy with your heckler and how he or she makes them feel awkward. The idiot is cutting into their valuable entertainment investment! They were enjoying themselves until "Vinnie or Velveeta Schmuckatelli" started running at the mouth. Your audience is your best ally and you should use them to your advantage. How? Each performer has to find his or her way to leverage the audience support for the task of ejecting the heckler from the stage. I have approached a few of our battle-scarred veterans to each give us their insight into their strategies for handling that clod who won't shut up and the resulting war stories follow below. Hopefully, you will find nuggets of truth to build up your own personal defense against*The Heckler!*

"Magic" Mike Stilwell

Here are some lines that I have heard entertainers throw at hecklers:

"Now I know why some animals eat their young"

"Do I go over to El Cajon Boulevard and bother you while you're working?"

"I would have a battle of the wits with you, but you brought a knife to a gun fight"

Matt Marcy

Let me put this video clip in context... the woman had been talking loudly and making random, nonsensical comments since the show began. A few jokes and heckler lines, despite the laughs, didn't seem to stop her -- this did." www.mattmarcy.com/heckler (only works if your video plug-in is recent software; i.e., link worked on my phone but not my desktop - JL)

Kevin Viner

Flash back to 2013, when I was working a week at the world famous Magic Castle. My routine involved a spectator's dollar bill, and I predict the serial number from across the room. Almost as quickly as I can have my volunteer pull out a bill, he informs me that he is going to make this

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“difficult.” A performer really only has two choices here. The smart choice is to pick somebody else. I went for the challenge. “Give Mark a round of applause as he comes onstage!” BIG MISTAKE.

I correctly guess the number, and Mark gets angry. “Do it again!”

“No such luck”, I politely inform him. To which he responds “If it’s real magic, you could do it again.”

I’m not a real Wizard, I inform him. Without breaking a beat, he yells across the room to his wife, “Honey, grab another \$20.” She declines, slightly embarrassed, and now he gets REALLY angry. “I said, grab another \$20!” I’m uncomfortable, and worse, my entire audience is uncomfortable. So I ask for a round of applause to send him back, and he responds “No. Do it again.” To which I responded with a line that I hope I never have to use again: *I HAVE A BETTER IDEA. WHY DON’T YOU JUST SHAKE MY HAND AND SIT DOWN.*”

He begrudgingly retreats to his seat in the back of the room and, at this point, I just couldn’t help myself: “*SOMEBODY’S GOING TO SLEEP ON THE COUCH TONIGHT!*”

And then, one of the greatest moments of my career happens. He yanks his wife up by the arm, yells “Honey, let’s go!” and storms out in a fit of rage to the rowdy applause of the crowd. There is literally no better outcome than causing a heckler to storm out on his own volition!

My closing remarks for the show: “*My name is Kevin Viner. I hope you enjoyed the evening. If you happen to see Mark around the club tonight, it seems like he needs some affection. Do me a favor — Give him a big hug. Good night!!*”

Malcolm Campbell

“Did your mother ever have any children that lived?”

Bob Pozner

Never ignore a heckler because he will continue. Get him on stage and embarrass him. You want your audience to be on your side *and entertained by your handling of the heckler.*

Case at point: Forty-years-ago I did a show for the UFO Club of San Diego. The show was at the Big Oak Ranch in El Cajon. My wife, a friend and his wife accompanied me. It was a large audience of about 500 spectators. They hired the wonderful Roy Shank too. Roy was very young and did the most beautiful silk act I have ever seen. He now works in Las Vegas where he has been for at least twenty years.

Roy went on first and did his wonderful routine. There was a small group of individuals wearing leather jackets that were dressed like Bikers. They heckled Roy and upset him. He finished his act and the M.C. announced me. I did a couple of comedy items and then introduced my wrist chopper. This was truly a vicious looking device with a heavy, bright, chromed blade. I explained how the apparatus operated, took it apart and displayed the case and the rigid blade and then demoed with a Japanese egg-plant. Japanese egg-plant is about the thickness of a wrist and 15 inches in length.

It cut that egg-plant in half so fast that the two pieces hung suspended for a second before they fell. Then I invited the leader of the heckle group on stage so he could assist me and put his hand through the hole.

He wouldn’t budge. No amount of cajoling could get this brave bully on stage, but he and his group remained quiet throughout my act. A ten-year-old girl took his stead and left the stage unharmed.

Jacques Lord

“I know you are, but what am I?”

A final word on avoiding the Heckler all together. Keith Field’s book “How to Handle A Heckler” mentions to **not** choose a volunteer that is super enthusiastic. Find the person who is avoiding your gaze, who doesn’t really want to do it but will under encouragement (not duress). Then you have a much better chance of volunteers who will behave themselves.

Illigitimati non carborundum!



Focus On THE LINKING RING

Each month, MagicCurrents features an item out of the dozens of informative articles in the current issue of The I.B.M.'s The Linking Ring in which we feel the members might be especially interested.

Once a year, *The Linking Ring* publishes an index of all of the material published the previous year. The February, 2015, issue contains the index for 2014.

Articles are listed by category. Tricks are classified by subject. A complete list of columns and contributors' contributions by name is also included.

(Continued from page 2)

Programs". A committee will be formed to make recommendations for programs.

NEW BUSINESS

Alternate meeting space: The possibilities for free meeting space were discussed but there are no plans to move in the near future.

Ring outside performances: Bob Meigs presented his thoughts on the Ring performing in public, both for fee and Pro Bono. The goals would be to help selected charities and to increase the community awareness of the Ring. A committee of the Board will look the proposals and make recommendations.

Member conduct policy. James Thayer presented a draft written policy on member conduct to be an addition to the bylaws. Compatibility of the proposal with IBM and Ring bylaws will be investigated before any decisions are made. In the meantime, the Board recognized the Sergeant-At-Arms as being the proper contact for issues involving member conduct.

..... Jacques Lord, Secretary

Focus on The I.B.M.

More about *The Linking Ring* archives.

As we mentioned last month, all issues of *The Linking Ring* back to 1922 have been digitized and are available on line. However, they are available only to I.B.M. members with the print or digital *Linking Ring* option associated with their membership. All issues are available through the Ask Alexander database.

But, there's more! The database available to I.B.M. members also includes the following magic publications, some going back to the early 1900's:

The Linking Ring

I.B.M. Convention Programs

Victorian Popular Culture Database

Johnson-Smith Catalogs

Conjurer's Monthly Magazine

Gibeciere Supplementary Material

Goldston's Magical Quarterly

Hugard's Magic Monthly

The Jinx

The Expert at the Card Table

The Magic Wand magazine

Magic (Ellis Stanyon)

Mahatama

The Conjuror's Magazine

The Seven Circles magazine

The Sphinx

The Wizard (P. T. Selbit)

It's all *free!* Just follow the instructions on The I.B.M. web site to access these materials.

..... editor



YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT'S AROUND THE CORNER

Writing and editing are an addiction with me; They are my drugs of choice.

Re-writing and editing for *The Linking Ring* for the past year and a half has proven to be an enjoyable but challenging task because of the very wide range of material written by magicians of various levels of writing skills and which, at times, has been translated into English from any one of about 80 languages. I often struggle to understand the concepts before I can assure that the words on the page can be followed to a successful conclusion by any reader with the talent to execute the moves.



Even if the effect requires *extraordinary* skill, a well-written article can be read like a novel and the reader can have a vicarious experience if he can follow it. Holding the reader's attention to the end is the primary goal. The reader can take it from there.

To that end, I strive for as much detail as possible in the handling, even if the procedures and slights are relatively simple. One of my most interesting tasks recently was editing a series of effects designed to be presented to a blind audience. I had to attempt to put myself in the position of a "spectator" and evaluate what he might perceive mentally from the stimuli of sound and touch provided by the performer. That was a very unique experience.

But, I recently had another task which dealt me a real surprise.

In this case, instead of a manuscript to work with, I had a video of a card effect with fairly complex handling including a new sleight. I had to translate what I saw in the video to text.

In order to make it possible to duplicate the effect, I had to follow and describe the movements involving the fingers of both hands. After viewing the video a number of times and gaining an appreciation for what was being done, I started to write, but soon got to a point where I lost track of the grip on the deck as it was set up for an offset Faro shuffle. Even going one frame at a time didn't help; It seemed that I couldn't accurately trace the movement of all of the fingers on the magician's right hand.

Then came the revelation: He had only a thumb and three fingers on that hand. A finger I was assuming was behind the deck at times didn't exist!

With that discovery, I continued the description, inserting what I felt would be the resulting position of that finger at a given time. Since I viewed the video six or eight times before noticing the discrepancy, I had to give him credit for performing great "sleight of *hand*"! Editor

CASTLE WATCH

Hi all. Here's what's going on at the castle:

March 10 - Strolling magic Show Down will be in the Inner Circle. Registration to be a judge or a contestant is @ 7-8pm. Winners will be announced at the end of the contests.

March 19-22 - Terry Lunceford will be performing at the WC Fields bar.

March 23-29 - Johnny "Ace" Palmer will be in the Close-Up room doing the late show. On the 29th, he will be doing a lecture at 3pm.

For more information on who's going to be at the castle, go to their web site www.magiccastle.com.

..... Kenny





NOTES AND REMINDERS

Dan Thomas, magician and former owner of The Gathering Restaurant which provided magic entertainment for many years, recently received an award for San Diego Big Brother of the Year.

The KUSI TV broadcast of the award can be seen at <http://www.kusi.com/Clip/11163962/big-brother-big-sister#.VOp1H1X0wkU.mailto>

Remember, we are looking for product reviews. It doesn't matter if you liked what you paid for or not, we want your opinion for the benefit of the rest of the members. If you're not a writer, we can arrange a short sit-down to gather the facts and write the review.

Have magic to sell, stage equipment to rent? Looking for something to buy or rent? Need a ride or have room for a passenger to an out of town event such as the Magic Castle?

Have a special skill another member might use? Need a temporary assistant?

Advertise it at no cost to Ring 76 members in MagiCurrents

The intended publication date of each issue of MagiCurrents is the Thursday 10 days before the monthly meeting. Submissions from officers, reporters and other members are due the Wednesday before the publication date. If you want *your* newsletter on time, please be prompt!!



... editor

Note from the Webmaster:

If the security in your web browser is set to not allow redirection or to warn you if the site attempts to redirect, the links on the Ring76.com homepage will not be valid. You can either reset that option in your browser or click "allow" to get to the proper page with valid links.

.... webmaster

Thanks to all who contributed to this issue of MagiCurrents!

..... editor