

# MAGI-GRAM

Official Newsletter of IBM Ring 50 -- The National Capital Ring -- Volume 77 No. 2 February 2018

## ♣ ♣ Mentalism Nite ♣ ♣

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## February Meeting Highlights

The February meeting of Ring 50 was a night for mentalism; crystal balls, mind-melding, impossible coincidences and stunning predictions as eight members took the stage to show their psychic powers. In an unusual twist, each performer revealed the secret of his effect as a sort of hybrid performance/teach-in for the benefit of would-be mentalists in the audience. However, those secrets will not be revealed here because of the possibility of exposing them to lay people. After the performances, a professional Mentalist from New York City, **Kent Axell** was on deck to comment on some of the effects and share some of his experiences in the field with members.



Buddy Smith

Before the main event, President

Larry Lipman welcomed **Buddy Smith** whose recent bout of flu prevented him from attending last month's President's Night where he was to be honored as the dean of living presidents. Buddy was President of Ring 50 Forty years ago, from 1978 to 1979. After receiving a round of applause Buddy said he has always loved being a member of Ring 50 and vowed that next year he would have a flu shot.

## Announcements

**Craig Fifer** said there is some great magic coming to the *Dickens Parlour Theater* near Bethany Beach, DE including **Francis Menotti** and **Chris Capehart**. The theater will give the Ring \$6.00 off the \$26 ticket price if we have a group of 10 or more. Craig said if there is enough interest among members it might make for a nice weekend getaway. Hotels there are relatively inexpensive in the off-season.

The March program for Ring 50 will be a lecture by **Mike Hummer**, a long-time demonstrator at Al's Magic shop who has done hundreds of children's shows. Mike will explain principles of performing for kids and demonstrate tricks and routines any members can master. Don't miss this lecture.

## Magi-Whirl

Chairman **Danny Selnick** said "We looking for a few Ring 50

members to help with Magi-Whirl 2018: registration, Gala Show flier design, ad sales for the flier (handed out to attendees of the Gala Show), two ticket takers at the show, dealer room security, social media outreach, who can help build two or three MW 2018 sandwich boards that we'll put on heavily trafficked roads nearby the event." Here's the catch -- as members of Ring 50 -- **we're asking everyone to help out only one time during an entire year** and if you can't volunteer for any of these positions, we're asking you to be responsible for getting at least FIVE people to go to the Gala Show. Five is really such a small number. Here's the URL to share: [Magi-Whirl 2018 Gala Show – I.B.M. Ring 50: The National Capital Ring](#) Chairman **Danny Selnick** also announced that **Craig Fifer** posted a Magi-Whirl Website for registration ([www.magi-whirl.org](http://www.magi-whirl.org)) and **Mike Wolf** has agreed to sell ads for the Playbill. He again urged maximum effort to promote the event since proceeds from ticket sales will help defray the costs of renting our monthly hotel meeting room.



*Jacob Miller*

Following the new policy, a Count of Conjuring, **Jacob Miller** was invited to perform a trick he had learned during the one-hour teaching session prior to the meeting. Jacob did a good job of trying a knot in a rope and then

moving it to other parts of the rope before making it disappear.

## Mentalism Nite

The preliminaries over, President Lipman introduced the first Mentalist of the evening: **Mike Peckham** talked about fortune-telling gypsies and then showed a real crystal ball and a black velvet bag that held it.



*Mike Peckham*

He gave a sealed envelope to **Matthew Biegun** to hold saying there was a prediction card inside. **Danny Selnick** was asked to gaze into the ball. He reported that the image of a four of diamonds had magically formed within the crystal orb which matched the card held by Matthew! **Barney Sperling**, a mathematics teacher, handed out four numbered cards to each of four spectators. Barney, using numbers called out at random from the spectators, assembled 16 numbers, four across and four down which he wrote on a large pad. When the numbers were added up they yielded a total of 2,718. It took a few moments to sink in – it was the month (2), day (7) and year (18) of the date of that very evening! Barney pointed out that it was a very special trick because it only worked one day of the year.



*Barney Sperling*

**Tom Bohacek** asked **Laurie Curry** to think of any animal and write the name of it on a pad and keep it from view. Tom then sketched a horse on a pad and turned to show it to the audience. He then asked Laurie to turn her pad and show what she had written and the word was HORSE! Tom then handed out a prediction sealed in a Mason Jar. He drew a numbered magic square and called on spectators to call out numbers which were circled. All other numbers in those ranks and files were eliminated until only four were left adding up to 34. That was the very number on the prediction Tom had sealed in the Mason Jar!



*Laurie Curry and Tom Bohacek*

**Jason Goldberg** asked **Tony Nichols and his son Matthew** to assist him in a demonstration of the special bond between father and son. Matthew was asked to focus on two cards that had been selected from the deck and not to reveal them to anyone else. Tony was asked to think about the connection to his son as he sought to find the matches to the two cards that

Matthew was holding. He tested the connection by dealing his cards facedown to a freely chosen point, stopping, and revealing the cards he had just dealt into two piles. The top card from each pile was removed. Amazingly, when Tony and Matthew compared their cards, they found that they each had a red four and a black six, proving that, as someone said, “The heart hath reasons the mind doth not know.”



*Jason Goldberg*

**Cristian Vidrascu** had a spectator think of any card in the deck. He then pulled out a deck of cards, fanned them and a miracle ensued – the chosen card was the only one reversed in the entire deck. Cristian then displayed a net laundry bag which was stuffed with various brightly colored socks which appeared to have lost their mates. Asked to choose a color, a spectator replied “PINK” – whereupon Cristian revealed that one of his feet was bare and that the other foot was sporting a pink sock!



*Cristian Vidrascu*

**Kenny Wardrick** handed a prediction envelope labeled “TOP SECRET” to a spectator. He then called Cristian Vidrascu back to the stage and adorned him with a garish Mardi-Gras mask and a fabulous hat made of balloons and blinking lights (Kenny is a balloon twister). He handed Greg a sheet of newspaper and told him to hold it behind his back and to draw a circle around some words using a Sharpie Pen. Kenny did so and when the words in the circle were read out to the audience, they matched those in the “TOP SECRET” envelope!



*Kenny Wardrick*

**Dwight Redman** had **Arnie Fuoco** and **Danny Selnick** each select a card. Despite a series of shuffles and cuts Dwight was able to spell to each card!



*Dwight Redman*

**Arnie Fuoco** had **Danny Selnick** shuffle shuffle the deck, make three piles, pick one and remember one card in that pile, shuffle the pile and bury it in between the other two piles, and then asked Danny to shuffle the whole pack. In these impossible conditions, Arnie asked Danny to spell to his card, and at the end of the count his card was revealed. It sounds impossible right? well, it is, but Arnie did it!



*Arnie Fuoco and Danny Selnick*

**Augie Arnstein** introduced 5 sealed envelopes. He said that one was special. He mixed the envelopes up and then asked Tony Nichols to further mix the envelopes then place them in a row on the table. This was done while Augie was in front of the table with his back to the envelopes. Tony was then asked to place his hand on any envelope and to move his hand to another envelope – or, he could leave his hand on the same envelope – each time Augie said a letter from the alphabet. Mike Wolf was also given a card that asked him to say “Stop” on a specific letter. When Augie got to the letter “E”, Mike said “Stop.” Tony gave the envelope his hand was on to Augie. This envelope was held in full sight as Tony opened each of the 4 remaining envelopes. Each of these envelopes contained a note saying: “You have phenomenal psychic abilities”. When the last envelope – selected by Tony -- was opened it was found to contain a crisp new \$20.00 bill!



With that, the eight mentalists received a collective round of applause for their mystifying performances.

**President Lipman** then brought **Kent Axell** to the stage. Kent is a published and professional working pro who has directed, consulted and performed in countless magic and mentalism shows in major US cities. Kent generously offered his thoughts on the mentalism tricks he had seen during the evening, both pro and con. He also fielded questions from the audience on aspects of this branch of magic. Specifically, Kent spoke about “pre-show” techniques of priming a spectator to take part in an effect without actually turning him or her into a stooge. He said that too often valuable time is wasted setting up the preliminaries to the trick and if the ‘volunteer’ knows in advance what he is supposed to do the effect will flow quicker and more effectively to its conclusion. Kent performed two mentalism effects of his own and made himself available after the meeting for one-on-one conversations.



*Kent Axell*

**RING 50 MEETING  
LOCATION**

**Holiday Inn**  
2460 Eisenhower Ave, Alexandria,  
VA.  
6:00 Dinner  
7:30 Meeting

**THE PRESIDENT'S  
CORNER**



**President Larry Lipman**

Once in a while you meet a person who is truly charismatic. **Dan Lacey** was such a person. Dan could light up a room. I have four distinct memories of Dan: He

arrived at a magic club meeting in someone’s basement and claimed he didn’t have anything to show. Then he opened his briefcase and amazed us with trick after trick. During an intermission at a magic show, Dan did a trick for a friend of mine’s daughter and her jaw practically hit the floor. One night, I got a ride home from a magic meeting with Dan and he told me how much he enjoyed performing walk-around magic at a local sports bar. A short time later, I began doing walk-around for kids night at a diner. The last time I saw Dan, he knew he was dying, but he still had great humor in his eyes as he gave me a bunch of decks of cards and said “practice.” He was Ring 50 president then and urged me to become president. Two years later I did.

Each year we hold the **Dan Lacey** Contest in his memory. This year it will be in April. I was honored to be Ring 50 president the first year of the contest. A few years later, in a burst of enthusiasm, another Ring 50 president declared that the winner of the contest was the DC Magician of the Year. I felt uneasy with that designation then and now—although I confess I’ve sometimes gotten caught up and used that description of the winner. But I won’t any longer. First, I think it’s presumptuous for us to declare that the winner of our club contest is the DC magician of the year, when the contest is not open to all DC-area magicians. Second, I think it takes away from Dan’s memory. This contest is for us to declare the winner of a night of magical performances held in Dan’s honor.

I have no quarrel with any of the past winners using the title DC Magician of the Year with their promotional material. They earned it in good faith and we have used that phrase repeatedly in the past. I just won't be using it in the future. Magically yours,

*Larry Lipman*

## Who is who in Ring 50

**Jason Goldberg:** I think I really first got interested in magic at the same time I became interested in marine science. I attended SeaCamp in the Florida Keys when I was in the 7th grade. I saw a large tarpon while snorkeling and was "hooked". The camp also offered a magic class and that's where I first got interested in performing. I don't remember much from the class except a rope trick that I don't perform anymore. I wanted to keep learning but never did until I graduated from the University of Miami (B.S. Biology) and had the free time to pursue magic as a hobby.

I have since worked for Congress, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. I currently help USFWS identify ways it can apply better science to meet its needs, whether it be how we can help wildlife adapt to a changing climate or understand the wildlife conservation implications of the latest genetic technologies. My supervisor at NOAA heard I was thinking of studying magic. She had a friend in I.B.M. who introduced me to the society, I found Ring 50, and the rest is history.

I have been a serious student of magic about 16 years. I wouldn't know what I know without the support of everyone in Ring 50 over

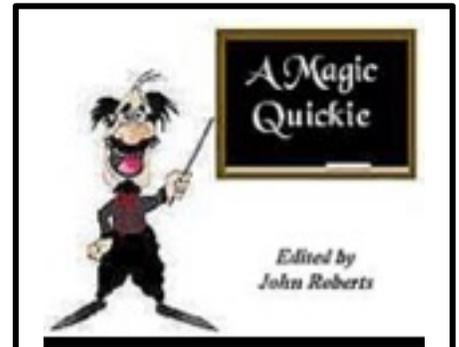
the years. Having a Ring this size with the experience and enthusiasm it has is one of the best things about being a magician. In Ring 50, the list is as long as my arm - **Scotty Scafidi, Mike Taggart, Bob Patterson, Tom Bohacek, Bill Wells, Laurie Curry,** and on and on - they've all taught me something which has made me a better performer.

As I'm sure most Ring 50 members know, I've also been an Associate Editor for The Linking Ring for about 10 years now, responsible for the Hocus in Focus column. I'm primarily a coordinator / editor - the people doing the real work are the reviewers, many of whom I've recruited from Ring 50. I need to give them a shout-out here, the column has a drumbeat of a deadline each month and their expertise and willingness to contribute makes it what it is.

I'm endlessly fascinated by the ways magic can be used in society in unexpected ways, especially any connections to science, medicine, and education. I perform about once a month these days at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History in the Sant Ocean Hall, where I use magic as a way to engage visitors in a fun way about ocean conservation.



*Jason Goldberg*



### "The Lucky Coin"

(I learned this trick from a magician named Lari who was a teacher at my University 20 years ago. It can be found in Giobbi Card College Vol. 2.)

Stick a miniature card, say the **6H**, securely to the back of a coin and put it face up on the table. Force the **6H** BYFM, show it around, place it back in the deck and control it to the top. Spread the cards, move the quarter over them and have a spectator to tell you to stop when he feels something special about one of them. Slide that card out and without looking at it, place the coin on top. Close up the deck and get ready for a top change.

Tell your audience that the coin is now sitting on top of the **6H**. Turn the card over - **Wrong!** It's the (say) King of Diamonds, and the audience lets you know it! Use that card to flip the coin and show it was indeed sitting on the **6H!**

Relax, the trick is finished and while all the attention of the audience is on the little card on the coin, do a top change and keep the changed card (**6H**) face down close to the coin... when the attention starts going down tell them that if you rub the wrong card on top of the coin, the card can also change to their selected card... what was it? the **6H?** check it out... rub it... and it's now the **6H...** and you are done.

(Ed.'s note: This little gem gives you ample misdirection for the top change, but you may want to practice it anyway.)  
John S. Roberts

Editor's Note: Jason donated several items to the ring. They are listed in the Magic Cafe for sale, and several of them have sold already for a total of \$60. Thanks Jason!

## Ring 50 New Members & Applications & Dues

ATTEND THE MEETING



**Membership**

Have YOU brought a prospective member to the meeting? They must be interested in magic and be a member of the International Brotherhood of Magicians.

Applications are available from the Treasurer.

New members are always welcome at Ring 50. You must be interested in magic (full time or part time performer, hobbyist, collector, etc.). You must join and be an active member of International Brotherhood of Magicians prior to belonging to Ring 50.

For current members, remember to pay your dues before March meeting! You can pay through PayPal now!

## Counts of Conjuring Meets March 7, 6:00pm



The International Brotherhood of Magicians, National Capitol Ring 50, "Counts of Conjuring" meets first Wednesday of every month at the **Holiday Inn Alexandria-Carlyle, 2460 Eisenhower Ave, Alexandria, VA** at 6:00pm. The "Counts" is a way for youths to learn about magic and the performance of magic.

Louis the Magician teaches the *Discover Magic* course. This is an amazing course that not only will teach the youths magic but will also teach them important "life-skills". This class is normally taught in after-school programs and summer camps and costs \$275 per child but will be FREE for the Counts of Conjuring (only cost is \$35 for the actual magic tricks).

Each month the youths will learn one new magic trick and have a chance to perform it.

The Counts of Conjuring is for youths 8 to 17 years.

**March 7, 2018, 6:00pm**

### Magic Quickies Needed

Send **John Roberts** a short trick you would like to share with newsletter readers. There are no guidelines other than the entry should be brief, simple,

doable and fun; the offbeat and quirky are encouraged. Send to John:

[Barjorobts@comcast.net](mailto:Barjorobts@comcast.net)

## Be Sure to Keep Your I.B.M. Membership Current

You must be an active member of I.B.M. to belong to Ring 50. If you haven't already, don't forget to keep your membership active in the International Brotherhood of Magicians to enjoy the benefits of membership. Send dues to: **International Brotherhood of Magicians, 13 Point West Blvd, St. Charles, Missouri, USA 63301.**

## Silent Auction at Ring 50

Last year, we started a silent auction before each meeting between 7 and 7:30 p.m. As always, 10 percent of the sale price goes to the Ring. Each person having items to be auctioned in the **Silent Auction**, must complete an **IBM Ring 50 Silent Auction Bid Sheet** for each item describing the items and any reserve bid if necessary. Each seller should provide a full and accurate representation of the item, such as missing instructions, repairs, wear and tear, etc. Otherwise it shall be assumed that all items are complete and in working order and includes instructions.

The form is will be sent by email to all members and a few will be available at the Auction. At the end of the silent auction, turn in the tally sheet along with 10% to the Ring 50 Treasurer.

