



# MAGI-GRAM



Official Newsletter of IBM Ring 50 -- The National Capital Ring -- Volume 74 No. 9 September 2020

## ***Sarah Trustman Lectures on Mnemonics at Oct. 7 Meeting***

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**Sarah Trustman** is a magician, creator, and mnemonist (memory master), among other things. She co-created the internationally acclaimed *Memory Arts: Fundamentals Series*, teaching how to learn anything through playing card memorization.

Her best-selling book for magicians, *The Memory Arts*, published through Vanishing Inc., specifically teaches how to memorize the Aronson Stack and Mnemonica stack, individually or simultaneously!

While she will give a brief introduction to the mnemonic arts, interactively and humorously teaching the beginning cards of both stacks, she will also discuss other ways to incorporate memory

into your magic performance, demonstrating with some of her favorite memory performances.

But her lecture goes well beyond memory, promising something for everyone. She will teach a few of her favorite shuffles, including a sure-fire way to Faro.

With decades of theatrical training, she will also discuss how to create a magic show, act, effect, etc. from the ground up, so that your audience is sure to be engaged and entertained.

*Continued page 8*

### **Past Presidents Perform**

**Jimmy Carter** will not be performing at the bonus meeting on **Thursday**, Sept. 24, but some Ring 50 members who served as club president during his administration – and the administrations of Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton,



*Continued page 8*

# Woody Aragón Stacks the Deck at Sept. 2 Meeting



*By Drew Owen*

Woody Aragón joined us from his home in Spain for our Sept. 2 meeting, which started at 7 p.m. EDT—which was 1 a.m. for Woody, so we really appreciated him staying up late to be with us! Woody Aragón is one of the leading magicians in the Spanish school of magic and a student of Juan Tamariz. He's now a teacher of magic in the Tamariz's school in Spain "Gran Escuela de magia de Ana Tamariz," where he teaches mostly card magic and magical theory. Penn and Teller use several of his effects on their show. His first book, "A Book in English," was a bestseller that influenced top magicians. In the foreword of Woody's latest book, Max Maven wrote: "Woody Aragón is one of the most important modern card magic creators."

Woody started by talking about the limitations of performing virtually, rather than in person. He is used to performing surrounded by

people and he feels his magic is about creating feelings and emotions in the audience, which is very hard to do online. Then he showed us a card trick he has been working on. He riffle shuffled a deck of cards, (in person, an audience member would do the shuffling). The spectator would then be asked to cut off less than half the deck, and place it



into the card box (Woody completed these actions). Woody held the box in his hand and said that by feeling the weight of the cards, he knew there were exactly 13 cards inside. When Woody removed the cards and counted them there were, indeed, 13 cards. Woody asked member Chuck Jones



*Chuck Jones*

what color he preferred and Chuck chose black. Woody predicted there would be six black cards which was, of course, correct. The explanation to this self-working trick was beautiful and brilliant! Woody talked about how to handle the audience so they shuffle the cards the way you need them to. He also said, when using a stack, on rare occasions a spectator will ask to shuffle the cards. He always says yes. Although he's "crying on the inside," he doesn't let the audience see this and is ready with an impromptu trick.

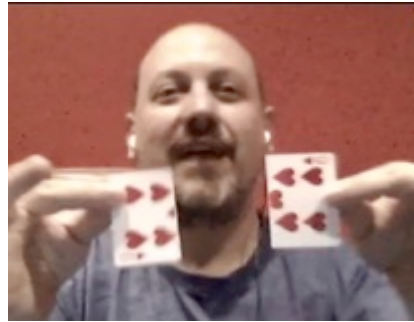
Next Woody showed us the trick he uses to end his stage shows: The Human Balance. In this trick, a spectator cuts a random amount of cards from one of Woody's outstretched hands to the other. By "weighing" the cards in each hand, he can drop just the amount of cards needed from one hand to make the piles equal. This quick description does not do the trick justice but you can watch his wonderful performance on YouTube by searching: Woody Aragón Cartomagia - La Balanza Humana.



*Marc Carrion*

Member Marc Carrion mentioned two of his favorite tricks from “A Book in English”: Bliss Poker, and the Love Ritual. Woody said Bliss Poker was not a good one to do online but did tell a funny story about being on a Spanish TV show in which one of the guests was a champion poker player. Woody used the method in this trick to repeatedly beat the champion at his own game! The Love Ritual may be the most popular trick during the pandemic because audience members do all the work themselves, making it perfect for virtual performances. Penn and Teller used this trick to close their most recent show. Woody took us through the Love Ritual, asking everyone to find four playing cards they didn’t mind destroying. Amazingly, almost everyone just happened to have some playing cards on hand! In this trick, four cards are ripped in half, one piece set aside and the others mixed and discarded through a series

of instructions which allow each participant to make their own personal choices. In the end, each participant



ends up with just one piece that matches the one they set aside. This is a wonderful trick with endless presentational possibilities. You can find the explanation in “A Book in English.” Woody talked again about managing the audience by giving clear instructions. He also warned about seeming to be worried that someone will make a mistake and not end up with matched pieces. He said it’s more entertaining and magical if you relax and don’t over control.

## Fall Meeting Schedule

**All meetings 7-9 p.m. using Zoom platform**

**Thursday, Sept. 24:** Ring 50 Past Presidents Perform (and hopefully new board installation)  
**Wednesday, Oct. 7:** Sarah Trustman Lecture on Mnemonics  
**Tuesday, Oct. 20:** Virtual Performance Contest & Ring 50 73rd Anniversary  
**Wednesday, Nov. 4:** Carisa Hendrix Lecture on Performance Character Development  
**Wednesday, Dec. 2:** Holiday Show

Woody ended by demonstrating the idea of doing an actual improvised story telling deck routine with a memorized deck. Woody was very generous with his time and knowledge, giving us many great ideas and methods and answering our questions. After two hours, it was 3 a.m. in Spain and time to let Woody go, and President Craig Fifer ended the meeting.



*Craig Fifer*

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



Bob Patterson of the I.B.M. Membership Committee reminds us that 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.**



# Virtual Shows, Real Value

## President's Column

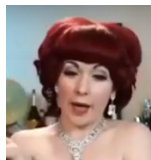
Craig Fifer



While we've all been stuck inside this year, magicians who make a living performing in person have had to adapt to virtual shows. I've had a chance to watch seven great ones recently, and I thought I'd share them with you:

### **Lucy Darling** ([thelucydarling.com/lucy-at-home](http://thelucydarling.com/lucy-at-home))

"Lucy Darling at Home" is more like an interactive comedy hour than a magic show.



The magic is woven into clever banter with the audience, as Carisa Hendrix plays her signature Lucy Darling character and her real-life roommates play her assistants. With

a great set, hilarious improv, and mesmerizing effects, this is a truly unique virtual experience. Ring 50 is looking forward to hosting Carisa on November 4, for a virtual lecture on performance character development.

### **Joshua Lozoff** ([joshualozoff.com](http://joshualozoff.com))

"Virtually Impossible" is Joshua's slick combination of card tricks, mentalism, and beautiful coin manipulation. As a longtime actor and speaker, Joshua brings excellent presentation skills to his show. He's also a member of Ring 199 in Raleigh, NC.



### **Max Major** ([maxmajor.net/live](http://maxmajor.net/live))

"Remote Control" is an outstanding effort by Max Major, who is currently competing on America's Got Talent. This Maryland native has put together a stunning set, some very clever effects, and his remarkable charisma. The ticket price also includes a custom box mailed to each attendee, which contains a variety of props and secret clues.



### **Alain Nu** ([theforumtheatre.com/alain-nu](http://theforumtheatre.com/alain-nu))

"The Man Who Knows: The Virtual Experience" is Alain's virtual representation of his popular Vegas show. This long-time Bethesda resident a friend of Ring 50 presents a laid-back but astonishing series of mentalism effects.



### **David Parr** ([davidparr.com](http://davidparr.com))

"The Sorcerer's Lair" applies David's brand of slightly goofy and slightly spooky entertainment to the virtual stage. Part storyteller and part magician, David presents a nice chance of pace from the typical show.



### **Seigfried Tieber** ([siegfriedtieber.com](http://siegfriedtieber.com))

"Odds and Ends" combines Seigfried's excellent card skills and endearing personality for an evening of magic and humor. His crisp and entertaining show includes a stunning memory effect in addition to some creative sleight of hand.



### **Justin Willman** ([justinwillman.com/virtual](http://justinwillman.com/virtual))

"Magic for Humans (At Home)" brings this Netflix star to the even smaller screen. With a simple but professional set in his home, Justin presents some of his signature effects and some fun new pieces. His baby makes several cameos, and the show concludes with a touching tribute to his mother, who passed away earlier this year. While most virtual shows I attended had 50 to 100 participants, this one had nearly 500!



Tickets for virtual shows are usually \$25 to \$40, which covers as many people as can safely gather around your screen. Each show is about an hour, and some performers stick around for Q&A afterwards. Check the web addresses listed above for upcoming dates and times.



## Young Members Show Their Stuff

Cards, rope and silk, and a Rubik's Cube-type puzzle. For the Conjurers' September meeting, we decided to let the kids do some virtual performances of their own!

A handful of kids volunteered to perform and they did a great job.



*Matthew*

Matthew showed a trick from Jeff McBride's magic camp. He showed a rope, made a magical move and produced a silk tied around the rope.



*Sean*

Sean showed a mind-reading card trick the Conjurers learned from the recent Max Maven lecture for Ring 50.



*Jiff*

Jiff showed how adept he is at manipulating a cube puzzle.

Prior to the performances, I spoke with the kids asking them what types of magic they would like to learn in the future.



They gave me a lot of good feedback that I will be able to use to plan the upcoming meetings.

Louis Meyer,  
Youth Activities Director



# Max Major Needs Ring 50's Support on America's Got Talent

Tuesday, Sept. 15, 8 p.m.

Vote at: [nbc.com/agtvote](https://www.nbc.com/agtvote)

Mentalist and magician Max Major, who grew up in suburban Maryland, is now living in Las Vegas to pursue his dream of headlining a show there. Since the pandemic has other ideas this year, he's focused on winning America's Got Talent virtually -- and he's the only magician who's made it to the semifinals! Max has asked for Ring 50's support, by voting for him and cheering him on. You can check out his most recent appearance

at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sxjE4KK4cN0> , and vote on Tuesday night at the link above.



Keith Harmon	Sept. 19
Larry Lipman	Sept. 19
Alec Negri	Sept. 19
Matthew Nichols	Sept. 19
Bob Carnathan	Sept. 26
Bryan McDaniel	Oct. 2
David Juraschek	Oct. 9
Gregory Szlyk	Oct. 9
Diego Ramirez	Oct. 11
Matthew Biegun	Oct. 12
Edward Spells	Oct. 12
Donald Freedman	Oct. 16
Linda Barrett	Oct. 19
Rucj Uffelman	Oct. 22



# Carisa Hendrix Named Stage Magician of the Year Ring 50 Lecture Set for Nov. 4



Carisa Hendrix, who will lecture Nov. 4 on performance character development, was named Stage Magician of the Year by the Magic Castle Academy of Magical Arts in August. You don't want to miss this lecture, which is exclusively for members of Ring 50. A Zoom link will be sent to members a week before the meeting.

## Advertise in the Ring 50 Magi-Gram



**Classified ads: \$5 for the first three lines in one column of a three-column layout; \$1 each additional line. Non-members pay double.**

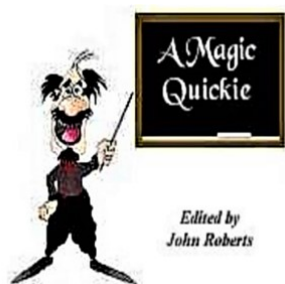
**One-column display ads (3-inches deep): \$5 for members; \$10 for non-members**

**Two-column display ads: \$10 for members; \$20 for non-members**

**Three-column display ads: \$20 for members; \$40 for non-members**

**Half-page display ad: \$25 for members; \$50 for non-members**

**Full-page display ad: \$50 for members; \$100 for non-members**



## September Quickie

### “Magnetic Cards”

(This is a nice, easy-to-do trick, good for beginners and maybe for the Counts)

*“Did you know that cards sometimes become magnetized as they rub against each other in the deck? Let me show you.”*

Have spectator shuffle a deck of cards, give them a cut, and put the top half on the table. Take the bottom half back into your hands and spread them to show how the card’s movements create magnetic attraction. Obtain a break under the second card and get ready for a double lift. Show the top two cards as one and then thumb the next card over beside it. Announce these two cards are now inseparable due to magnetic forces. Square the deck, place the top card on the tabled pile and give the cards a cut. Place these cards on top of the packet in your hand and square the deck on the table. The two original cards have been fairly and openly separated. Stare at the cards for a few seconds and then say *“Did you hear that? Did you hear the click?”*

Turn deck over and spread face up. The two magnetized cards are back together!

## Trustman Lecture on Mnemonics on Oct. 7

*Continued from page 1*

Perhaps most exciting is the opportunity to have a sneak peek at her newly created chessboard and not yet released, “A Night’s Tour” (the Knight’s Tour act, now without numbers and so easy you can do it in your sleep)!

Sarah, the president of IBM Ring 199, has lectured at Magi-Fest, TRICS and Baltimore Comic-Con as well as TedTalks Mid-Atlantic.

You can learn more about Sarah Trustman at her website, on Facebook, or on Instagram.

Watch your email for connection instructions.

This meeting is exclusively for members of Ring 50, so please do not share the connection information except with potential new members.

## Past Presidents Perform Sept. 24

*Continued from page 1*

George W. Bush, Barack Obama and Donald Trump—are scheduled to perform that night.

President’s Night at Ring 50 is always a fun affair and allows some of our Ring’s former leaders to return to perform.

In honor of Ring 50’s 73rd anniversary, more than a dozen past presidents of the Ring will entertain you with special virtual performances.

Those currently confirmed include Augie Arnstein, Craig Fifer, Stuart Finley, Arnold Fuoco, Eric Henning, Kevin McGuire, Louis Meyer, James Munton, Ken Norris, Dwight Redman, John Roberts, Danny Selnick, Mike Taggart, and Buddy Smith!

Thursday, Sept. 24; 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.





# Who's Who in Ring 50

## Marc Carrion – Magic With a Spanish Influence

I was born in Manresa, Spain forty something trips around the sun ago. Manresa is a little town north of Barcelona. Growing up I enjoyed watching Juan Tamariz on TV, and got his magic kit like most of the kids my age. I played with it for a while, but it was not until college that I got hooked thanks to a magic organization on campus.

There I learned about the magic of Ascanio and performed some shows for fellow students. Soon after I got my degree in Computer Science in Barcelona, I came to the US and I met Mike Taggart. His wife worked at the same university as me, and he brought me to the IBM meetings all the way from Fredericksburg. Soon after that we moved to Alexandria, so I started coming more regularly.

I love all types of magic, my favorite is card magic because of the Spanish influence, but I found every other branch fascinating. My favorite magicians include Juan Tamariz, Dani DaOrtiz, Woody Aragon, Gabi Pareras, Joe Barry, Patrick Redford, Ben Blau, and many more!

Even though my main focus is card magic, I'm not a highly technical card guy, or a move monkey. I love magic based on subtleties and subtle principles. Some of you have also met my son Daniel, he is a member of our Youth program. He is currently 10 years old, and only half interested in magic, but maybe



the bug bites him later in life like many of us.

I have a day job developing integrations for Student Information Systems for Colleges and Universities across the US (and a handful of international clients), so I'm not performing professionally.

Among other skills, I'm also a black belt in judo, I used to compete in my teenage years, and used to play chess on a team when I was a kid.

I can spend the whole day watching or talking about magic, please stop me anytime to show me whatever you are working on. I'll be happy to give you feedback or just watch. Also, whenever you have any question about a trick or a technique, just let me know, I'm always happy to help.

# Chuck Jones and Scott Alexander Team Up to Produce Amazing Magic Trick

*EDITOR'S NOTE: Ring 50 member Chuck Jones (who recently adopted the stage name Chuck Thomas – his first and last names – to avoid confusion with a more established magician named Chuck Jones), has teamed up with Scott Alexander (who lectured for Ring 50 last September) to produce a version of the old spike through balloon trick. With a hefty price tag of \$250, this trick is definitely designed for serious professional performers.*

*Here is an explanation to the trick from Scott's website:*

*Scott has reimagined the legendary Robert Gurtler's (aka Andre Kole) Spike Through Balloon, and created a new take and delightfully clever method, wherein the spike and tube can be completely examined by the audience.*

*Here is Chuck's explanation of how it came about.*

In 2019, I developed an original routine for the old Spike through Balloon trick, using an orange juice label, a nail, and a straw. I performed this trick at a Ring 50 meeting in



**Chuck Jones**

November 2019 and onstage at the Apollo Theater in Martinsburg WV later that month.

After watching a video of my performance, Scott Alexander expressed interest in re-inventing the trick and basing it around my routine. During the pandemic, he and I collaborated two states away from each other, and what emerged is a new trick called *Juice-Pop*, which is now available

through Scott's website and which will soon be available through magic shops.

In his written promotional material, instructional video, and written instructions with the trick, Scott talks about my performance. Specifically, he says,

*Sometimes you see a routine and realize that it is a perfect fit for you. When I saw Chuck Thomas' performance of Andre Kole's Spike Through Balloon, I thought I could really make something out of this for my act. Not only that, but I had a bunch of ideas I wanted to add to it to make it even more compelling. Chuck was kind enough to let me run with his premise and Juice Pop is the result. Thanks Chuck!*



**Scott Alexander**

You can see the trailer for Juice Pop at <https://vimeo.com/450582917>

Juice Pop is available on Scott's website at: <http://scottalexander.bigcartel.com/product/juice-pop>

# Did You Know?

*By John S. Roberts*

That in July, 1977, Ring 50 hosted the 49<sup>th</sup> I.B.M. Convention at the Washington Hilton Hotel? The four-day magical conclave kicked off on Wednesday night, July 6<sup>th</sup>, with an opening show produced by Ring 50 with

Al Cohen as Master of Ceremonies. Kohl & Company was a featured act which they reprised nearly 50 years later in 2018 at Ring 50's annual Magi-Whirl.

Howard Bamman wrote in the Linking Ring: \* "Washington Capital Ring 50 members went all out to provide an evening of entertainment, fun and fellowship that proved to be an auspicious beginning for the rest of the convention. It was a showcase that set the stage for shows to come. Producers Larry West and Art Emerson, together with Ring 50 members, did an outstanding job of keeping the (magic community) happy."

Ring 50 Past President (1974-5) Bill Wells was the liaison between the convention organizers and Ring 50. He says "The local Ring played a bigger role at that time than they do today. We were responsible for the first night show, the convention program, and many other details." The President of Ring 50 that convention year was Doc Dougherty.

Throughout the four days, Ring 50 members played various support functions to keep the convention running smoothly. Prominent magicians who took part included Paul Gertner, Trevor Lewis, The Gustafsons, Harry Riser, Tony

Griffith, Mike Caveney, Denny and Lee and Rick Johansson.

Bill Wells: "Jimmy Carter was President at that time and we invited Amy Carter to attend one of the evening shows and to our delight, the White House accepted. We moved IBM VIPs off the front row to make room for Amy and her entourage. After the show, Amy came back stage to meet and thank all the acts. One of the acts was Christian from East Germany (not Magic Christian from Vienna). We later learned that he was actually a Russian spy using magic as a cover. I guess the secret service didn't do a great job of vetting in those days.

Howard Bamman wrote in the Linking Ring: "Trying to review a set of magic shows of the caliber presented at the Washington Convention (July 6-9) is something like describing the thrill of seeing a glorious sunrise. Words are somehow inadequate. From the opening night fun and frolic to the closing showing show convention registrants were treated to magic, Magic, MAGIC!

Bill Wells recalls: "Working on the convention was a great thing for Ring 50 – most everyone pitched in and worked on the convention. It really strengthened the Ring. Those years and the next few years were high points for the Ring and the membership. Because of hotel rates and theatre unions it is unlikely there will be another IBM convention in D.C. in the foreseeable future particularly with the declining convention attendances."