



MAGI-GRAM



Official Newsletter of IBM Ring 50 -- The National Capital Ring -- Volume 75 No. 5 May 2021

Members Open Mic Night June 2

Show Us Your Stuff in Zoom Meeting

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PERFORMERS WANTED! Show us your stuff at the June 2 meeting when it's Members Open Mic Night at Ring 50.

Members will have eight minutes to perform using the Zoom platform.

The Open Mic night will be in lieu of the annual Dan Lacey Contest which we usually have every Spring. We'll wait until we meet again in person to resume that tradition. This is not a competition, so show us what you're working on.

Members who wish to perform for fun and the acclaim of their peers should contact Vice President Danny Selnick at vp@ibmring50.org.

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Joshua Jay Lecture July 7

World-renown magician Joshua Jay will lecture for members of Ring 50 exclusively at our July 7 virtual meeting.

Watch your email from Ring 50 for connection details.

Josh will be our third lecturer this year - following Mahdi Gilbert and Chris Capehart - to have fooled Penn and Teller on *Fool Us*.

He is a Guinness World Record holder for card tricks and has performed as the headliner in nearly 100 countries. He is a former World Champion in close-up magic and



has appeared on numerous television shows including *Good Morning America*, *The*
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SHABUM! to Lecture and Perform in August

Our Aug. 4 meeting will feature children's magician Shabum! a professional entertainer who has had his own magic television show for kids in Puerto Rico for over 20 years. Think of it as a cross between Captain Kangaroo, Mr. Rogers and Mister Wizard.

Like we did with the FizzWizzPop lecture in



January, Shabum! will give a 20-minute show for kids, so be ready to invite your relatives

Donation Will Boost Ring 50

Thanks to the generosity of a Maryland resident, Ring 50 has become the beneficiary of an extensive magic collection that should boost our treasury by several thousand dollars.

Early last month, John Ruppenthal, who is not a Ring 50 member, donated seven boxes of magic, mostly geared to children's performers, to Ring 50. Many of the items were in new or very good condition. Some might be rare. The Board considered selling them at auction to the Ring 50 members, but some of the items might be very valuable and the Board decided that auctioning the items solely to the Ring would not raise as much revenue as through a broader sale.

As a result, Vice President Danny Selnick and Board member Marc Carrion were authorized to ship the entire contents of the donation to Hocus Pocus Magic for a general sale to the magic community. Treasurer Bob Patterson gave a preliminary estimate that the collection might be worth in excess of \$5,000.

Here is how John Ruppenthal described his decision to donate the items to Ring 50:

"I used to perform magic for kids when I was younger, mainly birthday parties and my own shows along with my brother and best friend. We had a very elaborate script and the show featured puppets and my assistant. I rediscovered my love for the art many years later when I was recovering from back surgery at the age of 40. I started collecting effects both to perform for my kids and friends, but also because I just loved understanding how a trick worked. I amassed quite a collection over the years including a lot of effects that I bought just because it looked beautiful. Many of those effects were never used but were only put on display. Some of those were what I donated to Ring 50. I don't know what will become of all that I gave the Ring yesterday, but I hope that some is put to use in teaching a new generation of aspiring magicians the beauty of the craft."

and friends with young children. Then we will have the members-only lecture.

The theme of the lecture by Shabum! will be Teaching Magic Tricks to Children.

Kids love magic and there are many tricks you can teach them with regular household items or a deck of cards—they can even be animal cards. Many of us have, at one time or another at family gatherings, been asked to teach the kids some magic tricks. Shabum! will show us how.

Here is a link to a clip from Shabum's TV show on Telemundo in which he teaches an easy magic trick using rubber bands. This is in Spanish, but Shabum! will be lecturing for Ring 50 in English.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hPcCY5Z_uYU

Shabum! was a member of the I.B.M. Ring in Miami, where he grew up before moving to Puerto Rico. He's been president of the S.A.M. Assembly in Puerto Rico and was on the cover of M.U.M. magazine in 2019.

Watch your email from Ring 50 as we get closer to the meeting for details.

This Zoom meeting is only for Ring 50 members.

Chris Capehart Lectured May 5

Second 'Fool Us' Winner in Two Months

By Drew Owen

The May meeting featured a very entertaining and informative lecture by Chris Capehart. Chris, who was a "Fool Us" winner earlier this year, is an acclaimed children's performer and has been doing magic for over 50 years. His ring routine is legendary, as is his comedy. He has performed at The Magic Castle, Monday Night Magic in New York City, in Las Vegas and at the Blackpool Magic Convention in Blackpool, England. He's also featured in the March issue of The Linking Ring.

Chris told us about how he started out in magic by performing on the streets in New York for 15 hours a day, seven days a week. With that kind of experience, he seems to be ready to survive in any situation and the pandemic has been no exception.

Like many magicians, he has found ways to do successful shows using zoom and he shared some of what he's learned with us. The first task is to make sure people can see the trick well.

Chris has at least three cameras set up and uses a device called a Stream Deck to operate them. He also has his cameras set up on ceiling mounted tripods so they are not in the way on the floor. He switched to an overhead camera to show us a nice trick with four cards and also the Tenyo



Honeycomb trick, which Chris recommends.

Chris said he loves to get the kids to react and likes them to stay unmuted so he can hear them. He showed us his favorite running gag, one that gets the kids shouting. After emptying the water out of a vase, he places a stuffed rabbit on top, its bottom aimed over the opening (sometimes he uses an unclothed baby doll for this).

Later, the vase ends up full of "water." He keeps coming back to the rabbit and emptying out the vase numerous times throughout the show.

One advantage Chris finds in online shows is that small illusions can look big. He showed us a small production box that he'd had for years and never

used. On zoom, the box can fill the screen. We could all see into the empty box before he closed it and then made a live dove appear inside. He encouraged us to look at some of our unused magic props and see if they might work in a virtual setting.

Chris showed us how he was still able to use some of the classic tricks he is known for in his Zoom shows. His linking ring routine looks great on the

screen because he can come in close to the camera, making it look even more impossible. Chris shared with us the secret of a very magical link he created that works especially well virtually. The Miser's Dream also works, even when the audience is not in the same room. Chris has the kids throw imaginary coins at the camera and he catches them in his bucket. He

also plucks coins from the ears of his stuffed rabbit or from other props. It all works as long as you can still hear the coins fall into the bucket.



Even though he has successfully adapted his magic to online settings, Chris said he

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Conjurers Learn Tricks, Make Gimmicks at May Meeting

Members of the Ring 50 Conjurers learned three magic tricks at the May 5 meeting including a vanish effect, a levitation effect, and an optical illusion effect that is commonly performed by professionals.

This was a hands-on

meeting as Conjurers learned to make two different

gimmicks for card tricks from Youth Activities Director Louis Meyer. The goal was to make tricks that work particularly well on Zoom or other video platforms.

After a discussion of learning magic through the Boy Scouts, and Louis' first unsuccessful attempt to do a Houdini-type escape from real police handcuffs, attention turned to the first trick of the meeting: a flash vanish.

Louis held a cotton swab in one

After Louis revealed the secret to setting up the trick, members of the Conjurers quickly

demonstrated

their mastery of the effect.

The next trick

involved five playing cards (actually six,

but we'll get to that later) of any

denomination. This is a great trick to do if you have an old deck, even one without all the cards.

Louis carefully placed five cards on his open palm in a fan held down by his thumb. Then he turned his palm over so the cards were facing the floor, and he released his thumb. The cards seemed to float just beneath his hand.

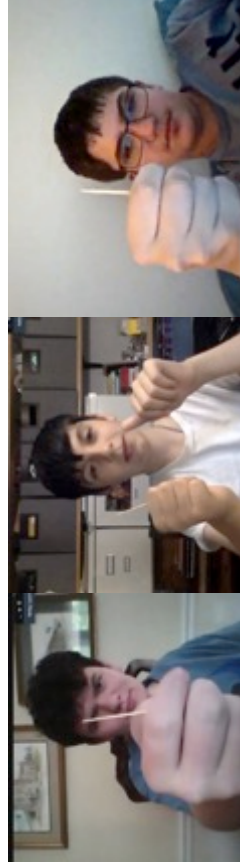
For this trick, Louis explained that the

Conjurers

needed to make a gimmick out of a sixth playing card with the



Now you see the cotton swab; now you don't.



hand and suddenly it was gone. It was

obvious that he had not just dropped the swab. He held it in a clenched fist and when he opened his hand and visibly showed his empty palm, the swab had vanished. Louis noted that the trick could also be done with a toothpick, and suggested that for Conjurers who have smaller hands than an adult, a toothpick might be a better choice.

Conjurers show they are up for the challenge.

use of an Xacto-type knife and adult

assistance, if necessary, to cut a flap out of the middle of the card. Another card is then glued to the gimmicked card, being careful not to glue the flap.

Louis then demonstrated how to use the flap gimmick and how to arrange the five visible cards

Conjurors Get Hands-On Experience Making Tricks

in the performer's hand in order to get maximum impact from the effect. After a few additional instructions, all of the Conjurors were levitating their fan of cards beneath their hand.

The final trick is one that is sold online and in magic shops already made up, but

Louis demonstrated how it can easily be made from five old playing cards. The only requirement is that one of the cards be obviously different from the other four. For example, using a red



The cards seemingly levitate.

Queen with four black number cards.

The five cards are shown side-by-side in the magician's



Assembling the middle card trick

hand. The red Queen is in the middle. The cards are then turned so that the backs are facing the spectator. The spectator is then asked to put the paperclip, or tell the magician where to put the paperclip, on the group of cards so that it will clip the Queen on the other side. Spectators invariably will put the clip on the middle card's back—but that won't be the Queen when the cards are turned over.

Louis explained how to build this puzzling illusion using five cards and a glue stick and paperclip.

After learning the three tricks, there was a discussion of the merits of the Invisible Deck.

As the meeting was ending, Louis invited the Conjurors to connect to the Ring 50 meeting featuring Chris Capehart. One of the benefits of being a member of the Conjurors is that they can also attend the Ring meetings and lectures.

After five years of guiding Ring 50's youth group (formerly known as The Counts of Conjuring, now The Conjurors) with monthly meetings, Louis will be stepping down after the June meeting and turning the reins over to Drew Owen, who performs magic for children as Professor Fizzwiffle.

Louis introduced Drew to the Conjurors during the meeting and Drew said he was looking forward to working with the youth group.

The June meeting of the Conjurors will be devoted to a summation of the material the youth have learned over the months and years that Louis has headed the program.

-- Larry Lipman



Drew Owen will take over as Youth Activities Director at the July meeting as Louis steps down after five years of guiding the Ring 50 youth group now known as The Conjurors (formerly The Counts of Conjuring).



I.B.M. is Having a 3-Day Virtual Show in July

I.B.M. Convention Registration Chairman (and Ring 50 Treasurer) Bob Patterson has announced that “out of an abundance of caution the I.B.M. made the decision to postpone our Live 2021 Convention in Pittsburgh and we are converting it into a virtual interactive experience, where everyone gets a front row seat.

“If you have rolled over your Pittsburgh convention

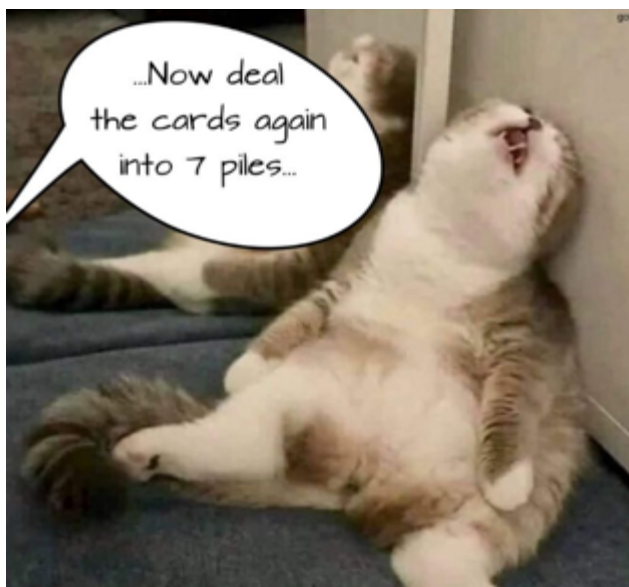
registration to the celebration of 100 years of the I.B.M., at our 2022 convention in Atlanta, you will automatically be registered for our 2021 virtual convention, which will take place on the evening of July 8, all day July 9, and all day July 10, 2021 **FREE OF CHARGE**.

“If you were not registered for the Pittsburgh convention you can still

enjoy the 3-day 2021 virtual convention for only \$99.

“This includes extending your digital membership for one year. To purchase this great event go to: www.magician.org/convention/online-2021-member

“We are excited for you to see what we have planned, and we appreciate you as loyal I.B.M. members,” Bob said.



Ring 50 Officers Elected

The following officers were elected May 5 to serve from July 2021 to June 2022.

President – Danny Selnick

Vice President – Craig Fifer

Treasurer – Bob Patterson

Secretary – Jason Goldberg

Sgt. at Arms – Reggie Rice

Magi-Gram Editor – Larry Lipman

Youth Activities Director – Drew Owen

At-large Board Member – Christophe Jelinski

At-large Board Member – Chuck Jones

Immediate past president – Craig Fifer



Danny Selnick

Who's Who in Ring 50

Christopher Biegun—Performer, Collector ***Systems Engineer Systematically Pursues Magic***

My vocation is a system engineer. Currently I work for a company named Black & Veatch, Integrated Services, providing biological weapons elimination for the Department of Defense globally. I spent 24 years in the US Air Force and another five in the Civil Service as a system engineer leading people, projects and missions in the Intelligence Operations field.

I have been an avid consumer of magic since about the age of 7, after seeing a live performance family show at the American Legion. Always amazed at the impossible, magic was a natural attraction for me. My first foray into magic was with Adams mail order effects “Chinese Linking Rings and Mystic Smoke from Fingertips”. I ordered these from the back page of “Boys Life” magazine, and I was hooked for life.

I have “dabbled” in magic since the age of 7. However, I have really only been pursuing my magic education and skills with any serious effort since 2005, and my introduction to IBM.

My major interest in magic is as broad as the craft itself. I adore Grand/Stage Illusions, but my budget does not. I tend to gravitate toward close up and parlor style magic. I consider myself a part-time, “professional, amateur.” Since 2005 I have offered pro-bono shows for numerous birthday parties, Blue & Gold banquets and to draw traffic to our services at corporate trade shows.



One day, when my vocation schedule allows, I hope to graduate to a true full-time professional. I love to collect unique effects and any magic literature or posters.

My favorite effects typically revolve around everyday objects. Nothing says “magical” like an effect using a borrowed object and having the magic happen in front of the donor.

Favorite magicians include David Copperfield and Jeff McBride (among so many others). My unwitting mentor(s) are all of you, my fellow Ring 50 members, to include my son Matt. I watch quietly as each of you so talented, contribute something to my education each meeting. I thank you for that. While only a 16-year IBM member, I look forward to on day joining the Order of Merlin.

My only non-magic accomplishments I would consider “outstanding” is my wife of nearly 32 years and my three wonderful kids: Ashley, Rachel and Matthew.

However, it is a great source of pride that I have served the US government and by extension many communities for the last 32 years.

Additional areas of interest include wood and metal working. I am currently looking into recreating some of the classic effects in fine woods.

Joshua Jay July 7

Tonight Show with Jimmy Fallon and *The Late, Late Show* with James Corden.

Josh is the author of several books, including the best-selling "MAGIC: The Complete

Course," and the upcoming "How Magicians Think." He has designed illusions for stage and screen, including a collaboration with HBO for *Game of Thrones*. He consulted with the U.S. Postal Service on the design for their postage stamp series Magic. He appeared at the Inaugural Ball for President Barack Obama in 2009 and gave private performances for President Bill Clinton.

In 2020, Josh was awarded Magician of the Year by the Society of American Magicians Parent Assembly for his contribution to the art of magic.

For Josh, and many of us, the pandemic has been a stressful test of our identities as magicians. Josh's lecture--which is an even mix of tricks and ideas--will also aim to refresh our purpose in magic. Josh will share insights into how he has evolved his repertoire as well as how he has evolved his relationship to magic.

The lecture that he created exclusively for Ring 50 will feature not only unpublished material for both virtual and in-person events,



but also an invigorating discussion on how to navigate this uncharted territory and find fulfillment in the most unexpected of places. Josh will cover:

- **Virtual ACAAN:** A new wrinkle on this classic plot that is optimized for virtual shows. It involves ANY card, ANY number, and ANY book chosen from your library. Intrigued? You'll use this.
- **The No-Card Index:** A fresh concept for being able to accurately predict ANY card named in a most unusual way. This plays well virtually or for small groups, but it plays particularly well for big groups on stage.
- **Into the Wild:** Josh's handling of the neo-classic Wild Card plot. This version focuses on hyper visuals and an ending that takes the plot to new heights.
- **Vinferno:** Josh's most popular creation, "Inferno," retooled for a virtual environment. This will include an unpacking of Josh's approach to "asymmetrical equivoque."



Magic Book Club Starts June 9

Ring 50 is starting a book club. Starting June 9, from 7-8 p.m. EDT, and running thereafter on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month, we'll host a magic book club starting with Roberto Giobbi's **Card College Light**. Come join us as we start on the Intro and Routine 1 from Card College Light, the first volume in the series.

Bring ideas to practice, tips to share, questions, or anything else from the book you'd like to discuss! We'll work through a new routine every other week.

(Please note: We are covering routines each time we meet, not individual tricks, so the first session covers up to Page 19.)

If you have questions, please contact Jason Goldberg at hawaiiisun@earthlink.net.

We'll send out Zoom info as time gets closer.

If you can't attend the first session but would like to join later on, no worries, just let Jason know so we can keep a running list. We'll send out reminders for each meeting ahead of time.

Chris Capehart Fools Us

looks forward to performing in person again and doesn't plan to continue virtual shows after the pandemic. He told us that he had invested in an expensive sawing in half illusion that he could use with a child from the audience. He used it exactly once before Covid closed down all his in person shows. He's looking forward to getting back to that and some other bigger illusions such as a levitation effect called "Up and Away" that he loves to use. He told us we can charge a lot more money for shows when we include illusions like these.

Most of us have watched Chris's winning performance on Penn and Teller's "Fool Us" by now and were very interested to hear about his experience on the show. He told us a little about how his routines were slightly edited so they did not look exactly the way they did live. It was amusing to hear that the baby pictures that we see in the introductory montage for his segment were not actually of him but of his son. Chris said "They just asked for baby pictures. They didn't say whose baby pictures." Chris demonstrated the three tricks he performed on "Fool Us," the Ninja card which falls over when he points at it, the light bulb that lights on command even when out of



blown up within another balloon. He fooled Penn and Teller by making the inner balloon burst on his signal without damaging the outer balloon. Although Penn and Teller claimed to know how the other two tricks were done, Chris isn't sure they

really knew.

He gave us a few ideas about how all three tricks were done but without fully exposing all of his methods. His advice for anyone who wants to fool Penn and Teller: "Don't try to use a big illusion. You're more likely to fool them with something small."



Julian Oteyza May 22
Katherine Rettke June 6
Bob Ellis June 16



Comedy Magic Show @ the State. Chuck Jones (performing as Chuck Thomas) joins Scott Alexander, Wayne Gonce, and Glenn Edwards in a live show **Friday, May 28**, at the State Theater, 325 St. John St., Have de Grace, Md. <https://fb.me/e/1iaaNIEWU>.

Brian Curry—The Good Liar. Brian Curry performs his one-man mentalism show **May 15 and May 29 and June 11** at the Capital Hilton Hotel, 1001 16th St. N.W. Washington D.C. <https://www.agoodliar.com/>

Reggie Rice—Adult Comedy Magic Show. – Reggie Rice with special guest DJ Dallas at TapHouse 1637 **May 29**. TapHouse 1637, 23418 Three Notch Rd. California, MD. <https://themagicoflaughterllc.ticketspice.com/reggie-rice-tap-house-comedy-magic-show>

ACE Magic Dealer Demo Brings Tricks From Across the Pond

By Drew Owen

Ring 50's April 22 "bonus" meeting was a dealer demo lecture by Stevo Watson, the director of ACE Magic Studio, which is a small company based in England that creates and sells original magic tricks and props. Stevo, a very enthusiastic and personable young man, started by telling about how he got into magic. He had played around with tricks from magic sets as a boy but never took it very seriously. During a family trip to Florida when he was in college, he wandered into a magic shop where the dealer demoed the "Vanishing Card Box" trick. It looked like real magic to him so he bought it. He started buying more tricks and books and eventually started creating his own magic. He is the inventor of several of the tricks ACE sells and actually makes the gimmicks himself by hand. He demonstrated some of his tricks including a card that changes instantly into a candy bar. This was very visual and looked like a camera trick.

Most of the effects ACE Magic Studio makes are small, easy to

carry around, and reasonably priced. Many use cards, but not always traditional playing cards.



Stevo showed us a nice trick by ACE founder Gary Sumpter that involved cards each printed with the names of famous cities. The spectator chooses a random card from the face down deck and the magician can instantly name the city. Not only that, when the cards are spread, they make a picture of a feature of that city: Big Ben, Eiffel Tower, Statue of Liberty, or Leaning Tower of Pisa.

Stevo told us that mentalism was an important part of ACE Magic Studio and demoed a nice trick called "Vegas Choice," which was very clever and gave plenty of space for the performer to personalize their presentation.



Another mentalism trick that looked very promising is a book test called "Screenplay."

This lecture was a great chance for our members to see some fun and original magic, buy some of the products at a discount, and just spend a little time with a very likeable guy who loves magic.

Be Sure to
Keep Your
I.B.M. Member-
ship 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.



January 13-17, 2022

Whether you are a magician, clown, face painter, balloon artist or ventriloquist, Kapital Kidvention has everything for the Children's Entertainer, including tons of business classes to get more gigs.

If you are a children's entertainer and don't attend Kapital Kidvention next year, you will be missing a good one. Kapital Kidvention is a must for any family entertainer. Keep January 13-17 open for Kapital Kidvention to be held again at the Hilton Mark Center.

You can't register yet, but there will be a special Deal Day on Sept. 13 when you can register for \$225.

For more information, go to: info@kapitalkidvention.com or 703-765-1923.