



# MAGI-GRAM



Official Newsletter of IBM Ring 50 -- The National Capital Ring -- Volume 75 No. 11 November 2021

## December Meeting: Open Performance Night

### Children's Holiday Show Canceled

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Because most young people have not yet been fully vaccinated, and are not likely to be so by December, Ring 50's board of directors has decided to cancel this year's Holiday Children's Magic Show.

Instead, we will be holding an evening of **Ring 50 Members Perform a Trick You're Working On.**

This will be an opportunity for you to audience-test material you are working on in front of a friendly audience of magicians at Ring 50. Each person will get five minutes maximum to perform.

The idea is to work on your material and have fun.

If you already have a polished routine you want to showcase and record in front of a live audience, here's a great chance to do so.

For those who are new to the Ring, this will be a chance to see how much of a fun club we are. If you are nervous about performing in public, here is a chance to perform in front of a friendly audience.

We urge you to give it a try.

Members who wish to perform, please send a note to President Danny Selnick at [president@ibmring50.org](mailto:president@ibmring50.org) no later than Nov. 25. Tell Danny something about the trick you plan to perform—whether it is mentalism, children's magic, cards, coins, etc.

These do not have to be well-polished routines. If you have a work in progress and need some input, or you want to polish what you already think is a finished routine, this will be the perfect opportunity to take your trick to the next level.



**Dec. 1 – Improve Your Magic**

**Jan. 5 – Teach-In**

**Feb. 2 – Henry 'Box' Brown**

**March 2 – TBA**

**April 6 – Dan Lacey Contest**

**May 4 – Randy Shine**

**June 1 – Member Favorites**

## Looking for January Teach-In Instructors

Member Teach-Ins have long been a popular activity of Ring 50. This year, for the January meeting, we are looking for four members to teach various aspects of magic.

But instead of Ring leaders picking the topics, we are looking for members who feel they have something to offer to come forward with a topic they want to teach. Maybe it is a performance technique. Maybe it's a trick that goes beyond the boundaries of normal cards, coins, ropes and other props tricks.

New Ring 50 member Mark Phillips, who has been performing professionally for decades, has volunteered to teach a wand spin vanish (so bring a wand).

We're looking for three more folks who have something they want to teach, particularly if they have not been a teacher for a few years. We're looking for a wider variety of volunteer instructors.

If you have something to offer – remember it doesn't have to be lengthy, each session will be about 15 to 20 minutes—please contact Danny Selnick at [president@ibmring50.org](mailto:president@ibmring50.org).

## February

# The Life and Magic of Henry 'Box' Brown

You didn't learn this history in school. Henry 'Box' Brown was a Virginia slave who earned his nickname after he literally mailed himself to freedom inside a wooden box addressed to a Philadelphia abolitionist.

He later became a public speaker and in 1850 fled to England where he was an illusionist and conjuror.

He returned in 1875 with a family and a magic act, which he continued performing in the U.S. until the late 1880s.

In honor of Black History Month, Ohio magician Rory Rennick will tell the story of



*Rory Rennick*

Henry 'Box' Brown at our **Feb. 2, 2022** meeting and demonstrate some magic of the period.

Be sure not to miss this unusual and informative meeting.

## Magi-Whirl



While we had originally planned to hold Magi-Whirl 2022 in March, there's still so much uncertainty because of the pandemic that the Ring 50 Board has decided to hold off until we get more clarity on the situation.

Putting on Magi-Whirl has so many moving parts -- not least the big expense of the venue -- as well as finding and getting lecturers and performers, issues with travel and transportation, advertising to get regional magicians to attend, and the public for the Saturday evening gala show.

We'll be monitoring the situation, so stay tuned.

## The Treasurer is Now Collecting Dues for 2022

The Ring 50 annual dues of **\$20** for 2022 are due by February 28.

Ring 50 Treasurer Bob Patterson requests that you pay by check, as this eases the record keeping. Make checks payable to **IBM Ring 50**. Please send your check to his home address at Bob Patterson, 3450 Wainscott Place, Lake Ridge, VA 22192-5362.

Or you may pay by PayPal at [Payments@IBMRing50.Org](mailto:Payments@IBMRing50.Org) as "Sending to a friend." Your 2022 Ring 50 membership card will be sent upon receipt of payment.

Enjoy your Ring activities and the Magi-Gram throughout 2022 by paying your dues now.

# Larry Hass Unveils Eugene Burger's *Final Secrets*

## Jim Holloway Recounts the Lyceum's Magical History

By Jason Goldberg

The Ring got our second in-person meeting in over 19 months off to a grand start with about 35 members in attendance and the announcement that five new members had joined the Ring! In addition, the Capital Conjurers had five members join us in-person. Maybe we really are starting to get back to normal.

President Danny Selnick handed Ring 50 membership cards and certificates to four new members at the meeting: Larry Hass, Vicky Chang, Mark Phillips and Haig Colter. A fifth member, John Swomley was not in attendance.

If you have not yet been able to join us in person, you're in for a treat when you do. This was my first time back with the Ring, and the Lyceum is an amazing building. You can feel the history when you enter. That history, as it turns out, includes more than a little magic. Jim Holloway, the facilities coordinator for the Lyceum, started off the evening with a talk about magicians who had performed at the Lyceum between 1839, when it was built, and 1868, when it was sold to a private owner. (It was purchased by the City of Alexandria in 1969 and became the city's history museum in 1985.) Holloway found the first recorded performance, which included Mons. de Courcey, occurred in 1841 and was part of a variety show including Austrian folk music and tight rope dancing. In a surprising move, the show was prohibited two days later, but was reinstated three months later without reason. Holloway suggested



*Jim Holloway (left) and Larry Hass, watched over by a bust of Seneca, lectured at the November meeting.*

it might have been due to perceptions that magic was perhaps too low-brow for such a venue, but declining ticket sales in magic's absence restored its esteem!

The clippings for the offerings could be exhaustive. Holloway shared an advertisement for Mr. Young's show, whose performance list ran almost an entire page, including an explicit statement that his performance was done "without the agency of the Arch One." This led to calls from the audience for an evening of magic by Ring 50 members drawn from this set list; stay tuned. Other performers Holloway noted included Signor Blitz, who performed for President Lincoln, Monsieur Philippe, Haskell, and Wyman the Wizard, each of whom brought their own

unique styles to the venue. Holloway concluded by saying that he was glad magic is back in the Lyceum. Ring 50 has a strong legacy to uphold.

Our featured speaker for the evening, Larry Hass, the philosopher magician, set the bar for New Member Night. As he noted, the Lyceum was also the name of Aristotle's school in Athens, so it was appropriate that Hass was able to share his lecture about Eugene Burger for the first time, on his way to a tour that concludes with FISM. Hass and Burger had a long-standing and close friendship

that started back in 1994 when they met and Hass was mesmerized by Burger's use of magic as an artform. Burger became a featured performer and speaker when Hass was offering his seminars at Muhlenberg College in Pennsylvania, and they later worked together at Jeff McBride's Magic and Mystery School.

In 2010, Burger asked Hass to compile, write, and publish all of his material after Burger passed. While he wanted to guard his material while he was alive, he felt it was important to share it with the magic community when the time was right. Hass had to agree to publish only after Burger passed away, and he had to keep it a secret to avoid questions while Burger was alive. In 2017, Burger was diagnosed with cancer and died, and Hass kept his word, publishing *From Beyond* in 2019 and *Final Secrets* in 2021 (both on Halloween).

*Continued next page*



# Welcome New Ring 50 Members



Four new members were formally inducted into I.B.M. Ring 50 at the November meeting. At left, President **Danny Selnick** is joined by new members **Haig Colter**, **Mark Phillips** and **Vicky Chang**. At right, **Larry Hass** shows the membership certificate he and all the other new members received from Danny.

## Larry Hass Unveils Eugene Burger's *Final Secrets*

The lecture consisted of four pieces that Hass believe best highlight Burger's principles. He started with "Spot Card," a trick that was known back in the 1600s but became popular in the 1900s. This is a well-known piece where dots on a card grow in number and multiply. Burger chose to perform Merv Taylor's version because Burger wasn't fond of magnets and thought the spots never lined up properly. Given that so many of us use the magnetized version, Burger's version became a real magician-fooler! Hass shared this version in part to highlight Burger's



belief that not all improvements are really improvements, and that it's worth reading books written before 1950 because techniques get forgotten and we can get caught up in the "tyranny of the new."

"Not Cutting to the Aces" was the last trick Burger worked on, and it was one he presented as a display of skill. He based it on Dick Koornwinder's control card. As presented, the magician is able to

immediately cut to the four tens after the spectator has cut the deck. Surprisingly, the method for each cut is the same, but Burger's presentation made it appear as if finding each ten

increased the difficulty. (Even though, in fact, the method is surprisingly easy!) In Burger's view, every magician needs some strong after-dinner close-up magic, and this trick fit the bill. And why the Tens instead of the Aces, you ask? Because everyone else cuts to the Aces, so why not be different?



One of our new members, Vicky Chang, helped Hass with his third piece, "Thought Sender." Hass said

*Continued next page*



# Unveiling the Performance Secrets of *Final Secrets*

that this is the trick that made him want to be a magician when he saw it in 1994. Through a process of elimination, Vicky came to a selected card that was

revealed to be the only red-backed card in a blue-backed deck. Hass shared this piece for a few reasons. First, it's personally important to him. Next, he highlighted the distinction between this trick and the Invisible Deck, a popular trick that Burger felt could be improved. Third, it shows brilliant psychological thinking; equivoque is used, but not always, which steers spectators down the rabbit hole. Finally, it highlights the importance of

good spectator selection and management.

The last piece was one of Burger's favorites, "Influence," and Hass shared a video of Burger performing it. It's a version of Marlo's "Ace of Spades," where a spectator tells the performer to stop as cards are dealt. Burger then flipped

over the selected card to reveal it was the only one with an X on its back. Next, another selected card is revealed to be one hiding in plain view under the

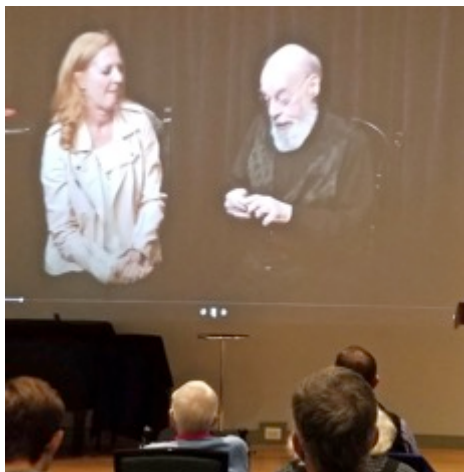


magician's closeup mat. It's one of those pieces that is simply amazing to watch Burger work.

Hass

concluded the lecture by noting that Burger tried to unfailingly channel David Devant, who said his tricks were, "All done by kindness."

If you ever saw him perform, you know Burger could be many things in his performance – comedic, mysterious, always compelling. And always



*Eugene Burger shows his "Influence."*

kind to his audience, wanting them to

leave completely astonished and with great memories. Burger wanted *From Beyond* and *Final Secrets* published because he knew magicians would want to know how he did it, and with a wish that we could continue as practitioners of the art to continue to be kind to our audiences too.

# James Munton to Lecture at Kapital Kidvention

James Munton, who served as Ring 50 president from 2000 to 2001, is scheduled to lecture at the 2022 Kapital Kidvention, run by three-term Ring 50 president Louis Meyer.



The annual convention of children's entertainers—including magicians, balloon twisters and face painters—will be held Jan. 13 – 17 at the Hilton Mark Center in Alexandria.

James is a highly successful magician, often performing as the Spy Magician James Wand, (he comes by the British accent legitimately).

James moved to the Dallas area in 2007 and quickly rebuilt his magic business from scratch. He taught his methods in the course Zero to Booked Solid. James will be sharing some of his favorite magic routines and business building skills at Kapital Kidvention.

Registration is at [www.kapitalkidvention.com](http://www.kapitalkidvention.com).

**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.**

## Dan Lacey Memorial Contest Set For April Meeting

Dan Lacey was the Ring 50 president in 1999 and 2000. His second year as president was cut short by his tragic death from cancer.

Dan was a wonderful magician, but was also a mentor to many people just starting in magic.

After his death, the Ring 50 Board unanimously decided to establish a contest in 2003 for the Dan Lacey Memorial Trophy in his honor. A few years later, a Ring 50 president, in a burst of enthusiasm, dubbed the winner the “D.C. Magician of the Year.” But since the contest is not open to all magicians in the Washington area, the winner might be more accurately dubbed “The Ring 50 Magician of the Year.”

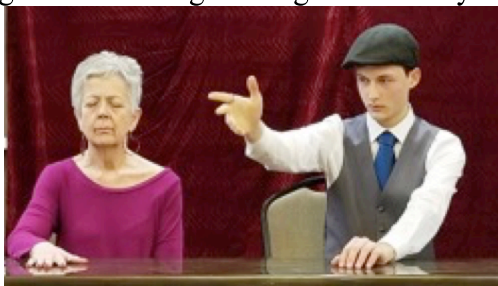
The contest was suspended last year because of covid, but is scheduled to resume this year at the April meeting.

Although the specific rules and judging criteria have not yet been set for the 2022 contest, winning routines have historically been those that were original performances with a high level of technical ability.

It’s not too soon to start thinking of what you might do to win the prestigious Dan Lacey Memorial Trophy next April and earn the prestigious title “Ring 50 Magician of the year.”



*Dan Lacey*



*Christophe Jelinski, seen here with Dan Lacey's sister Cecilia Ritchie in 2018, won the Dan Lacey Memorial Trophy in 2018 and again in 2019, the most recent year the contest was held.*

## Ran'D to Lecture on Steps to Becoming a Better Entertainer at May Meeting

Randy Shine, who goes by the stage name Ran'D and is one of the hottest magicians today on the college performance scene, will be our lecturer for the May 4 meeting.

Ran'D's lecture will focus on **Practical Theory / Practical**

**Magic: Steps to becoming a Better Entertainer.** According to Ran'D, “there is a difference between being a magician and being a magic entertainer. Becoming a magic entertainer is not solely about how skillful you are or the difficulty of tricks.”

In this lecture Ran'D said he will share some of his methods and techniques he has used to entertain thousands of audiences across the country, get on national television and win College Magician of the Year twice.

“Here's the best part,” Ran'D said in an email, “it doesn't make a difference if you are full time, part time, or a hobbyist, you will get some valuable information from this lecture that you can immediately apply.”

Among the topics Ran'D will cover are: how to engage from the stage; the value of being authentic, Digital Divide (his newest and effective marketing secret); 4 Finger Opener: A quick and easy opening effect; and AKAN Divination. A simple card divination using, the double-blind principle.

Ran'D performed at President Barack Obama's 2009 inauguration banquet and did 20 performances at The South African National Arts Festival in Grahamstown, South Africa.

Ran'D prides himself on being an historian and “educator of magic.” He has lectured on campuses throughout the United States as well as military bases in Japan, Guam, and Korea. Remarkably,

He has also performed at Hollywood's Magic Castle as well as Monday Night Magic, New York's longest running Off-Broadway magic show. He was also a contestant on Penn and Teller's “Fool Us.”





# President's Message

President Danny Selnick



## Let's Make Our New and Existing Ring 50 Members Feel Welcome

I was delighted to see so many people attend November's Ring meeting featuring Jim Holloway, director of The Lyceum, who gave a talk on the history of magic performances and lectures that were held so many years ago in the very room we're now meeting in at the Lyceum. Jim's talk was followed by a super interesting and

fun lecture Dr. Larry Hass, who's just published his final book on Eugene Burger's unpublished secrets. (BTW, Larry has also joined Ring 50 having just moved to the area -- so we hope to see more of him at our meetings.)

What really jazzed me up beyond the lectures was that we also inducted five new IBM Ring 50 members (one was not at the meeting) -- which brings me to another thought. Our club continues to be a place for magicians and magic enthusiasts, and we're



*Danny Selnick welcomes people to the October*

growing -- which is so important to the art and our club. With our growing numbers, I'd like to ask that we remember to take a moment to welcome these newbies and help them feel at home.

And while I'm at it, I'm sure we all don't know even "regular" members of the club, so I'm hoping we all try and make an effort to say "hi" and introduce ourselves to anyone we don't know.

So at our December meeting, let's make an effort to say "hi" to people we don't know and get to know them. It could be as easy as asking them what kind of magic they enjoy or how did they get started in magic. Who knows -- you might just find your new best friends. That's what I've gotten at Ring 50... a whole lot of best friends who share the same interests.

*Danny*



In his excellent book "Maximum Entertainment 2.0," Ken Weber, who lectured for Ring 50 in September, says on page 226: *"Never intimidate. At all costs, avoid words, facial expressions and gestures that in any way suggest displeasure. These lead to tension, and tension subverts entertainment. Always remain polite and friendly."*

The day after reading that, I came across this cartoon:



Richie Klein	Nov. 11
Haig Colter	Nov. 23
Tony Nichols	Dec. 2
Wayne Spillner	Dec. 10
Daniel Holtan	Dec. 14
Laurie Curry	Dec. 15
Danny Selnick	Dec. 16





## Conjurors Hold First In-Person Meeting Since the Pandemic

Members of the Capital Conjurers met in-person for the first time since the beginning of the pandemic at their November meeting in The Lyceum.

Youth Activities Director Drew Owen, a professional cellist and professional magician, began the meeting by introducing himself and asking the five Conjurers who attended this first in-person meeting to do the same. The Conjurers sat spaced apart at two tables and all wore masks.

Drew began the meeting by discussing one of his favorite classic magic tricks, the linking rings. But for the Conjurers' meeting he said he would do the trick with paper rings, rather than metal rings. Drew asked one of the Conjurers to join him in doing a paper version of the linking rings.

He took two long thin strips of paper and taped the ends to make a couple of loops. Then Drew and the Conjurer each cut their loops lengthwise to make two thin loops. But something unexpected happened.

Drew ended up with two individual loops while the Conjurer ended up with two linked loops.

With another Conjurer as the assistant, Drew tried it again. This time, he again got two unlinked loops, but the Conjurer got a single loop that was twice as long as it was originally.



*Youth Activities Director Drew Owen works with the Capital Conjurers.*

Drew explained the clever method of attaching the ends of the paper so that when it is cut lengthwise it either makes two unlinked loops, two linked loops or one very large loop.

# Conjurors Make a Magic Trick, Receive a Magic Trick and Learn a Magic Trick

Each of the Conjurors was then given a magic trick: the Stop Light Trick. This consists of two plastic cards, about the size of a business card. One



*Members of the Capital Conjurors proudly show off the various loops they made by cleverly taping and cutting a strip of paper.*

appears to have three dots on one side--red, yellow, green—so that it resembles a stop light. The other card appears to be blank on both sides.

Drew handed one card to a Conjuror and the other card to another Conjuror. Both covered their cards with their hands. After a bit of magical business, the stop light card in one Conjuror's hand showed only the red and yellow dots. The green dot was on the card in the other Conjuror's hand.

Drew said he plans to give every Conjuror a new magic trick at each meeting.

Displaying the *Mark Wilson Complete Course in Magic* book, Drew next taught the Conjurors a card trick from the book: The Fantastic Five.

One of the Conjurors took a card, looked at it and showed it to the other Conjurors. He then placed it on top of the deck and then buried it by cutting the deck.

The cards were placed on the table and

spread out. One card in the face-down spread was now face up. It was a 5. Drew said that was the "locator card," and the Conjuror counted five cards down

from it. The fifth card was turned over--

and it was the card originally chosen.

Pretty good trick.

But the trick wasn't over, yet. Drew then revealed that the four cards between the locator card and the selected cards were the four aces. Members of the Conjurors then practiced doing the trick.

The Capital Conjurors is the official youth group of I.B.M. Ring 50 and is open to girls and boys age 8 to 15 (although there are some Conjurors who have been in the group for several years and are now older than 15). There is no charge to join or be a member. The group meets at 6 p.m. on the first Wednesday of each month at The Lyceum, 201 S. Washington St., Alexandria. The meetings end just before 7 p.m. so the room can be vacated before the monthly Ring 50 meeting begins at 7:30. Conjurors who have been fully vaccinated will be allowed to attend future Ring 50 meetings.



# Who's Who in Ring 50

## Chris McCauley Bowers—Magic Camps and Martial Arts Classes

Magic has been a part of Chris McCauley Bowers' life from an early age. He thinks it began when he was about 5 years old and his mother helped him check out a children's book on magic from the Davis Library in Bethesda Md.

Chris received a magic set when he was 6 years old. A year later, a magician performed at his 7<sup>th</sup> birthday party. In the fifth grade, Chris and a friend, Javier Isquierdo, put on a magic duo show and that's when he became really fascinated with magic. When he was 11, he attended a magic camp at St. Alban's School, and when he was in the eighth grade talent show, he performed the appearing cane and a dove pan routine to the *Mission Impossible* theme song.

After graduating from Wheeling College with a major in philosophy in 2000, Chris used to hang out regularly at Barry's Magic Shop in Wheaton, MD, while he worked several odd jobs as a waiter, at an accountant firm, and for a used car dealership.

Chris talked to Barry fondly about magic camps where he learned magic and the possibility of running a camp himself. A few months later, Barry got a call from Washington Episcopal School looking for someone to run a magic camp, and handed Chris the phone. This was his first magic camp. Over the next 10 years and aided by the Harry Potter boom, Chris would expand to 25 weeks of magic camps at various locations in the MD/DC/VA region, as well as teaching

after school magic classes five days a week at various schools' after-care programs.

Chris met Eric Henning at an SAM/IBM meeting and began to go to magic lectures with him, as well as learn magic from him. This culminated in a performance above Barry's Magic Shop at the Psychic Ghost Theatre, which he filmed and used for promotion. Eric was impressed with not only his magic but his sense of humor, and became a lifelong mentor.

Chris has done magic camps all over the Washington D.C. area for two decades with Montgomery County Recreation, Anne Arundel County Recreation, Glen Echo Park, and at public and private schools for two decades now.

Because of the Harry Potter phenomenon, he was running 25 different week-long magic camps between 2006-2014. In 2014, after the phenomenon began to wane, he began his own martial arts organization and currently supervises 25 after school programs as Zen Budo Karate. He began taking martial arts at the age of 7 and specifically studies pressure points, and the original self defense applications of the art.

Chris enjoys learning and performing magic involving coins, equivoque, escapes and has performed close-up, parlor/stand-up at numerous venues. Among his favorite magicians are Jeff McBride, David Regal and former Ring 50 president Eric Henning. He has been a member of Ring 50 for two years.

Chris started an initiative called the Equal Arts Program, where he works in economically disadvantaged areas teaching both magic and martial arts under the

*Continued page 12*





# *The Play's the Thing*

**METAMAGIC**  
*Looking Behind Concepts*  
By Chris McCauley Bowers



"*The play's the thing wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king.*" So says Hamlet in Shakespeare's most famous and most performed play. We usually say it as an expression of the idea that the play is really important. And it's usually quoted without the second half of the line. If Hamlet can catch the conscience of a King with a play, we can do wonders with magic.

Here's something shocking. There are people that entertain others *without* any thumb tips, sleight of hand, or brightly colored boxes. Those people are called "Comedians," "Poets," "Public speakers," "Orators," and so forth. How can they possibly keep people's attention without a flash pot, a wand covered in sequins, or a mutilated parasol? But they do. In fact you don't even need magic at all to entertain people. Why? Because "*The play's the thing.*"

Think about all of the great magicians that you know of. I'll go first. If you watch an act with Jeff McBride in it, you aren't just going to get magic. You're going to get mime, music, kabuki, masks, drama and choreography. It will be a full-blown play.

With Eugene Burger you're going to get one heck of a story. He was an amazing storyteller. Remember, *The play's the thing!* What about someone like Fred Kaps? Well, in addition to incredible sleight of hand, you're going to get charisma, a sharp sense of humor and gosh, *quite* a snappy dresser, with a plot where things go wrong... until they go very right!

It is much better to think of a trick itself as a

"special effect" just like in a movie. We have all been to movies with overblown special effects and no real interesting content. Think about how terrible that is. Even a movie with incredible special effects falls flat when the plot has huge holes in it. We've all been there.

Albert Goshman in his book *Magic by Gosh* talks about how everyone likes his rising card trick the best. This incensed him because he was a sleight of hand artist and the trick was completely automated. What he realized was that with the absence of sleight of hand, he concentrated on presentation, the *play* itself.

Magic is what happens when a *trick* meets a *presentation*. At a lecture with Doc Eason I was asking about this very question and I'll never forget what he said: "*If you're looking*

*for that next big thing, that one trick that's going to make you a great magician: forget it!. You're never going to find it. It has to be you and come from within you. You have to have a personality and a presentation to go along with a trick.*"

I wasn't at this next lecture,

I only heard about it secondhand. But in the same way Chris Kenner, who was an advisor to David Copperfield (still is), was tired of hearing the same question over and over.

"*All of you always ask me, what's the thing that's going to get me onstage and on TV like David*



Jeff McBride

# ***The Play's the Thing***

*Copperfield? Well I'm about to show you the next piece of equipment that's going to do just that."*

Moving to the projector, he put up a slide. The slide was of an exercise treadmill.

Many people were offended, but I hope that you get the point, in an amusing way. The play is the thing! Not the props!

You don't need to be a huge storyteller to evoke the feeling of a play.

Let's take "The floating match." For those of you who don't know, this is one of the simplest tricks in magic. But you can easily make it a showpiece. The working is that you have several strands of invisible thread stretched across and fastened to a playing card. You place a match on top and when you bend the card, the match appears to float above the surface.

"I have a special set of matches from NASA designed for weightlessness, but be careful! I need complete silence and please watch what I do because they sometimes explode."

Wordlessly form a ring of people, with hand motions getting them to back up. Carefully walk into the center of the circle and take out your matchbox. Place it down in the center of the people and walk backwards. Now take out a deck of cards, (with your gimmicked card wrapped in invisible string). The matchbox has a single match in it and some cotton (for padding from the volatile nature of the match, of course!) Take the gimmicked card out of the deck, put the deck back in your pocket and then walk back up to the matchbox and kneel down. Take a pair of tweezers from your pocket, and with hands slightly trembling, remove it from the box.

Proceed with the trick, bend the card and make the match float and then carefully put everything away as if it were about to explode. And there you have it. A complete play, which only took two lines of dialogue and leaves a huge dramatic

effect on your audience. You can play this seriously, or as a comedy. As an ending you can have a cap gun in your other pocket and pull the trigger at the end of the effect (as if the match really did explode).

The point here is: The play is the thing. It doesn't have to be extravagant. It can be a joke, an idea, a character, a plot, it can even be done with no words at all. But it has to be a play. It can be a one act play, or a one line play, but it has to be a play. When *presentation* meets *trick*, that's *magic!* Stay magical my friends!

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## **Chris McCauley Bowers**

auspices of grant-based programs funded by Montgomery County. He also pays people who teach for him in these programs on an equal share basis, giving a 50 percent commission to his workers, and also providing dozens of scholarships for needy children. He calls the business model "Hyper-Ethical Capitalism."

Chris often states that when he was a child he wanted to be a ninja and a wizard and has fortunately never strayed from those two important career goals. He has been self employed for over 20 years combining magic and martial arts camps, lessons, birthday parties and writing in publications.

He has been published in the *Linking Ring* as well as contributing an article on magic to a National Geographic Book for children. Chris is working on an upcoming book on mentalism called *Equivoque: Theory and Practice*.

Chris lives in Kensington, MD with his wife Dannel, a social worker, who he has been with for 13 years. They have two pets: "Jack," a black pit bull mix, and "Nellie," a multicolored cat. Jack can never get enough cuddling and Nellie complains loudly if not fed on time.