



Volume 6, Issue 3

8 March 2017

Words from the Secretary

Craig Colombel

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The newsletter needs you. I need articles and news events written by you. Send me emails(accolombel@zipcon.com) on what you would like to see in the newsletter and what you like or don't about the newsletter. Visit our Facebook page and post. Come to the meetings and lectures. The club needs your input come to the meetings and help determine the direction of the club.

DUES ARE DUE FOR 2017. PAYING YOUR DUES KEEPS THE CLUB ABLE TO BRING IN LECTURES.

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President's Message
Ralph Huntzinger

Time for Dues for 2017. Dues are \$25 or \$35 for a family membership.

Pay at the meeting

Or

Pay at a lecture

Or

You can pay the dues by sending your check to

Craig Colombel
509 So 165th St
Burien, WA 98148

February 2017 MEETING

This month's theme was Discs or Improbables. Discs could include coins

Ralph Huntzinger started by showing a dollar coin size Okito Box. He indicated that if did any coin tricks he would use silver dollar coins or similar size.

Craig Colombel held 4 different coins (penny, dime, quarter, nickel) in his hand and had a volunteer choose one of the coins. Craig then showed that he predicted which coin would be chosen and proved by showing he had the same coin in his other hand. This was a routine from the "Linking Ring".

Jeff Dial told us that he was reading a book titled the "Zig Zag Girl", this is a fiction mystery book that had a magician as the detective. There is a book review later in this newsletter. He then performed with 8 coins a "coins across" using the "Mysterious Cross of India" crossing of the hands to send each coin one by one.

Evan Shuster did a teach-in segment and taught a ring and rope penetration move. Payne showed a variation of the move. He then performed a card trick using a card with the universal bathroom figure on it to find the card.

During the trick the figure on the bathroom card disappeared from the card and appeared on the chosen card.

Payne performed a routine in progress using poker chips and pages from a newspaper. A volunteer chose a number between 1 and 32, then took one page of the newspaper. The paper was then folded and cut into 32 equal pieces, then pieces stacked and counted down to the chosen number. The volunteer concentrated on a word on the piece and Payne could determine the word.

There was then a workshop on the Jordan Count.

Remember it is time for Dues. Support your club.

Ring of Fire meets the second Tuesday of the month at the Richmond Beach Library.

Remember, to visit the club's website, <http://www.nwringoffire.com> and also visit the clubs Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Northwest-Ring-of-Fire/4296167377105973>

Ring of Smoke Report

No ring of smoke report this month

The Ring of Smoke meets the first Sunday of the Month at Shawn O'Donnell's in Everett.

Roughing It

By Phil Reda

I still remember my first visit to the magic shop. I was in 7th grade and dad took me there one Saturday afternoon. Located on side street in downtown Detroit, Fox Fun and Magic became my mecca. The shop was located below street level in the basement of an old building. The only windows were the small basement style type that would let a limited amount of light in. Descending those steps into the shop you were greeted by shelves and glass cases overflowing with miracles, but always out of reach. Roy Kissel would always greet you with "Hey kid how much money you got in your pocket". Well that day I had \$20 (I had been saving up for that first visit). The very first trick Roy presented was the miniature version of the Invisible deck, I still have that little deck in my drawer. To say the least it blew me away and to this day is one of my favorite tricks. As you probably guessed by the title, this article will be about this trick. As I continue I will be purposely vague in some areas. Those who know how this deck works will fully understand my comments. What I would like to present are some opinions and tips on this wonderful trick.

There are two versions of this. First the card revealed is face up in a face down deck (this is the version I originally purchased). The second version the card is face down in a face up deck. Which version is better? I guess it depends on how you are routining the effect. My personal choice is face down in a face up deck. There are two reasons. It is easier to locate the card. And second I think it adds more suspense revealing a face down card in a face up deck. Again, this is a personal choice.

I remember a couple of years ago, I watched a street magician in Oakland California performing the invisible deck. When it came time to reveal the card he got the wrong one. After the performance, I introduced myself and as we talked he told me that in the heat of the performance he miss calculated and produced the wrong card. I asked him if he was familiar with the Don Allen stack, he was not. Most magicians perform Don Allen's routine with the Invisible deck but they are not familiar with his setup of the deck. As you know the original is set up in odd even with the pairs adding up to 13. In the heat of performance it is easy to make a mistake as you have to do some simple math to find the card. Don's setup makes it almost foolproof. Arrange the cards in clubs, diamond on one side and hearts, spades on the other. Then pair the same color and value together. 2 of hearts with the two of diamonds. That's it! Works like a champ. Now all you have to do is remember which way to pull the deck from it's case.

By now most of you know that you can make your own deck all you need is roughing fluid. Go to the hardware store and buy a spray can of Tester Clear Dul-coat. There are better products that are available but I am not at liberty to mention them. One tip I wanted to pass on is what's called Super Roughing. I first learned this technique from a Mark Striving lecture. By the way he is currently putting a book together on Roughing, should be a good reference. With Super Roughing, you only rough a small band in the center of the card, about a one inch area. The area above and below the band are clean. You need to mask off the cards before spraying. This makes the deck really easy to operate. Anyone with experience with this deck knows sometimes the cards stick together like glue. Give this a try you will be glad you did.

The deck was original introduced to the magic fraternity in the JINX. Since then there have been many improvements. One that you should be aware of is Devin Knight's Improved invisible deck manuscript available at Library.com:

<http://www.lybrary.com/improved-invisible-deck-p-675706.html>

This improvement allows you to show both sides of the deck and there are some great handling and roughing ideas included. I am a big fan of Devin Knight and recommend anything he puts out. And he is a nice guy. He will answer your emails with any questions you may have.

I discovered by accident a way to show the backside of the deck years ago. Assuming you have the type of deck that reveals the card face down (also works with the other type). With your deck in hand start spreading and reveal a card face down. Now cut the cards above the face down card to the bottom of the deck. Remove the face down card and now you can casually turn your hand holding the deck face down and a back shows. To reset just put the revealed card face up on the back that is showing.

The biggest problem with this deck is it is so strong it is hard to follow. So, I save it for special occasions. If I am only going to do one trick this is it. Currently I am a cast member with the Camano Island Radio Theater:

<http://www.voiceover.studio/Camanoislandradiotheatre/cast/>

We do live performances and I open the show with this one trick. Also as a mentalist I use this deck (after a deck switch) as a final test in a longer routine. The thing to remember there are so many uses for the Invisible deck that go beyond the standard way it is performed. Don't under estimate the power and utility of this deck.

Until next time

Club Calendar

NWRF – 2017 Meeting Themes

January – Magician's Choice – Bring your favorite magic to perform.

February – Discs or Improbable

March – Spheres or Description Based

April – Thin & Flat or Impossible

May – Fabric or Story Based

June – Outdoors or Something from Nothing

July – Filling the View or Rare

August – Books or Containers & Stuff

September – Prep for All Hallows' Eve or Tests

October – Prep for Holidays or Short Betweeners

November – Food or Betting

December – Messages & Giving or Garden Paths

Make sure to check the website for upcoming events and lectures.

HTTP: [//WWW.NWRINGOFFIRE.COM/INDEX.HTML](http://www.nwringoffire.com/index.html)

FACEBOOK : [HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/PAGES/NORTHWEST-RING-OF-FIRE/429616737105973](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Northwest-Ring-of-Fire/429616737105973)

Routine Development

Renfaire thoughts

By Ralph Huntzinger

Once again Ralph is sharing his thoughts from his blog. To read more go to magickhappens.com/wp
Most part-time pros and enthusiasts treat themed situations like Renaissance Fairs as a venue to fill in outside of their major working focus. Therefore, they slightly modify their bread and butter routines when they do the “themed work” and the results become generic to be used anytime and anyplace. Twenty years ago, when I realized that early retirement would cover the mortgage and keep starvation away so I could follow dreams, I decided to make the thirty or so weekends from the spring vernal equinox (before Easter) to Samhain (All Hallows Eve) my bread and butter work. Interestingly, ten weeks in the beginning and several weeks at the end of this performing season includes time when public schools are in session.

My mindset therefore was to create routines, themes, and characters for the Tudor Era Renaissance Faires and modify them if and when used in modern venues. This is the reverse of regular magical thinking — how do you get work doing 16th century birthday parties? Of course, the mortgage and canned beans were covered.

Niche marketing thinking suggests finding the niche not filled instead of jumping into the mainstream where there are already established businesses. Instead of being another small fish magician competing with a dozen others in the local venues it becomes easier to diminish the pool’s size to themed venues and become a larger fish with fewer qualified competitors. Of course the number of renfares makes the hiring pool much smaller, there were four stable renfares venues in the Washington – Oregon area. So we had to grow the market, expand our territory, and stand out from the renfaire magicians. Most performers are local to the area of a faire and have day jobs outside of performing, traveling a larger circuit becomes a distinguishing asset. Most have average acts because they don’t do many performances in a season and lack flight time to polish their offerings. Most renfaire magicians were forced to do twenty-five minute “walk or roll on” shows on platforms (called stages). It became obvious that a true fifty minute “stage magic” offering would create a large fish in the small pond. But was it cost effective and where do I find the routines?

Performing “stage magic” in the renfaire market required eventually creating a troupe atmosphere and supplying a performing environment instead of accepting the limiting generic platforms of typical renfares. Even theme park faire’s “stages” often are just glorified platforms with false backdrops instead of supplying the required and attached off-stage theatrical spaces. Preparation and staging areas rarely exist in renfaire thinking, instead the facilities require setup somewhere remote from the stage. Security and storage of larger apparatus, illusions, and costly props was assumed to be the performer’s responsibility and handled elsewhere. Moving a sword box, a Blamo box, a Doll House, an Assistant’s Revenge, or any type of illusion that could contained a person was not considered in the design. That’s why renfaire acts look like comedy club offerings — the performing structure forces the performance structure. It also became necessary to reduce the overhead costs by substituting other options to address the obvious requirements.

magickhappens.com/wp

Magic Shops in the Area

Below is a list of the Magic shops in the Area. None have paid for this listing and if anybody knows of others let me know and I will list them.

Seattle's Market Magic Shop

Pikes Place Market
1501 Pike Place #427
Seattle, WA 98101

www.marketmagicshop.com

(A store that many know about. In existence for 30 years)

Terjung's Studio of Gifts

4547 Calif. Ave SW
Seattle, WA 98116

(This is a gift store with a counter in the back where they sell magic)

Lakewood Costumes

5932 Lake Grove ST SW
Lakewood, WA 98499

<http://www.clownshop.com>

(Mainly Costumes and Clown items, they have a counter where they sell magic)

Dave's Killer Magic Shop

1707 Main Street
Vancouver, WA 98665
360-448-9022

Brian Cook's

WWW.MAGICCRAFTER.COM

South Seattle Magic and Novelty

9460 Rainier Ave S
Seattle, WA 98118
206-321-1291

FunkyFun Magic Shop

Capital Mall
625 Black Lake Blvd
Olympia, WA, 98502
<http://Funkyfunmagic.com>
Funkyfunmagic@gmail.com

Magical happenings

Magic Monday! Magic Monday is an hour of magic, conjuring, & prestidigitation which stars magicians from the Northwest region on the second Monday of each month. Location: Ravenna Third Place Books in the Ravenna neighborhood of Seattle. 6504 20th Ave. NE, Seattle, WA. Time: 7-8pm Magic Monday is not only a great place to see local magicians doing what they do best; it is also a great place for YOU to perform. It happens the second Monday of each month. If you want to hone your magic skills, get in touch with Mark Paulson, the producer of this venue (mark2061@yahoo.com). It is a wonderful chance to perform for an appreciative audience. It's been standing room only all year.

If you wish to perform contact Mark at:

mark2061@yahoo.com or on Facebook at

<http://www.facebook.com/thirdplacebooksmagicmonday?fref=ts>

March 13, 2017

April 10, 2017

Mark Paulson

Jeff Dial

Louie Foxx

Jim Earnshaw

Craig Friedman

Ruben Barron

Master Payne

Mark Paulson

Master Payne

May 8, 2017

June 12, 2017

Mark Paulson

Mark Paulson

Jude Sack

Fred Turner

Otto Miller

Craig Friedman

Master Payne

Jeff Dial

Master Payne

"That's Impossible Presents" (Seattle's Best Magicians)

That's Impossible Presents a Night of Magic, Mystery, and Comedy, with your host: Tim Flynn Magic.

This month, featuring: Rick Anderson.

With Special Guest: Ariann Black.

2nd Saturday of Every Month. Hosted at Delancey's on 3rd in Renton. Doors open at 7:45, Stage Show begins at 9pm. Food & Drinks are available. Table-side magic before the show from real magicians!

This month we are graced with a book review from member Jeff Dial. Thank Jeff

BOOK REVIEW by Jeff Dial

The Zig Zag Girl by Elly Griffiths Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Co, 2014

‘Looks as if someone’s sliced her into three,’ said Solomon Carter, the police surgeon, chattily. ‘We’re just missing the middle bit.’

And so, opens Elly Griffiths’ murder mystery, The Zig Zag Girl. Set in post-World War II seaside Brighton, England it tells the story of murders tied to the wartime exploits of a top-secret group of magicians, prop builders, and thinkers known as The Magic Men. The first victim’s upper body and legs are found in two packing boxes. The middle of the body arrives in its case addressed to Detective Inspector Edgar Stephens, a former member of The Magic Men. He joins forces with another member of The Magic Men, the leading variety magician of both pre-and post-war, Max Mephisto. Together and separately they unravel the murders that all have an illusion gone wrong theme, Zig-Zag – a girl is divided into thirds, Sword Box – victim impaled by a sword in a wardrobe, and “The Wolf Trap” – such an unknown illusion that even the magicians in the story have never heard of it.

And therein lays the problem with the book. It is a book written about magic and magicians where the author herself has little knowledge of the craft. She admits so in the acknowledgements. The explanations of the effects that she does describe seem to be drawn from descriptions she found online while working under a deadline. In the book, Max Mephisto describes the workings of the Zig Zag Girl; “The trick is that the cabinet’s actually bigger than it looks. Black strips down the sides make it look narrow and the middle part is actually bigger than the top and bottom.” Accurate, but only up to a point.

There are problems with the portrayal of Max’s act as well. He is booked for a week at a time in a theater, has Sunday off to travel, and starts at the next theater in another town on Monday. He gets there by driving in his sharp and fast Bentley. Yet, somehow, he has enough props at his disposal perform three different methods of the center piece of his show (a “volunteer” from the audience vanished from the stage and reappears in her seat), all of them grand illusion props. It’s just not practical in the real world of the dying Music Hall and Variety Theater.

There are many references to magic and magic lore. (One of the magicians mentioned in passing died of a heart attack at the Wood Green Empire Theater, which would make the third to physically die on that stage.) But they are not based in the actual historical world.

It seems the author is trying hard to set the book solidly in 1950 with references to Ed Sullivan, Tommy Cooper, and the mounting of Agatha Christie’s play, “The Mouse Trap”. All of which are to be harbingers (no relation to the true inventor of the Zig Zag) of the end of stage magic. “Have you heard of Milton Berle? He’s a comedian, a huge television star. That’s where the money is these days, believe me. But magic would never work on television. People need to watch magicians up close. No, you’re finished, my friend.” p.66

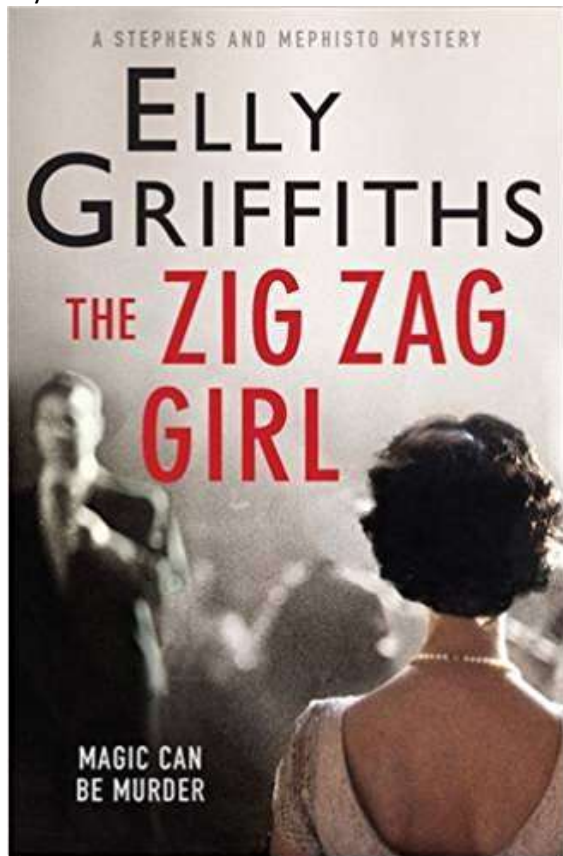
The most telling ignorance of author regarding a magician and his craft is a statement by Max Mephisto about a fellow magician who has lost the skill to perform: “He really was a terrible table magician. And there is where the real skill is. *Anyone can do a trick on stage with the right props.* But table magic – performing a trick just a few inches away from someone – that takes real sleight of hand.” [emphasis mine] No stage magician, especially one of Max Mephisto’s skill and reputation, would ever denigrate his own ability on stage like this.

Yet as a mystery novel it is a good read. The plot has enough twists and unknowns to keep one interested and the pages turning. People come into the story and then “disappear” adding to the mystery and frustration of our two protagonists; fitting well with the magical theme. I must admit that I had my eyes on the murderer about halfway through the book so that the reveal was just a confirmation. Yet it held my interest until the end.

Continue next page

From previous page

For more mysteries that will fool you and, as they say, fool you badly try works by Agatha Christie or John Dickson Carr/Carter Dickson. For mysteries written by a magician about magicians with a magician detective check out works by Clayton Rawson. His first book, Death from a Top Hat, has been voted in the top 10 of all-time best locked room mysteries.



Ice McDonald Lecture and Club Social

On February 18th, the Ring of Fire hosted an Ice McDonald Lecture. After the lecture the clubs annual social was held. Both events were held at Shawn O'Donnell's in the lower level.

The lecture was well attended and we got to see and learn some great magic and most important learn about Ice's philosophy of magic and performance.



After the lecture members and guests staid for the club's social. Ice McDonald stayed for the social as the club's guest. We had a great pasta dinner, provided by Shawn O'Donnell restaurant that all enjoyed. There was a Broken Wand Ceremony for Dick Ptacek. The club's president Ralph Huntzinger read a memorial written by Jerry Dressden and talk about Dick's role as one of the founders of the Ring of Fire. Below is the write up about the club and Dick. After the ceremony, we had dinner and after dinner there were awards given out.

Lifetime Memberships: Payne and Jeff Dial

Magician of the Year: Evan Reynolds

President's Award: Craig Colombel and Evan Shuster

Entertainment was provided by members of the club. A good time was had by all and we got to see much good magic.

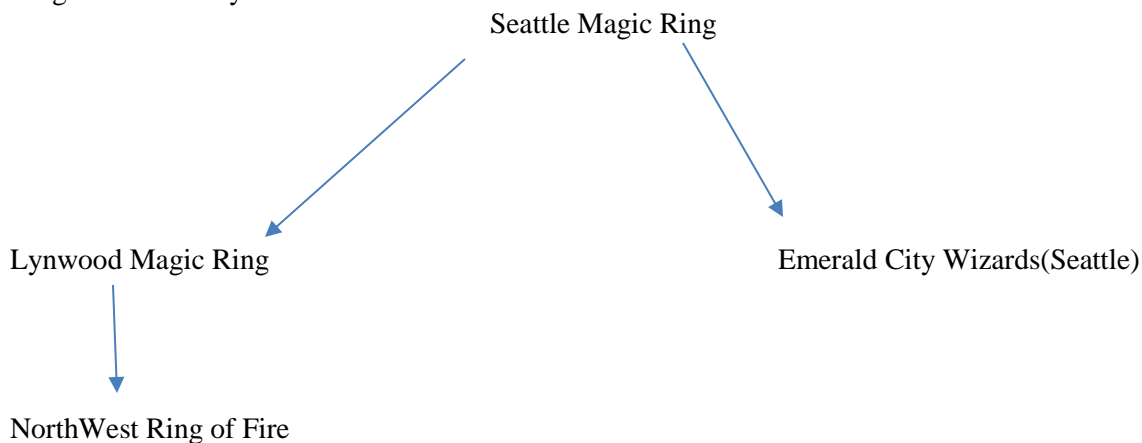
A couple of the pictures are on the next page all pictures from the lecture and the social will be on the clubs facebook page.



Pictures

Write-Up on Dick Ptacek and Club Family Tree

Ring of Fire Family Tree



Dick Ptacek some thoughts by Jerry Dressden

My apologies for not making Dick's Broken Wand Ceremony. I have prepared a small speech that only touches the surface of the story of how our club was formed, and the huge role Dick played in it.

I met Dick Ptacek in the waiting room at our family clinic in Lynnwood back in the late 80's. He was a patient of one of the other doctors. I noticed every time he came in, he would do a magic trick for the receptionists. He didn't know that I was also a magician, and was quite surprised when I took his deck of cards and did a few routines for him.

We quickly became friends, and during our occasional get-togethers he said to me: "Hey Jerry. Why don't we get a Magic Club going?"

I had spent a lot of time going to downtown Seattle, and knew that there was a need for a "Northern" group. Neither one of us wanted to step on any toes with the Seattle group, so we talked with them, got their permission, and put the word out for our first meeting.

We met at Nick's Deli - a small sandwich shop just East of the Alderwood Mall. There were about 10 of us that showed up, including Dave LaKay, John Carlsen, John Pomeroy and Mickey Hades.

I felt like we were being looked at thru a microscope, but after the meeting was over - all the "Big Boys" seemed to like what we were attempting to do, and gave us the thumbs up.

We formed the Lynnwood Magic Ring in August of 1989 and word of mouth spread quickly. We ended up growing to a group of over 115 members over the next 10 years. We had a monthly meetings and newsletter, video and book library, buying co-op and a young magicians group.

After a few more years, the membership voted and we became the Northwest Ring of Fire, and gained status as an IBM Ring Charter.

Dick was always there to help. The magic club was one of his favorite things. As you know, Dick always had a trick to perform at every meeting. And as most of you know... he had a unique style of telling and performing his routines.