

The Northwest Ring of Fire

September 2010

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Secretary's Message
- 2 President's Message
- 3 September 2010 Meeting
- 4 Magic Review
- 5 NWROF Picnic
- 6 Reports on the Members
- 7 Librarian's Notes

President's Message

A message from your President Master Payne

Happy Halloween every one!
I trust your October is fully booked with shows and you've dusted off those once a year scary tricks you do only this time of year... If so, and you've not got yourself a gig this Thursday then bring 'em to the club meeting and share them with your magical compatriots. We'll have a screamingly good time. Plans are proceeding forward for our Gala show the first weekend in November at the Tri-Cities Magic convention in Vancouver and I'm seeking volunteers to help out with the annual Holiday Party in January. Step forward or you will be forcibly recruited. I need a committee to select the worthy award winners for this year as well as advice on selecting the entertainment. We also need to begin work on organizing our Day O'Magic next year. So if anyone is interested in heading up that committee let me know. These events just don't happen by themselves but come to fruition due to the diligent and excellent work of our membership.

See you Thursday

Payne

(As a Newsletter did not go out last month here is el president message from last month, better late than never.)

Secretary's Message

Greetings from your secretary, Craig Colombel. Last month was missed but this month has a full slate with a report on the picnic. Again if you know of any magic events or performances or are performing yourself let me know and I will place it into the newsletter. If you want to see your name in print write up something with a magic theme, send it to me and I will place it in the newsletter.

"Hi ho,
Your president here. Hope every ones Labor Day holiday was restful or profitable or best yet a little of both. I am sure the annual club picnic was a rip roaring success and I'd like to thank our hosts, the Meyers, for once again opening the doors of their vast estates for the benefit of our club. We have a lecture coming up this Sunday. Tom Noddy. I hope everyone can make it out to see the Bubble Guy. He's a truly amazing performer and if you've never seen him do his truly magical act of bubble blowing in person you should not miss this rare opportunity to see him perform. Plus you'll learn something new to boot! If you missed the last meeting we revealed that the current slate of officers will continue on in their duties for the next term so there is no need for elections to be held this year. I would like to thank all our officers for their continued work and support and look forward to working with them next year when we will actually have to do a couple of things. Like hold the Day O' Magic we were originally planning for this year. Also it's no too soon to start thinking of the Holiday Party where we will present the coveted yearly awards. A selection committee is needed. So if you would like to be, or even head up this most august group please let me know.

September 2010 Meeting:

The meeting started with Payne showing a book that was a reprint of a catalog from the 1930's that had items for initiations for fraternal groups. Jeff Dial our librarian talked about the library and encourages people to make use of it. All you need to do is look on the club's website and find a title that looks interesting. Then you contact Jeff and he will bring the book to the next meeting for you to check out. In November Lennart Green will be in the area to lecture. Also in November we will have Richard Sanders lecturing.

There was a report of the club's picnic at Bruce Meyer's house and even in the rain a good time was held by all.

Magic:

William Murray –Had a spectator performed a Gypsy spell. The spectator was to think of a person then think of something bad to happen to them. The spectator picked their ex-wife and ingrown toenails. He was then told if the spell did not work he would get the ingrown toenails. The spectator was to pick about a quarter of a deck of cards, count the numbers then add together to get his lucky number, then from the rest of the deck count down to that number and the card was to match a count down on a clock. The spell worked.

Hugh Castell (Dandy Dragon) - performed a card trick based on John Banners Strangers. He had three spectators pick a card, and then he showed a face up card in this case the 5 of spades. He then put the 5 face down on the table and proceeded to show the other 3 cards one at a time face up and they each turned into the 5 of spades. At the end the backs changed from red to blue.

Rich Water proceeded to demo the first trick he learned. It was taught to him by his father. He told us whenever he did not want to do chores his father would play "Find the Joker" to determine if he did the chores. Of course Rich could never find the Joker. He use 4 large cards, 3 two of diamonds and one Joker. As his father tried to make it fairer and fairer the routine finished with 4 two of diamonds and the Joker in an envelope.

Zack Daniel- Told us about spending long hours learning the classic force then demo a gag classic force. He then performed an ambitious card routine with 5 cards. Then continue with removing cards until he was left with one card the 5 of spades then changed that card to the 5 of diamonds.

Rodger Needham - Did a cannibal cards routine with a story, sound effects and song. This ended with one card left.

Jim Rodgers – Took 4 red cards and 4 black cards, mixed them together and by magic they separated into their separate colors. They then remixed by magic and again separated by color. He then used magic to separate the whole deck.

Jeff Dial- Performed a renaissance theme routine, using a toasting fork. He had the spectator pick a card then selected 9 others. When recounted the 10 cards went to 9, added a card then on recount went to 8. The recount went on several times with the cards coming to 9, 10, and 11. Finally there were only 10 cards, Jeff was blindfolded and the cards thrown in the air and the selected cards were to be stabbed with the toasting fork.

Payne- Demonstrated a trick he was reviewing for Mum. There were 4 paper bags and one egg. The egg was placed in one bag; all the bags were folded over and mixed up. In front of each bag were cards with numbers. The spectator was to choose which number went with each bag. Then the bags in numerical order were pick up and smashed on the spectator's head with. Each time no egg, until one bag was left and that one had the egg. "Russian Rulegg"

Remember come to the meetings and see and learn magic. Also enjoy great company and do a trick. The meetings are a great place to practice that new routine. Here you can goof and learn.

The Club's unofficial motto is: "This may or may not work"

After

After the performances the meeting was adjourned and those that wanted to went to Maddox's for refreshments.

If anyone wants to add to the meeting notes send to me and I will add in the next newsletter. My email address is at the bottom of each page of the newsletter.

Thanks

Craig

Magic Reviews

Payne has graciously donated some reviews of magic, he did for MUM Magazine. I will print one per newsletter issue.

Up the Ante

By Martyn Smith

Card Trick

Pamphlet 12 pages 8.25 X 5.75 Stapled

Available from the Merchant of Magic

<http://www.magicshop.co.uk>

Price £9.99

So here's the effect. A spectator is invited to freely cut and shuffle a deck of cards. The magician, who never touches the deck throughout the entire routine, instructs the audience member to deal two cards face down on the table. He then asks them what the odds would be for this pair of cards to contain one red and one black card and whether they would be willing to make a small wager upon the matter.

A wager is agreed upon but to sweeten the deal the magician has the spectator deal two more pairs of cards face down upon the table.

The ante now is upped (hence the name of this effect) when the magician wagers that these two new pairs also contain one red and one black card.

Throwing caution to the wind the magician now has the spectator deal three more pairs of cards face down upon the table and proceeds to stun everyone with the declaration that these three pair too consist of one red and one black card and ups the ante once again.

Throwing caution (once again?) to the wind, and to mix things up a bit the magician now tells the spectator to deal out three sets of cards each containing four cards each. To everyone's disbelief the magician then proclaims that these three packets will not only contain two red/black pairs but these pairs will be made up of one of each suit – One Club, one Heart, one Spade and one Diamond. The ante of course is raised to meet this new improbable claim.

As a quick "side bet" two more cards are dealt out which, the magician assures us, will also be a red black pair.

Even though the pot now is of a most prodigious size the magician needlessly tempts the fates and has the spectator deal thirteen cards face down on the table.

A thousand pounds (this is an English publication after all) is now bet that this pile of thirteen cards will contain, not in any particular order, one card of each value Ace through King.

But wait, there's more. The magician also bets an additional thousand pounds that the thirteen cards remaining in the spectators hands will also contains a random run of A, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, J, Q, K.

Impossible you say? Well let's find out. The seven two card piles are at long last turned over to reveal that yes; they are indeed comprised of red and black pairs. Next those three piles of four you'd nearly forgotten about are flipped over and, just as predicted, they contain not only two pairs of red and black cards but are also comprised of one card from each suit.

Now the first pile of thirteen cards is delved into and, to everyone's amazement, it contains one card of each value. But surely the magicians luck can't hold. Those last thirteen cards can't possibly contain a perfect yet random run of thirteen cards. But indeed it does. It has all come out precisely as the magician had said it would.

Amazing but true, and, as the instructions proclaim, "If you did not possess a reputation as a card-sharp before this routine, you certainly will at the end."

However the author fails to tell you exactly how you will gain this reputation as a card-shard since at no time during this effect do you ever handle the deck of cards. Thus, since you've not given your audience an opportunity to postulate that you were somehow able to deal the cards out in the proscribed manner through a series of clever yet invisible manipulations, they are left with little alternative but to ascribe the tedious series of events they were just forced to sit through as a mathematical card trick.

Which indeed it is and as is the case of many mathematical card effects it suffers from an inordinate amount of counting and needless pile making. It also requires a stacked deck and a fair amount of real estate as you have eleven or twelve piles of cards laid out on the table at the conclusion of the trick making this a completely impractical effect for the walk around or restaurant worker.

Continue on the next page

Continue from previous page:

While it is self-working and there are no angles to worry about the reset requires the entire deck to be manually restacked. It can be done with your typical CHaSeD stack so it can be done as a finale piece to a number of stacked deck routines.

The pamphlet contains the one routine, an explanation of how and why it works and a couple of different stacks you can use. This makes it a pricey routine for the fifteen or twenty dollars it's going to cost you at your average magic shop here in the States. After reading the routine and trying it out for some magic and non-magic friends (my magic club gave it a 2) I was left with the impression that this was more suited for release in the trick section of a magic magazine than it was as a dealers item.

As a reviewer I really do not like to label magic tricks as good or bad. I understand that what one might think to be lame and unworkable effect another might see pure performance gold. I unfortunately see no gold here. It's the type of trick you might perform a couple of times for your friends and then chuck it in the bottom of your magic drawer. There to languish forgotten until it ends up on your table at the next magic swap meet.

For me it fails as a gambling demonstration. As I already pointed out since you don't handle the cards you're not displaying any type of card dealing dexterity. The cards end up in red and black pairs. I know of no gambling game where this would be an advantage. One would think a true gambling routine would be composed of dealing out series' of cards that would be of use in a game of chance. This routine simply doesn't work for me, or anyone I've shown it to so far.

But as I said before, what one might find lame, another finds gold. After showing this routine to a magic friend he pointed me to an older version of the trick with a better presentation performed by Lennart Green called The Dragon's Pearl (available on his Green Light DVD).

Mr. Smith mentions on several online forums that he was unaware of Mr. Green's earlier version and stopped production and release of his product until he obtained permission from him to proceed. Curiously however there is no thanks' or attribution to Mr. Green anywhere in this thin pamphlet.

So, if you want to perform "The Dragon's Pearl" for half the price of what it would cost you on Lennart Green's DVD then go ahead and purchase "Up the Ante". However if you want a great self-working mathematical card trick with a gambling theme there are probably much better ones out there.

NWROF 2010 Club Picnic

Some 70+ magicians, mystics and families gathered at the Meyer's lake house on Labor Day and thoroughly enjoyed an afternoon of great food, magic discussions, magic performances and a surprisingly darn good swap meet. We had attendees from all over the Sound region including several from as far away as the members of Vancouver Magic Circle 92.

The Magic competition awards are as follows:

Showmanship Award –Diego Condit

Excellence in Sleight of Hand Award – Leo Kanzelberger

Creativity Award – Logan Earle

The Best use of the Right Foot – Bruce Hunt

The Most Red Act – Bruce Hunt

The Lulu Award – Bruce Hunt

The Dropped Zombie Award – Is awarded to the performer who screws up the most because of lack of effective preparation, which includes practice. It was awarded but we've decided to not announce the recipient publically if he promises to correct his errant ways.

The Meyers Award- Is awarded to the performer who is most over time. Sufficient to say it was awarded and the performer promises to mend his ways.

We were also regaled by non-competitive performances by the very entertaining Ray Roch and the charming Aaron Wheeler.

Because it was raining rabbits and doves outside the picnic was held inside and on the decks. Non-the-less all who attended will tell you it was the best Club Picnic ever held which was evident by the warm camaraderie, smiles and laughter.

By Bruce Meyers

Pictures on the next page



Ribs, chicken and great food prepared by Jennifer and Paul Meyers and well Ben Soltero who is chef of the fabulous Paraiso Mexican Restaurant located in Smokey Point.



Ray Roch crakin' us up



Bruce Hunt, who is President of the Vancouver Magic Circle, is awarded the Best Use of the Right Foot Award

Reports on the Members

An email from Bruce Meyers

In other news, magician from the Seattle area now working in LA, Joseph Re`ome, has signed on with a manager who produces for MTV as well as other television productions and movies.

You may remember that Joe was a NWROF Vice President for a year and from The Magic Joe Show as well as working in Bruce Meyers' stage productions for several years. Great going Joe!

<http://BruceMeyersMagic.com>

It was announced at the meeting that the Paraiso Mexican Restaurant in Smokey Point is looking for a house magician. If interested contact Bruce Meyers.

CORRECTION TO THE NEWSLETTER- I GOOFED AND BELOW IS A CORRECTION.

SORRY BRIAN

If you want to see magic, Brian Cook is performing in his new show called "Thursdays Live". You can catch it at the Royal Palm Restaurant in Seattle on the 1st Thursday of the month. The address is: 6715 Roosevelt way. You can find more info online at www.thursdayslive.com . A must see the next show is November 4th, showtimes at 7pm and 9pm.

If you are performing let me know and I will put into the newsletter.

Learning Afresh

Jeff Dial

What is out there in the future for learning new tricks? In my time we've gone from books, audio cassettes, to VHS/Beta, DVD, CD's, on-line video, e-books, phone apps, and stuff that I'm sure I'm already behind the times.

In 1972 Isaac Asimov, a prodigious author of classic science fiction, was challenged by the coming wave of technology being used in education. At the time the new wave of educational technology was referred to as "TV cassettes" Asimov had been part of a conference where these cassettes were touted as the forerunner of technology that would forever change how we learn. "The manuscript of the future", the speaker said, "will not be a badly typed sheaf of papers, but a neatly photographed sequence of images. And men like Isaac Asimov will find themselves outmoded and replaced."

Two days later Asimov was called on to fill in for a speaker who cancelled. He used the opportunity to respond to the eventual putting out to pasture of authors like himself. He recalled his talk later in an article. See how accurately his predictions have played out in the last 38 years.

"The speaker of two days before had spoken of TV cassettes and had given a fascinating and quite brilliant picture of a future in which cassettes and satellites dominated the communication picture, and I was now going to make use of my science fiction expertise to look still further ahead and see how cassettes could be further improved and refined and made still more sophisticated.

In the first place, the cassettes, as demonstrated by the speaker, needed a rather bulky apparatus to decode the tape, to place images on a television screen, and to put the accompanying sound on the speaker.

Obviously, we would expect this auxiliary equipment to be made smaller, lighter, and more mobile. Ultimately, we would expect it to disappear altogether and become part of the cassette itself.

Secondly, energy is required to convert the information contained in the cassette into image and sound, and this places a strain on the environment. (All use of energy does that, and while we can't avoid using energy, there is no value in using more than we must.) Consequently, we can expect the amount of energy required to translate the cassette to decrease. Ultimately we would expect it to reach a value of zero and disappear.

Therefore, we can imagine a cassette which is completely mobile and self-contained. Though it requires energy in its formation, it requires no energy and no special equipment for its use thereafter. It needn't be plugged into the wall; it needs no battery replacements; it can be carried with you wherever you feel most comfortable about viewing it – in bed, in the bathroom, in a tree, in the attic.

A cassette as ordinarily viewed makes sounds, of course, and casts light. Naturally, it should make itself plain to you in both image and sound, but for others, who may not be interested, is a flaw. Ideally, the self-contained mobile cassette should be seen and heard only by you.

No matter how sophisticated the cassettes now on the market, or those visualized for the immediate future, they do require controls. There is an on-off knob or switch, and others to regulate color, volume, brightness, contrast, and all that sort of thing. In my vision, I want to make such controls operated, as far as possible, by the will.

I foresee a cassette in which the tape stops as soon as you remove your eye. It remains stopped till you bring back your eye, at which point it begins to move again immediately. I foresee a cassette which plays its tape quickly or slowly, forward or backward, by skips, or with repetitions, entirely at will.

You'll have to admit that such a cassette would be a perfect futuristic dread: self-contained, mobile, non-energy-consuming, perfectly private, and largely under the control of the will.

Ah, but dreams are cheap and so let's get practical. Can such a cassette possibly exist? To this my answer is: Yes, of course.

The next question is: How many years will we have to wait for such a deliriously perfect cassette?

I have the answer, too, and quite a definite one. We will have it in minus five thousand years – because what I have been describing (as perhaps you have guessed) is the book! "

Ok, I'm a librarian. I love books and Asimov, in his tongue and cheek way, illustrates what an incredible thing the written word is. Video is great, but only up to a point. The rest of the article does go on to expound the value of stored speech, creating your own images through reading, and reading as a minority activity (most people don't read).

So, this winter when you are snowed in and the power is out and you are bored enough to want to learn a new trick. Just reach over pick up that ultimate cassette, open the cover, and have someone from the past teach you something new in a way that has been working for 5,000 years. Who know, maybe you'll want start before the snow falls.

I've wanted to communicate this for some time. I'll be off my hobby horse and get you back to tricks next time. Let me; however, leave you with Asimov's conclusion:

But through it all, the faithful less-than-1-percent [readers] stick to the books. *Only the printed word can demand as much from them; only the printed word can force creativity out of them; only the printed word can tailor itself to their needs and desires; ...* The book may be ancient, but it also the ultimate. [Emphasis mine]

(Asimov, Isaac. "The Ancient and the Ultimate" Journal of Reading. January 1974; pp. 264-271)