

the Equinox Magic News



Fall 2007

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Ring 9

The Georgia Magic Club meets the Third Monday of Every Month at Startime Comedy Club, 608 Holcomb Bridge Road on Highway 9 in Alpharetta, GA.

Guests who are interested in magic are welcome to visit our club, and apply for membership. All members of the Georgia Magic Club must become members of the International Brotherhood of Magicians.



There's Magic In The Air!

Summer conventions are over, and we now move into the busy holiday season...

Ring 9 has enjoyed recent months of fun and informative meetings, a series of international lectures, awesome mini-lectures presented by our own members, and 2 exciting contests!

We are so proud of our members who generously donate their performances for charity events throughout Atlanta, and of all the great magic being performed throughout Georgia by our members who are part-time pros and full time magicians.

As we move into the fall of 2007, we head toward our annual auction (a much anticipated and always exciting event!), and our fourth quarter of fun monthly meetings.

Ring 9

The Georgia Magic Club

Magic

The President's Corner

"He is a wise man who does not grieve for the things which he has not, but rejoices for those which he has."

Epictetus (ca. 55 - ca. 135 A.D.)

Man is it hot! In fact, it is so hot I saw 2 trees fighting over the same dog. OK, so it's a bad joke, but hopefully it took your mind off the temperature for just a moment.

While we can't change the weather, we can change how we think about the weather by changing what we focus on at any given moment. If we focus on how hot it is - well, it's going to be hot. But, if we focus on something like puppies chasing balls by the cool lake where a mother duck leads her babies through the still water, now it's not so hot. Now you say, well one of the puppies saw the ducks and ran to the edge of the lake and fell in and I had to jump in to save the puppy. And though I was wet, I was cooler.

Yea, I suppose that's a goofy illustration, but we can apply the power of focus in our Club.

Since we get what we focus on, then we need to focus on the good in our club. By doing so, we will create a strong positive atmosphere where it is fun to come the meetings.

I may be over stating the obvious, but I know that "I" sometimes lose sight of this powerful principle.

It's tough, if not impossible to please all the people all of the time, but if we all direct our energy - our focus - on moving the Ga Magic Club forward, we will have success.

The Ga Magic Club/Ring 9 of the International **Brotherhood** of Magicians remains as one of the finest clubs in the magic fraternity.

Dale Adamson, President

Thoughts from Mr. Grouchy

A combined convention?

Oh... my... gosh!! Next year they are combining the SAM and the IBM into one gargantuan mess! I've never been to a national convention because I couldn't afford it... now, I'm surely not going to go because now it's TWICE AS MUCH!! Whose lame-brained idea was that? It used to be we could go to one convention and skip the other one based on talent and locale. Now they've pooled a bunch of mediocre talent to fill up an overblown and over-hyped mega-convention! Sheesh, on a good day, you couldn't fit in everything one convention had planned, unless you got up at the crack of dawn! Now, for sure, you're not going to be able to see everything. I hope you like contests because this convention is going to be ONE BIG CONTEST with all the money they are offering to a bunch of Lance Burton wannabees. Me, I'll stay home and watch re-runs of "Amazing Magical Pets" on Animal Planet.

Disclaimer: Mr. Grouchy's opinion is his own, and is not supported or endorsed by the Georgia Magic Club, the officers, or the editorial staff of the Equinox!

Kidshow Crowd Control

by Tommy Johns

This is the second in a series of articles for the Equinox that will deal with ways to maximize effectiveness and minimize problems with an audience full of kids. There are a lot of tools we can use that will help make us effective as entertainers.

2 - "Create an Environment for Cooperation"

While you can't control the amount of sugar the kids have consumed, the way they've been allowed to act before you arrive at the venue, or whether or not the little darlings have had their medication, you can control a lot of the environment. Environmental factors are HUGE when it comes to setting expectations and leading kids to behave in a proper manner. Negative environmental factors can test the skills of even the most seasoned pros. When you can, control your "stage and auditorium."

Advance Preparation is the Key – One of the best ways you can create a great show environment is to let your client know what you need in the way of space. When you send your contract, confirmation letter or the "I'm looking forward to adding a little MAGIC to your event" e-mail, tell them how much and what type of space you need in order to do your best. If a client is spending big bucks on your show (and \$200 to a birthday mom is BIG money!), she wants to do whatever is needed to insure you deliver the best show she can get. If that requires moving furniture or moving the party indoors for the show, she'll usually do it, IF YOU TELL HER HOW IMPORTANT IT IS. If we educate our clients, they are usually more willing to give us what we need than if we just tell them, "I don't do outdoor shows." If they are not willing to help with this, then they deserve what they get. You are the expert and most of the time the client will acquiesce to your experience.

Reduce Distractions – Inside is better than outside, TV and music is better off than it is on, quiet parents are better in the back of the room than loud ones (don't get me started on THAT one!), and simple is better than cluttered. If you have a large interesting prop that you are using late in the show, cover it up unless you have a good reason to let kids see it ahead of time. Better yet, keep it inside or behind your table. If you eliminate the competition, you have a better chance of winning the battle for the children's attention span.

Focus Attention – Always try to perform in front of a plain background or provide a backdrop that lets the kids know where your show is. Try not to have your show spread across the stage or family room, if at all possible. If the kids don't know where to watch, you can't blame them if they aren't paying attention to what YOU think is important.

Use Auditory Signals – Music goes a LONG way toward creating an environment that helps kids behave. Even using simple music as the crowd assembles or when you go out into the audience to find a volunteer can add a lot to your effectiveness. Use a microphone if the situation warrants it. There are very few people who project well enough to get by in a large room without amplification. If you are working in a large room, and you don't have a sound system, tell the client you need one. Better yet, invest in a microphone, and a small sound system. While adults MAY strain to hear you, your audience of seven-year-olds won't pay attention to what they can't hear.

Take a good look at your show – Sometimes we are our own worst enemy. If your intro includes a Q & A and your response is "I can't hear you!" four or five times, you may be setting yourself up for trouble. If the kids are rewarded early on for being rowdy and out of control, they are not going to understand when the rules change later. Do you treat your audience and especially your volunteers with respect? While very few people can get away with not using a microphone, even fewer can get away with being like The Amazing Jonathon. Do you model good behavior? If you make a balloon sword and whack a kid with it, don't be surprised if he whacks you back. Where it hurts. With something harder than a balloon.

You can't control everything. But you can control a lot of things. And you should.

If you have a topic you'd like me to cover in an upcoming Equinox, email me at tommyjohns@magictj.com. Limit it to managing kids' behavior at your shows please. Advice to the lovelorn is someone else's column.

Contest Winners



KEN SCOTT - Doyne Michie Excellence in Close-Up Magic Contest

ARTHUR ATSMA - First Place, J.C. Doty Excellence in Stage Magic Contest

Convention Reports

Society of American Magicians Convention - Dallas

by Debbie Leifer



The evening shows were outstanding! The first evening we enjoyed the Stage Magic Contest. Several very talented performers competed, many from Asia. First place winner was a young girl from China, Chen Juan. She blew away the entire audience with phenomenal flower productions, climaxing in a flurry of flowers appearing as she levitated off the ground! The Friday night show was a Cruise theme gala, with many of America's top cruise magicians performing their best stuff. Chris Mitchell was a fantastic MC who kept the audience laughing and the show moving, Fred and Kellie Becker were in rare form as they demonstrated why they are amongst the most sought-after cruise ship acts, Chip Romero was very funny, and John Shyroch delighted us with a strong performance. The Gleasons closed the show.

The final evening's show was Viva La Magia, starring Latin American magicians. David Sousa presented a sophisticated manipulative act, Brandon & Silvana's theatrical performance with an extraordinary climax, Gustavo Raley performed a frenetic and very funny act we loved just as much as his highly acclaimed lecture, and Juan Ordeix stunned everyone with original FISM-winning mentalism. The closing act, FISM first-place in Originality winner Hugo Valenzuela was the highlight of the evening for me. His UFO themed act was a theatrical experience that contained many visual effects, magical surprises, and ultimately his stunning disappearance and reappearance.

Personally, the convention was a whirlwind of activity for me. As a member of the National Council, I had to attend the National Council meeting and give a report. My big moment was Wednesday evening when I was privileged to present my lecture, "Motivational Magic: Making Magic Relevant in the 21st Century". It was very well attended, seemingly endless accolades followed. Thursday morning, I participated in the second annual "Magic With a Feminine Touch" Q & A Panel. This year I was asked to produce the event, as well as act as moderator and panelist. I was very fortunate to get legendary magicians to participate on the panel. My guests were Celeste Evans, one of the most famous women in magic; Trixie Bond, a very successful children's entertainer who was a longtime house magician at Houston's Magic Island; and Gay Blackstone, wife and chief assistant to the legendary Harry Blackstone Jr, and President of the Academy of Magical Arts.

I attended the banquet for the first time in more than a dozen years in celebration of the installation of new S.A.M. President Maria Ibanez. The entire convention was dedicated to the Dean of the S.A.M., a fabulous lecturer and probably the biggest hit of the close-up show, George Schindler.

Convention Reports



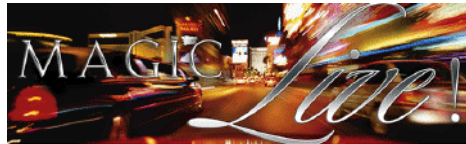
International Brotherhood of Magicians Convention - Reno by Joe M. Turner

After a ridiculously busy week, I made it into Reno for the IBM convention on Thursday. Lectures and shows were a mixed bag at best. The shows felt long and arduous, with some bright moments of course, but they were generally among the weakest in memory. The buzz around the convention was not as positive as one would have hoped.

The contest show was followed by performances by Ruth & Bill Pitts and a tribute to Blackstone. EITHER the contest OR the tribute show alone would have been a full evening; together, it was just interminable. Close up winners were 1) David Menken and 2) Nathan Gibson. Stage winners were 1) Shen Juan of China, and 2) Shayna Reed. No gold prizes (medals or cups) were awarded.

Phil Willmarth was sworn in as International President, with Joan Caesar as president elect. Ring 9'ers who attended included: JMT, Rolando Santos, and Rick Alston. Atlanta was represented well on stage, with ventriloquist Mark Merchant on the Thursday show (a bright spot) and Tony Chapek on the Friday night show. Next year should be much better, and I am excited that the 2009 convention will be at the Gaylord Opryland in Nashville -- a truly magnificent venue. Perhaps things are looking up...

Magic Live! - Las Vegas by Debbie Leifer



The third edition of this "one-time-only" convention was once again an exciting mix of award-winning performers, unique lectures, fascinating interviews, and celebrity sightings. Highlights for me included interviews with actor Jason Alexander and street performer Cyril; a performance of a work-in-progress by Mac King; a very funny news broadcast by Michael Weber; a convention wrap-up by Max Maven; a very funny game show that could have gone on for hours with no complaints from me; and finally seeing the phenomenal comedic timing and magical talent of the inventive Rick Merrill who performed his awesome FISM-winning act.

Convention was terrific, but definitely was not up to the same phenomenal standards of the last one in 2004. The final stage show was an entertaining program starring Anthony Reed, Jason Byrne, MC Mark Kornhauser, Gaetan Bloom, Raymond Crowe, David Sousa, The Evasons, and Les Arnold and Dazzle. For the most part, the evening shows showcased high-quality entertainment worthy of a major national convention, but there were a couple of less than stellar performances that disappointed.

They did an interesting experiment in which six teenagers performed their acts, and elicited critiques from the audience. Not sure how many attendees participated by contributing written suggestions to these young pros, but I found it a worthwhile and interesting addition to this unique convention. The standout performer of this experiment was a young Krystyn Lambert who blew us away with her dry sense of humor and impeccable delivery. This was once again a delightful convention that felt like a huge party the entire time. Kudos and thanks to Stan Allen for another grand adventure, and an excuse to visit Vegas, where I availed myself of just about every magic show in town.

Do You Have A Trick You'd Like To Submit For The Next Issue of Equinox Magic News ?

Ring 9

Monthly Themes

September - **The ABC's of School Magic**
Educational presentations for young audiences

October - **AUCTION NIGHT**

November - "Think A Drink" **Liquid Magic**

December - "I Knew You'd Say That!"
Mind Reading Magic

Mini-Lectures

September - Debbie Leifer
"Handling Unexpected Challenges Onstage"

October - Joe M. Turner

November - Bill Packard
"The Seven Wonders Show"

December - David Smith
Magic and Hypnotism

Lectures

Monday Sept 10, 2007 - Diamond Jim Taylor

Theme Winners

March - Carey Huddleston

April - Ken Scott (contest)

May - Evan Reynolds

June - Wes Petty

July - Arthur Atsma (contest)

August - Paul Sponaugle

Communications:

Yahoo Group:

Ring 9 members are invited to join and participate in our Ring 9 Yahoo Group. We post questions, requests for performing advice, news, and convention reviews.

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To submit material for future issues of Equinox Magic News, please send suggestions, articles, and tricks to
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