

blueridgemagiciansring320

*This is the information place for the
Blue Ridge Magicians*

August 20th Ring Meeting

Posted on [September 8, 2013](#)



September 2013

Ring #320 The Blue Ridge Magicians

President Wes Iseli

Vice President Eddie Tobey "Tobini"

Treasurer David Clauss

Sgt. at Arms Jim Champion

Secretary Dennis Phillips

Here are the themes for the Ring Meetings for the rest of the 2013.

Remember these are only suggested themes

September – Holiday themed magic

October – Swap Meet

November – First trick / favorite trick..... or both

December – Christmas Dinner & Show

Ring Report

August , 2013 Ring Meeting

Our August Ring meeting saw the return of member Josh Meggison. President Wes Iseli conducted our pre-meeting teach-in. He focused on “How to make Money in Magic”. Wes works fulltime. His only job for the past 16 years has been performing magic, so he is an expert in the subject. He went over a dozen or so marketing ideas in his booklet about being a successful professional.

Under old business, we are still working on a fund-raising show for The March of Dimes. Under New Business, We have booked the Jason Palter lecture for April 14th. October is magic month and George Buckley and Eddie Tobey are working on a media blitz for the Ring.

The theme of our Ring meeting show was comedy and it kicked off with Josh Meggison doing a mysterious ring and chain routine. Jim Champion did an effect, “Night out with the Girls”. It was the story of bathing beauties and interns and the beauty that one guy ended up with. George Buckley did a cute John Fedko inspired trick that was a kind of Card Monte with a rabbit card. He also had a topsy-turvy smiley face card.

Dennis Phillips had a few sight gags and jokes and a demonstration of funny hats such as the plunger under the Wizard’s Hat. Ron Schneider had some fabulous card effects where cards change places, were very ambitious and finally the signed card appears in his wallet.

Eddie Tobey had a clever Ring and Shoelace effect where the lace visibly linked and unlinked. Wes Iseli concluded the show with his new improved magnetic spoon routine. He has themed the effect so that the boy volunteer assistant become a Super Hero, named Magnet Man.

Dennis Phillips

Dennis Deliberations.... Editorial and Comment

By Dennis Phillips

September 2013

There seem to four kinds of people:

The optimist who sees the glass as half full.

The pessimist who sees the glass as half empty.

An engineer who sees the glass and says, “That glass is twice as big as it needs to be!”

And the magician who sees the glass says, “Damn! I wish the magic companies would make a glass that lets ALL of the liquid drain out!”

The month, I am engaging in a kind of *mea culpa*. When I am wrong about something, I want to make it right.

It’s about Jeff McBride. I guess that I never fully understood him and as a result was unenthusiastic about his work. When he appeared at the Daytona Convention a few years ago, he closed the big show with his wife Abbie Spinner and Eugene Burger and I was muted in my accolades. Okay, again I need to fess up again. I all but panned the show. As I recall, I thought the whole show was small and simple for that stage and he engaged in a lot of posing and mugging and fiddling with odd unworldly props such as twin LED floating canes, and a plastic mask that was trying to kill him. The show was ,as my country Grandma used to say, “Artsy-Fartsy”.

But I respected the stage effort and McBride does have some good signature pieces such as his water bowls, Miser's Dream and classic Mask Act and he does a dynamic card manipulation sequence.

Well, recently I was asked to look at his 3-D set from L&L called " Jeff McBride and his Magic on Stage". While I retain the concept that he is a quirky performer, I was very impressed by his knowledge, stage thoughts and teaching ability. Watching the series led me to a much greater appreciation for his work. My head seamstress, Trish, at my old Winter Park Costume Shop, loved McBride and I recall her snatching the copy of Linking Ring when the mailman delivered it with McBride on the cover. Trish was a 60s Hippie who never grew out of her love for the odd and mystical.

So let's look at the outstanding job that McBride's did on his 3 VHS cassette series:

Tape One is McBride's Commando Act. It all fits inside a lawyer's shoulder bag. It packs small and plays big. The routine has 5 parts to it. They are vanishing cane and silk productions, cut and restore rope, ring on string, linking rings, mouth coil with the finale of a bottle of Champaign produced. Also there are a few bonus tricks that are not part of the commando act but they could be added. The act has audience participation it. While there are some things that I would not do such as the mouth coil, Jeff's approach to doing a "perform-anywhere-no-cases-to-carry act" was excellent. On the tape he credits the concept to Jeff Sheridan who he watched in a New York park. In today's downsizing, Jeff gave me the motivation to get a Commando Act together. I can already do 10 minutes out of my suit coat pockets ,as needed when I am substitute teaching in public schools, but I can see that a satchel and some thought can make it a full stage presentation.

Tape Two is Exotic Mysteries. It is a fusion of a martial arts feel, dance, Kabuki Theater with all the stagecraft. You will get a feeling that he was influenced by Fu-Manchu (David Bamberg) and the classic turn-of-the-century Asian themed acts. You may not do the specific routines but the insights into staging them and the thought on movement and how to get the most out of the routine is valuable. The tape was very colorful and also contains lots of great ideas on silks and paper spring flowers. Everything shows that McBride put a lot of thought into what he does.

Tape Three is Classic magic. This contains a great teaching segment on the Dancing Cane. It will teach you everything you need to know. It also has excellent instruction on the classic Zombie. I was excited to see his Zombie gimmick with its small wire bend under the cork. He says the idea was from Finn John. It makes a big difference in control of the ball when peaking over the edge. Jeff is quite accomplished at presenting the Zombie. His Fountain of Silks and Twentieth-century Silks had subtle bits of preparation and performance that were very good. If you would like to do the 20th Century Silks and hold the tips of both silks and shake them before you tie them together, watch his video!

Page Two---

Finally, if you are really into gaining an academic understanding and enjoy intellectual stimulation. Try this:

Why is deception such an essential part of the human condition? What evolutionary purpose does it fulfill? How can we recognize it on an individual level, and overcome it on a societal level in a modern democracy?

Watch an exciting panel of scientists and public intellectuals including revolutionary biologist Robert Trivers, notable social psychologist Carol Tavris, accomplished neurobiologist and laboratory directors at Barrow Neurobiological Institute Stephen Macknick and Susana Martinez-Conde, **acclaimed magicians Jamy Ian Swiss and Joshua Jay**, and Origins Project director and moderator, physicist Lawrence Krauss as they discuss the biological, behavioral, and political boundaries of this controversial issue.

Part 1 of 2 (1:37:48) : <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZUduQ2aqQ5o>

Part 2 of 2 (49:11) : <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hMm3KnfovPo>

Dennis

Posted in [Uncategorized](#) | [Leave a comment](#)

Peter and Steve at PVCC for Carnival of Wonders

Posted on [September 1, 2013](#)



Saturday, Sept. 14

http://www.pvcc.edu/about/maps_parking.php

The History of the Sideshow

1:30 p.m.

Free admission, no tickets required.

Join Peter Monticup and Steve Pittella for a journey into the odd world of the carnival sideshow. Using vintage video, demonstrations and authentic props, the lecture will explore this amazing and nostalgic piece of American history.

Carnival of Wonders

7:30 p.m.

General seating. \$12 adults, \$10 seniors/students.

Experience the amazement of the classic carnival sideshow with Peter Monticup and Steve Pittella as they perform illusions, stunts and thrilling physical feats in an evening of fantasy and fun. Wonder at masterful sleights of hand and marvelous acts such as fire eating, sword swallowing, lying on a bed of nails and much more. This entertaining show will captivate the entire family.

Dickinson Theatre Box Office

Is only open 2 hours before performance.

TO BUY TICKETS

PVCC's Fine Arts and Performance events may be purchased by the following:

1. Call the PVCC Box Office at 434.961.5376 to charge tickets to your Visa, MasterCard or American Express.
2. Purchase at the Box Office window two hours before performance.
(If tickets are available)
3. Purchase [online](#).

4. Purchase advance tickets at the following locations
(one month prior to each event): (Dickinson Main Stage Only)

PVCC Cashier's Office

501 College Drive

Charlottesville, VA 22901

434.961.5213

9 a.m. – 3 p.m. Monday through Friday

Posted in [Uncategorized](#) | [Leave a comment](#)

Just in! Photos from August 20th Ring Meeting



Ring #320 August 20th Ring Meeting-
Top Left- Wes Iseli's new routine transforming Eddie Tobey in "Magnetic Man"
Top Middle- Jim Champion with a Pin-up girl card trick
Right Middle-Ron Schneider with an ambitious signed card trick
Left and Middle, Middle- Dennis Phillips reading jokes he wrote
Right Middle- Eddie Tobey with a great self-working Ring and String
Bottom- George Buckley with a John Fedko inspired Bunny card trick

[Image](#) | Posted on [August 21, 2013](#) | [Leave a comment](#)

Message from President Wes Iseli

Posted on [August 16, 2013](#)

Hey Guys,



Our **next meeting** is this **Tuesday August 20th** at Wayne Hills Baptist Church, 877 Ladd Road, Waynesboro, Va 22980.

The theme will be – Comedy magic

As always it is just a suggested theme, just bring something if you can.

Here is a classic Penn & Teller TV special I thought I would pass along to you.

It is a classic and it is the full special.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pUcAido2x4I>

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Also if you have any questions, comments or concerns please contact me directly:

By phone toll free [1 877 987 4201](tel:18779874201)

email wesiseli@gmail.com

Posted in [Uncategorized](#) | [Leave a comment](#)

Wes Iseli's Magical Vacation

Posted on [August 11, 2013](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#) | [Leave a comment](#)

Monthly Ring Report

Posted on [July 20, 2013](#)



AUGUST 2013

Editor, Dennis Phillips

Ring #320 The Blue Ridge Magicians

President Wes Iseli

Vice President Eddie Tobey "Tobini"

Treasurer David Clauss

Sgt. at Arms Jim Champion

Secretary Dennis Phillips

Breaking News

November 19th is the Peter Pitchford Lecture.

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George Buckley notes that our Ring is 17 years old!

Eddie Tobey notes that it is almost able to vote.

Another member notes it still has 4 years to go before it can drink.

§

<http://www.paulhallas.com>

Mentalist, Paul Hallas, is appearing for a lecture (free to Ring #320 members) on September 13th at the S.A.M. “Hersy Basham” Assembly #32 of Lynchburg, VA. They meet at Tharp Funeral Home Contact: Patrick Hubble at (434) 847-4933 or John Jennings at Investigatefire@aol.com

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From IBM Ring #103 in Hampton Roads:

David Simoson Book Auction

July 27th at 1:00 p.m.

The auction of David Simoson’s excellent book collection is scheduled for Saturday afternoon July 27th beginning at 1:00 p.m. in the Shafer Room at Virginia Wesleyan College. The auction will be conducted by Harold Wood. To download a complete listing of the books, magazines and pamphlets that will be offered.

<http://www.ibmring103.com/Newsletter.html>

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Remember the blog address is

<http://blueridgemagiciansring320.wordpress.com>

Ring Report

July 16, 2013 Ring Meeting

The heat of Summer was apparent for our July Ring meeting. President Iseli was away performing at a County Fair and President Eddie Tobey (Tobini) conducted the meeting.

First up was information from two guests from the March of Dimes who informed us about their willingness to host a fund-raising magic show by our Ring. We hope to get a high school auditorium to use and present a 90 minute show on a Saturday night to the general public and raise funds for the March of Dimes.

This month's pre-show lecture was conducted by Treasurer David Clauss who did an informative lecture and demonstration of using an end short card as well as corner short card. He also provided a hand out with printed materials on the techniques. David used it for mindreading as well as finding cards. Short cards are a useful tool.

The theme of this month's Ring show was "Gimmicks and Gaffs". Dennis Phillips was first up with a zip lock bag filled with flesh-colored gimmicks. He had a Silks from Newspaper gimmick, several Stillwell balls, a Palmo, an Al Baker Die Tube and Ireland Dye Tube. He then showed a PK Bat gimmick. Using a spectator he showed how to gimmick spoons to make them stick to a magnetic man. He then showed Al Gorham's BINGO trick where a bingo number is predicted. He concluded with an Applause Meter where the children try to outdo each other screaming until the break the meter.

Bryan Bence blew up several balloons and they broke on command with nothing near them. A spectator was also able to break them with his thoughts. Steve Pittella showed the difference between a gaff and a gimmick. His gaff was a two-headed duck and his gimmick was a Jack Chanan device for blowing smoke out of your mouth. Guest Alexander MacPhail, whose father is member Ralph, showed a startling card demonstration of being able to cut to all four aces in a deck after repeatable being shuffled. He explained that John Scarne never revealed his method as he told us the history of the effect. Ralph explained his own technique but we still marveled at the skill needed to do it.

Jim Champion had his version of the Ambitious Card effect but using a clever gimmick. Jim called it, "The trick that fooled Houdini". He also showed a gimmick that made cards exchange in a spectator's hands.

Finally Eddie Tobey had a spectator select a card and sit on it. Eddie had him hold a thin wire between his hands. Eddie took the wire and heated it with a flame and it formed into the symbols of the chosen card.

Dennis Phillips

§

Feedback is welcomed. Write a comment. Disagree. Agree. Call me names.

These are my personal opinions. I respect your opinions.

Dennis Deliberations.... Editorial and Comment

By Dennis Phillips

August 2013

"haud ignota loquor" [Virgil's Aeneid](#), 2.91.

Female illusionist, Ariann Black had a disastrous performance on America's Got Talent. She and her assistants accidentally exposed Jim Steinmeyer's "Interlude" Illusion.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8SFOU2p8Gq4> Black has been attempting to mystify people with magic for the last twenty years. She's been mostly unsuccessful at imbedding herself into the top tier in the Vegas magic scene. Her own show on the strip seemed to fail, she reinventing her show on the strip, which seemed to fail again, she was another magician's opening act, and then a part in Splash... And now at age 45, I think that you can see the pattern. I believe that she does have talent but has not been able to translate it and her good looks into the shinning career she seems to want. It could be that the times and Vegas conditions are just not right. For all the talent that the late Peter Reveen had, he just never quite succeeded as an illusionist. Both he and Black had their best chance at being top acts in the 80s.

This latest disaster with Ariann Black and The Interlude may have pulled the final curtain on her attempt at being a star Vegas Illusionist. As sarcastic and snotty as Howard Stern and the rest of the AGT panel, they seemed baffled at trying to understand what she was trying to do. That means her act was not bad. It was not even good enough to be just "bad".

Much of the problem is the Illusion she was trying to present, Jim Steinmeyer's Interlude.

No one has greater respect for Jim Steinmeyer than I do. He is the single most prolific creator of illusions in the last quarter of the 20th century and he continues to create. But like most thinkers and inventors, not everything he creates is great. One great illusion he created was the Origami Box, another is Modern Art. It virtually made Harbin's Zig-Zag obsolete.

A clever but not spectacular Steinmeyer illusion is "Interlude". It is where a magician steps into an upright frame and is covered in the middle and a woman crawls through his body. It is another one of Steinmeyer's puzzles like about 50% of what he creates.

P.T. Selbit (P.T. Tibbles), the genius of the early part of the century, also had a ratio of failures. I think that like Selbit, many magicians performed his lesser illusions out of respect rather than merit. Both Virgil and Levant abandoned Selbit's "Mighty Cheese". It was a novel idea with a giant two-foot high cheese wheel (cylinder) which could not be turned over by a group of spectators. The secret was a large internal gyroscope which was spun to high speeds by an external electric motor or bicycle method. Like all gyroscopes, it resisted any forced movement through its vertical plane of rotation. For all you math geeks, like me, its used Precession. It is a change in the orientation of the rotational axis of a [rotating](#) body. It can be defined as a change in direction of the rotation axis in which the second [Euler angle \(nutation\)](#) is constant. In [physics](#), there are two types of precession: [torque-free](#) and torque-induced. Enough of that! A gyroscope can be mysterious and I am sure it was more so at the beginning of the 20th century and Selbit's audiences. But a puzzle is not a magic trick.

"Interlude" is just not that great of a magic trick. The only way the Interlude sort of works is with a virile male in the box and a gorgeous female passing through such as Charlotte Pendragon and Joanne Spina. Siegfried and Roy added a surprise ending by backing it up to a Million Dollar Mystery mirror tube and producing a black panther out of Roy's middle.

The illusion always seems to take on a sexual metaphor. (Not to get too Freudian, here) It has a tinge of masochism-domination as the guy gets penetrated by the female, For some this must be a male and female fantasy. I will just leave this line of commentary at that point.

"Interlude" works as a throw-away for a big box show when used this way. Copperfield helped his performance

with the remote controlled rotator. The Pendragons were all beef and flesh. The boxes were irrelevant except as shock and awe.

One other performance I saw with it had merit. It may have been Hirakowa (The guy in Honolulu with the hotel dinner show) <http://www.magicofpolynesia.com/>

I seem to recall that his Interlude split in two down the middle! . It was themed in bamboo with vines and at the end were tiki torches that he held on to as he was sacrificed by an island shaman to have a slender Hawaiian Goddess pass through his heart. It clam-shelled open to let him in and then closed. The plot dominated the trick, as it probably should with this illusion.

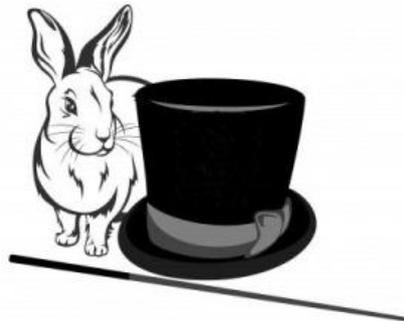
But for me and most others to do this effect would come off as kinky... Ah, the pain of growing old (and knowing it) Apparently Ariann is clueless about her age. She has increasingly become garish in her looks and was spooky on the AGT clip...harsh and old. She is not aging as well as Heather Locklear, who is also getting ragged. Ariann, like Melinda, was very attractive in her youth and still appealing but in a different way. Like Melinda, she needs to take a different career path and business model. What she is doing is not working

Dennis

Posted in [Uncategorized](#) | [Leave a comment](#)

July Ring Meeting

Posted on [July 11, 2013](#)



A Message from Ring President Wes Iseli

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Our very own David Clauss will be doing a teach in (Which will be a surprise to everyone)

Our digital library is growing. Check it out to see what's new at: <http://digitallibraryforring320.blogspot.com/>

Here are couple of cool videos I found online this month I thought you may enjoy as much as I did:

David Copperfield Biography - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hRLFGqv7wqw>

TV's 50 Greatest Magic Tricks - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mcLsS_idliY

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See you at the meeting

Wes Iseli

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