



THE SILENT MESSENGER

Silent Mora—Ray Goulet
www.Ring 122.com
May 2015

Coming Events ...

Next Meeting: Wednesday, May 27th,
7:30pm, at the Unitarian Universalist
Church of Watertown, 35 Church Street.

**Our May meeting is sure to be
great fun with a Wizard Wars
game that Debbie O'Carroll will
conduct!**



Two teams will vie for the
championship, and the winning
team will win the prize of sitting in
the coveted first row seats at the
next lecture. There will be lots of
laughs and camaraderie, so don't
miss this meeting!

**(More Coming Events on
page 3)**



Springtime Magic is in the Air!

Our April meeting was robust and productive. First, we organized all the front and backstage issues for our upcoming Spring Magic Spectacular on May 16. Then we moved on to a demonstration of card sleights and tricks by Ray Goulet. Ray kept apologizing—"I used to be able to perform 90% of Erdnase. Since my heart attack my hand is numb and I can only do 15% of Erdnase now." But 15% of Ray doing card tricks is better than 90% of most card magicians, so I don't see

what Ray has to apologize for. His variations and uses of the throw change, running cuts, find the ace tricks, and a great one-handed rising card from Expert Card Magic kept us entertained and interested. Ray's unfussy card handling is based on his friend Frank Thompson's advice: "Make it look like you're doing nothing."

Next came several performances by members. John Sanbonmatsu did a card to pocket routine that used the migration of the monarch butterfly as the basis for the return and disappearance of the spectator's signed card.

WonJun performed a psychometry trick that used three spectators and their cellphones and two KitKat bars. The climax hinged on whether WonJun was going to step on an envelope that contained a cellphone or the candy.

Bob Filene performed a comedy chain escape routine. The props withstood close inspection yet Bob got in and out of the locked chains at will.

Kevin Butler took a small, perhaps six inch piece of rope, then turned it into a six-foot piece of rope. Kevin then tied the rope around his neck, and pulled it straight through his neck.

Felice, one of our new members, amazed us with her sleight of hand. She performed the coins in glass, where four coins go invisibly from her hand into the glass. Felice then produced coins from her feet, and then a cellphone! She next performed a pickpocket card trick that used a \$100 bill transposing with a card in a box in the spectator's pocket. (Additional photos on page 2)

(Springtime Magic is in the Air!
Continued from page 1)



John Sanbonmatsu's card-to pocket routine



Won-Jun, after his phone mentalism routine



Bob Filene performs his comedy chain escape routine



Felice Ling performs coin and bill sleight-of-hand magic

—Pat Farenga
Photos by Bruce Fenton

From the President
Ready or Not



Silks ironed? **Check!**
Sponge balls plumped? **Check!**
Coins polished? **Check!**
Patter ready? *Oh darn it, what was that line again?*

Preparing for a show is *not* like riding a bicycle. It doesn't matter how many thousand of times you have performed a routine ... if you haven't done it recently and regularly, your mind will play tricks on you, and the timing can go haywire very quickly.

Lately, I've found that time for practice is a precious commodity. The dozens of one-liners and sight gags I used on the street are sadly no longer part of my daily conversation. The silent script, the order of moves, and pocket management are a bit fuzzy.

Sure, it's fun to share tricks with other magicians. I always have coins in my pocket to practice with secretly while waiting in line at the Registry. All that is fine but it avoids the one singular inescapable truth that there's no substitute for working in front of real people.

Surprisingly, lay people can work in your favor. They *want* you to succeed, and they usually have no idea how the magic works, in spite of YouTube. Just remember to take it slow and easy. There's plenty of time. If your routine looks like it's about to hit the fan, just stop. I rely on a quick distraction or two that's always close at hand, such as my eyeball falling on the table or Ammar's "Little Hand". Anything self-working that allows you time to get back in the groove works well.

My magical character has deliberately been developed over the years as a clumsy, bumbling incompetent dolt. This can cover a multitude of sins. It's much more convincing now. So, the best remedy is keep it simple and enjoy the show!

—Bruce Fenton

Coming Events (Continued from page 1)

Saturday, May 23rd: Boston Live Magic EXPO. 10am-4pm, DoubleTree by Hilton Boston-Bedford Glen, 44 Middlesex Turnpike, Bedford, MA 01730.

Admission is \$9.95. Reserve today and get a \$10 voucher at the door to spend at the EXPO. Featured dealers, and more information at:

<http://www.penguinmagic.com/p/5421>

Wednesday, April 8th: S.A.M. 9 Lecture, The Psychology of Magic, Gerry Frenette. Magicians only. 8pm. St. James Armenian Church, Mt. Auburn & School Streets, Watertown, MA 02472. Admission is free for S.A.M. 9 members, and \$15 for non-members. More information: alanwassilak@verizon.net.

The Silent Messenger is published every month except for July and August. Editorial duties rotate each month between Jerry Schiowitz (editor of this issue) and Pat Farenga (editor of next month's issue). The deadline for submissions is the eighth of the month. Articles, inquiries, and letters can be emailed to the editors:

- Pat: pfarenga@comcast.net
- Jerry: annjer@rcn.com

(The following text is from the article featured in Merrimack Valley Magazine, March/April 2015, and is copyright © 2015, 512 Media, Inc.) The article, with photos and captions, is available on the IBM Ring 122 website, at <http://www.ring122.com/books-and-articles.html>

The Past, Present, and Future of Magic in the Merrimack Valley, by Henri B. Marchand

Magicians have long called the Merrimack Valley home. Lawrence Crane and Lowell natives Art Lyle and Louis Ackerman are three who mystified audiences well beyond the Valley beginning in the early 1900s.

Crane grew up in Lowell after his family immigrated to America in 1885. Billed as the "Irish Wizard," he is reported to have begun his career at London's Palace Theatre. Lyle performed close-up magic and also toured a vaudeville stage act. After retiring as a performer, he contributed articles to magic publications and opened Joker's Alley, a store that sold novelty and magic items. Ackerman, stage name Ackero, had a colorful East Asian-themed show that he performed in casinos, on cruise ships and in nightclubs from the 1940s through the 1970s. He also appeared on "The Ed Sullivan Show."

Crane died in 1950, Lyle in 1974 and Ackerman 10 years later.

IBM Ring 122, Silent Mora

Website: <http://www.ring122.com>

Meetings take place the last Wednesday of every month at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Watertown, 35 Church Street.

Ring 122 Officers for 2014-2015

President: Bruce Fenton, galahad37@hotmail.com

1st Vice President: Kevin Butler, kevibutler@comcast.net

2nd Vice President: John Sanbonmatsu, js@wpi.edu

Treasurer: Daryl Vanderburgh, 508-655-8553

dvanderburgh8@gmail.com

Secretary: Debbie O'Carroll, 978-462-9954

debbie@debbieocarroll.com

Sergeant-at-Arms: Bob Filene, bobfilene@alum.mit.edu

Board of Governors: Doug Rickenback, rickenback@verizon.net

But their legacies remain as magicians continue to call the Valley home. Among them is Bob Riordan, a Derry, NH resident who grew up in Lowell. He was first drawn to magic when he saw a magician on television. "A few years later," he recalls, "I went to a birthday party and the kid got an A.C. Gilbert Co. "My Favorite Martian" magic kit for a gift. I hunkered down in a corner and played with the magic." He was hooked. Riordan, 53, frequented Joker's Alley and eventually purchased his own magic kit.

"In seventh grade, I took a course in magic at Northern Essex Community College with Vinnie Lumenello," Riordan says. "He was a fixture in the Valley magic scene." In 1982, Riordan took a year off from the University of Lowell (now UMass Lowell) to sharpen his skills at the Chavez Studio of Magic in Colon, Michigan. During college he worked birthday parties and restaurants, and went on to perform at Benson's Wild Animal Farm in Hudson, NH. A full-time professional magician, Riordan is a regular at The Mystery Lounge in Cambridge and recently signed up for his first cruise ship gig. Riordan also collects antique posters of legendary magicians.

Louis Ackerman travelled the world performing an East Asian-themed show as Ackero and was recognized by the International Brotherhood of Magicians for his work. **(Continued on page 4.)**

**The Past, Present, and Future of
Magic in the Merrimack Valley
(Continued from page 3)**

Downriver in Methuen, amateur magician **Doug Rickenback's** magic man cave is neatly packed with 2,500 books, 350 DVDs and 500 decks of cards. Rickenback, 62, grew up in Michigan but moved to the Merrimack Valley 15 years ago. Rickenback describes his start in magic as typical. "My grandfather worked for Ford and took us to a Christmas party," he recalls. "There was a magician on the bill ... the first live magician I ever saw." Rickenback is "more interested in the art than in performing," but says he puts on shows for "family and friends and neighborhood gatherings" and considers magic a "special gift" to be shared.

Retired from a career in computers, Rickenback attends several magic conventions each year and, despite knowing the secrets, retains his little boy sense of wonder. "There are some really special moments," he says of live performances. "The magic happens between the performer and the audience. It's like we're never going to grow up, like we're still little boys looking for real magic."

Andover resident **Jim Loscutt** (not to be confused with the former Boston Celtics player of the same name) credits his father for sparking his interest in magic. "Dad showed me a trick when I was a kid," says Loscutt, 58, who later spent time in California where he took lessons and performed bar magic. Today, his programs are eclectic — corporate programs and children's shows, and Halloween-themed "wizard stuff." At Christmastime he plays Santa Claus. Although his full-time job is owner/operator of Camp Evergreen, a summer camp for children in Andover, magic remains a daily activity. "I use magic as a tool to enhance the camp experience," he says, adding that tricks can cheer up children if they're having a bad day. "It's a pleasure to do magic," Loscutt says.

At the mouth of the Merrimack, **Debbie O'Carroll** specializes in school and library shows, performing children's magic with a sprightly energy. Originally from Syracuse, NY, O'Carroll, who preferred not to give her age, attended Emerson College in Boston, where she studied children's theater before settling in Newburyport.

Like Riordan, her interest in magic began with a borrowed magic kit. But that interest eventually hit a magical "glass ceiling" of sorts. "I wanted to join the magic club in high school, but was told no girls allowed," she says. Undeterred, she "bought books and made my own magic."

In 1991, O'Carroll was welcomed into The International Brotherhood of Magicians, and now serves as secretary for the local club and is territorial vice president for Massachusetts. O'Carroll's repertoire includes science-, reading-, geography-, Halloween- and Irish-themed shows, which she has performed from the Topsfield Fair to Jordan, Ireland and Montana. "Magic is such a wonderful vehicle for children to learn," she says. "It says to a child, 'Your imagination can take you any where!'"

In a 1972 Lowell Sun interview, Art Lyle bemoaned what he perceived as declining opportunities for young magicians to develop their acts. But while vaudeville and other venues have vanished, Merrimack Valley magicians continue to create new opportunities to sustain the art, and the wonder, of magic.

Editor's Note: The writer of this article, Henri Marchand of Lowell, is also a magician and member of I.B.M. Ring 122. Look for his performances at special and charitable events.

Birthdays of Famous Magicians in May

02- Robert Nickle	16- George W. Hunter
03- Percy Abbott	17- Mario Carrandi
03- Doug Henning	18- Silvan
04- Servais LeRoy	21- Gene Anderson
04- Harry Lorayne	21- Imro Fox
04- Robert Lund	23- Herman Hanson
07- Frank Ducrot	25- W.H.J. Shaw
08- Dr. Robert Albo	27- George Cooke
08- Frank Garcia	28- Logan Wait
09- Fred Culpitt	30- The Great Raymond
14- Carl Hertz	31- Nate Leipzig