



# THE SILENT MESSENGER

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

## Have our next meeting *your way!*

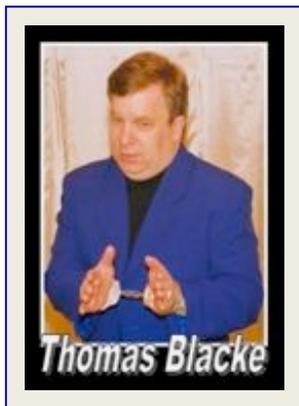
Although the Big Magic Auction originally scheduled for our November meeting has been postponed until Ray's hip heals, it will be a great opportunity for you to teach, perform, or try out an effect on which you've been working.

**See From the President on page 3 for more information.**

Our next meeting is on **Wednesday, November 18th, 7:30pm**, at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Watertown, 35 Church Street.



## Thomas Blacke Presents "Cards and Cuffs"



Thomas Blacke presented his lecture "Cards and Cuffs" to Ring 122 at its October 2015 meeting. Blacke is a magician, escape artist, martial artist (he earned three black belts), author of seven books (not all are about magic), and a magic dealer who surprised and entertained us with his stories and tricks. He is a member of the Magic Circle and he's been performing professionally since 1983. Blacke mentioned that he has known Ray Goulet since that time (Ray was at the meeting), and his presentation was more like a good talk among friends than a formal lecture.

He started by sharing the story of his performing career. He realized he needed to create a name for himself with something other than winning a magic contest, because he didn't think he was as good a magician as the other competitors. He said, "I don't compete in magic contests but I wanted something on my marquee," and that's when he decided to pursue world records. Blacke holds 10 world records, including two from Guinness: Fastest escape from chains and fastest escape from chains while under water. The underwater escape was featured in Ripley's Believe It or Not.

Blacke then moved into his lecture material, starting with card tricks. He made a point to say that he doesn't do knuckle-busting sleights nor use lots of gimmicks to achieve his effects (one effect used a double-backed deck and all

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**Thomas Blacke Presents “Cards and Cuffs”  
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his others used a standard deck), and his explanations proved it. Before he got to the escape lecture, Blacke demonstrated another talent and world record that he holds: the fastest dog balloon twist dog on earth—3 seconds! He immediately demonstrated this feat and left us amazed. In a brief aside, Blacke mentioned that he does a lot of balloon work these days, and that he’s not the best balloon artist, but by being the fastest he gets business. “Balloons are the greatest thing in the world. I always carry a balloon,” he said.

We also learned that Blacke also always carries a rope (for martial arts’ purposes, not magic!) and about a thousand lock picks hidden on his clothes and body! As an escape artist he consults with law enforcement agencies and the U.S. Navy and he showed us why they ask for his advice by escaping from regulation handcuffs in no time.

Blacke noted how each escape artist must use individual preference and their personal style to make their escapes unique and used Mac King’s thumb tie routine as an example. What is not involved in King’s routine is making a big deal out of getting out of the thumb tie. Instead, King makes a big deal about the chair, purse, and other objects his thumbs get tied to and humorously freed from.

Blacke got hurt once during an escape and decided he needed to change his act a bit as he got older, so he added more comedy to his escapes and developed his condiment theory of performance: he gets ahead of the audience so they are always playing catch-up to him. Blacke was generous in his explanations, sharing his many ingenious lock-pick hiding places (cufflinks, credit cards, and collar stays, for instance), as well as his means. He showed us how to pick door locks, handcuffs, and pad locks. He showed how a hook pick, rake pick, tension wrench, and a bump key work. Blacke also noted that low-tech Zip-tie cuffs were the least expensive and most effective cuffs to use on someone you want to keep locked up. As we approached the Halloween anniversary of Harry Houdini’s death, Thomas Blacke showed Ring 122 that in the 21st century, escapes and magic tricks still combine to make for an entertaining and enlightening show.

—Patrick Farenga  
Photos by Bruce Fenton



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**It’s That Time of the Year!  
Time to Pay Your Dues**

Dues are \$35 to receive the Silent Messenger by e-mail, \$45 to receive a hard copy by US Postal Service. Please make checks payable to "IBM Ring 122".

Please bring your dues to the November 18th meeting, or mail them to:

Daryl Vanderburgh  
31 Stonebridge Rd  
Wayland, MA 01778

Thanks!

## From the President



Ray's unfortunate accident has caused the **postponement of the Big Magic Auction** originally planned for the November 18th meeting. But ... have patience ... Ray's auction will be rescheduled as soon as he gives us the word that all is OK with his gaffed hip.

We thought that the best use of the November 18<sup>th</sup> meeting would be to solve all of your problems. So, that meeting will be a **good old fashioned magic session**. Are you having problems with your double lift? Is your Bobo Switch turned off? Have you been trapped in handcuffs for three weeks?

Maybe your compeers can help. This meeting will be a potpourri of magic ... part teach-in, part rehearsal, part psychoanalysis.

Bring your biggest magical problems and members will try to solve them. It could be anything: difficult sleights, timing and routing, or wondering why you got into magic in the first place. We can fix it together. Often, another perspective can turn an average presentation into a great one. Teach-ins are welcome as well.

Please join us for a fun-filled evening of magicians performing badly.

—Bruce Fenton

*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](mailto:pfarenga@comcast.net)
- Jerry: [annjer@rcn.com](mailto:annjer@rcn.com)

## Secretary's Report

- The meeting was called to order at 7:45 by our president, Bruce Fenton. The Secretary and Treasurer reports were accepted by members. Eliot Palmer and Peter O'Malley were welcomed as our as our guests.
- Gil Stubbs announced that he has four openings to be filled by magicians who would like to appear on his monthly show, "Gil Stubb's World of Magic", on the Wellesley Community Channel. Interested magicians should contact Gil at [gilstubbs@gmail.com](mailto:gilstubbs@gmail.com)
- We learned that Steve Rogers broke his knee and we wished him a speedy recovery.
- We discussed putting an application for Ring 122 membership on our website. Daryl Vanderburgh, Debbie O'Carroll, and Pat Farenga will work on this.
- Bob Filene announced that our proposal to present a show at the Regent Theatre in Arlington has been accepted. The show will be on Friday, June 3rd, 2016 in the evening. Magicians who would like to participate should contact our Performances Chairman, Ryan Lally at [lallymagic@gmail.com](mailto:lallymagic@gmail.com).
- We agreed to spend \$9.00 per month, for six months, to advertise on [meetup.org](http://meetup.org).
- The meeting was adjourned at 7:55pm

—Debbie O'Carroll

## 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 2015-2016

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