

## Upcoming Ring Events

- Next Meeting – May 1, 7:00pm
- May's Theme – Rubber band Magic
- June 12 – Rope Workshop with Bob Knigge
- July 12 – Gray Fun Fest Block Party Show

## Ring Officers

President – **Scot Price**  
Vice-President – **Dan Wolfe**  
Treasurer – **Clift Mitchell**  
Secretary – **Andrew Hyder**  
Sergeant-At-Arms – **David Larkins**

## Ring 355 Magician of the Year Results

The **Magician of the Year competition** was the main focus of April's meeting.

Clift Mitchell started things off by performing a version of Al Koran's Princess Card Trick. Clift brought 5 people up and gave each a few cards. After they each remembered a card Clift was able to call out the cards and name the one they had thought of.

Matt Watts followed this with a version of Vernon's Ace Assembly, a cut and restored rope routine and ending with silk to egg.

Up next was David Larkins. David performed BILLoon. A borrowed, signed dollar bill is vanished. A random balloon is chosen, blown up and eventually popped by the spectator. Inside the balloon is the signed dollar bill.

Rounding out this year's competition was Dan Wolfe. Dan performed his handling of Slydini's Torn and Restored Newspaper using a very slick method.

After all the votes were tabulated by Secretary Andrew Hyder it was my privilege to announce the 2007 Ring 255 Magician of the Year Award goes to....Clift Mithcell.

Congratulations to Clift and all the monthly winners this past year.

## IBM Ring 355 News & Notes

- The April meeting was held at the Gray Community Chest building and it looks like this will be a fine place to have our meetings.
- It was great to see some familiar faces back at the meetings, especially Andrew Hyder. Andrew is still weak from his hospital visit but strong enough to show everyone some stuff during the open magic section.
- Ring 355 will be performing a stage show at the Gray Fun Fest Block Party on July 12. We need all the help we can get for this. The average attendance for this event is 2500 people. We need both performers and stage hands.
- May's theme is Rubber Band Magic.
- Bob Knigge has volunteered to do a Rope Workshop at our July 5 meeting. Everyone is asked to bring their own rope that night. We will all participate while learning and teaching rope effects. 8-10 feet of rope should be plenty. Look for more details coming soon.
- Be sure and check out the Ring's website at [www.IBMRing355.org](http://www.IBMRing355.org) , Mike Lewis has done a terrific job on this.
- The new by-laws were approved unanimously.
- Bob Sanders will be lecturing at the Knoxville ring on May 22. We may try and get a group together and go see this silk lecture.

## Member Spotlight on Dan Wolfe



“People won’t remember what you did. People won’t remember what you say. But people will always remember how you made them feel.”

I was born in Pennsylvania, where I lived until getting married in 2005. My wife Tobe' and I decided that East Tennessee would be our new home, so here we are. I've been doing Magic professionally for almost 30 years and have always built my own props. Originally it was because there were simply no magic shops in my area, but later because I always envisioned items that weren't available. I don't perform as much as I used to, but still get overseas occasionally. Mostly I stay home and build amazing things for other people.

### **You run Smoky Mt. Magic. What is the most difficult part of running a magic business?**

Making money! Seriously!

Magic is a boutique industry. You're not going to sell a zillion of any one thing. Wal-Mart doesn't carry Zig-Zags. So nothing can be mass-marketed or mass-produced on a grand scale to bring the costs down. All of it is hand-made, making it labor-intensive.

From the other perspective, the bulk of Magicians are hobbyists...which means broke. They're looking to save a buck, and you can't blame them. They're also constantly looking for something new and different. I guess the difficult part is balancing quality (which I insist on) and innovation (which I strive for) with price...and keeping the bottom line in the black.

### **...and the easiest?**

It's probably different for me than other dealers/builders. More than one veteran magic builder has told me, "Magic would be a great business, if it weren't for Magicians." Personally, I enjoy the challenges folks bring me. Speaking with performers from all over the world, each with a different style and vision for their act. For me, that's one of the best parts of the job. I just LOVE dreaming up new stuff for them...and making it happen.

### **What is your favorite area of magic to perform?**

Comedy, Stage Magic and Illusions. I'm far too lazy for sleight of hand, so I don't do close-up. I'm also WAY too goofy for Mentalism. Anything else is fair game. I don't work with livestock anymore. All I need is another mouth to feed. But if the doves could have been potty-trained, I might still have 'em. Also, one of my new effects in development is a livestock production, so I may need to borrow somebody's rabbit. <hint, hint>

### **Who was the first magician you remember seeing perform?**

The first Magician I saw perform was Mark Wilson. His 30-minute TV show ran once a week on our local station for a while. I vividly remember seeing Mark and Greg present a "sucker" dove vanish together. It was the first time I'd seen a KID doing Magic. I thought, "He's MY age. I could be doing that!"...and went to work making it happen.

The first Magician I saw performing live was the late Harry Albacker. He was based in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and did kid shows at fairs and festivals around the Northeast for 50 years. Crusty old guy who reportedly shunned other area Magicians, but for some reason, he took a liking to me. The man performed in a glittery turban, satin genie pants and a button-down, long-sleeved dress shirt. His act was mostly Supreme Magic (cardboard) and he \*never\* changed his act...or his patter. Fifty years of doing "Instant Art" and "Jolly Polly George." Both the act and the costume took true courage, believe me.

**Member Spotlight on Dan Wolfe continued...****Did this spark your interest or was it something else?**

I was given a Marshall Brodien Magic Set for Christmas when I was about five. Since I couldn't read the instructions yet, I'd study the props and make up my own tricks with them.

Learning to read was both a blessing and a curse. I found that the library was FULL of new magical ideas. However, I also found out what the tricks in my magic set were supposed to do...and was usually disappointed. After that, they seemed kind of lame. I liked mine better. It's probably why I started developing new magic. I saw a need for it even then.

**When you wake up in the morning is your mustache still in a handlebar?**

Depends on how I slept. You CAN get "bed-head" on your face.

**Who is/was your favorite magician?**

Doug Henning. Hands down. He wasn't afraid to go beyond the norm and do something different. If it weren't for him, I'd probably still be shopping for second-hand tuxedos...and feeding those doves.

**You can do juggling, mime, clowning, fire eating, and sword swallowing in addition to magic. Any other amazing skills we do not know about?**

I write comedy songs, a little artwork. My wife says I make an absolutely awesome meatloaf.

**What is your favorite thing about being in the Ring?**

The fellowship with other Magicians. Being able to toss ideas back and forth and watch the creative sparks fly. For many, MANY years, the nearest Ring (or even another Magician) was a two-hour drive away. Most of my career was spent in isolation. It's probably why I turned out so weird.

**Do you have a tattoo? What is it?**

No tattoo. I seriously considered getting one while on my honeymoon in Hershey, PA. "The Sweetest Place on Earth"...just too perfect. To commemorate the occasion, I wanted to get a Hershey Kiss on my right butt-cheek with my new wife's name on the little paper tag. Didn't happen...but the day's not over, yet.

**If you could sit down to dinner with any three magicians from any time, who and why?**

That depends. Who's paying?

**First:** Any one of my Magic Building Clients - Because I usually only get to meet them over the phone.

**Second:** Samuel Patrick Smith - Because he ALWAYS laughs at my jokes...if he "gets" them or not. He was the Best Man at my wedding and I don't see him nearly enough anymore. (He'll probably order the ribs.)

**Third:** Doug Henning - Because I just miss hanging out with him.

**What three magic books would you recommend to us?**

The Fitzkee Trilogy (which I'm counting as one book) - Provides wonderful bits of insight into the actual workings of Magic. Not methods and effects, but how to make it "work." I don't agree with everything Fitzkee says, but then, I seldom agree with anyone 100%.

"Jarrett" by Jim Steinmeyer - Jarrett's designs are classic. Imagining his thought process when creating an illusion just fascinates me. I also appreciate the historical bits. Magic has always been a cut-throat business and he isn't afraid to give us the real dirt (or at least HIS perception) behind the public personnas of our most revered performers. Granted, you could choke an elephant with his ego...but, Magic tends to attract those. Ever notice that?

"Jump Start Your Brain" by Doug Hall - Not a Magic book, but a great read about unlocking your natural creativity. His system WORKS! It's probably out of print, but if you can find one, I highly recommend it.

**You Might Be A Magician If...**

You pay \$50 for a \$1 coin

Your best pickup line is "Pick a card."

A "shell" is not something found on a beach.

You pose for a photo with one eyebrow raised!

If you've ever been asked the question "can you make my wife disappear"?

There's a pack of cards in sight as you read these words.

You're holding a fan of cards in every photo that you're in.

You record every magic special on TV.

No one will play cards with you....ever.

All your friends call you when magic is on TV.

After viewing magic on TV, everyone in the room looks at you and asks, "How'd they do that"? And, all you do is smile and say, "It's really easy if you think about it, but magicians can't tell." And you're really thinking "How the heck did they do that"?

You have your local magic shop on speed dial.

You can lose your thumb and you visit the magic shop instead of the emergency ward.

You pay \$60.00 for a book and get, possibly, one or two useful things out of it and you're happy.

You pretended to be insane just to get the straight jacket.

You never throw out old decks because you "can make something out of it".

You carefully watch a card-playing scene in a movie only to see what kind of cards they're using.

**2008 Officer Elections**

A move was made to keep the same officers for one more term. All the current officers agreed to this and will remain in office for the next year.

**What's in a Name?**

Here are the answers to last month's quiz. Did you get them right?

1. Criss Angel = Christopher Sarantakos
2. Fantasio = Ricardo Roucau
3. David Copperfield = David Kotkin
4. Jonathan Pendragon = Claude Yarbrough
5. David Blaine = David White
6. Dai Vernon = David Verner
7. Max Maven = Phil Goldstein
8. Andre Kole = Bob Gurtler, Jr

**Here is a sneak peek at May's  
Magic Magazine**

