

# MAGI-GRAM

Official Newsletter of IBM Ring 50 -- The National Capital Ring Volume 62 No. 1 January 2008

## Stage show highlight of Ring convention

The award-winning magic of Aldo Colombini will be one of the features of Ring 50's annual Magi-Whirl convention stage show. Voted "Parlor Magician of the Year" twice by the Academy of Magical Arts in Hollywood, will perform with his wife Rachel. He moved



**Aldo Colombini**

to the United States from Italy in 1993 and has been a hit wherever he performs. He has appeared in more than 50 countries including every European country, the United States, Canada, Japan, Australia, South Africa, China and South America.

Aldo is a F.I.S.M. prizewinner—one of the most prestigious awards in the world of magic. He dazzles audiences of all sizes... from as small as a few people with his amazing close-up magic to crowds of 1000-plus with his comedy and charisma on stage. He has performed often at Caesar's Magical Empire in Las Vegas and continues to appear several times a year at the world-famous Magic Castle in Hollywood,

And, if all that isn't enough, he speaks Italian, English, Spanish and French—and can perform in all four languages.

Magic also has been a life long hobby for Rachel Colombini. Following her career with one of the largest corporate organizations in Britain, she established a magic shop in Manchester, England, in 1993. She spent the next five years displaying and lecturing on magic at various conventions and magical societies before moving to the United States.

Turn to page 3 for more details about this year's two-day convention sponsored annually by Ring 50.

## Holiday magic to usher in new year

A fast-moving storm caused the cancellation of our December meeting, but the plus side is a holiday show planned for that night will be produced in January. A lineup of Ring 50 performers is ready to welcome in the new year with their special magic.

If you haven't signed up to join our list of entertainers for the evening, contact Ring 50 President Michael Taggert immediately.

### Dues due in February

Ring 50 dues are due in February of each year. The annual dues of \$15 are due by the Feb. 6 meeting for all members. Anyone, wishing to do so, can pay their dues at the next meeting, Jan. 2 Ring 50 Treasurer Bob Patterson asks that you pay by check to ease record keeping. Make checks payable to IBM Ring 50.

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**International Brotherhood  
of Magicians Ring 50  
The National Capital Ring**

**President**

Michael Taggert  
(540) 370-0752

[president@ibmring50.org](mailto:president@ibmring50.org)

**Vice President**

Louis Meyer  
(703) 765-1923

[vp@ibmring50.org](mailto:vp@ibmring50.org)

**Secretary**

Laurie Curry  
(703) 698-6953

[secretary@ibmring50.org](mailto:secretary@ibmring50.org)

**Treasurer**

Bob Patterson  
(703) 490-1222

[treasurer@ibmring50.org](mailto:treasurer@ibmring50.org)

**Sergeant-of-Arms**

Reggie Rice  
(240) 298-6077

[sgtarms@ibmring50.org](mailto:sgtarms@ibmring50.org)

**Magi-Gram Editor**

Jim Flanigan  
(202) 554-3775

[magi-gram@ibmring50.org](mailto:magi-gram@ibmring50.org)

**Webmaster**

Eric Henning  
(301) 369-0025

[eric@ibmring50.org](mailto:eric@ibmring50.org)



**JANUARY MEETING**

Wednesday, Jan. 2, 2008

**HOLIDAY INN  
IN ALEXANDRIA**

2460 Eisenhower Avenue  
Alexandria, VA

6:00 Cocktails

6:45 Dinner

8:00 Meeting/Show



# Coming Events

## Events at Barry's Magic

Visit Barry's web site for the latest events.

Place: Barry's Magic Shop, 5544 Nicholson Lane, Rockville, Md.

Contact: 301/933-0373 or email [magic@erols.com](mailto:magic@erols.com).

Web site: [http://](http://www.barrysmagicshop.com/)

[www.barrysmagicshop.com/](http://www.barrysmagicshop.com/)

## Lectures at Denny's Magic

*Denny and Lee in Baltimore has moved to a new, much larger location. All phone numbers, emails and website ordering remains the same. Visit Denny's web site for the latest events:*

<http://www.dennymagic.com/cgi-bin/>

**Denny & Lee Magic Studio**, 9004 Yellow Brick Road, Suite H,, Baltimore, MD., 21237.

Contact: Denny's at 410-686-3914 or email [dennymagic@aol.com](mailto:dennymagic@aol.com).

**Society of American Magicians (SAM)** Larry West Assembly 28

Date: Jan. 16 at 7 p.m.

Place: National Press Club, 529 14th Street NW, Washington, D.C.

Theme: Love Story (Valentine's Day magic)

Contact: Ray Eyer at 410/798-0176 [ceyler1026@aol.com](mailto:ceyler1026@aol.com) or email SAM

Assembly President Larry Lipman at [lmipman@cox.net](mailto:lmipman@cox.net).

**Lecture by Dr. Lawrence Hass**, creator of the annual *Theory and Art of Magic* Academic Conference on the campus of Muhlenberg College in Allentown, Pa., featuring world-leading stars of magic. He also is now writing a monthly "Theory and Art of Magic" column for *MAGIC* magazine.



Date: Feb. 6, 2008

## Dr. Larry Hass

Place: Eisenhower Avenue Holiday Inn in Alexandria, Va.

Sponsor: IBM Ring 50

Cost: Ring 50 members free; others \$10 at door.

## Glenn Gary Parlor Show

Dates: Every Friday at 8 p.m.

Place: The Westin City Center Hotel, 1400 M Street NW, just off Thomas Circle at 14th and M, in the Fireplace Parlor adjacent to the dining room of 1400 North Restaurant.

Cost: Pending available seating day of performance, any IBM member can get in at a discounted rate of \$25 cash at the door.

Contact: 703-963-0790 or [www.glenngary.com](http://www.glenngary.com).

## Combined IBM-SAM convention

This first-ever event, jointly sponsored by the International Brotherhood of Magicians and the Society of American Magicians, will include two gala stage shows, a banquet with cabaret shows and music for dancing, a close-up show, special programs for young magicians and for spouses, more than 60 dealers and other highlights.

Date: July 21-26, 2008

Place: Louisville, Ky.

Cost: A pre-convention registration special of \$295 expired last December. The current cost is \$395 until Dec. 31, 2007. It goes up to \$495 starting Jan. 1.

Contact: John or Virginia Apperson  
Email: [IBMSAM2008@appsmagic.com](mailto:IBMSAM2008@appsmagic.com).

Telephone: 618/451-9749.

Fax: 618/451-9374.

## Illusions Magic Bar and Lounge "Its All Just An Illusion"

Open: Wed-Sat, 5 p.m.-1 a.m.

1025 S. Charles Street  
Baltimore, MD 21230

Phone: (410) 727-5811



## Professor who doubles as magician sets dates for college program

Lawrence Hass, a philosophy professor at Muhlenberg College in Pennsylvania who also is an accomplished magician, will be the featured lecturer at the February meeting of Ring 50. He has a passionate commitment to the art of magic.

Larry Hass has performed his astonishing, artful magic in venues from Las Vegas to the East Coast, both on the stage and close up. His essays on magic performance and theory have been published in leading magic magazines, including *MAGIC*, *The Linking Ring*, *M-U-M* and *Hokus Pokus* (Switzerland).

Hass has recently completed his first, full-length book for magicians, "Transformations: Creating Magic Out

of Tricks". The book is listed as No. 2 in the top ten best selling books in *Genii* magazine.

Meanwhile, Hass has announced that the spring 2008 season of the *Theory and Art of Magic* program which he developed at Muhlenberg College runs March 12-16 starting with a lecture at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 12, by Eugene Burger titled "Magicians Who Have Changed My Magic and My Life" followed by an appearance at 7:30 Thursday, March 13, by Max Maven headlined "Max Maven Thinking in Person: An Evening of Knowing and Not Knowing".

Then on Friday, March 14, there will be an evening program with Maven and Burger.

Saturday, March 15, a lecture will be given by Maven at 2:30 p.m. followed by a reception. There will be a workshop given on Sunday, March 16, by Maven titled "So You Want to Be a Mentalist?" at 1:30 p.m. Seating will be limited.

William Kalush, author of "The Secret Life of Houdini", makes a presentation on Houdini on Wednesday, March 26, at 7:30 pm.

Hass delivers "The Transformations Workshop: Performing Magic Rather than Tricks" on May 2-4. "Participants will learn in one intensive weekend what my magic students receive over the course of a semester!" he says.

## THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Seasons Greetings once again to everyone!

Thank you everyone who called and requested that we postpone last month's meeting until January. It was a tough call to make and even tougher to get the word out at the last minute. Many thanks to Eric Henning, Bob Patterson and Jim Flanigan for getting the news out to you via the web and phone. It is better to have postponed than to have you in an accident because of a storm that hit at rush hour.

With that said, remember the meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of January is the holiday party and not an Ask the Panel Night as previously planned. If you wish to perform some holiday magic for us please give me a call or email me so we can put the list together. I also am hoping to encourage a volunteer to emcee the evening for us.

This puts us very close to Magi-Whirl. Now is the time to buy your tickets for the convention. I also will be calling everyone to pin down your



Michael Taggart

volunteer slots. While many folks have already asked to repeat in their same roles we still have openings in all phases of the event.

We are also adding a whole section this year to handle refreshments. We pulled off food and drink services at the last minute last year and we would like to be more prepared for this year.

Bob Patterson, who is our all-around handyman as well as treasurer, will be putting together the play bill ads. If you would like to advertise in the program for the convention, our stage show or both, please see Bob to get your copy in so we can get the layout done.

We have 700 seats to fill for the gala evening show. Please encourage your co-workers, friends and family to buy tickets to this exciting show. This year is shaping up to be the best Magi-Whirl we have ever done. Let's all pitch in. If everyone does a little bit, no one has to do a lot. Remember this is your convention and you are the one who makes it great. I only send out the emails.

I am seeking some one to act as a committee chair for a Magic Youth International Development committee. If you are interested in heading this important project call me and we can discuss the requirements at length.

*Michael*

## Ring 50 Meeting Schedule 2008

Jan. 2 — Holiday Magic

Feb. 6 — Richard Hass Lecture

March 5 — Four Corner Teach-In

**March 28-29—Magi-Whirl**

April 2 — Auction

May 7 — Dan Lacy Contest

June 4 — Winton Carroll "Most Humorous Magician" Contest

July — No meeting -- IBM/SAM joint convention in Louisville, Ky.



**BUY ONE NOW!** -- New lagoon-blue Ring 50 shirts are now available. You can also buy them in white. You won't want to be without one.

## **Magi-Whirl runs** **March 28-29, 2008**

There will be four lectures, plus three close-up performances, 10 dealers and a spectacular evening show at Ring 50's annual Magi-Whirl convention March 28 and 29, 2008.

The event is being held at Bishop Ireton High School, 201 Cambridge Road, Alexandria Va. Registration is only \$40 when you register at the meeting (\$45 online until March 16. After March 16 the price is \$60 for everyone).

Extra tickets for the Saturday night show may be purchased at \$10 each. Registration forms for this special price are available at the meeting.

### **Buy Magi-Whirl Advertisements**

You can support Magi-Whirl 2008 and get your name out at the same time! Ring 50 is now accepting advertisements for the Magi-Whirl 2008 Saturday evening Gala Show program and the registration program.

The show program will be distributed to attendees and members of the public at the evening performance. Last year more than 400 programs were distributed at the show. Help the Ring out by selling some ads to commercial businesses too. See Ring 50 Treasurer Bob Patterson for more details or questions.

Ad rates are as follows:

Full page 4¼"x 7":	\$90
Half page 4½"x 3¼":	\$50
Sq Box Ad 2¼"x 2½":	\$25
Rectangle Box Ad 1½"x 4½":	\$25

### **Stay in touch always** **through Ring 50 site**

Between Ring 50 Magi-Gram issues, check out the latest news events and performances at the official Ring 50 site: [IBMRing50.org](http://IBMRing50.org). Our webmaster is former Ring 50 leader Eric Henning.

# Lecture captures true meaning of magic--presentation, persona, practice

*Ring 50 member Glenn Gary, a professional magician, developed the following notes for teach-in lecture last year. Some of his ideas were gleaned over the years from other magicians. Other thoughts came from his own acting experience and from life itself. He observes: "None (of these notes) is really revolutionary, just common sense if you think about it."*

I am honored to stand before you and share some of my magical thinking. However, when asked to teach some coin sleights, I said that I would prefer to share my thoughts on magic presentation, blocking and framing. You can learn 500 tricks, sleights, moves, flourishes with coins, cards, balls and you will be a trickster. But you will not be a magician because magic is not created by doing a bunch of tricks.

So what is magic? How is magic created? That is what I want to explore with you tonight in the time we have. Only I don't want to tell you what magic is or how to create it because I want it to be YOUR magic, not mine. Magic is something different to each of us and affects our being, our lives in different ways. It has a different meaning to each person. I want to give you material to think about to empower you to create your own magic from within.

Eugene Burger once asked, "If our thinking is confused, how can we expect those actions which spring from that thinking to be clear and focused?" We can't, of course. So it is not enough to go out and buy a trick, read the instructions, and start performing it unless we want to fail. Each trick, each presentation, takes thinking, practice, and rehearsal before performance. Every effect has to be blocked and framed in our routine and persona. And after we move into performance and have some audience feedback, hopefully, our thinking will become even sharper and more focused. For it

is only here that we realize the greatest impact of our magic.

To begin, let us understand what presentation, blocking and framing is, not necessarily in that order. Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary offers the following:

**Presentation:** The act of presenting.

**Present:** to bring or introduce in to the presence of someone. As to bring a play before the public. To offer to view or show. To act the part of; or perform.

**Persona:** To conceive of or represent as a person or as having human qualities

or powers. To be the embodiment or personification of: incarnation, impersonate, represent.

**Blocking:** To work out or chart the movements of stage performers

**Framing:** Plan, contrive as framed a new method of achieving. B. to give expression to as to formulate, show or construct. Arrange or Produce. To construct by fitting and uniting the parts of the whole. To enclose in a frame or as if in a frame.

I thought we better understand the meaning of these terms if we were going to fully understand our discussion because it takes Blocking, Framing, and Persona to make a magical Presentation which requires a whole lot of magical thinking.

If you have noticed, I sign my emails and letters with "Make It a Magical Day!". It's not "Have a Magical Day" but "Make It A Magical Day". I have already used the phrase "magical thinking" twice in these notes because I think it is important. If I think it is important than maybe you will think it is important. Later on I will explain why it is important for you to see importance in your magic if you want the audience to see it as important. Sounds like a lot of double talk, but it really makes sense.

You don't have to be a magician to engage in magical thinking; we do it every so often and some every day. You visit Disneyland, watch a movie that



you really get involved with, read a book that you just can't put down because you are right there with the characters, or even buy a lottery ticket.

Eugene Burger wrote an essay on the subject of magical thinking that I read just this month. I was surprised to read his words because they were describing exactly what I started doing when I was 21 years old and what prompted me to start signing my emails and letters with a few years ago.

In his essay, Burger says, "All you have to do is buy a lottery ticket and you are in the midst of magical thinking: All reason tells me that I am not going to win, and yet whenever I buy a lottery ticket it's the only time I enjoy giving money to the State!" He continues to tell the story of one Emil Coue, who was born in 1857 and died in 1926. Mr. Coue wrote a book called *Self-Mastery Through Auto-Suggestion*. After traveling though England and the United States, he claimed to have effected many rather remarkable cures for people by encouraging something that is essentially magical thinking.

This is what I started doing at 21 years of age without any knowledge of Mr. Coue or thought of magical thinking. Not in these words but with other thoughts. Mr. Coue's idea was every morning you should say twenty times, "Day by day, in every way, I am better and better." Coue's idea was that our mental lives, our inner lives, are not in balance. They are not in balance because most of us are caught up in negative thought. Negative thought is brought on by our own minds or voice of our friends and family telling us that we can not do certain

things or that we are going to fail. Burger puts it this way, "I mean the chatter in the skull, the little voice in the head that tells me I won't succeed, that I must inevitably fail, that I couldn't be having any interesting ideas of my own and therefore I have to turn to somebody else for authority." Can you imagine what that negative thought does to the creative processes not to mention your entire physical, mental, and emotional state? If it does not stop you from doing anything, it most certainly would limit any possibilities. This negative thought process is really negative reinforcement resulting in negative people like me.

You see, there you go, I have a negative reinforcement by thinking that I was a negative individual, which I am. Augh, there I go again. Negative people are not creative or do well in businesses because they are limited to their fears, things are always going to turn out for the worst, the most dreaded and horrible thing that could possibly happen is going to happen. So Coue's idea is that people are already caught in this negative thought process and his exercise is a way of positive reinforcement that counter acts the daily negative reinforcement that we encounter every day.

I think the main principal behind this positive reinforcement is that we are telling the subconscious the same thing over and over until we actually believe it. If we tell a child how great he is or how good looking she is often enough they will soon believe it. Just like an audience tells a magician how great he or she is and they actually believe it. Also if you say something negative to or about someone often enough over and over that person hearing the negative will start believing it.

When I was 21 years of age I had such an inferiority complex that I thought that I was very unattractive looking. I would look in the mirror and wonder how anyone could like that person. So I started getting up in the morning, looking straight in the mirror and saying "You are really good looking, you are handsome!" Yeah, I know it's funny, but it happens to be true. I told myself how good looking I was so often that I actually started to believe it. And in my eyes at least, I



was good looking. Even if I wasn't, I believed that I was, and I acted like I was. I had more confidence in myself and I felt better about myself.

I also started telling myself how great I felt and it wasn't long until I actually felt great with lots of energy. My point to all this is the power of positive thinking, which is the power of magical thinking. In Berger's words, "It is about visualizing something differently, visualizing it concretely, and Coue is, in a sense, playing the same game. The idea is that through directed, conscious choice, you can image and then actualize a better state and that's magical thinking."

You ask "How does this tie in with my performance as a magician?" Magic is all about transformation. You can take just about any trick and transform it to your persona and performance style. According to Berger, you are the magician of your life. If you don't like something about your life or your relationship with others you have the power to transform it because you are the magician of your life. It is your responsibility to make the transformation as the magician. Just like your presentation of magic to an audience is your responsibility. It is up to you to make that audience like you and to entertain them. What could be better than having the power of transformation, to be able to make things happen the way you want them to happen, to laugh and enjoy life? It is within your power just my magical thinking. Visualize it, see it in your mind the way you want it to be and then

think about how you can make it happen. Don't be negative, be positive and think magically and "MAKE IT A MAGICAL DAY"

But darn it, "You still haven't told me how this ties in with performing magic", you say. Apply everything I just said to your magic performance. Put the same magical thinking to each trick, routine, or act.. Now we are going to talk about the building blocks.

**Persona:** What is your personality? Who is your Character? Who are you on stage? Who or what do you represent, or impersonate? Sometimes I go on as Blackstone, sometimes I am Stripdini, and sometimes I am Glenn Gary. All three take on a different personality, attitude, body language, and character. They all have different personas, they are three different people and none of them are the same as I am off stage. Remember when Lance Burton was the Count character, Johnny Thompson was The Great Thomcini and many others. My wife was so let down when she met Denny Haney in person because she only saw him on stage and saw his stage persona which was totally different than he is in real life. We take on a personality or persona that the audience will like, hopefully, or at least can relate to. Lance put forth that confident persona of a count on stage but yet so shy that he had trouble carrying on a conversation off stage unless he really knew you. Denney is the reincarnation of Red Skelton. Once you find your persona it will be easier to select the magic that persona would perform and how he would present it. Do some magical thinking. Visualize it.

**Framing:** As above, framing is the act or art of uniting or putting together all the little pieces to make a whole. It is also the area in which you present your act as if framing a picture. On a presidium stage you have the framed sides and curtains without which you will have to make your own frame. Bob Kohler does this with his Three Fly; he draws an invisible box where he wants the audience to watch. In close up you frame your performance area with your hands and body. On stage you have to be bigger than life depending on how big your audience is.

But for our purpose we mainly are talking about framing your show. It can

also be called producing your show as in mounting a production, not the executive producer that puts together the financial packaging. It's selecting the effects, tricks, comedy, music, lighting, costumes, makeup, scripting, sight gags, special effects that will make up the presentation for the persona you have selected. When selecting all of the little pieces that must fit together to build the show, they must be selected for the persona or character that the audience will see. If what is going on in the show does not match the persona of the character then the show is in for a disaster.

So be asking yourself every time you choose a trick, line, or anything, "Would this character do this? What would his attitude be? Would he be in on the trick, outside looking in, or is he skilled manipulation or is it a surprise to him that this is happening. In other words is the magic happening to him or is he part of the magic or is he causing the magic or is he a victim of the magic? Is the audience outside watching what is happening to him or is he a part of the audience seeing this happen for the first time?

**Blocking:** This seems like it would be the easiest of the process but it is the hardest for the magician because he can not see it as it is in the eyes of the audience. Most people in the performing arts have directors and producers. The director of a play blocks every movement on stage, every tone that is used to deliver a line, and every subtext is directed. The actor makes his interruption but the director has the final say as to how a line is delivered, every move that takes place. Why? Because the director is knowledgeable of what the play should be and has in mind what he wants the play to say. He also can see it from the audience's viewpoint. From outside looking in as if he was watching someone else's life.

Everyone needs a director, yet magicians are the last to even want a director. From the beginning it is a one-man operation even if you have an assistant. The magician is his own producer, director, writer, wardrobe, marketer, publicist, and so on and so on. The reason is we start out as loners; we develop and practice our secrets in



secrecy, alone. We develop our act alone and resist any direction.

And the hardest thing that we must overcome is that inner resistance toward direction. We must become directable and learn to take directions from those with the knowledge and experience in the theater, magic, and performing arts. Notice here, that I said **KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE**. You can say, "Honey, what do you think of this?" and she will probably tell you! But keep in mind that this is a layperson's viewpoint, which is valuable because your audience is going to be lay people. But lay people cannot help you put the professional touches to your act. And it is those professional touches that make the difference in presentations.

Okay, so you can't afford a director, or like me, you grew up in an area where you and maybe one other person practiced magic. You probably went through many stages or phases in your magic. And somewhere along the line you started finding yourself. Now you're saying, "What is he talking about, finding myself?"

Well, it is a gradual process that takes many years and in my judgment, never completed. I am still trying to find myself. You perform the same old tricks over and over until you feel like you're in a rut but inside you are thinking; you are changing. And then one day it dawns on you. I need to do it this way or I need to turn this way, or I need to say this or that in this tone. Or you change your whole routine because a light went off. You just took another step toward finding yourself.

But somehow you have to find a director in a friend that knows magic or hire a theatrical director after you

have put all the magic together. He may not know magic but he can correct all the little theatrical mistakes in stage movement. We all do it and I am just a guilty as everyone else, but the difference is that I know better. I know what I should be doing in putting together a show and I still don't do it the way it should be done. I know, for example, that I should script everything in the show, but I don't. I know everything should be blocked, but I don't. And my presentation suffers for it. The audience may not realize one way or the other but I guarantee that if the show was properly blocked and framed with the help of a director, you would see the difference in the response of the audience.

In lieu of a director, we have to block the show ourselves or with the help of our friends. Someone has to watch us perform, even if it is only on video tape, to see what movement is distracting, flashing, out of character, what lines are being dropped, where is the timing and delivery off, where does the tempo need to be cut or slowed down, what needs to be cut or done a different way. There are just so many blocking errors that we make that distracts from our performance. Something as simple as stepping on our own line can cause an audience to miss the magic.

**Presentation:** Okay, you have got your persona down and you have rehearsed that character, you are that character. You chose the right effects, gags, lights, music, sound, costume, theme for the character and the show in the framing stage and you have it all together. You got a director of sorts and with his help you blocked the entire show and rehearsed the delivery and timing of all the lines and every move is automatic that you don't even have to think of the required movement. You can now concentrate on your presentation.

This is how you present your magic, your show, your act. This is where your attitude shows through, this is where you have to become the believer. Because if you don't believe your character, if you don't believe that this character is really doing magic, I promise you your audience will not believe it either. You can not be caught acting, you can not be caught doing

magic because it spoils the illusion for the audience. Once you transform them into the world of fantasy you have to hold them there and if they catch you acting, doing magic, dropping out of character, forgetting your lines, any interruption of that fantasy at all and they will snap back to reality and you have lost them.

Make your presentation look natural with natural moves. The only time that the audience should see you skill is if you are presenting an act of skill. If you are presenting magic, it should look like magic and not skill. Make your props important and handle them



accordingly. Make a big deal of your props because if they are not important to you they will not be important to your audience. Certain props, like the

Torn & Restored newspaper, you do not want the audience to think the paper is important. After all it is just a paper, nothing else. So I walk over to the curtain and casually throw it backstage. But my zombie ball takes on a personality of its own and I treat it like it is special because it has special powers that I can control. Your presentation is an acting job but you cannot let anyone see you acting. Make each thing you do important and if your framing is correct, each thing will be more important than the preceding one until you climax at the end of your show.

## Update: No Disappearing Act Here

Earlier this year, it didn't look good for Barry's Magic Shop. As part of a revitalization project in downtown Wheaton, Md., Montgomery County officials had paid nearly \$1 million to buy the building that housed the store, one of the Washington area's only remaining specialty magic emporiums. And co-owners Barry Taylor and Susan Kang said they couldn't afford to find a new space.

After more than 30 years, it seemed that their stock of rubber chickens and magic rings would disappear, as if in one of the tricks they'd sold to thousands of budding magicians.

But in April, County Executive Isiah Leggett (D) announced a deal to relocate the shop to a building on Nicholson Lane just up the street from White Flint Mall. The county would provide \$260,000 over five years to help pay for costs associated with the move. At a news conference to announce the plan, Taylor celebrated the way he knew best: He pulled a dove out of a sack.

And so in August, Kang and Taylor threw open the doors of a bigger, brighter Barry's Magic Shop. The new store is more than twice the size of the old Georgia Avenue shop and includes a 40-seat theater, complete with rich, burgundy curtains, where Taylor and other guest magicians do shows and teach tricks.

"I have to pinch myself," Kang said recently as she surveyed the spacious, second-floor shop. "We're so lucky."



**Barry Taylor**

The new space provides ample room for the husband-and-wife team to display an extensive collection of magical items. There are sections for magic coins, magic silks, new and beginner magic. There's even a Gag Department, complete with plastic barf and rubber dog poo (though, Kang said, they are running low on trick bagels).

Although some in the community voiced concern about the subsidy provided to Taylor and Kang, county spokesman Patrick Lacefield noted that in the past officials have provided financial support for businesses forced to relocate to make way for building projects. A decade ago, several other Wheaton businesses, including an Irish pub and a Peruvian chicken shop, received payments because they were being closed or relocated, he said.

At Leggett's town hall meetings, Lacefield recalled, the fate of Barry's Magic Shop generated as many comments as the county's traffic problems.

On a recent evening, three magicians sat at a poker table tucked in a corner of the store comparing notes on card tricks. Such a space wouldn't have been possible in their previous quarters, Kang said.

Nick DeCiutiis, a retired bank manager, gifted magician and longtime Barry's customer, recalled how worried he was that the shop would disappear. The new shop, he said, provides "a place where local magicians can meet."

"I really think this is going to revitalize magic," Kang said as the store's mascot, Frankie the Wonder Dog, rested at her feet. "I feel like this was destiny."

— Lori Aratani, *Washington Post*

