



Sacramento Area Magicians

October 2006

# Magic Flash

Newsletter of the Society of American Magicians Assembly 72

### Monthly Meetings

Assembly 72 of the Society of American Magicians meets on the fourth Wednesday of every month at 7:00 P.M. We meet at the Mission Oaks Recreation and Parks District's Senior Citizen Center, 4701 Gibbons Drive in Carmichael. Prospective members are encouraged to visit us anytime!

**Our next meeting  
is  
Wednesday  
October 25th  
at  
Richard LaVergne's  
699 Morris Way  
Sacramento**

### 2006 Assembly Officers

President

**David Wright** 916-944-8454  
wright.davida@sbcglobal.net

Vice-President

**Leland Eiben** 530-790-7470  
leenassoc@hotmail.com

Secretary

**Viktor Berry** 916-362-8355  
viktor2@mac.com

Treasurer

**Allen Greenberg** 916-483-4345  
greenberga@placersierrabank.com

Board Members at Large

**Richard LaVergne**

**Richard Hill**

Visit our web site at  
[www.magic1.org/sam72](http://www.magic1.org/sam72)



Wright writes ...

## Now That's Bizarre!

BY DAVID WRIGHT, PRESIDENT

Our next club meeting will not be held at Mission Oaks Community Center, our normal meeting location, as the facility is closed for renovations during the month of October. *Instead, we will hold our meeting at Dick LaVergne's house at 699 Morris Way, Sacramento, 95864. The meeting will be held as usual on the fourth Wednesday of the month, October 25, starting time 7:00 PM.* In addition, we have invited IBM Ring 192 members to join us this night as they could not meet on their usual meeting night this month at Mission Oaks Community Center, either. The performance theme for this special meeting night will be Bizarre Magic. Given sufficient time, we will also hold a workshop on the topic, How to Theme Your Act.

Bizarre Magic is the perfect theme for our next meeting, as it embodies a broad spectrum of magical illusions, including Halloween magic, story-telling effects, Geek magic, and/or the weird and strange. Unlike traditional magic where tricks are often performed in a similar way, most Bizarre Magic strives to be unique in nature and touch the audience on a deeper emotional level. It is more like watching small, intimate theater than a traditional magic show. It is just right for the time of year when ghouls and goblins come out to play.

Speaking of strange, why is it that ghouls and demons never fight? Because demons are a ghoul's best friend!

*What is really bizarre* is that *no one* from SAM Assembly 72 has volunteered to serve as a club officer for 2007 – except those that are currently elected officers for this year! Unless someone steps forward to volunteer, your Assembly officers will not change from this year to next. That means that you will be stuck with the same president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer and board members for twelve more months! How do you feel about that? Come the next meeting and let us know how you can help next year.

We have the opportunity to co-host a lecture by Daryl on January 17, 2007, along with the Magic Circle of Elk Grove and IBM Ring 192. Details for this special event will be voted on at our next club meeting.



## Finding a Magical Mentor

By Quentin Reynolds

Quentin Reynolds works as both magician and speaker. You can read about one of his programs at <http://www.speakinschools.com> Mentalists, please visit <http://www.TheShielsEffect.com>

Finding a mentor can be the single most powerful step in your magical career. With the rarest exceptions, (and usually only when dealing with pure genius) all the great performers, actors, artists, musicians had mentors.

It only stands to reason that someone who has spent a lifetime in a successful career would have something worth knowing. I know of no quicker way of achieving success than learning from someone who has already been there.

I never learned as much from anyone as I did from my mentor **Eric Sharp**, and equally, I never knew how much I knew until I became a mentor to three magicians in Dublin.

Until 2003, I lived in Dublin, Ireland, when I moved to Manchester, England.

At the age of seventeen I wrote to Eric Sharp, who lived in Wales about an article he had published in *Abacadabra* magazine. I just wrote to say how useful I had found it – nothing more. However Eric replied asking a few questions about myself and a correspondence started. We later met and Eric offered to teach me his ideas on entertaining children as well as show me how to do *Punch & Judy*, the puppet show.

With Eric's help and guidance it wasn't too long before I found myself earning more money part time than I would at my intended career as a teacher. So I went full time and never looked back. Eric and I are still in constant touch and I am still amazed at his thinking and helpful suggestions.

Fast forward to 1998 and I had the opportunity to mentor three younger magicians in Dublin. Two of them have become full-time professionals and the third used magic to pay his way through college and open his own video production company.

Now here's the really interesting thing. Teaching them had an amazing impact on my own thinking and knowledge. I had to put into words what I had learned instinctively and through experience over the years. They would ask questions and while I could give a good answer, I wasn't really sure why. So I'd think it through to clarify my reasoning.

So how do you find a suitable magical mentor? First, I must ask what kind of magic you do and whether you intend performing for laymen. If magic is your hobby and you don't intend earning money with it, then a dedicated amateur magician may be able to give you all the help and guidance you need. By dedicated amateur I mean someone who loves magic, is knowledgeable and works actively to improving their craft. For whatever reason they have no particular interest in earning money from their hobby.

If you're aiming to perform professionally then you look for someone who has already been successful in that field. They may charge for lessons or guidance but many times their biggest reward will be seeing you act successfully on their advice.

And as you become successful, you will in turn become a mentor to someone else.

While Eric Sharp has been my main mentor, there are others who have, at the very least, influenced my thinking.

**Alan Alan** ran a magic shop in London known as *Alan Alan's Magic Spot*. The shop was on street level and catered for both magicians and laymen. He carried a good selection of magic and books as well as the jokes and simple effects popular with laymen.

Prior to this Alan was a very successful escapologist and had toured the world. Frequently he was the head-

line act in Europe's leading circuses. He was the first to escape from a straight-jacket while hanging upside-down from a burning rope over a cage of lions.

Over the years Alan had met and studied many of the world's leading entertainers. He would analyze what they did and why they did it. He can tell you in great detail their strengths and weaknesses.

During the 1980s I would go to London at least four times a year. Alan's shop was where I spent most of my afternoons. Between customers we would chat about magic and show-business, or rather Alan would talk and I would listen. He would espouse the theory that "Magic is Theatre and Theatre is Magic." On the surface it sounded bland, but the more I thought about it, the more I realized it's truth. We are in the profession of creating theatrical magical moments.

Alan had the enviable knack of taking a simple trick like the self-lighting light bulb sold in joke shops and building a presentation around it. Such a strong presentation that even magicians would buy. He sold thousands of these effects over the years.

Watching Alan demonstrate was a lesson in magic as theatre. Every effect had its own presentation with a beginning, middle and end. Every step of the way was perfectly clear. No confusion whatsoever. And each effect left you with a satisfying sense of completion.

The really interesting point about Alan's presentations was that anyone could do them. By that I mean you could use his script without having to change a word of it. I pointed out that this was most unusual. Not only are we taught as magicians to come up with our own presentations but it is extremely rare to find a script that can be used as is.

Alan said that it was like buying clothes. Some need to be altered but occasionally some fitted perfectly and needed no alteration at all. It was Alan's genius and deep knowledge of theatre and magic that allowed him to come up with such direct and enchanting routines.

*My biggest lesson from visiting Alan was to realize that every performance is a piece of theatre and should have a beginning, middle and end.* Now you might say that's obvious and I'd agree it is. But how many magicians actually heed it?

Here's the thing. We recognise it when we see it. We see a magician with an original presentation for a standard trick. Our first instinct is that we want to use it ourselves. But isn't it far better to put on our thinking caps and

come up with our own unique presentation?

While Alan has influenced many magicians his star pupil is **Michael Vincent**, whose close-up work is a delight to watch.

© 2006 Quentin Reynolds. Quentin Reynolds works as both magician and speaker. You can read about one of his programs at <http://www.speakingschools.com> Mentalists, visit <http://www.TheShielsEffect.com>

## September Meeting Minutes

We had a tremendous turnout for our September meeting. Holding the Annual Magic Auction that evening may have played a small part in attracting such a big crowd. Everyone had a great time and the buying and selling of treasures was fast and furious. We did not deal with any other Assembly business this month.



*Assembly 72 Vice-President Leland Eiben performing at the Close-Up Competition this summer.*

# SAM 72 • 2006 Magic Calendar

DATE	PERFORMANCE THEME	WORKSHOP THEME
Wed. October 25	<b>Bizarre Magic</b> at Richard LaVergne's house	How to theme your act
November 15*	Holiday Magic *This is the <b>THIRD</b> Wed.	Build your own props
December 6 (Possibly)	Coin/Silk Magic *This is the <b>FIRST</b> Wednesday if we decide to meet.	
December __ Date TBA	Annual SAM/IBM Holiday Party	Seasons Greetings
January 24, 2007	First meeting of 2007!	Happy New Year

Find our Assembly activities in the Sacramento Bee's web site at  
<http://ourtown.sacbee.com/SocietyofAmericanMagiciansAssembly72>

## The Magic Flash

Society of American Magicians

Sacramento Assembly 72

Viktor Berry, Secretary

2827 Tiber Drive #37

Sacramento, CA 95826-2533



**Next meeting is this week!**

**Wed. October 25• 7:00 P.M.**

**Theme – Bizarre Magic**

**Workshop – How to theme your act**