

# SPECIAL PANDEMIC ISSUE #17

February 1, 2021 | Archived Famulus



**Ring Report Ring #170 “The Bev Bergeron Ring” SAM Assembly #99**

**-Orlando and nation on partial lockdown-**

**No Ring/ Assembly face to face meetings until future notice**

**Virtual on-line sessions happening on the regular monthly meeting night, the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 7:30PM**

Our January meeting was again by Zoom and featured a lecture by Jimmy Inchihana. Even though Jimmy lives here in Orlando, his reputation is far reaching. He has been on Fool Us and baffled Penn and Teller. Ichihana’s interest in magic began when he was about 12- or 13-years old, and was fostered during a Tannen’s summer camp that he had the opportunity to attend. He said the experience had him hooked on studying, practicing and performing magic.

“Card magic is definitely my passion and specialty,” he says. “Cards offer a near endless variety of possible effects and techniques.” Jimmy said Juan Tamariz is one of his favorite magicians — whose specialty is also card magic — and he and his wife moved to Madrid for a year so he could study magic. He was on season 4 of “Penn and Teller: Fool Us” in 2017 and season 13 of “America’s Got Talent” in 2018. He was once again featured on “Penn and Teller: Fool Us” during a season 6 episode. He has also performed at the Magic Castle in Hollywood. You can easily find his work and clever instructions on the Internet.

To describe Jimmy’s lecture is like capturing lightning in a bottle. The effects come quickly and one surprise follows around. Let me give you a feel for it. He shows one of the advertising cards in a card pack. It has a partial picture of a King. He pulls a complete card out of the advertising card leaving a hole in the card where the king was! He named the

effect, “Free Advertising”. He showed how to do a Hofzinser cull force by using transparent cards and did an effect called “One in the Hand”.

He was not against using a Stripper deck , but how it was used was cleverly concealed. For “Uncut Deception” we had an entire deck of cards printed on one sheet that was folded up to look like a regular deck. The names card was missing with a hole in the sheet.

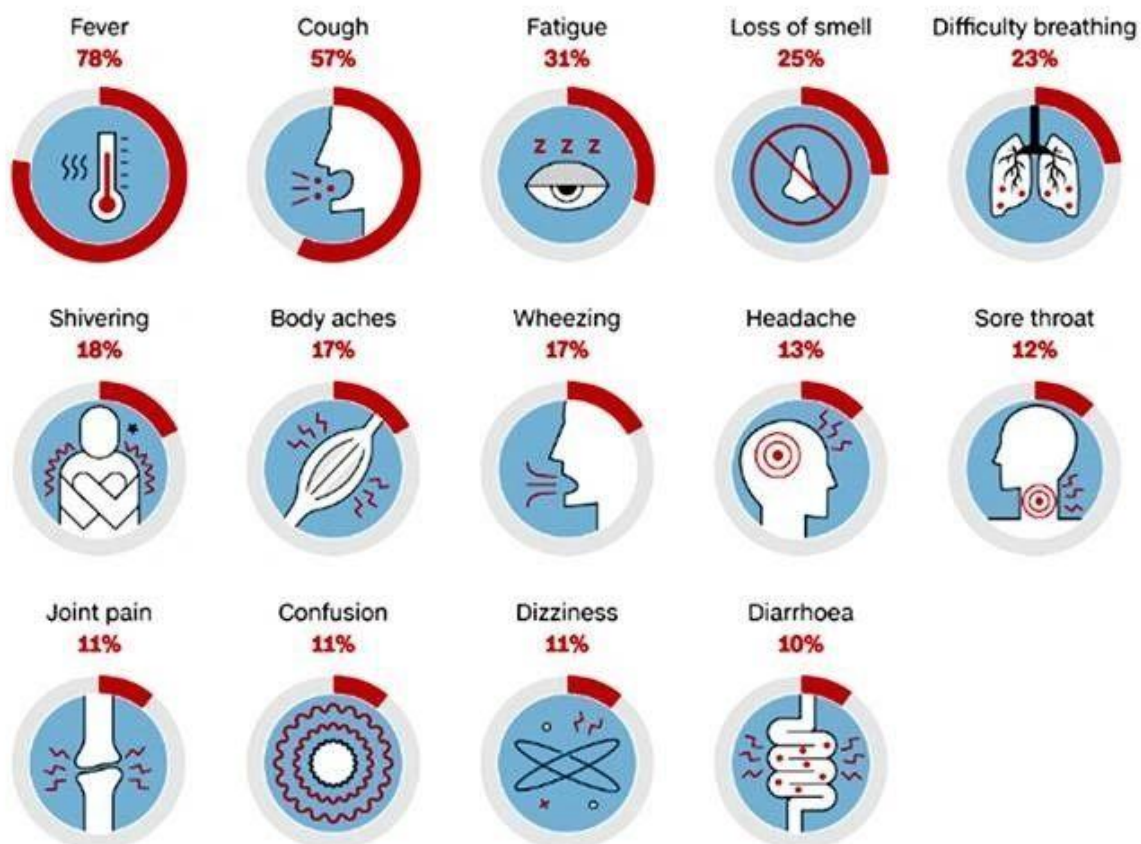
Departing from cards, he had a little Lego man who bent a quarter coin. He had a baffling “Short cut to winning at Go Fish”.

Jimmy is an excellent instructor and enthusiastic and entertaining performer and his work and lecture is highly recommended. You will be hearing and seeing a lot more from him.

Dennis Phillips.

## The most common symptoms of Covid-19

The proportion of coronavirus patients that experience each symptom.



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## In France, Performing Artists Are Guaranteed Unemployment Income

[https://www.npr.org/2021/01/11/954994402/how-france-is-helping-its-artists-during-the-pandemic?utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_term=nprnews&utm\\_source=facebook.com&utm\\_campaign=npr&fbclid=IwAR0DH9RBm5O3TlXlk0GuqpYW9VOqlOM\\_ggVVXsm5Aq93CFDgZe4Z7dTS96A](https://www.npr.org/2021/01/11/954994402/how-france-is-helping-its-artists-during-the-pandemic?utm_medium=social&utm_term=nprnews&utm_source=facebook.com&utm_campaign=npr&fbclid=IwAR0DH9RBm5O3TlXlk0GuqpYW9VOqlOM_ggVVXsm5Aq93CFDgZe4Z7dTS96A)

The pandemic has dealt a particularly heavy blow to those who make their living in the arts, as cultural venues like theaters and concert halls have had to close their doors for months. In the U.S., some artists have turned to [philanthropic](#) or community support to get by. But in France, dancers, musicians, even the set-builders, costumers and lighting designers who work on the production enjoy regular unemployment support. Hanno Baumfelder is one of the Death Breath Orchestra musicians. He says he'll be OK even if the show doesn't go on.

"Once you're officially recognized as a working artist, you're assured of having a vital minimum," he says. "It's based on how much you work. But even if it's not much, you'll have a fixed sum to get you through."

Baumfelder is referring to France's special unemployment system for performing artists and technicians, known as Intermittence de Spectacle, that takes into account the irregular nature of their work.

[According to the online journal Mediapart](#), the *régime salarié intermittent à employeurs multiples* (system for intermittently salaried workers with multiple employers), as it was known when first introduced in France in 1936, was initially designed to support development of the technical crews of the country's burgeoning cinema industry. Their specialized skills were rare at the time, in part because of the irregular (and thus, for many, unattractive) nature of film production. *Intermittence* provided a solution: the right to publicly-funded unemployment benefits for each day that these *techniciens* didn't have work on a film project.

The system has expanded over the years to include other cultural sectors such as theater, music and dance, and today counts approximately 250,000 beneficiaries. In order to qualify, each one has to accumulate a certain amount of time as an employee on artistic projects, clocking a minimum of 507 hours of paid work during a one-year period.

[In May of last year](#), French President Emmanuel Macron promised to maintain the current system for the duration of the pandemic, announcing that unemployment benefits for *intermittents* would be guaranteed until Aug. 31, 2021.

Macron stressed the importance of access to culture for everyone. "We thank all of those who've created and innovated during these difficult times," he said. "Culture is absolutely essential to our lives as citizens."



### **Dennis Deliberations ... Ring # 170, Assembly #99**

#### **"The Bev Bergeron Ring**

So much sad news for the magic world as we begin 2021

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**Alouise Doris Bergeron**

**SEPTEMBER 4, 1942 – JANUARY 16, 2021**

**Alouise Bergeron, wife of the late Bev Bergeron and long time ring member has passed.**

**Graveside Service will be held on February 13, 2021 at 11:00 am at Woodlawn Memorial Park & Funeral Home, 400 Woodlawn Cemetery Road, Gotha, FL.**

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The full duo of Siegfried and Roy are now history.

Siegfried died in Las Vegas from pancreatic cancer, his rep told ABC News.

He was 81.

His sister, a nun who lives in Munich, told the German news agency that she was able to talk to him on the phone before he died .

He was born *in Rosenheim, Germany in 1939.*

*"In magic, anything is possible," he said.*

*He and Roy worked on cruise ships and started in Las Vegas in 1967, as part of the "Folies Bergere," "Hallelujah Hollywood" and "Lido de Paris."*

*By 1981, they were at the New Frontier Hotel and Casino and then to The Mirage, with their own full show, in 1990.*

*At the time, he and Roy ranked No. 27 on Forbes Magazine's list of the highest-paid performers.*

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Mark Wilson influenced so many of us in magic.

Many of our fondest childhood memories were of him, Nani and Rebo on the Magic Land of Alakazam.

Master Magician Mark Wilson will be greatly missed. He was the most influential American Magician of the 1960's and beyond.

A pioneer in national television magic that paved the way for the likes of Doug Henning and David Copperfield.

He died peacefully at home with his family in California.





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David Roth passes in New York.

(1952 - 2021)

Cause of death was not immediately known. He was found in his apartment having died days before.

He was the greatest living coin magician.

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I am so sorry to hear about the passing of Bev Bergeron's wife, Alouise. After Bev died last month, she moved to be close to their daughter in Jacksonville.

At the time they bought their house on Delora Drive, in 1971, it was a small subdivision surrounded by orange groves and lakes. I was first there in 1975.

I hope that most people know that Bev moved to Orlando to work at the new Disney World (1971) and was hired in LA to work in a copy of the Disneyland show. "The Diamond Horseshoe Review" was the new show at the new Orlando park. Bev played the traveling medicine salesman and Pecos Bill. The Pecos Bill, hilarious bit with him wearing fur chaps, had Bev accidentally hit in the mouth and spitting out loose "teeth" (white beans) in time to the drum rimshots of the live music. Several musicians in the pit would pull out ping pong paddles and swat the beans around. It was pure family adapted vaudeville/burlesque.

When I used to visit Bev's house over the years, Bev's office (one of the former bedrooms) was crammed with books and papers and the two car garage was an enchanting magical storehouse with illusions and props. Every one of the props had a story and were they came from.

He showed me on box made from thin, but strong, plywood. He asked me what kind of wood it was. I guessed that it was 1/8th inch aircraft birch. He explained that in the 40s and 50s that type of wood was common and cheap, due to ramping up production for the needs of World War Two and after the war it was also used in furniture manufacturing for the bottoms of furniture dresser drawers. He said, the old vaudevillian, who he got the prop from, would steal the thin birch plywood drawer bottoms out of the hotel room dressers and make props out of them. Free cheap wood. So the vaudevillian told Bev that one day he returned to the same hotel, a few months later, that he always stayed at, and when he got to his room, none of the dresser drawers had bottoms in them! He called the hotel office and the manager came up and said, "Since you have taken 3 sets of drawer bottoms,

I thought you just carried them with you and did not need any” ! Bev said that stealing drawer bottoms was fairly common by magicians who made their own small props. He said, that magicians left the towels but kept the pillow cases, bathroom glasses and drawer bottoms.

Every time I left Bev’s, he gave me a stack of papers, drawings and ephemera. I still have pieces from his advertising of his acts over the years. Also are his explanations for his illusion ideas and improvements on things he had seen. He knew that I was a builder so he shared concepts. Much of Bev’s early experiences with Willard the Wizard ,Virgil, Bill Siros and the Owen’s factory could be seen as the basis for his creations and improvements. Bev was a leading figure in Mark Wilson’s creative crew: Alan Wakeling, Don Wayne, Frances Martineau et. al.

You and I are now , the few in the last historic links to that magical age and heritage from him.

Note: I still have a clever (and amazingly simple) method for doing a stage version of “The Hindu Rope Trick” (The Holy Grail of stage illusions. It does not use the dangerous spring-loaded black art that Blackstone Sr. used or the faulty slide projection of Thurston or the hanging vertical mirror. Bev’s used a minimal black art and a common child’s playground device and would be inexpensive to build and set up. I think that he said that he had worked it out with Robert Harland “Torchy” Towner as an improvement of Kalanag’s method. I might just build the thing someday! Bev and Torchy were both giants who walked with giants <https://allakazamarchives.com/allaka-team/>

Now, Bev and his beloved Alouise are at peace and together forever.

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In light of recent political events ( and this is not a political statement!) I think that we in the performing arts and magic should object to a mischaracterization of our craft and work.

It seems anytime there is a massive distaste because of a social travesty, or criminal action, the first associations are made with magic and the performing arts. We hear it all the time. People say, “What kind of clown is that idiot?” and “ that fraudulent accountant juggled the books” or “that crooked politician is just a ventriloquist dummy for traitors”, “the jailbreaker was a real Houdini!” . Now, we have to put up with self-labeling lawyers, who are defending lawbreakers, as being “magicians”, and this was by the suspect’s own attorney! Why drag all of us real magical entertainers into such ridicule?

It is just not fair.



What does magic have to do with springing a client who was seen breaking into the capitol building and trashing the building's contents and stealing the Speaker of the House's lectern?

The suspect's lawyer should have said, "The photographic evidence seems pretty conclusive that my client was involved in questionable actions. But, much of the American justice, in our jurisprudence system, involves intent and culpability. The court will need to consider the sanity of my client. "

This guy's attorney needs to do his job and keep magicians out of his client's case!



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CAPITOL PROTESTS · Published 20 hours ago

# Lawyer for Florida man seen at Capitol riot with Pelosi's lectern says photo a problem: 'I'm not a magician'

Adam Christian Johnson is set to appear in court on Jan. 19 in Washington, D.C.



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[Magicians and Influenza — 1918 and Now](#)

# **INFLUENZA**

FREQUENTLY COMPLICATED WITH

## **PNEUMONIA**

IS PREVALENT AT THIS TIME THROUGHOUT AMERICA.

THIS THEATRE IS CO-OPERATING WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH.

### **YOU MUST DO THE SAME**

IF YOU HAVE A COLD AND ARE COUGHING AND  
SNEEZING. DO NOT ENTER THIS THEATRE

**GO HOME AND GO TO BED UNTIL YOU ARE WELL**

Coughing, Sneezing or Spitting Will Not Be  
Permitted In The Theatre. In case you  
must cough or sneeze, do so in your own hand-  
kerchief, and if the Coughing or Sneezing  
Persists Leave The Theatre At Once.

This Theatre has agreed to cooperate with  
the Department Of Health in disseminating  
the truth about Influenza, and thus serve  
a great educational purpose.

**HELP US TO KEEP CHICAGO THE  
HEALTHIEST CITY IN THE WORLD**

**JOHN DILL ROBERTSON**

**COMMISSIONER OF HEALTH**

Many of those of us who perform for our income or even for enjoyment, the lack of access to a real-live audience is tough. It is not tough enough to seek opportunities to violate good public safety guidelines, but it is tough enough to make us miss the days of performing. We can imagine it is even worse for those of our profession who depend on appearance fees for

their work at the greatest platforms for our art we know, such as the Magic Castle and top notch resorts and cruise ships.

We looked back at the way performers handled the lockdowns in the 1918 Spanish Flu. We should have guessed that Houdini's involvement with the 1918 flu would be documented.

Houdini actually contracted the flu but apparently was of sufficient strength or granted sufficient protection to survive the flu in 1918. Interestingly, that strain of the flu attacked those who were young, healthy and strong. It forced the immune system – usually stronger in young – to cause the cytokine immune system to over-react and kill the infected. David Ben's book that points out Houdini was at the time of the flu "middle aged" and thus that part of a population that was actually safer from the flu.

Medical journals reviewing entertainment's response to the flu are informative.

In an article titled "Lessons Learned from the 1918–1919 Influenza Pandemic in Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota," in the journal *Public Health Reports* in 2007. It is documented that the closing of theaters in November of 1918 was shown to reduce the number of cases. The Minneapolis Tribune reported that when the closure of theaters was announced, patrons rushed to the venues for one last show, "Downtown theaters were packed last night with patrons who took advantage of their last chance to see a performance until the ban is lifted." ("Influenza Lid Clamped Tight All Over City," *Minneapolis Tribune* 1918 Oct 13).

There is a great summary of how show people handled the sudden closing of the theaters at [Circus Talk](#). Contracts were cancelled "left and right" and so performers were tossed from the hotels and boarding houses where they were staying. Some looked for theaters that either were not affected by the shut-down or simply ignored the law and thus risked criminal sanctions. In those towns without laws or regulations, performers received poor reviews and small audiences.

We have much to learn from the past but the lessons are hard to learn and follow..

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Here is some more fabulous European Stage Magic. Very elaborate and complex.

You will see nothing like this here in the United States. No shows like this.

American TV's Masters of Illusion is simply 90 second bits strung together and little personality development.

Dany Lari had a busy schedule planned for 2020. That was suspended due to the pandemic. He played municipal theaters, some resorts and also has a prop, costume and scenery factory in a southern French town.

From talking to people in France, Italy and Germany, their show business structure is not like ours. There is far more cultural value placed on the live variety arts. Their tax structure does not favor the kind of patterns of consumption that we have. Their cultural mindset is different. Most theaters are municipally owned, though privately managed with public subsidies.

In America, the live show business has enormous expenses like insurance (health and property and casualty etc.)

Up until 40 years ago, we were a lot like Europe and far more communally, locally oriented, with a lot of small towns and small town business and community support, which is why Stan Kramien, Vince Carmen, Phil Morris, Dennis Loomis, Ken Griffin, Jay Owenhouse, and me and many others could tour full time. Today, small towns and small town businesses are struggling and there is much more competition from the electronic media.

<https://www.leparisien.fr/culture-loisirs/de-l-algerie-a-la-drome-dani-lary-les-secrets-d-un-magicien-20-02-2020-8263770.php>

Le Parisien

Culture & Loisirs

## From Algeria to Drôme... Dani Lary, the secrets of a magician

The illusionist plays Friday and Saturday at the Casino de Paris his new creation, "Tic-Tac". In his theater-museum near Valence, Dani Lary tells us his story.



In June 2019, Dani Lary opened a 1,000-seat performance hall in Barbières, near Romans (Drôme), where he lives on a beautiful property. LP / Jean-Baptiste Quentin





Here is his warehouse, theater and workshop at Barbières, Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes north of  
Marseilles France.



Here is the backside:



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The December edition of Genii Magazine has a card effect reviewed by David Regal. The trick (that sells for a whopping \$9.96) is of no importance, as I only want to address some commentary that David Regal inserted within the review.

He stated:

“I have good-natured discussions (arguments) with other magicians regarding what I feel is an undesired audience conditioning that sometimes takes place within the scope of a magical presentation. For example, in the classic “Broom Suspension”, an assistant is propped up on a broomstick and then “hypnotized” and brought to a horizontal position, seemingly balanced in the air between two brooms space a distance apart. The broom at the assistant’s feet is then removed as the assistant remains suspended atop one broom, a definitive magical beat. I feel that at this point in most presentations the audience is waiting for the remaining broom to be removed as that seems like a logical progression — we are essentially teaching the audience that brooms can be removed while an assistant remains in the air. This does not happen, however, so those audience members who were anticipating that the final broom would be removed are disappointed. ...Is the audience frustrated? Do they have suspicions? Those questions have no hard and fast answers but are useful to consider as most magic routines contain elements that can be magnified and those that should be minimized. Understanding those considerations and making adjustments is something the best performers have in common.”

What Regal calls “undesired audience conditioning” with regards to his example, the Broom Suspension, simply means, that particular illusion suffers from seeming to be “incomplete.” Modern audiences aren’t as unsophisticated as we sometimes might like to believe. Are there any competent magicians who *truly believe* that it could never occur to viewers of the Broom Suspension that the removal of the one broom at the feet does NOT trigger the thought, “Okay, magic guy, let’s see you remove the *other* broom too!”

When Robert Houdin did the “Ethereal Suspension” of his son, using an alleged bottle of the newly-discovered anesthetic of the times (Ether?) as the throw-off (as opposed to “hypnosis”), audiences back then weren’t nearly as educated in medical advances, and for that matter, cutting-edge mechanical technologies either. Witness the fact that all sorts of wildly exaggerated claims — and even outright lies — were employed by advertisers in the first decades of the 20th century regarding the incredible “cures” that could be had from magnetic fields, X-Rays, various new elixirs, and a whole host of weird-looking electronic gadgetry, the likes of which, the average person was totally clueless about. Unscrupulous advertisers, doctors and chiropractors had a field day. These hucksters had the public buying, and buying INTO! — all sorts of pseudo-scientific nonsense.

So it wasn't any mystery that Houdin had no problem convincing the gullible audiences of his times that the stunningly new chemical that could drastically reduce, and even eliminate, *pain*, could also (with the help of MAGIC?) make his son "as light as a feather". And on the matter of mechanical, or should I say "engineering" advances, that too, was so new back in Houdin's era, that it likely never occurred to the technologically naive that the revolutionary refinement of "ratchet mechanisms" and associated steel strengths could, in combination, easily support a human body in a manner that seemed to "defy gravity." So... it MUST be MAGIC! Just as so many other rapidly advancing sciences of those times appeared to border on the magical.

Robert Houdin had the perfect combination: a charismatic magician who could do the seemingly impossible; some glib patter that took advantage of people's ignorance of anesthetics; and the knowledge that audiences were not up-to-speed on basic new engineering principles.

SO TODAY, the "suspension illusions" that were so effective a hundred-and-more years ago, have PAST THEIR PRIME. Chair... Broom... and Sword Suspensions should be now be relegated to the "museums of magic history". OR! — Perhaps some enterprising magic genius will actually figure out a way to *remove* that second chair, broom or sword! (Just as I'd like to see some magician "accidentally" push the middle section of the Zig Zag illusion out "too far", where it goes crashing to the stage, only to be picked up and hastily shoved back into the cabinet — whereupon the girl steps out unharmed!)

In light of the weakness of these classic *illusions of the past* that now trigger "undesired audience conditioning", one can only wonder what OTHER classical and all-too-often-performed illusions of TODAY may end up suffering the same fate, as technology continues its relentless and rapid advances. I'm sure this would make for some interesting discussions at any future late-night gab sessions at, say, the magic conventions or club meetings....

Or perhaps not.

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Jim Teter, Ventriloquist, Comedian and Magician and survivor of a 1977 Disastrous Nightclub Fire.

Here is his "Presidents routine".

Here Jim does some magic and a hilarious cruise ship routine.

The Entertainment business has evolved through many phases. When Vaudeville died in the 1930s, the nightclubs took over. Jack Gwynn and Tony Marks made their magic work, by adapting to a floor level semi-surrounded Night Club .There were also more mainstream and family venues that combined food with entertainment before the rise of the Comedy Clubs and Dinner Theaters in the 1970s and that was The Supper Club.

In the U.S., a supper club is a dining establishment generally found across the United States, but usually more concentrated in the Upper Midwestern states of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, and Iowa. These establishments typically are located on the edge of cities in rural areas.

Supper clubs first became popular during the 1930s and 1940s, as an economical and cheap escape from the Depression and war weariness and continued into the 1970s before a decline in the 1980s.

In addition to catering to a daytime Wedding Party or Sunday School Group, traditionally supper clubs were considered a weeknight "destination" where patrons would spend the whole evening, from cocktail hour to nightclub-style entertainment after dinner. Featuring a smart casual but relaxed atmosphere.

The decorations were always opulent looking, like a mansion, with lots of tapestry, paintings, outdoor gardens, and marble sculpture along with large multi-room dining facilities. Many superficially resembled an Italian Villa. The very essence of the club was its falsified sense of luxury. At first glance you are captivated by what appears to be spectacular grandeur. A crystal chandelier glimmering in the light dangles from the ceiling and the rear wall of the room is adorned with an impressive kitsch scene. So much concern was focused on the appearance of the club and what decorators call "flash and trash" that important matters such as safety were largely neglected.

Supper clubs generally featured "simple" menus with somewhat limited offerings featuring "American" cuisine. The food and show was reasonable in the \$12 to \$15 range. Menu includes dishes such as prime rib, steaks, chicken, and fish. An all-you-can-eat Friday night fish fry at some clubs. Typically, it was served family style at the table , help-yourself to the serving service. Relish trays with items such as crackers, carrots, green onions, pickles, radishes, and celery were served at the table on Lazy Susans.

In the Washington-Baltimore area, there was the "Peter Pan Club" which was located in rural Howard County. Here is Florida in Clearwater and later in Daytona, the Kapok Tree Inn. There was a Branch Ranch outside of Tampa. The Florida facilities did have a small stage but that was mostly for wedding party bands and corporate entertainment. I did a few shows in the late 70s at these.

Supper Clubs, on a smaller level were in hotels. The old Winter Park Langford Hotel had, The Empire Room, which seated about a hundred people had afternoon organ music with Rae Heath and then the Micky Gio Combo for dancing and a floor/stage show. Bev Bergeron played there as did Magic act ,Tom and Sherry, and ventriloquist team, Garay and Tomio and Jim Teter, the Comedian and Ventriloquist. Jim is retired now and lives in Orlando, For many years he worked with another comedian as Teter and McDonald and they were opening acts for many big names such as John Davidson. And that connection is where this story is going.

The Beverly Hills Supper Club was a major attraction, less than 2.5 miles south of [Cincinnati](#), just across the [Ohio River](#) in Southgate, Kentucky, on [US 27](#). It was once the sprawling, opulent "Showplace of the Midwest," known for some of the best entertainment between New York and Chicago. It had opened May 5, 1937, and over the year's personalities such as Jimmy Durante, Milton Berle, Carol Channing, Lena Horne and Sid Caesar performed on its stage.

The club booked its entertainers from [Las Vegas](#), [Nashville](#), [Hollywood](#) and [New York](#) and other show-business hubs. Magicians, Ventriloquists and Variety Artists played there along with top name singers and musicians.

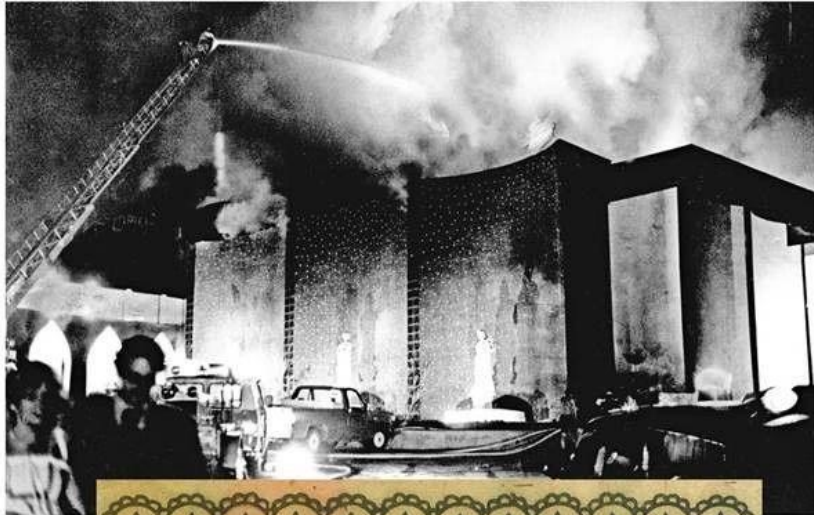
On Saturday, May 28, 1977, the Beverly Hills Supper Club was operating way beyond capacity, largely due to the popularity of that evening's Cabaret Room show, featuring popular Hollywood singer and actor [John Davidson](#). His opening act was Teter and McDonald. It was a big building with a complicated floor plan.

The building did not have a fire-suppression sprinkler system installed—at the time, these were not required in Kentucky venues such as the Supper Club—nor did it have an alarm system or smoke detectors. In addition, most of the paths for emergency escape in each event room led not to the outside of the building, but to a variety of narrow interior corridors and service spaces. The 4-R Corporation had conducted many construction projects and additions and renovations without acquiring the necessary permits and permission. The Club structure made substantial use of wooden building materials, including floor joists for the two-story portion of the complex, and framing on interior hallways. It was decorated throughout with highly flammable carpeting and wood wall paneling; event rooms also used wooden tables and supports, as well as tablecloths, curtains, and a variety of other small combustible materials.

Violations existed in abundance at the club. The electrical wiring investigators said, “was an electrician’s nightmare,” and those installing the electrical system had failed to install mechanisms, such as EMT metal tubing, intended to hinder the spread of fire. Moreover,

aluminum wiring had been used in most of the additions and renovations. It was a disaster waiting to happen and it did.

Around 9:00 PM, that Saturday, a deadly fire broke out below the Zebra Room in the Beverly Hills Supper Club, and disaster that ensued resulting in 165 deaths. Approximately three thousand people had occupied the club. Most were lucky. There were several hundred cases of burns and smoke inhalation.



**JOHN DAVIDSON**  
& COMEDIANS TETER & McDONALD  
(BRING THE FAMILY FOR THIS SHOW)  
**MAY 19-MAY 29**  
*Coming Attractions*  
VANDELLS . . May 31-June 16  
WITH MOOSE, DUKE,  
CHUMLEY & SPIDER  
PHYLLIS BILLER . June 17-26  
RICH LITTLE . June 28-July 3  
BUDDY RICH . . . . July 6th  
JAMES BROWN . . July 8-17  
CHUCK BERRY, Aug. 8-14  
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**PACKAGE** Appetizer thru Desert &  
Show Only. One Drink Minimum. **13<sup>95</sup>** for JOHN DAVIDSON

**Beverly Hills**

At 8:45 pm, some complained in areas of smoke and heat. Alert Employees of the club had already begun helping some patrons evacuate the building until they could determine the cause. But, not until 9:08 p.m. did young busboy Walker Bailey, take the stage and grab the microphone and interrupt the performance of comedians Jim Teter and Jim McDonald, who were opening for John Davidson's show in the Cabaret Room, to alert the audience of the imminent danger and point out the exits and encourage them to orderly exit.



Teter said to the audience, "Well, folks, I don't know what's going on, but I guess we need to get out of this room. And after we go outside and they give us the OK, we'll come back inside and start this show over again." Some guy yelled out, "Do I have to listen to the same jokes again?" Teter replied, "No, we've got enough of this miserable material that we can change everything."

Teter and McDonald made it to the exits and so did John Davidson who had been in his dressing room. Sadly John's music director died of smoke inhalation. Some said that he was tried to retrieve his music charts, the band's orchestration music.





My wife, Cindy taught school in Independence, Kentucky in the mid-60s and that was not too far south of the fire, so Teter and I talked about it several times. He used to frequent my costume shop in Winter Park in the early 80s.

Jim never seemed, to me, to quite get over the trauma of that night. We talked several times about it. He went on to split from MacDonald and become a solo act and worked regularly for another 25 years. His Presidential Ventriloquist dummies are now at Vent Haven Museum.

The fire became a kind of turning point for that type of supper club venue and entertainment. Certainly, laws across the country have tightened up. Tastes in entertainment shifted as casual dining restaurants partly filled that need and HBO cable TV could bring big name acts to your living room screen.

Things would never be the same, just as with The Station Rhode Island Dance Club Fire (2003), the night that “Great White” was playing, forever changed show pyrotechnics and teen dances venues. The building lacked sprinklers and had flammable plastic foam ceiling panels, inadequate exits and the band was using indoor pyrotechnics.

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Color Monte

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FREE Magic PODCASTS

This is **essential** to pass on to every magician friend who you know, if they don’t know about it already:

There is a gold mine of magic podcasts, dozens and dozens, all listed under the heading of “The Magic Newswire”. Go to:

<https://podcasts.apple.com/ca/podcast/the-magic-newswire/id277451149>

Or:

<https://podcasts.google.com/feed/aHR0cHM6Ly9tYWdpY25ld3MubGlic3luLmNvbS9yc3M>  
=

Or: [https://www.podcasts.com/the\\_magic\\_newswire](https://www.podcasts.com/the_magic_newswire)

And there are many more.

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A signed and borrowed coin vanishes and appears in an impossible location.

Here is a fun and inexpensive effect. Instead of a lighter, for legal-safety reasons, I would use an LED keychain light, maybe with a Ghostbusters label on it!

If you decide to perform this, put in the practice time to do the Bobo change and Ramsey subtlety and follow all his performing tips.

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Let’s talk about name changes ... among entertainers. Do you need to change your name? People almost expect it for a magician. Often when I was introduced, people wanted to know what I called myself. They expected and sometimes made up a name!

How about, “The Great Phillipini”. In a total adult audience, I made it a joke, “... My name is Dennis Phillips! The emcee wants to call me “The Great Feel a Pini”. Hey, I am not a

urologist!” I stayed with my birth name. On radio, early on, they made me use an air name to prevent calls at home. My middle name “Wayne” so used my last and middle name. “Phil Wayne”. My longtime magic friend, and FISM winner Wayne Alan Hofstetler uses “Wayne Alan”.

Magicians: Often do make name changes like “David Copperfield” (David Seth Kotkin) or “Harry Blackstone” (Henry Bouton) or “Vince Carmen” (James Cain) or Jonathan Pendragon (Claude Douglas Yarbrough). A quick internet search will show how many of the “birth” names are not used.

John Rogers Stephens must have had an ego bigger than the proverbial barn door, when he decided to create, as his professional name, John *Legend*. A great pianist, I suppose, and a passably good singer-and-composer, but (and who am I?) I’ve found his subdued style kind of underwhelming. He reminds me a lot of the “sleepy” song style of a Tom T. Hall or Perry Como, or... so many more. Will John Legend ever, in the last days of his career and especially after he’s gone, be considered an unforgettable and highly venerated “legend” in the world of entertainment? Whether deceased or living, couldn’t we give at least thirty other, more-deserving entertainers the often-overhyped appellation, “legend”?

Now that I’ve probably disingenuously slandered a living “legend” without cause (hah!), I’ll now move on to the lighter side of the NAME game...

There is the often-told story (and told by the man himself!) of the struggling wannabe entertainer, Declan Patrick MacManus (Wooh! You’re way ahead of me!) This guy, at the time an obscure and mundane British computer programmer, was so desperate to break into the music business that he used to stand outside business conferences of record company executives, with guitar in hand, and “working the crowd” like the frantic amateur busker that he was. He was hoping against hope to attract the attention of “The Suits” as they filed into the building, those (largely tone-deaf) who were in control of making-or-breaking rock-and-pop-music artists.

“The problem, as I see it,” said a prospective agent to MacManus, “is your NAME. It’s too... too...” [well, let’s move on with this story]. The short of it was, the guy was told that he needed a truly catchy and memorable *professional* name. When MacManus asked what would be a good one, the agent said, “Elvis. Let’s call you —“ “**YOU’VE GOT TO BE KIDDING!!**” shouted back MacManus in utter disbelief.

The very idea of picking the first name of one of the most “legendary” (yes, the word fits!) personalities in rock music history, seemed to MacManus to be *beyond* egocentric.

And how he ended up with the oddball last name of “Costello”, I don’t remember, but suffice it say, it seems have worked. — Not unlike the totally unknown singer Arnold

George Dorsey, who rose suddenly out of the ashes of abject obscurity when he was advised to change his name to the utterly ridiculous *Engelbert Humperdinck*. ( the original was actually a German composer d.1921, who is best known for having composed the opera [Hansel and Gretel](#).) — Or the equally obscure wannabe comedian Jacob Rodney Cohen , an insignificant former paint salesman who couldn't survive for ten minutes in show business; that is, until some enterprising person changed his name to the much more quirkily memorable, *Rodney Dangerfield*, a used a gimmick (the hilariously self-deprecating moniker, "I get no respect!). And finally, we can't forget the very handsome former young British nonentity, William Michael Albert Broad, who might have remained unknown if he hadn't become the popular punk-rock icon, *Billy Idol*.

I can guess that at this point, all sorts for other "name changes" of showbiz alumni will spring to mind, and I dare add, there are so many of them that their stories could be compiled into a BOOK. Harry Houdini (born Erik Weisz, later known as Ehrich Weiss, or Harry Weiss).... and in the movie world, Tony Curtis (Bernie Schwartz).... Cary Grant (Archie Leitch) ... John Wayne (Marion Robert Morrison)... and so on, ad infinitum.

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Magicians, take note and ask what magic means to your audience and your own existence. Magic and math has the same greater purpose of providing some insight into your world view ( weltanschauung- paradigm) rather than only manipulating materials or even the ideas. Both math and magic should drive you to some insight into the human condition and challenges , possibly similar to Aristotle's "Catharsis". He explained it in Poetics I , his classic explanation on how the dramatic arts worked for emotional improvement. It purged hubris, which led to an insightful person and a more orderly society.

"Last time, I asked: 'What does [mathematics](#) mean to you?', and some people answered: 'The manipulation of numbers, the manipulation of structures.' And if I had asked what [music](#) means to you, would you have answered: 'The manipulation of notes?' "

-Serge Lang

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We lost Goebel. I have known George for 60 years. It is a sad day for classic magic.



**This is on the DVD is from the Goebel Book... It is his full evening show.**

George Goebel (died at 87 years old) owned the historic A.T. Jones Costume Company in Baltimore. He enjoyed the costume business but his major love was magic-illusion shows. The costume business gave him enough income and time to indulge in magic. <https://izi.travel/es/1083-at-jones-sons-costume-shop/en>

Goebel's wife, Carole, was a career social worker, but also a dancer, so most of the people were either from dance school ("Jean Kettell Dancers") or other theater groups who he provided costumes for.



He did a once-a-year show - 4 performances in one weekend- at a Dundalk theater (“The Strand”) in a working-class neighborhood of Baltimore. The theater was an old vaudeville house. It would have been totally impossible to tour such a show of that size with that many people.

George performed, with his full company, at the International Brotherhood of Magicians one year around the early 80s. He told me that he treated the expenses as a gift to the IBM. I think it cost him, then, about \$15,000 to put the show together, lease a semi-truck and driver, pay the people and put them up. He said to me, around 1982, that to do that show would be at least \$25,000 a week if you added in all the front office expenses and tried to make it a business.

Rare photos of Goebel’s Illusions, today in storage. His show was a spectacle or quality. The Black and White photos, and more, of these illusions, as used on stage in the Goebel Show, can be seen in Mark Walker’s book, “The Master Illusionists”. (Photos from Magic Bill Schulert, a great Michigan Classic Illusionist and collector of classic illusions)



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COST of Touring an illusion Show today: You don't want to know!

The inflation rate in the United States between 1972 and today has been 526.39%, which translates into a total increase of \$526.39. This means that 100 dollars in 1972 are equivalent to 626.39 dollars in 2020. In other words, the purchasing power of \$100 in 1972 equals \$626.39 today. You can do the math.

[Value of 1972 US Dollars today - Inflation calculator](#)

During the 1980s with 4 people and myself, my show nut was around \$1,500 for a 400 miles round trip and an overnight. If we skunked out on the back-of-the-room sales, pitch items, balloons, coloring books popcorn and drinks, at a net of \$2,000. I came home with very little. This is why when I wrote the shows, I tried to build in concession items like kazoos to sing along or themed plush animals. We sold, a green alien or Teddy Bears or Wizard of Oz or Patriotic materials.

I tried to eliminate the motel costs and extra gas cost and stayed within a 3 hour driving range. The two major gas crunches of the 1970s were brutal. If it was out of state, I needed at least 4 shows over a 4 day period and hoped for great extra concession sales ,which typically were at least 50% of the profits. Understand that this accounting did not reckon in the cost, storage and repair of my props and costumes, or even wear and tear on my van, all of which was, like the late George Goebel , was a cost that was folded into my costume business.

Phil Morris used a motor home to save on lodging costs, but that is very “cozy”, shall we say, for 5 or 6 people, who are not family. You hoped for auditoriums with showers and used truck stops for most personal hygiene. A shower used to be free if you bought gas. Ken Griffin and others told me they lived on a lot of peanut butter and Dinty Moore stew, poured over rice-in-a-bag, all topped off by coffee, cigarettes, Jim Beam, Corby's and other fluids.

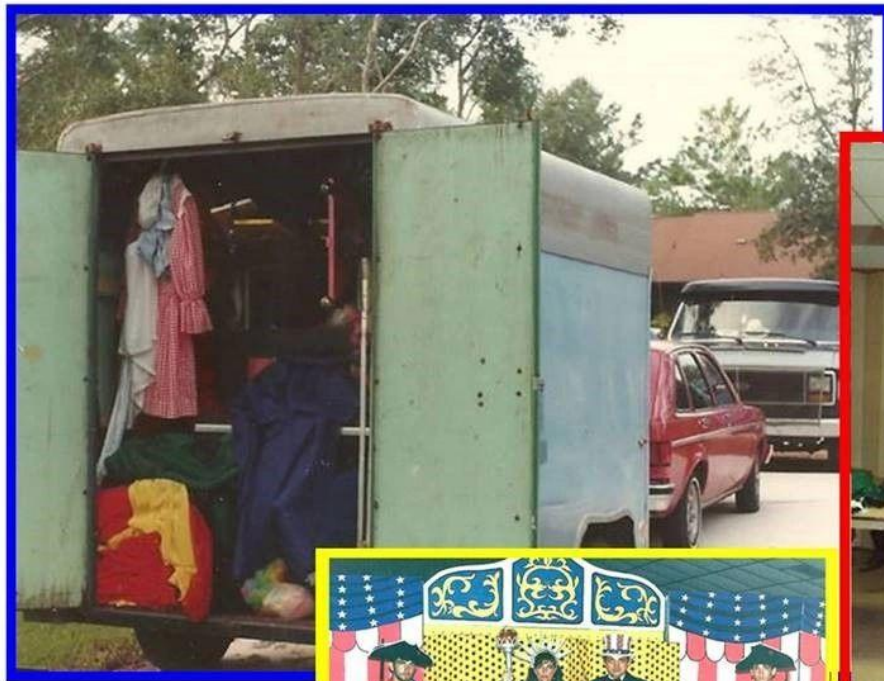
Every time I got back home from a week on the road, it took another week to mentally get myself and the show and my mind back together. When I took a rented box truck and the proper crates, it was better organized but the expenses for the truck and driver was higher.

From 1989: I towed my trailer ( I still own it) with the '84 Econoline Van and not the Chevette! This photo of my trailer and van must have been taken during the Florida “Love Bug” season (April May) because I have the radiator screen on the van. When traveling down the Gulf Coast of Florida ( Tampa to Naples) I would take a couple of cans of PAM vegetable cooking spray or WD 40 and coat all the leading edges of the vehicles which made it much easier to wash off the splattered bugs.

It was a family show but Goldilocks (Brandi, my longtime assistant) spiced it up for the camera in this photo.

The Goldilocks photo was made in mid-December 1990 in the backstage prep area of the Ocala National Guard Armory. It was a show mostly for the National Guardsmen families who had loved ones just sent to Iraq for Desert Storm. My phone promoter, Ken Parker, correctly guessed that it would be a great boiler room, "phone beg" and he sold it out for two full performances and a thick program book.

Our Patriotic Finale got a standing ovation along with a lot of tears. We, the cast, were on stage and looked out to see the families hugging and crying. They asked us to come down off the stage and we all got hugged and wet with tears. It took an hour to hug and get our pictures made with everyone.



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Before the pandemic killed all shows, I had been occasionally doing a “Cell Phone in a Nest of Boxes”

I borrowed the phone to “clean the screen and tune it up”. It went into a bag and I accidentally dropped it and then crunched it in two ( Saltine Crackers, in a Devil’s Hank, feels and sounds great for that)

Of course all returns to normal when it is found in the middle of the Nest of Boxes.

I decided that I did not want anyone coming back and blaming me for messing up their cellphones, breaking their screen, hacking it to 5G, so I quit using cell phones for that.

All I would borrow from audience members, today would be coins, dollars bills and shoes. No one carries cloth handkerchiefs anymore. I even had to drop my Knife Through Coat, since suit coats have not common for the last 20 years. Certainly hats, other than baseball hats, are not used anymore.

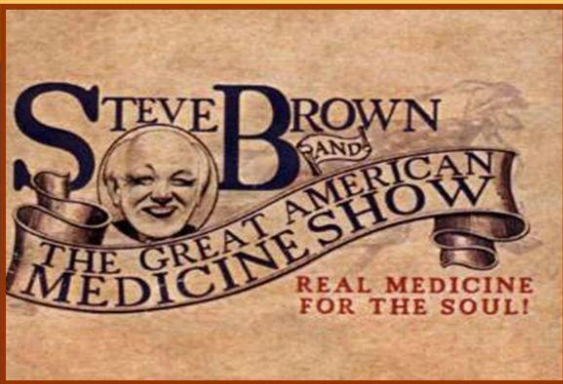
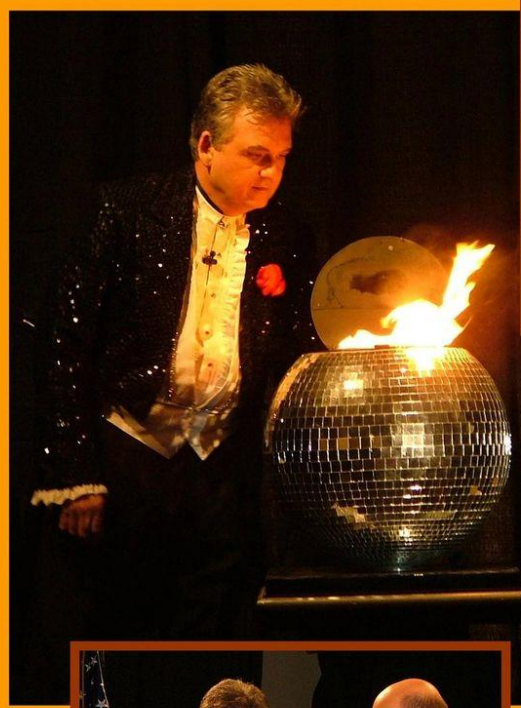
Probably, for the foreseeable future, due to the pandemic and health concerns, the area of “borrowing” much of anything from an audience member is finished.

Here is a photo montage showing my flameless shoe-burning machine ( based on an original concept by Steve Hart and some art styling ideas from Joe Eddy Fairchild and the “Jarrett Base” concept from Smokey Mountain Magic’s, Dan Wolfe)

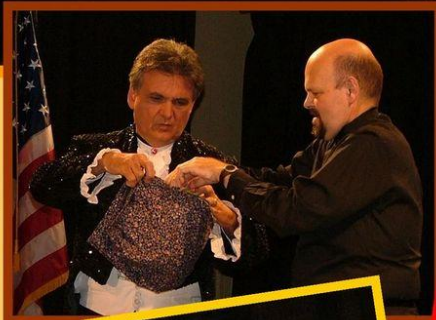


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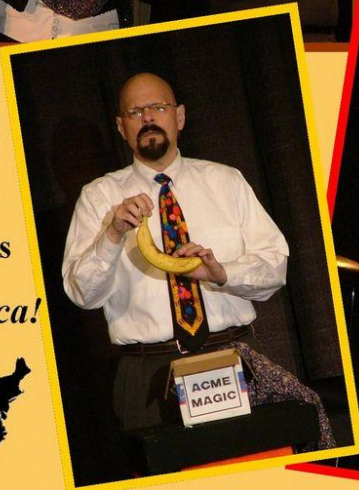


Featuring  
**THE Magic** of  
**Dennis Phillips**  
**On the Road!**  
*with Comedian Charlie Jones*



Appearing  
in auditoriums

*Across America!*



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One old effect that played very well was the Classic "Vanishing Bandana" comedy bit. I realize all us magicians believe that it is old and well-known, but actually most modern

audiences have not seen it recently and it is like a piece of music. You can experience it again, if it is well done. Charlie Jones, was my comic sidekick on the old Steve Brown Show and he was a hilarious comedic actor and it was always a hit in our shows. I was a little like Harvey Korman was in sketches with Tim Conway: I could not keep from laughing. If you ever wanted to do this comedy effect, all you need is small cardboard box , about 6 inches by 6 inches by 8 inches ,with as sign that says “Acme Magic (Use your computer to make that)” , a Devil’s Handkerchief and a banana.

I insert a 1 gallon Zip Lock bag into the Devil’s Handkerchief pocket to make the clean-up easy.

Here is the sound track. I am told that it was the voice of Howard Hale’s daughter.

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Dennis