

Press-to!

Assembly 206 News

Calendar Reminders!

Monday March 16th - 206 Monthly Meeting

Saturday April 18th - SAM 206 Magic Auction

Saturday, March 21st - Magic Square Clinic

NEXT MEETING OF S.A.M. ASSEMBLY 206

March 16th @ 7:00 pm at the Omni Southpark

The Magical Austin Roadshow

From The President: Hull Youngblood

A Tale of Two Anything

The classic Dickens novel, “A Tale of Two Cities”, begins with one of the greatest opening sentences ever written.

“It was the best of times. It was the worst of times.”

I am NOT trying to draw comparisons between Dickens’s exploration of the years of unrest leading up to the French Revolution, and the current political climate in America or the world. I am saying, however, that those iconic opening words make sense today, just as they did when they were written in 1859.

Most of you know that I am a “deal” lawyer. I help people start companies, buy and sell businesses, build buildings, and work on strange financing. Because of that, I have seen a lot change in the last nine months. (You would have to be a monastic ascetic not to have seen the current financial turmoil.)

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But in the last two or three months the strangest thing has happened. There is a change in the attitude of businesses – at least the ones I deal with. During the last half of 2008, most business owners that I know slowed down, took a deep breath, read the depressing financial news, and focused on cost-cutting while trying to save every job that they could. Now, as 2009 gets underway, they are back making their business work in this reduced economy. They see the opportunities out there.

From the President (cont.)

One fellow just started a restaurant. He started leaner and more flexible than he first had planned, but it made his venture a better risk, with a higher probability of survival and success. Another guy is using the downtime to completely re-engineer his website to focus on serving his clients more than just having pretty pictures about himself, and fancy “opening” graphics. He is also re-writing his marketing materials to be more focused on solving his client’s problems. And don’t forget that Joe the Plumber (of Obama Campaign fame) is now a correspondent for a media outlet.



Hull at Work

In a recent episode of “Deadliest Catch” (a show about the maniacal group of fishermen that fish for King Crab in far north Alaskan waters in the WINTER) one captain spent more than an hour in a perilous fight with the angry weather to get his ship through a long narrow channel (lined with huge boulders) so that he could get out of the harbor. The waves produced in the harbor by the freak winds were pounding the boats against the docks, and literally destroying the boats. After completing the dangerous maneuvers required to get to the open sea, the captain sat back in his chair and talked to the camera. He said: “We had to get out of that harbor. We would have been bashed up. Besides, **there ain’t no money in the harbor.**” What a quote. Wish I had said that.

This is no time to sit in the harbor and worry about what might happen to the boat. It’s time to get out there, with focused intent and clear vision. Whether you are a magician, computer programmer, news reporter or a lawyer, this is time to focus on the opportunities that exist today, and pursue them. In some ways it may be the worst of times. But these can be the best of times as well. Now get out of the harbor.

Hull

Assembly 206 February Meeting Report**by: Sue Caldwell****Mentalism: Hosted by Paul Q.**

Carl Seagren opened the meeting, welcoming visitors.

Past President **Stan Seaton** spoke emotionally of the death of his wife, Millie, and the memorial held at her doll museum in San Marcos. In keeping with magical tradition, Carl then led the group--not in a moment of silence--but in a prolonged standing ovation for our departed compeer. Carl announced that the Magical Austin Road Show in Houston yesterday evening was dedicated to Millie.

Kent Cummins announced that UT's annual Juggle Fest will be held this weekend, much of Friday, all day Saturday, and part of Sunday. It is an international festival, and includes teaching sessions and a free public show on Saturday night (which includes **Arsene Dupin** among the performers).

Kent also described the Magical Austin Roadshow last night at Houston AOM. **Chris Walden** and **Hull Youngblood** set it up so that performers can easily swap places. There are plans to take the show to San Antonio, Dallas, and other venues. The show will be the program for our March meeting – bring family and friends! Last night featured Hull as Master of Ceremonies. It opened with **Ian Varella**; then **J D Stewart**; then Kent and his human pin-cushion daughter



*Doc and Millie Seaton
photo taken summer 2008*

(who continued in her role during the 12-minute intermission, earning \$134.52 in donations from those wanting to examine her in the pin-cushion box before he got her out); then **Paul Q**; then **John Maverick** escaped from a straight jacket; and **Peter the Adequate** closed the show. **Chris Walden** produced (and did not perform – which helped things go much more smoothly as he could attend to details and not have to worry about his own performance). **Carl Seagren** was the stage god backstage, while his wife Beverly pulled wire and served as microphone goddess. **Fernando Uloa** worked tech. **James Caldwell** provided technical assistance and equipment.

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Assembly 206 February Meeting Report (cont.)

Ron Cartlidge discussed the Austin Magic Auction, to be held starting at 8 am on April 18 at the First Baptist Church. He explained that 90% of the selling price of each item goes to the seller, while 10% goes to the club. The live auction begins at 9 am, with auctioneers **Kent Cummins**, **David Hira** (from Dallas) and **Scott Wells** (from Houston). For more information, he referred us to the website, www.austinmagicauction.com.

Ron also presented the new member certificate and information packet to **Lee Robertson**.

Carl then introduced the host for the evening's program, **Paul Q**. Paul had a well-organized and informative program on Mentalism. He first discussed the difference between how a magician handles a force and how a mentalist handles it.



Paul Q in action

Kent Cummins explained why he doesn't do mentalism (because he doesn't like mentalism), and demonstrated and taught us to perform a mentalist effect using a "magic wheel" (an effect published in the December 1995 M.U.M. cover article on Kent – he gave us a handout of the wheel shown in the article).

Paul demonstrated and taught a "magic square" effect (with hand-out); he said Harry Anderson does a 2-hour lecture on the magic square. He also noted that Banachek says he is using the 5 known senses to present the illusion of a 6th sense.

Chris Walden demonstrated and taught a card trick in which he "reads the mind" of a subject to manipulate his card set to match that of the subject. Paul presented the effect Fate, available for sale by Texas Magic Supply during the break.

After the break, Paul discussed Corinda's book, 13 Steps to Mentalism. It says mentalism is not so much the effect as the way you produce it. Showmanship is the key element for a mentalist, how you talk to the audience, how you engage them. This helps the mentalist take the heat off the method. Paul showed and taught the effect "Hot Rod Flashlights," in which the chosen child (say, the child having a birthday) is the only one whose flashlight works; audience members suggested variations on this theme.

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Assembly 206 February Meeting Report (cont.)

Then Paul introduced **Blake Adams**, who performed many feats of mentalism, including: predicting the guestimate (of gumballs in a jar) that an audience member had made; identifying items gathered from audience members while Blake's eyes were covered by silver dollars and his face by a metal mask; and performing "Book Test" (see Opie Houston's notes for this meeting).

Paul interviewed Blake: Blake is 23. He started as a magician when he was young, and started performing professionally a few years ago. But, he said, when he performed as a magician, people all knew it was a trick. He likes the reaction when people see a mentalist – they're not sure how he does it, if he's really reading minds. For resources, he recommended [13 Steps to Mentalism](#), also books by Banachek, Paul Brooks, and Bob Cassidy. Asked what he does if he misses, Blake said it doesn't matter – it makes the rest stronger (but **don't** muff the climax).



Blake Adams (left) is from San Antonio but now lives in Waco, where he is going to Seminary.

Finally, Blake demonstrated and taught an effect in which the audience member selects a card, and it matches one sealed in an envelope that has been in sight since before the card was selected. The envelope actually contains 4 different cards (two 2-sided cards, one obtainable from each end of the envelope); and the deck consists of these 4 "force" cards alternating with garbage cards, giving enough variety that the deck can be flipped through quickly and assure the audience that it is not gimmicked.

Assembly 206 March Meeting: The Magical Austin Roadshow!

"The Magical Austin Roadshow" stops at the corner of IH 35 and Hwy 71 to perform at the Omni Southpark on Monday, March 16, for the monthly meeting of SAM Assembly 206. After rave reviews from the Houston Association of Magicians, and as a tune-up for San Antonio, the Magical Austin Roadshow will actually be performing in their home town,

produced by Chris Walden and featuring some of the finest entertainers in Austin (and San Marcos). President Hull Youngblood is the Master of Ceremonies, as he shares some of the stories and introduces some of the performers who help keep Austin weird. If you like magic you will not want to miss this very special meeting.

Member News:**by : Kent Cummins****Austin Magic Auction News**

Tagging parties have been scheduled at the home of Doc Seaton at 10511 La Costa in Onion Creek. The next party will be on Sunday, March 15, from 1 pm to 3:30 pm.

Other tagging dates for March are Tuesday March 24 at 6:30 p.m and Monday March 30 at 6:30 p.m. Please mark these dates in your calendar. It is so easy to join the auction team by sending your intent to texashoudini@msn.com.

The actual auction is scheduled for April 18 at 8:00 a.m. at the First Baptist Church, 901 Trinity in downtown Austin. Please check out our website for further details. Seller's deadline is March 31, 2009. All items must be in by that time. We currently have 17 sellers plus two major donations of items with profits going to the assembly.

There is a \$10 entry fee for all that come to the auction.

Local Magic Shows

"The Fantastic Kent Cummins" will be performing "The Magic of Books" at the San Marcos Public Library on Thursday, March 19, at 10:30 am in the children's area of the library, which is at 625 E Hopkins Street in San Marcos.

Magic Classes at UT

"Discover The Secrets of Magic!" will be taught again at The University of Texas

by Kent Cummins in April. Classes will be on four successive Tuesday nights, April 7 through April 28, at Benedict Hall Room 1.102 from 7 to 9 pm. The classes are designed for beginners, but are also enjoyed by anyone who loves learning about MAGIC. (Among the members who have enjoyed the course are Stan Seaton, Richard Garriott, Will Mannis, Ranger Bob, Carlos Santillan, David Luther, Solaris, and many more.)

To sign up for the classes, go to www.InformalClasses.org and enter the name under Creative Arts or activity number 3645.601. The price is less than \$50 for 8 hours of instruction.

Mini Magic Camp in April

There will be a one-day Mini Magic Camp at the Lakeway Activity Center on Saturday, April 4, for all school-aged children. Campers will get a Magic Camp T-Shirt and learn magic, juggling, and puppetry, as well as watching a professional magic show. To register, call the Lakeway Activity Center at (512) 261-1010.

Magic Square Clinic

Dear Colleagues in Hocus Pocus: I am very pleased to inform you that Lou Hornung will be conducting the Clinic on Saturday morning, March 21, 2009. Your friend in magic, Roger Gorss (cont.)

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Member News: (cont.)

Magic Squares have been with us for thousands of years on many levels. Most of us have been introduced to them as a puzzle or an idle curiosity. They have also been a serious challenge to mathematical greats such as Leonard Euler, Arthur Cayley and Ben Franklin. Many believed they originated in China and spread to India and Egypt; spreading their magic through Arabian astrology and that of the seven astrological planets through medieval Europe. Today their most exciting manifestations are in the hands of mentalists and magicians.

Come to the clinic on March 21 to learn to make squares of the orders of all the astrological planets, viz. the 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9th orders. Lou Hornung, who made his first presentation of the squares when he was in high school, will not only teach methods for their construction, but will also teach the science behind them. You will also learn his totally impromptu routine for which only a pencil and a few scraps of paper are needed. The methods of construction are clear and simple with minimal memory work. Alternatives will be taught for particularly strong endings or to use as an encore.

The particulars are as follows:

**Magic Squares
With Lou Hornung
Saturday, March 21, 2009
10 am to 1pm
Texas Magic Supply, Cedar Park**

By the nature of the intent of the Clinics with hands on instruction and the size of our room, there are given limits to the number of attendees. Don't be disappointed. SIGN-UP NOW by return e-mail or if you don't have access to e-mail, call Roger, (254) 289-4305. It's free to RING 60 members and only a modest fee of \$5 for non-members. ALL SEATS RESERVED, please.



*Paul
Hornung
left
Ramon
Galindo
right
at a SAM 206
meeting last
summer, 2008*

Big News From Houston

The 2009 TAOM Committee is proud to announce that this year's convention will be dedicated to Ramon Galindo. His myriad accomplishments in magic and his unswerving dedication to our organization make him the obvious choice for this honor.

Ramon joined TAOM in 1949 and has not missed a single convention during the ensuing 60 years. As a volunteer, he filmed convention acts for over 40 years. He has generously offered to donate his personal TAOM film library to the archives.

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Member News: (cont.)

His many honors include winning the TAOM Herman Yerger Trophy for Creativity and serving as TAOM president for a very successful convention in Austin in 1993. Ramon has performed around the world, earning many awards and accolades, including being named one of Mexico's "Magicians of the Decade" in 2008.

Many of you have read about TAOM history; Ramon has lived it.

A section of the Souvenir Program will be devoted to Ramon's many accomplishments and contributions. You can publish a personal message or congratulatory note to Ramon in the program. Watch for details. Scott Hollingsworth, President TAOM.

Philadelphia passes New York City!

No one thought it could ever happen, but parent assembly number one was passed by Philadelphia as the largest assembly of the Society of American Magicians. Here were the rankings at the start of last summer (June 1, 2008)

1. Philadelphia 119
2. New York City 116
3. Austin, Texas 109
4. L.A. California 72
5. Houston, Texas 68
6. St. Louis 67

7. Elmhurst (Chicago) 56
8. Tucson, AZ. 52
9. Boston 51

As of our February meeting, we were two down at 107 members, but that is just 13 members from what was the largest assembly in the world! Still, we are one of only three assemblies over 100 members.

It would be nice to see Hull accept the trophy as the largest assembly in the world at Buffalo this summer!

These members were due in February:

Kenneth Dickensheets
Rod Foyt
Bobby Lee Lucas

Due in March:

Debbie Baize
Donna Band
Tim Dietz
Jeff McDonald
Carl Seagren

Due in April:

Brian Brushwood
Ramon Galindo
Leslie Heather
Ed Wooton
Ian Varela

Due in May:

Mike Collins
David Luther
Will Mannis

Please pay your dues on time. Local dues are now past due and still just a buck a month!

Member Spotlight

by: Ron Cartlidge

Jim Baldauf

The Gift of the Magi ...

... to a grateful new member, Jim Baldauf

“Magi” (*N. Pl.*): A caste of priests, philosophers, and magicians, among the ancient Persians; hence, any holy men or sages of the East.

The Gift of the Magi: A famous short story by William Sydney Porter (O. Henry) featuring great irony and surprising twists of fate.

Ironically, O. Henry, a contemporary of Houdini, lived and worked in Austin, Texas. And ironically, it was in Austin that the gifts of the Magi started flowing my way once again. Throughout my life, the philosophers, magicians, and other practitioners of the conjuring arts have been among the most gracious and friendly folks I've ever met. After not waving a wand for almost 30 years, the warm welcome I've received from the Austin magic community is the latest example of the many gifts that magic has sent my way.

It all began (again) about six months ago as I was reading *The Secret Life of Houdini*, a fairly new biography by Bill Kalush. Throughout the book, many references are made to correspondence between Houdini and his lifelong friend Jim Bard, another early vaudeville performer.

It was my privilege to know Mr. Bard in the mid 1950s, when he was in his late eighties, and I was a budding boy magician of twelve or thirteen.



Jim Baldauf's memorabilia of Jim Bard

This relationship, among many others, inspired me to become a performing magician all through my school days and college, until the oil and gas business took over most of my spare time. But even then, I had the chance to do a few shows at the M.D. Anderson Children's Hospital and the Houston VA Hospital, before I hung up my thumb tips for decades.

So, in a surprising twist of fate, if I had not picked up the Houdini book, if I had not dusted off my old Jim Bard scrapbooks and my rusty bag of tricks, if I had not met the wonderful wizards of Austin, I would not be writing these words today. So, now, with my sincere thanks to you all, I will give up my magic when they pry my cold, dead fingers from my wand.

Feature Article**by: Scott Wells****ALI BONGO PASSES AWAY****1929 - 2009**

Ali Bongo suffered a stroke while about to present a lecture in Paris during the last week of January.



The Magic Circle Vice-President Jack Delvin reported that Ali was feeling anxious while preparing in his hotel room. After arriving at the venue, Ali was waiting backstage, just about to go on, when he fainted and hit his head. He was rushed to a Paris hospital in a fire engine.

He was given medication for an erratic heartbeat and advised that he should be put on a pacemaker. Ali refused to have that operation without first returning home to the UK. He felt well at the time, but the next night in the hospital suffered a stroke from a blood clot in his brain.

The stroke left Bongo's right side paralyzed and caused some problems with his speech. Scans showed the clot gradually responding well to treatment and Ali seemed to be recovering well. His niece, Allison, traveled to Paris to be with him, and he was able to communicate with several magicians and other friends via Allison's cell phone.

Ali Bongo appeared as the "Shriek of Araby" less than a week ago Jack Delvin reported,

I have visited him recently and found his speech improving with considerable mobility on his right side at last. He is now more independent and spends some of his time sitting in an armchair looking at a spectacular view of the Thames. He seems to be much better in himself and is now ready for more visitors.

Then today, March 8, 2009, the magic world learned that complications from pneumonia took his life.

Born William Oliver Wallace in Bangalore, India on December 8, 1929, and reared in Kent, England, this much beloved entertainer was also highly respected as a creator and inventor of many magic effects which appeared in his books. He marketed his first invention at age 16. Among his many inventions was his variation of the Lu Brent "Growing Hat". He also originated a routine for a PomPom Pole which is used by many magicians today. Ali had a recognizable style for his illustrations that filled many books, magazines and catalogues as well as columns which appeared in "The Magic Circular" over the years. His books include The Bongo Book (1966), Be a Magician (1979), and Ali Bongo's Book of Magic (1980).

Ali Bongo in happier times Ali Bongo had his own TV series featuring children's magic and was the presenter of the Ali Bongo's Cartoon Carnival which featured himself and his assistant Oscar. It aired on UK TV BBC1 on Saturdays between October 23, 1971, and December 18, 1971, a total of nine episodes.

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Feature Article (cont.)

Bongo was featured in an episode of Children's TV show Rainbow and appeared in the science-fiction show The Tomorrow People in the serial "Revenge of Jedikiah". He also acted as the magical advisor to 70's cult TV show in the UK, Ace of Wands.

In later years he was a magic consultant for many television shows and musicals including David Nixon, Paul Daniels and others that aired on the BBC.



He, along with

David Berglas and others also helped provide consulting for the magic performed in the movie Casino Royale that starred Orson Welles.

Ali Bongo was a past president of the I.B.M. Ring and a winner of the prestigious British Ring Shield in 1964; The Magic Circle "Magician of the Year" Award in 1972; the Academy of Magical Arts "Best Lecturer of the Year" Award in 1975, and the David Berglas Award in 1991. The Academy of Magical Arts presented Ali Bongo with a Masters Fellowship in 1993; he also won the 1993 Carlton Award for Comedy. On September 8, 2008, he and was elected President of The Magic Circle.

Some may not know that Ali claimed to be a direct descendent of William Wallace, perhaps better known to U.S. audiences as the central character in the movie, "Braveheart". He derived his stage name from his native India which was known as "Pongolia", hence "Pongo" or rather, "Bongo".

Ali Bongo was always a smiling face at I.B.M. conventions. He was personable, congenial and always accessible. He would offer advice and loved all things magic. We enjoyed him as a guest speaker one year at our Merlin Breakfast.



Ali regaled us with stories and amusing anecdotes from his many years in magic.

by Scott Wells

The S.A.M. 206 Connection?

Ali and I were good friends. I recall that at the joint I.B.M./S.A.M. convention several things happened concerning Ali. First, he lost his ticket or badge to get into one of the big parties at the convention. I told him that I would take care of it, but had nothing to do with the organization. I spoke to security and was able to get him in. In addition, he had lost his drink tickets. My wife and I had two tickets, so I shared one with Ali though he tried to refuse. At another convention Ali had lost his medication which I think was in his bags. Doc Seaton, a member of our S.A.M. club was able to write Ali a prescription so that he could get his medication at a drug store in the United States. He was forever thankful. Ali also made a \$1,000 donation to the S.A.M. Magic Center Foundation while in Louisville. That fact is not well known, but I am a board member and know that to be a fact. It is a sad day for magic. Ali was a great link across the pond and beyond. - Ron Carlidge