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## THE FORT WORTH MAGICIANS CLUB NEWSLETTER

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December 2011—[www.fortworthmagiciansclub.org](http://www.fortworthmagiciansclub.org)—Volume 2011 Issue 12

**Next Meeting: 7:00 p.m. Thursday, December 1, 2011 — Energy Auditorium-Tarrant County College/ River Campus**

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### *It's a "Bamboozled" Holiday Celebration at the December Meeting*

Ah, the holiday season. The most wonderful time of the year. At least that's how the song goes, so I will at least pretend it has some truth to it. For the Fort Worth Magicians Club it means that we have to find some way to celebrate. Normally, we do a Secret Santa, or a Chinese Christmas. This year I thought we would do something else. So...

Get ready for Magic Bamboozled! That's right, this December at the club will be the first magic holiday game show. If you would like to be a contestant, all you have to do is bring a magic gift. The gift needs to be around \$5. Make this a 'Royal' and 'Addams' holiday, so to speak. It could be the equivalent as well. Just don't spend more than \$5. Because that's all you need to play Magic Bamboozled!!

So study your magic trivia, work on your palming, and for a hint... "get a bee in your bonnet" because Magic Bamboozled has three different levels and special prizes are rewarded for each level, but the top level winner will receive a very special prize worth \$50.

Come celebrate and have some fun with the Fort Worth Magicians club. \$5 gifts. Use the rest of your money to pay your dues.



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### *On A Personal Note . . .*

[Editor's notice: This column is dedicated news about our members and friends in the greater North Texas magic community, particularly regarding those who are under the weather, recovering, and those of our community whom we unfortunately lose. As we can, we will provide mailing addresses, email addresses, and telephone numbers for our colleagues and their families.

To this end, please send your information to the *Flashpaper* editor Geoff Grimes at [ggrimes1@aol.com](mailto:ggrimes1@aol.com) or call at 972-740-3125.

Please provide contact information as you can.

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### *Prayers and Best Wishes*

**Fran Hatzenbuhler** continues to experience severe pain and, as she indicated in October, is probably anticipating corrective surgery.

Fran has always been one of the most supportive and active member of the club, along with her husband John, our former club president.

The FWMC extends its warmest regards to Fran for a restful holiday season!



*Features: December Party, November Meeting Notes, Commentary, M S Mahendra, Birthdays*

## November Meeting Opens the New Year with a Performance Agenda!



The November 2011 meeting of the Fort Worth Magicians Club marked the beginning of our new club year.

**Ash Adams**, our new president, opened with a welcome and told us the Fort Worth City Council had proclaimed October 25<sup>th</sup> thru 31<sup>st</sup> to be Magic Week. Several members were at the proclamation service where a staff, carved by our own **Doug Wilson**, was presented to Fort Worth Mayor, **Betsy Price**, as a way of saying "Thank You". Ash also shared copies of a cover story in Fort Worth Weekly about Magic in Fort Worth.

There were 26 members present, as well as the following visitors: **Conner Goldberg**, **Will Baffle**, **Rene Lopez**, and **Pix Smith**. It is good to see new people interested in magic.

Several members performed at a program for troops returning from Afghanistan. Those honored for their participation in the program

include **Hal Hudgins**, **Geoff Grimes**, **Rick Burcher** and **Craig Herren**.

**Geoff Grimes** told us about Snowball Express, an organization that provides social support for families that have lost a member in military combat. December 9<sup>th</sup> is "Magic Day" with Snowball Express in Dallas and Geoff is seeking volunteers to help.

**Bill Irwin** gave us an overview of the Cook Children's Young Magicians Club. This club is open to children from 7 to 17 years old, and meets at the Cook Children's Hospital. Bill invited members of our club to help with this endeavor.

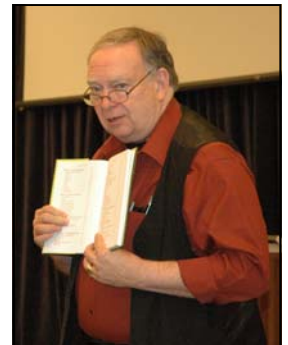
Geoff Grimes reviewed [Beyond Deception – The Theory and Technique of Creating Original Magic](#) by Tobias Beckwith. Geoff highly recommends this book for all that want to make their performances more original.



**Randi Rain**, our new Vice President and Program Chair kicked off a new project that should be very fun for all. With Randi's guidance, the group selected a volunteer from our members. Then, upon finding someone willing, the club selected a performance persona. Through the year, the club will mold his act, providing guidance and polish at every meeting. His new act will be featured at next year's installation banquet.

Then Randi introduced a guest, **Shel Higgins**, a busker from Florida. After a delightful cups and balls, Shel thrilled us with a dangerous escape from a straitjacket while balancing on top of a ladder.

The evening closed with Randi interviewing Shel on his journey through magic and into his profession as a street performer.



Reported by Jeffrey Hallberg  
FWMC Secretary



*Shel Higgins performs for the Fort Worth Magicians. (Far left) Shel performs his street version of the cups and balls.*

*(Left) Shel labors to extricate himself from a straight jacket while balancing on an aluminum step ladder.*

*(Above) Randi interviews Shel who relates his life in magic.*

## A "Dickens of a Christmas" ~ A Commentary

**Mike Smith**, President of the Dallas Magic Clubs, and I dine out occasionally just to "talk magic," and it was on one of those outings recently when he brought up the topic of Charles Dickens and the famous writer's own relationship with magic. It took him a while to find it, but he passed on to me a small collection of information he had gleaned on the subject.



In 2005 the IBM's December issue of *The Linking Ring* featured a cover spread of Dick Newton's portrayal of Charles Dickens as the "Necromancer" and the accompanying article on the subject, brief as it was, in its record of Dickens' own magical acumen.

Ten years earlier David R. Goodsell, editor of the "Nothing Up My Sleeve" column for the 1995 issue of SAM's *M.U.M.*, also devoted two or three paragraphs on the subject of Dickens as a magician, noting that "Dickens was, as we all know, an amateur magician who enjoyed giving magical performances for his children and family."



Geoff Grimes, editor of  
*The Flashpaper*

Well, "**we**" did not all know that, and that the author of "The Christmas Carol"—what Goodsell characterizes as "the most magical story of the Christmas season"—was, in fact, quite accomplished as a magical entertainer. Reporters witnessed and recorded Dickens' routines and published them in the news of the day, but Dickens himself wrote enthusiastically of his conjuring, dating at least to 1842, when he performed with a friend for a New Year's eve celebration.

Heathcoat Williams has printed a small, twenty-page monograph on Dickens, the conjuror. He quotes liberally from Dickens' correspondence and Dickens scholarship. A year later, in December 1843, at the age of 31, Dickens purchased "the entire stock-in-trade" of a retiring magician, writing gleefully about his good fortune (Williams, 5).

Dickens performed under the *nom de theatre* as "Rhia Rhama Rhoos," a name Williams attributes to its similarities to "Khia Khan Khurse," an Indian juggler of the day. In any case, Dickens donned an Asian costume, blackened his face, and strolled out onto "a small scale" (stage) for his performance.

We have a record of Dickens' performance set. Williams identifies five pieces. "The Conflagration Wonder," a work of magical mentalism, features the identification of a selected card, its burning, followed by its reconstitution from its own ashes. Second, a pair of selected cards rises mysteriously out of a goblet. In a third piece, "The Pyramid of Wonder," a borrowed and marked coin disappears, only to be found in a nest of boxes. Next, a small doll "travels" about the room, disappearing from one place only to reappear moments later in an unexpected venue. Finally, a gentleman's expensive hat is set ablaze only to be returned, restored, to its rightful owner (Williams, 1-3).

Goodsell suggested in 1995 that it might be delightful, at some expense and preparation, to host Dickens parties. That's not a new idea. In fact, Charles Dickens societies around the world have been doing just that at least as far back as Dickens' death in 1870 at the age of 58.

The latest twist on a Dickens celebration just concluded in McKinney as the "Dickens of a Christmas" celebration hosted by merchants of the historic square wrapped up its 31<sup>st</sup> annual Thanksgiving weekend sales event. Merchants and their staff join Chamber of Commerce and organization representatives in donning festive 19<sup>th</sup>-century Victorian-style costumes for a weekend of family activities and sales events.



Charles Dickens  
English Author and Magician  
(1812—1870)

(Continued on next page)

(A "Dickens of a Christmas" ~ Commentary continued)



Jennifer and Chris Gracy, owners of Main Street Magic and Fun Company

This year, **Jennifer and Chris Gracy**, owners of Main Street Magic and Fun Company, expanded its family functions with the addition of old-time magic shows in a tent perched in the middle of the street on the square.

As one of the house magicians of Main Street Magic, I performed more than twenty half-hour magic shows over the three-day extravaganza.

**Libby Sharpe** closed each show with a beautiful snowstorm that triggered an eruption of snow clouds both inside and outside the tent, much to the delight and surprise of patrons as they exited the tent.

Windy weather conditions and common sense dictated that I abandon any thoughts of fire in the tent show. However, Richard Osterlind's "break through card system" provided an expanded version of Dickens' mental magical effect in his identification of the spectator's selected card.

Other North Texas magicians added to the glee of Main Street Magic festivities. **Hal "Doc Haliday" Hudgins** greeted magic store patrons as they entered and exited. **Cameron Rivers** and **Clay Tippel** also sported Victorian garb and "barked" in the streets for the hourly shows. **Cameron** drew large crowds of revelers on the street corners with his cups and balls routine and balancing act, featuring a folding table stand balanced on the tip of his chin.

I have found no records of Charles Dickens performing his show twenty times in three days, but I can attest that weekend "Dickens" goers received a fair introduction to the season's "Scrooge" from some local magicians who had a blast sharing the gift of magic!

I'm just saying . . .

Geoff Grimes, Editor  
The Flashpaper

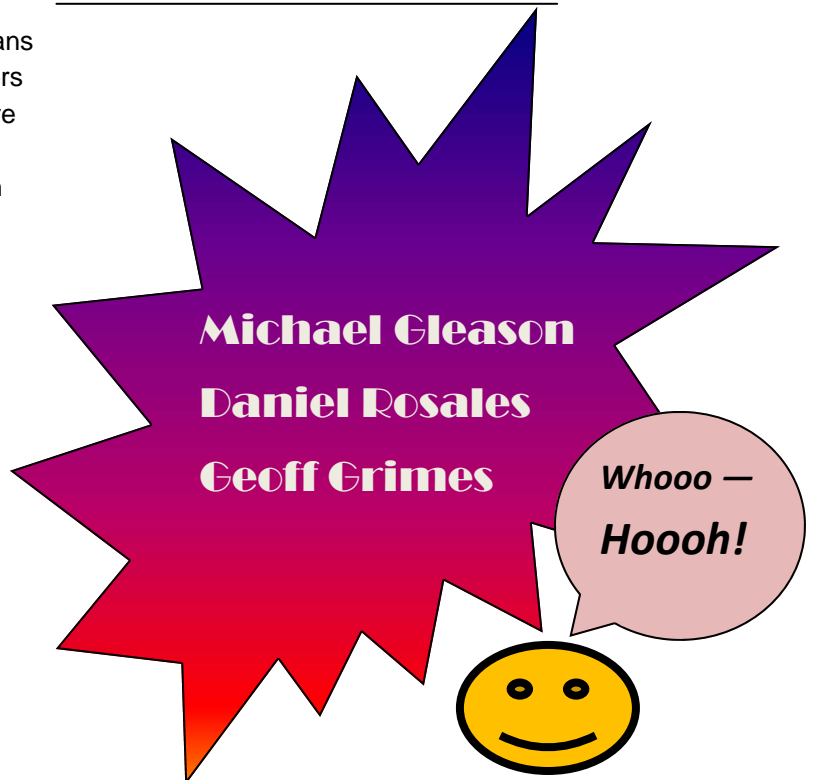
2011-2012 Dues Are Now Due

In order to retain membership in the Fort Worth Magicians Club, dues of \$20 are repayable each October. Members who have not renewed their membership by January are dropped from the list of members. You can renew your membership by completing the membership application found on the FWMC website ([www.fortworthmagiciansclub.org](http://www.fortworthmagiciansclub.org)) or at the end of *The Flashpaper*.

Paid Members To Date:

- |                  |                     |                  |
|------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| Luther Adkins    | Larry Heil          | Doug Wilson      |
| Richard Amon     | Bill Irwin          | David Youngblood |
| Dana Archip      | Bob Karlebach       |                  |
| Stacey Archip    | Jess Langston       |                  |
| Larry Brown      | Randy Keck          |                  |
| Rick Burcher     | Matthew Martin      |                  |
| Bruce Chadwick   | Richard Pemper      |                  |
| Louis Daniel     | Elena Ponsler       |                  |
| Arthur Emerson   | Randi Rain          |                  |
| Albert Fox       | Michael Rubino      |                  |
| Marvin Gearhart  | Libby Sharpe        |                  |
| Geoffrey Grimes  | Russell Shead       |                  |
| Jeffrey Hallberg | Betty Jo Standridge |                  |
| Don Hartman      | Bob Utter           |                  |
| Brendan Hartman  |                     |                  |

December Birthday Greetings!



## Fort Worth Magicians Club Officers

### PRESIDENT

Ashley "Ash" Adams, 817-908-9008,  
ash.a.adams@gmail.com

### EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT AND PROGRAM CHAIRMAN

Randi Rain, 682-841-2375, randi@randirain.com

### VICE-PRESIDENT AND EDITOR OF THE FLASHPAPER

Geoffrey A. Grimes, 972-740-3125, [ggrimes1@aol.com](mailto:ggrimes1@aol.com)  
or [ggrimes@dcccd.edu](mailto:ggrimes@dcccd.edu)

### VICE-PRESIDENT AND WEBMASTER

Bruce Chadwick, 817-832-6062, [chadwickillusionist@yahoo.com](mailto:chadwickillusionist@yahoo.com)

### SECRETARY

Fran Hatzenbuhler, 817-430-1867, [tophatz@tex.rr.com](mailto:tophatz@tex.rr.com)

### TREASURER

Larry Heil, 817-444-0743, [landkheil@verizon.net](mailto:landkheil@verizon.net)

### SERGEANT AT ARMS

Mike Rubino, 817-262-3325, [r\\_jack\\_jackal@yahoo.com](mailto:r_jack_jackal@yahoo.com)

### HISTORIAN

Rick Burcher, 817-469-7037, [rick.burcher@gmail.com](mailto:rick.burcher@gmail.com)

### MEMBER-AT-LARGE

John Hatzenbuhler, 817-430-1867, [tophatz@tex.rr.com](mailto:tophatz@tex.rr.com)

### MEMBER-AT-LARGE

Logan Stadtman, 817-350-8445,  
[imperialamusement@yahoo.com](mailto:imperialamusement@yahoo.com)

### MEMBER-AT-LARGE

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### TRUSTEE (Term Expires 2017)

Bruce Chadwick, 817-832-6062,  
[chadwickillusionist@yahoo.com](mailto:chadwickillusionist@yahoo.com)

### TRUSTEE (Term Expires 2013)

Arthur Emerson, 817-868-6827, [mlart@verizon.net](mailto:mlart@verizon.net)

### TRUSTEE (Term Expires 2015)

Bill Irwin, 817-805-1655, [magicfx@sbcglobal.net](mailto:magicfx@sbcglobal.net)

### APPOINTED TAOM REPRESENTATIVES

Bill Irwin, Ren Clark IBM Ring 15

Mark Miertschin, Bruce Chadwick SAM  
Assembly 138

## 2011—2012 Dues Now Due

Please make arrangements to renew your FWMC dues in the next month or so or join us anew. The form is now online. Dues for "Active Members" are only \$20.

## A Ghost from Christmas Past

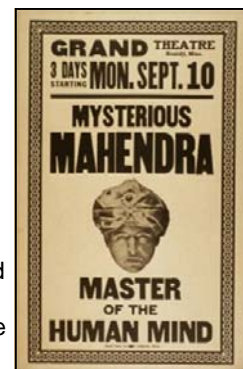


The 1936 Christmas Card from the late Texas magician,  
M. S. Mahendra.

Ash Adams offers this piece of seasonal memorabilia from the Bob and Ash Adams' collection of Fort Worth Magicians Club history.

From *MagicPedia*: <[http://geniimagazine.com/wiki/index.php/M.\\_S.\\_Mahendra](http://geniimagazine.com/wiki/index.php/M._S._Mahendra)>

"M. S. "Doc" Mahendra ( 1886? - September 19, 1970), born Francis B. Sterling in California. He specialized in mentalism, some times billing himself as "The Mystic". He spent his early performing years in Chicago, when not on the road, and joined the Chicago Conjurers' Club. His wife Ann was his bookkeeper/manager and danced in the shows for a time too. He was also known as an excellent cook. He wrote a complete book on the Si Stebbins system in 1919 called *Modern Card Miracles*. He was president of the Playing Card Collectors Association and owned over 8000 different playing cards. He was an active member of the IBM and wrote a column for the *Linking Ring*. He appeared on the cover in October, 1940. He retired from performing in 1946 and was living in San Antonio, Texas at the time of his death. The San Antonio, Texas IBM Ring 18 is known as the M.S. Mahendra Ring."



## Club Calendar—December, 2011

**FWMC December Meeting**—Thursday, December 1 at 7 p.m., in the Energy Auditorium at Tarrant County College-Trinity River Campus, corner of Cherry Street and Belknap, downtown Fort Worth.

**Lance Pierce Lecture**—Sunday, December 4 at 2 p.m. Crystal's Pizza, MacArthur and H183, Irving. 2 p.m. \$20 for club members.

**Snowball Express Event**—December 9 and 10, Sheraton Hotel  
This event brings families who have lost loved ones in the active military to Dallas for five days of family outings. FWMC members are asked to volunteer magical entertainment. Contact Geoff Grimes at 972-740-3125.

**Monday Night Magic**—Each Monday evening at Humperdink's Restaurant at Six Flags Drive, Arlington. Gather around 7 p.m./informal. Strolling performers are appreciated in the dining area before 8 p.m.



# Dues Payment Form

## The Fort Worth Magicians Club



To keep our club roster up-to-date, please fill out this entire form. Please PRINT carefully! Return this form along with cash, check or money order made payable to The Fort Worth Magicians Club to the address printed below. Make a second copy if you need a receipt.

FIRST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ LAST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

BIRTH (DAY AND MONTH): \_\_\_\_\_ SPOUSE'S FIRST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE SUBMITTED (MONTH AND YEAR): \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: HOME \_\_\_\_\_ OFFICE \_\_\_\_\_

SEND FLASHPAPER MONTHLY NEWSLETTER BY: ( ) WEBSITE OR ( ) US MAIL

MAILING ADDRESS: STREET OR PO BOX: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

IBM NUMBER (IF ANY) \_\_\_\_\_ SAM NUMBER (IF ANY) \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Membership: (check one box only please):

( ) **ACTIVE** - A person eighteen years of age or older, proven active in magic, and who has been accepted by the Club. Active Members may vote, hold office, serve on committees, and enjoy all the activities of the Club.

**Dues are \$20 per year.**

( ) **ASSOCIATE** - A spouse or professional assistant of an Active Member, and who is eighteen years of age or older. Associate Members do not vote or hold office, but may serve on committees and enjoy all the activities of the Club. **Dues are \$20 per year.**

( ) **JUNIOR** - A person fourteen years old or older, and under eighteen years of age. Upon reaching eighteen years of age, Junior Members automatically become Active Members provided they are dues paid members in good standing. Junior Members do not vote, hold office, or serve on committees, but do enjoy all the activities of the Club. **Dues are \$20 per year.**

( ) **ASSOCIATE JUNIOR** - A person under the age of 14 who is screened for approval by the Executive Committee prior to being granted membership. He must be accompanied at Club functions by a legal parent or guardian who themselves must be an Active, Associate, or Honorary Life member of the Club. Upon reaching the age of 14, Associate Junior Members automatically become Junior Members provided they are dues paid members in good standing. Associate Junior Members do not vote, hold office, or serve on committees, but do enjoy all the activities of the Club. **Dues are \$20 per year.**

( ) **HONORARY LIFE** - A person who has significantly contributed to the advancement of the art of magic internationally, or a person who has been an Active Member of the Club for at least 25 consecutive years and who has made an outstanding contribution to the welfare of the Club. Honorary Life Members are elected by a majority vote of the Executive Committee, and then a majority vote of the Club at a Monthly Club Meeting. **Honorary Life Members have the benefits of Active Membership without further dues payments.**

Submit a filled out copy of this statement along with cash, check or money order made payable to The Fort Worth Magicians Club to Jeff Hallberg, Secretary, 713 Ridgewood Circle, Hurst, TX 76054, Phone 817-479-3186