



...the Charles Howard ring

# Vancouver Magic Circle

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF MAGICIANS - RING 92

Affiliated with the Pacific Coast Association of Magicians

## VANCOUVER MAGIC CIRCLE SUMMER PICNIC - August 15, 2010



Come and join the fun and games at Queens Park (by the Band Shell) in New Westminster on Saturday August 15th starting at noon. The VMC will provide hamburgers and hotdogs, condiments and beverages for your family (the BBQ will be cooking from 12:00pm—1:30pm). You can choose to provide your own extras, such as salads, snacks, and your own beverages. Remember to bring your lawn chairs and plenty of sun screen.

**12:00 pm**—heat up the BBQ

**3:00 pm**—Magic Wand performers

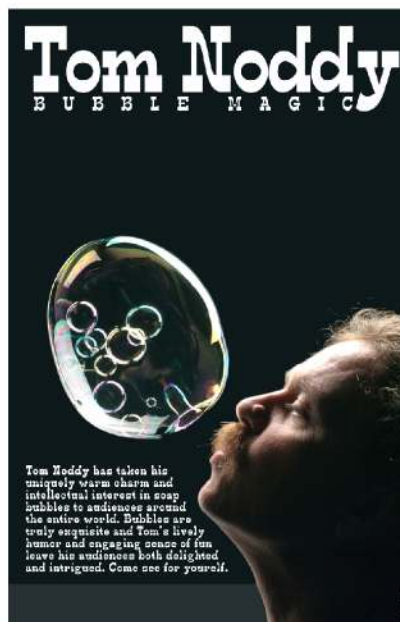
**12:00—5:00 pm**—Fun and Frolicking

## TOM NODDY LECTURE - September 10th, 2010

Tom Noddy spent over a decade developing a new kind of performance piece. Sitting alone with dime store bubble solution, a childlike sense of wonder and an adult sense of humor he brought a new thing into being: Bubble Magic.

Tom has taken his uniquely warm charm and intellectual interest in soap bubbles to audiences around the world. The bubbles are truly exquisite and Tom's lively humor and engaging sense of fun leave his audiences both delighted and intrigued.

Spend an evening with Tom Noddy learning the ins and outs of this magical lost art.



### The Magical Minutes

Newsletter Date:  
Summer 2010



### Tri-City Magical Weekend.

November 5th  
to 7th, 2010.

Tickets are only  
\$95.



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## PRESIDENT

Bruce Hunt

604-591-9353

bruce.hunt@ibmring92.com

## 1ST VICE-PRESIDENT

Neil Kremer

604-288-2596

neil.kremer@ibmring92.com

## 2ND VICE-PRESIDENT

Mike Norden

604-916-9879

mike.norden@ibmring92.com

## SECRETARY

Karen Eskilson

karen.eskilson@ibmring92.com

604-255-9946

## TREASURER

David Wilson

david.wilson@ibmring92.com

604-467-7887

## SARGEANT-AT-ARMS

Bryn Williams

bryn.williams@ibmring92.com

604-862-6609

## PAST PRESIDENT

Gord Boyes

604-852-7361

gord.boyes@ibmring92.com

## MAGICAL MINUTES EDITOR

Neil Kremer

604-288-2596

neil.kremer@ibmring92.com



Accept the things you  
can not change and  
change the things you  
can not accept.

-Marc Janmaat

## Lessons Learned - submitted by Bruce Hunt

I hope everyone is having a wonderful summer, and look forward to seeing you all at the annual VMC picnic on Sunday, August 15th at Queen's Park in New West (12 – 5pm). I write this having spent the last few days laid out on my couch suffering from a double whammy of the effects of what I suspect are sunstroke and on top of that, most likely food poisoning. I can at least thank my lucky stars that I am not at a magic convention cooped up in a hotel room and feeling miserable. It is much better to feel miserable at home than paying over \$200 or more a day to feel miserable at a great location! Hopefully I should be up and around in a day or two – I just wish it had hit me at the beginning of the week rather than just before the week end!

Well, I got an email from our foreign newsletter creator and editor, Neil Kremer, asking if I could contribute an article for the summer edition. The only thing I have done so far this past couple of months is work at my regular job and do a few festivals and shows – so there isn't much to tell. I figure I should take this in a bit of a different direction – please be patient with me if I seem to ramble – I'm sick.

As many of you know, I have been performing magic for over 45 years. Over that amount of time there have been many incidents that stick in my memory – most of them having to do with sudden foul-ups and unexpected incidents. If you do enough shows you are bound to run into a few problems due to equipment failure or just plain stupidity. Here are a few anecdotes from the latter.

The old saying about learning from your mistakes is true. I have learned from all of my mistakes, and can repeat them all exactly! These incidents had to do with fire tricks. I really do understand why all of the VMC and convention competitions have banned the use of fire effects, and why most theaters won't even let you light a match. From an early age fire magic fascinated me, and although my parents wouldn't let me use anything

with fire until I was of age ("Hey Ma.. the barn's on fire ... heh, heh, heh"), it wasn't until I was in my 30's that the rest of the world starting piling on the restrictions, so I had a few years in between to make a fool of myself. Here are a few really stupid mistakes that weren't really all that funny at the time, but the fact that I am still alive and well (sort of) with five complete digits on each hand and no burn marks, I can at least smirk at the memory.

**The Electronic Fire-Pan:** I still have this thing stored in my magic room. The whole idea is to magically produce a lit pan or wide bowl of fire from under a silk, then after a few seconds, the fire turns into a bouquet of spring flowers. Great effect, but I bought this second hand in the late 70's, not realizing that the welded portion that held the asbestos wicking had a nearly invisible crack in it. To set it up I had to soak the wick with lighter fluid, then, when ready, hit a switch which electronically ignited the wick. I was doing a charity show for a retirement home at the time, and I had set up my roll-on suitcase-table in their main lounge which had a highly polished wooden floor.

As the group assembled, I bent down (hidden behind my case) to set up the pan. I was unaware that as I squirted in the lighter fluid, it was dripping through the faulty weld onto the wooden floor. I thought I had better test the ignitor, hit the switch, and not only did the pan burst into flame (good), but so did a small pool of lighter fluid that had leaked onto the floor (bad). The audience in front of me was no wiser to my predicament as the case was hiding the ensuing bonfire. My immediate reaction was to stomp out the fire on the floor (very bad) which of course lit my shoe on fire. My wife (we had only been married less than a year at this time), who was busy setting up something else, saw what was happening and grabbed a towel that we just happened to have with us, and we were able to smother the flames.



To say the least, the fire pan did not make it into the show and I have not used it since! I keep it as a curiosity and a reminder of what could have happened. Oh, by the way, the floor was fine. Apparently the high gloss was actually about 40 years worth of wax build up on the floor, and once the flames were smothered, it was no worse for wear. I think the place has burned down since, but it wasn't my fault.

**The Phoenix Tissue:** This was from an earlier period in my performing career, probably the mid 70's. One of my favorite books, or rather series of books, was and still is the Tarbell books on magic. If you study these books, you will find many effects that may be outdated in their style and patter, but the methods can be applied to transform them into something "new".

One such effect is the Phoenix Tissue – forgive me if the name is wrong, I just don't feel like sorting through my library right now to correct it. Anyway, the effect is that you make a ribbon loop of red tissue appear, and then light it on fire. The tissue burns very quickly (so there is no worry about the actual fire) and leaves behind a very thin, but intact loop of ash. Because heat rises, so too does the ash. As the ash cools (which happens in a couple of seconds) the loop of ash returns to earth, and you reach into the ash to make a fully restored loop of red tissue appear. I had done this a couple of times before and it really is a beautiful effect, although because the ash is very thin it will disperse easily, but a quick broom cleans it up.

One other thing, there should not be a door open or a fan blowing that will cause the ash to go off of it's intended trajectory. Well, it was the middle of the show and time to do the effect. It went flawlessly – until someone suddenly opened a door at exactly the wrong time. The ceiling in the hall was maybe fifteen feet high and at the point where the ash was supposed to return to earth, it continued right up and into the ceiling, where the black ash dispersed into a very large and very ugly black smudge. Not knowing what else to do, I produced the red tissue loop and the audience was suitably impressed. After the show I tracked down the maintenance man who assured me that it was fine, because the next week they were going to repaint the whole room (including the ceiling) anyway! Another bullet dodged!

**The Kikuchi Fire Coin Purse:** Although there are a few more stories to tell, I will end with this one. A utility item I bought from Mike Caveny many years ago was the Kikuchi leather fire coin purse. You can store a few gimmicked (or otherwise) coins in it and before bringing them out open the little purse to show a burst of fire, close it, then bring out your coins. Very impressive.

My wife and I were hired to entertain at a cocktail party and I thought this might be a nice touch. I got dressed in my tuxedo, and about 10 minutes before we were scheduled to leave, I had a sudden flash of brilliance. Heat and fire travel upwards ..... right? If I were to place a wad of flash paper deep into the bottom of the purse and put the coins on top, it shouldn't light until I pull the pieces out and intentionally light them.

OK – my wife was yelling at me that we have to go. "Just a minute!". I stuffed some flash paper down inside and put the coins in. The coin purse was closed, and, as I stood in front of the bathroom mirror, I flicked the flint to ignite the upper fire gimmick. Immediately a large - what I can only describe as a tube of fire - spewed upwards, singeing off a good part of my eyebrows and the front bangs of my hair. I heard a funny "SHHHHH" noise and immediately knew I was in trouble. The acrid smell of burning hair wafted through the house. My wife yelled "Are you burning something?", whereupon I yelled down "No – be right down" as I frantically went at the remainder of my hair with cuticle scissors and a comb.

Well, it didn't fool her for long as she ran upstairs, saw the situation and after a few appropriate words me helped with a cosmetic fix to make me appear normal. We made it to the show sans the coin purse. Since that day I have been banned from doing anything remotely akin to fire magic (of course what she doesn't know won't hurt her.....???), and we have a fire extinguisher in every room.

Of course the moral to these stories is never to put yourself in a situation with your magic that will endanger you or your audience, be it with fire, sharp objects or any other items (confetti?).

My wish upon passing is to be laid out in a row boat and floated out under the Lion's Gate Bridge with a lit Kikuchi Fickle Fire gimmick in each hand and fifty pounds of flash paper. Someone look after that, will you?

Well, that's my contribution to this newsletter. See you all at the picnic/BBQ, and then in September at the Tom Noddy lecture on the 10th, and then the Auction on September the 23rd!

Cheers!

Bruce Hunt



## PCAM 2010 Review - submitted by Mike Norden

Hola! Off to Mexico it was for the 2010 PCAM convention hosted by Shawn Farquhar. This year was going to be a little different as we only had about 60 registrants - but that would also mean some quality time spent with the performers as you are looking at a ratio of 10:1 for attendees vs. talent!

I headed down early to attend the IBM Convention for a day in San Diego, with Jonathan Hamilton and Chris Yuill from the Island in tow. Shawn was there, along with David Wilson, Dave Watters and Joji from our club - so it was nice to see some familiar faces.

After that is was off to LA to board Royal Caribbean's Mariner of the Seas Ship (yes, SHIP - not a BOAT!) and set sail for the sunny beaches of Mexico! The first day was a day at sea, which allowed us to get settled in, explore the ship, and register for the convention and do a meet and greet with fellow attendees and performers. This continued to the wee hours in the pub on the promenade. Wonderful first night!

The itinerary did change a few times, as the ship would change their schedule and interfere with ours. Shawn did his best to ensure we did not miss out on any of the ships activities and of course the excursions!

Lectures were held in the evening at 10pm so that everyone could enjoy the 3 ports of call. We had lectures by Eric Buss, Oscar Munoz, Steve Kline and Stephen Bargatze. Shawn Farquhar did an extra workshop on the classic force (I missed that due to the realization that the bag of tricks was going to be happening in one hour!) and I hear it was one of the highlights for the participants!

The ships juggler, Ivan Percel, also joined

us and gave a show based on his new competition act, so he can be a 10 times world champion...because he thinks 9 times is not enough. We wish him luck and hopes he wins!

Our first port was Cabo San Lucas and most of us took to land to explore. A group of us headed out to snorkel off the beaches and let's just say that certain activities involving barley and hops the night before do not mix well with a speed boat on choppy waves! But a great day was had by all and back to the ship we went for one of the evening lectures!

The late night sessions were held in the Wig and Gavel pub, and followed up in the Dragon's Lair (the ships nightclub) until the early morning hours! What was that Shawn? Yes, we can all sleep when we are dead...

The second port of call on Wednesday was Mazatlan. It was hot - 36 degrees with 87% humidity. Whew! Well, this town was a bit of a dive...sort of like the Bagdad of Mexico one might say. Other than the cheap beer on shore, I found no other reason to leave the ship. And why leave? I mean the ship had a rock climbing wall, mini golf, an arcade, a skating rink, and....yes, that's right...a skating rink!! Oh we will post videos of some awesome wipeouts soon!

The service and food was great on the ship and I thoroughly enjoyed the atmosphere. Dinner was always a riot as Shawn spread the talent out so that most tables had at least one performer to mingle. Somehow I was lucky (sure, we will call it lucky) to have Eric Buss, Steve Kline and Trevor and Lorena at my table! This made dinners pretty interesting and you left with a stomach ache every

time...due to the laughter going on!

Thursday found us in Puerto Vallarta and this was one of the most beautiful ports in my opinion. A group of us went zip line trekking into the jungle and that made for one of the best times of the trip! What a rush! Back on the ship it was another 10pm lecture and party to the morning light.

Friday and Saturday were days at sea on our way back to LA - this is really when the convention started. The evening shows where split into stow with Eric Buss and Oscar doing one and Stephen Bargatze and Steven Kline the other. We tried out best to invite other guests on the ship to see the shows to fill the theatre and it worked well!

The competitions were on the Friday and saw lots of Ring 92 members compete. Jonathan Hamilton tried out for the Children's, but was bested by Frank by only 2 points! Henry Tom won the Comedy and Most Innovated for his Acme Dental routine, and Steve Dickson took home gold in the Close-Up category. Nicolas and Jack Chow also cleaned up in the Juvenile stage and close up categories. Glen Labarre come in first for the bag of tricks, with Mike Norden second and Jonathan Hamilton third. Not bad Ring 92!! And congratulations to all the winners!

We docked back on Sunday morning and after all the tears and goodbyes (ok, maybe not tears) we all went our ways - but not after making new friendships and strengthening the ones we had. A most enjoyable cruise was had by all!



## PCAM 2010 Review - continued

My group continued back to the Magic Castle once again and we took along Stephen Bargatze - a blast! Sorry Jonathan, next year we can get you in to the castle without taking a Sharpie to your drivers license (yeah, like we thought that

was really going to work).

We can't wait till next year when the PCAM and CAM get combined and we rock the country with the 2011 convention! I hope to see you all there! Right now I

have to add another 20 friends on Facebook from this convention - chao for now!

Mike Norden



Thanks to Rod Chow for the wonderful photos!

## Why support the local magic shop?

Bottom line soon you won't have any, anywhere. Local magic shops will be a thing of the past. When the recession hit, there were magic shops in the states closing down at an alarming rate, ones that had been around for decades closed. We can't compete with online prices and videos that make the worst magic trick look phenomenal, rent of \$2.50 square foot and staff that knows trick # 27786 belongs in this order but no idea what item 27786 does, picture perfect knock offs that could zap the hair off your volunteer. If you don't see the value of supporting the local shop by at least sending interested parties there, then you'll lose it. You have no idea how many times I've heard from members "I haven't been here in years. This is a really well stocked store. You have THAT trick?."

I'm always amazed when people come in the store (Clowning Around Magic Shop) and they are from Victoria. They admit freely they never visit Murray's but they made a "special trip just to visit my shop when they came to Vancouver". Why? It can't all be a tax write off.

Some buy, some don't. I just find it odd that they'll buy a scotch and soda at my place and not locally. Or they go to Vegas and load up on tricks. ARE YOU NUTS?

I'm always amazed how I have to stand on my head to sell products (books, DVDs and tricks) made by home grown talent to the locals, but people not from around here will buy it easily. Makes me wonder why? Actually makes me crazy. No, they can't give it to you for free, that's how they pay their rent.

The market share of a magic shop is a small, small, small sector of the economy but every magician wants a well stocked friendly, shop in their area. Why? People, professionals included, like to see it, no camera tricks. Jugglers have to feel and throw it. Pranksters just lie in wait. A magic trick done in person is far better than a 2 dimensional one. Getting performance ideas or handling tips. Magicians think "I have everything. I don't need to

go to the local magic shop." Paaaah! You always need silks, wax, thread, flash paper, slush powder, thumb tips.

If however their magic trick breaks, they expect us to stay open "until I get there, because I'm on my way to a really big gig" which would be like calling Safeway and getting them to stay open past midnight because you ran out of mayo.

In my store, the magicians who buy are the people we remember when gigs come up and references are given out or people are hired through the store. Those who come in and yell at us because they are having a bad day don't get passed on. Those who harass my customers, butt in, stand in front of my till while others with money behind them can't get through and start doing non-stop magic tricks and kill sales don't get recommended. Those who hand out their business cards Jones-ing around for work or try to sell their stuff to my customers don't get passed on either. That's my pay cheque!

Not all IBM members are performers. Some just like the knowledge. Well, you might feel overwhelmed or embarrassed to ask about a trick there but maybe we could help you find the info. Maybe we could help you get enough confidence to start performing.

I know magic can be expensive but it's less expensive if you have someone you can trust to say "don't buy it, it's not for you".

The norm seems to be going more and more to "rip it off", "YouTube it", "I'll just download it", to do anything to get it for free. At what cost though? No local magic shops? All online. Basically then, you've gone full circle, you're back buying the tricks off of the back of the electronic comic book. As I hear in my shop all the time, "some were good and some were really terrible", but all purchased with great anticipation.

**So support your local magic shop, we're good people.**

Please continue to show your support and appreciation for Vancouver's ONLY (and very local) magic shop by visiting them on the 2nd floor of the Kids Market, Granville Island.  
(1496 Cartwright St, Vancouver, BC 604-682-0244)  
-2010 VMC Executive





## **MAGICAL MENTORSHIP PROGRAM GROWING**

This is the second annual Evenings of Magic and the numbers are increasing significantly over last summer. Steve Dickson reports that in 2009, the Mentor-ship Program at Boston Pizza in Mission, hosted approximately 12 junior and senior magicians; eager to learn the ins and outs of performing magic in a restaurant setting. This year, he already has 22 magicians scheduled to participate and is still getting e-mails expressing interest. They even have one member from the Victoria Magic Circle coming to join in and others expressing interest from the U.S.!

The Mentor-ship Program is designed to teach magicians the basics of performing in restaurants, including how and when to approach and leave tables, how to work with the layout of a restaurant and blend in with the staff, as well as what effects work best in this setting.

All participants have the chance to "let their theory meet reality". It is one thing to practice your effects on family members but a whole new reality to bring them to the general public. Dickson puts a lot of emphasis on "promoting personality" and not just showing magic tricks. Members are specifically taught how to introduce themselves, carry out a conversation and keep the patrons wanting the magician to return with

more.

Steve would like to give a special thanks to Gord and Jesse Boyes and Brianna Carlson who hosted an event and shared their experiences from last year while Steve was away at PCAM. Also, to Alyn Alami who is no stranger to the restaurant business, for hosting and sharing his experiences with the members in Steve's absence.

If you are interested in becoming part of the Evenings of Magic, contact Steve at [coolmagic@shaw.ca](mailto:coolmagic@shaw.ca)



MAGIC MYSTERY PHOTO



Do you know who this VMC magician is?  
(Answer at the bottom of back page.)

If you haven't yet earned your Magic Wand degree now is your chance to do so! All that is required is for you to perform a 15 minute public magic act at our VMC Summer Picnic. To submit your intent to perform, please do so ASAP by contacting Competition and Awards Chair Bryn Williams. (contact details on page 2)



If you would like to be featured as our MYSTERY PHOTO MAGICIAN, please send an old photo via email to the Editor. Neil Kremer - [neil.kremer@ibmring92.com](mailto:neil.kremer@ibmring92.com)

# Coming Events

VMC Summer Picnic - August 15

Tom Noddy Lecture - September 10

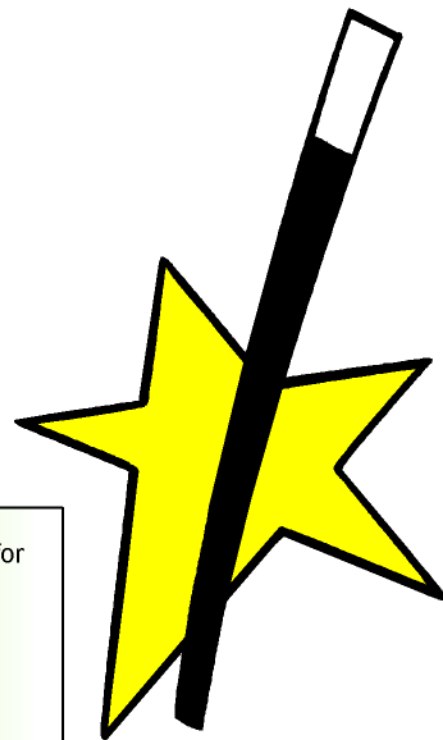
General Meeting and Auction Night - September 23

Tri-City Convention VANCOUVER - November 5 to 7

Ring # 92 is proud to re-introduce the '**Tri-City Magical Weekend**' by being the first host for 2010! The Convention will rotate through the 3 rings (Vancouver, Everett & Victoria) each year!

- **When:** Friday November 5th - Sunday November 7th
- **Where:** Best Western Sands Hotel, 1755 Davie St, Vancouver
- **Why:** Awesome Lectures, Saturday Evening Show, Sorcerer's Social, Dealers Room, Magical Lunch - and MORE!
- **Who:** **Daniel Garcia** (close up master), **Shawn Farquhar** (World Champion), **Robert Baxt** (IBM winner for comedy), **Bill Abbott** (comedy magic), **Tim Sonefelt** (kids magic)
- Plus local talent like **Trevor & Lorena**, **Steve Dickson**, **Payne**, **Jeff Dial**, **Brian Cook**, **Matt Wells**, **Fredrick Turner**, **Jamie D. Grant** and MORE!

Registration rates for members of all three clubs starts at just \$95! So come out and have some fun – visit [www.ibmring92.com](http://www.ibmring92.com) for more info and to register!



As part of your plans to attend coming events, please include a visit to Clownin Around Magic and help support our magic community.

## NEXT GENERAL MEETING AND AUCTION NIGHT



Our next general meeting takes place at the usual secret location (Sunrise Community Hall) on September 23rd. It will be ANNUAL AUCTION NIGHT. Have a look through your supplies to see if you have something you'd like auctioneer Dave Carlson ([dave-carlson@shaw.ca](mailto:dave-carlson@shaw.ca)) to put on the block for you!

**Doors will be open at 6:30 PM for viewing of auction items and socializing. The business meeting will start earlier than normal - 7 PM. Immediately following the meeting the auction will commence.**

Disclaimer — These Magical Minutes have been brought to you on a tight deadline with little resources. The author(s) accept no responsibility for typos, spelling errors, grammatical errors, accuracy of fact (or lack of), omission of details, layout, graphics, political correctness, oversight of individuals or groups or groups of individuals who may or may not have contributed to the creation process or the creative inspiration of others. No animals were harmed in the creation of this newsletter.

Neil Kremer, Editor