

Magic Week New Haven 2008

offered by International Brotherhood of Magicians Ring 59

Members and friends of IBM Ring 59 sponsored a week of magical activities during the last seven days of October. First launched in October 2007, "Magic Week New Haven" is becoming a new tradition in the Elm City. The strongest tie has been between the ring and the New Haven Free Public Library. The library has hosted magicians in all of its branches each year for free shows to the public. More than 200 children and family members enjoyed this year's performances. Magicians donated their time and talent. The library made a monetary donation to the Ring in support of Magic Week.

The week began with "Magic Dan" Hovey on Saturday the 25th. Dan has entertained children and adults as a semi-professional magician for nearly sixty years. With his magic rabbit, "Snowball", Magic Dan amazed his audience with a number of effects, including changing a silk into an egg and "cooking" the egg in a pan from which the bunny appeared. Ropes, silks, cards and other things were used it to create magical miracles. "Snowball" helped with three illusions and stayed after the show to be petted by all the children. Magic Dan also introduced his pet bird, "Vern", who did a rope trick. "Vern" wore an eye patch for Halloween, but wouldn't cover his eye with it because "Then I couldn't see."

On Monday, Jeff Horton's show at the Wilson Library started with a dozen kids and a few adults in the audience. The size of the group quickly grew to 30-40 as the performance progressed and many stopped to watch the fun. The show opened with a sponge ball routine and continued with, among other effects, a comedy card prediction, a "Magic Pizza Oven" (in which a die box-like pizza wanders about until it is found hanging from the volunteer's back), the production of "Puffy" a magic dove and a finale featuring "Harriet" a very friendly rabbit.

One child asked how magicians learned about magic. This made for a great opportunity for Horton to segue into the importance of local libraries and the wealth of knowledge within, including books on magic. The kids were delighted to meet "Harriet" following the show and were invited by Horton to pick up a flyer at



the library's front desk which contained information on more free magic shows coming to the area during "Magic Week New Haven."

CJ May, aka "Cyril the Sorcerer" presented two shows during Magic Week. The first was his mainstay and was presented on Tuesday: "Recycling is Magic." This is the story of how a happy village is brought to desperation by the invasion of an army of ogres that eat, drink and break everything the villagers own. When a wandering wizard scares them away with a magically appearing cane he is left with the job of cleaning up the mess. He quickly learns that vanishing a bottle is the wrong road to take. He begins transforming old newspapers into new newspapers et cetera as a means for saving the village.

Andy Charney, aka "Amazing Andy," wow-ed the 30 or so children and adults in his audience on Wednesday. Combining clowning, comedy and conjuring, he kept them entertained throughout the show. Andy involved his younger audience members in several parts of the show. Through his excellent *repointe* he included the volunteers in the laughter as the never ending series of gag wands were handed out. Andy performed several miraculous feats including wonder blocks, stiff rope and a production of Halloween candy. He complimented these with double stick-and-string yo-yo, balloon animals and non-stop verbal and slapstick comedy.

Cyril the Sorcerer was back again, at a different library this time, for Thursday. "Escape from the Goblins" is the story of a young boy who escapes from the Goblin King's dungeon with the help of a magical bottle imp and some rope tricks that are more useful than they might appear. During his escape he meets Ursula, the local wise woman. She shows him that magic exists in all things, demonstrating this through small feats of magic with stones, a metal ring and chain and in the resurrection of a "dead" twig. She scares away the goblin pursuers with an explosive fireweed mixture and brings the boy home safely.

In all, Magic Week New Haven proved quite successful. For future years the organizers are considering publicity performances in public venues, magic classes, busking and bringing in a large act to New Haven's Shubert Theater. For more information or to offer suggestions, please contact CJ May at cyril.may@yale.edu. Magic Week information is available at www.magicnewhaven.com.

