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Magic man

Bedford native deals in slight of hand

By Dennis Oblander

Staff Writer

TOLEDO — "TV Magic Cards," explains magician Andrew Martin, "that's when the bug bit me."

The then-11-year-old Temperance youth was bitten deeply.

"I was always looking for some outlet to get attention," Martin said of his attraction to the age-old art of deception and its debt to Magic Cards, the Chia Pet of the era.

"I got attention from my parents and kids my age," Martin said. "I think that's what really attracted me, and I just had a natural ability to learn magic."

Twenty-seven years later Martin is still learning, and he is getting more and more attention.

On any given evening Martin performs "walk around" magic for patrons at area restaurants including Ralphie's in Maumee, TGI Friday's in Toledo and the Mules Corral in Lambertville.

Performing professionally for the last seven years, Martin works his magic nearly every day, rounding out his schedule with appearances at corporate functions, parties, trade shows and elsewhere.

"Maybe you could call me a general practitioner," he says of his style of magic. "I do just about everything from larger tricks to close-up magic."

The larger tricks include stunts like producing a girl out of a Plexiglas box, sticking swords through a girl who disappears in a puff of smoke and even Houdini's classic "Metamorphosis" trick in which Martin switches place with his assistant, emerging from behind a screen seconds after being handcuffed and locked in a trunk.

"Every performance is different," Martin said. The fact that the unexpected is sometimes to be expected makes it all the more interesting.

There was a memorable moment, for instance, during a recent performance that involved communicating with the dead and some on-stage pyrotechnics.

"The explosion went off and caught some hay on fire," Martin said. "I was stamping the fire out while the ghosts were flying over my head."

Not to worry — Martin enjoys challenging his audience and watching how their reactions dif-

fer.

"I kind of hate that I know what's happening," he said, "but I never want to say 'this is how it's done.'"

Martin takes a dim view of a series of a television specials that revealed some of the secrets of magicians.

"They're not really accurate," he said. "A lot of the things you can get from the library and others are 100 years old."

"It really spoils it for a lot of the people. You want to suspend your belief. It's the same as going to the mall during Christmas and seeing Santa Claus and going up to him and pulling down his beard and saying, 'See, kids he's not real.'"

"You don't see those shows so often anymore. People didn't like it. They enjoy watching magic."

Martin, married with two young children, grew up in Bedford Township, graduating from Bedford High School in 1980, he now resides in Toledo.

Though he has some new things in the works, "I'm not expecting a big Las Vegas review or anything."

"I'm very happy right now—pleasing people, entertaining them. That's what I really go for."



Photo courtesy of Andrew Martin

Magician and Bedford native Andrew Martin, shown with his assistant, Trixie, loves to challenge his audience.