



# Fooling eyes to win hearts

**Ryan Noik**

Instead of the expected flourish of cloak and wands, a regular-looking, friendly guy, casually dressed, strolled over to my table.

A broad, disarming smile suffused his face as he extended his hand and introduced himself.

The first thing I noticed about Herman, whose real name is Perica Zuvela, was an unmistakable but completely understandable Croatian accent.

The next thing that quickly became evident was his passion for performing magic.

"I have been practicing magic for the past 20 years and performing full-time for the past 15," he explained.

Herman, said he performed all disciplines of magic, which included stage magic, close up magic, stand up magic and children's magic.

While much of the work he does is for corporate events and restaurant patrons, Herman also performs to raise funds for good causes, particularly for cash-strapped schools.

Herman is one of 52 magicians from countries around the world who will be attending a five-day magic convention in Italy at the beginning of August. The convention is one of the few oppor-

tunities magicians have to learn their craft.

"There are no universities that teach magic; even though when people ask me where I learnt I tell them I attended Hogwarts," he laughed.

Herman began his career when a retiring master magician from Las Vegas taught him the fundamentals of the craft.

"Many people think that if they buy a magic set they will be able to do magic, and while those magic sets may be fun, they are not magic," he pointed out.

Real entertainment magic, he continued, involves mastering misdirection, distraction and manipulation, to direct the audiences' attention where the magician wants it to go.

"While the audience is looking in one direction and expecting to see one result, the magician is able to create the desired allusion," he elaborated.

Herman added that while magic contained a psychological component, it was foremost about entertainment and therefore needed to involve the audience and build up the excitement quotient.

"I think the real magic in what I do lies in the connections I make with the people for whom I am performing," he revealed.

"I've always wanted to amaze people and entertain them, and while being a magician might not be viewed in the same light as being a doctor or lawyer, when I see people laughing, my soul is satisfied," said Herman.

**Herman, with one of the tools of his trade, a pack of cards.**

Photo by Ryan Noik

# Josie explores her field of dreams