

H-T Sarasota South

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WHO'S IN TOWN



COURTESY PHOTO

Josh Corn is a co-founder of Camp Cigma, which teaches magic to children.

Founder of camp keeps life magical

By CHRISTINE HAWES
CORRESPONDENT

Josh Corn, co-founder of Sarasota's Camp Cigma for magicians, has not ruled out the possibility that he will become a professional magician himself. After all, as one of his magic mentors says, he is a "ham."

But for now, the 19-year-old Sarasotan — highlighted this fall by Magic Magazine as one of 16 young magicians to watch — is busy creating the opportunity for others to entertain an audience.

Corn, an architecture major at the University of Pennsylvania, is most busy as set designer for the Mask and Wig Club, an all-male comedy troupe featuring university students that tours nationally. Corn also provides sound for the university's student groups as a member of the university's Social Planning and Events Committee. And still, he remains active with the magicians camp he co-founded in Sarasota with mentor Elia "Ilan" Chesnoff, which is helping to unearth a new generation of budding magicians.

"Magic is just a way of entertaining people," Corn said, explaining what he loves about the trade. "And I've always loved entertaining people."

Corn's talent took center stage at his graduation from Pine View School. Corn and a friend performed an illusion that involved several of their friends and even a school administrator.

Corn first discovered his love for magic when Chesnoff came over for dinner and provided Corn an up-close look at magic that he videotaped and studied. "I spent weeks and months studying that tape to figure out the stuff he did," Corn recalls.

Corn's next step was to join Sarasota's club for magicians, called Ring 81. Club member Joe Floersheimer took the 12-year-old Corn under his wing. "He worked hard, and he picked up on things very, very well," Floersheimer recalled. "And his family was very supportive. His mom would drive him to our meetings and wait for

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WHO'S IN TOWN

Who's in Town is a regular feature of H-T Sarasota South. The column is designed to highlight people who make up this community. They include people who are known for their acts of kindness, who have done something interesting, who are neighborhood icons or who are famous. We welcome ideas and submissions. Columns should be no more than 500 words. Send submissions by e-mail to Sarasota Community News Editor Earle Kimel at earle.kimel@heraldtribune.com.

Camp Cigma founder keeps life magical

MAGIC FROM 1G

hours for him."

When Corn first joined the magic club, Floersheimer said, children as members were very rare. Since Corn and his family founded Camp Cigma, however, Floersheimer has noticed a more steady stream of children joining the club. "Why we're getting them has to do with Josh," he said.

As a youth, Corn volunteered at the Players Theatre and as a computer technician at Laurel-Nokomis Elementary School. Corn worked as an intern at the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall, where he shadowed a technician to learn even more about what is behind the scenes.

Corn hopes to take his knowledge of architecture, theater and performance and use it to

design and build theaters. He returns each summer to help teach Camp Cigma, helping youngsters understand not only the art of illusion, but the art of entertaining as well.

"I've always been fascinated with the psychology behind magic, understanding what people are thinking at different moments in our routine," Corn said. "Magic really is just knowing about those different times."