



Kid Show Magicians Advance the Art

By [Wayne Kawamoto](#), About.com Guide January 8, 2010

David Kaye's KGB Meets in Hollywood

Every pro magician will tell you that magic is serious business. And when it comes to the top echelons of children's magic, the practitioners, as do their counterparts in close-up and stage, are constantly working to advance the art.

This is the reason for the little known KGB conference, now in its seventh year, which is gathering this week in Hollywood, California. I had the opportunity to briefly visit the meeting on its opening day.



If you've never heard of KGB, it's an underground magic conference that is almost as secretive as its Soviet counterpart. This year, the gathering brings together 13 of the top kid magicians in the world from six countries. Attendance is by invitation only and with such a small and exclusive group, almost every attendee acts as a lecturer, performer or workshop leader.

Who's who in Kid Show Magic

The attendees are a veritable who's who of kids magic with David Kaye (AKA [Silly Billy](#)) acting as host. Attendees included: Norm Barnhart, Mike Bent, Jozo Bozo (Croatia), Jimbo (UK), Kimmo (UK), Jouquin Kotkin (Mexico), Mr. Mushroom (Columbia), Payne, Doug Scheer, Ken Scott and Shabum (Puerto Rico).

In addition to the sessions, there's plenty of scheduled time for the magicians to hang-out and participate in that age-old tradition of "jamming" and sharing ideas. With the meeting this year in Hollywood (the group meets annually in different locations), the week will commence with performances at the nearby [Magic Castle](#).

Raising the Bar for Kid Show Magic

"KGB was created to bring together the best kid show magicians from around the world for four days of brainstorming, exchanging ideas and comradery," says David Kaye. "You have to get the best guys. For me, for example, in New York, I have no equals. My equal, someone who has the same skills, experience and success, is going to be in a different city and be the best in that city."



"How can I spend time with that person?" asks Kaye. "Well, we have to have something like this. From here, we can all return home knowing that we have raised the bar for kid show magic."

On the afternoon that I attended, I listened to a fascinating lecture by Seattle's Payne on "The Descent of Magic." Norm Barnhart, from Minneapolis, Minnesota, followed with a hilarious performance and lecture. For the afternoon, Mr. Mushroom, from Columbia, lectured on characters in magic.

You can't attend KGB by request. But if you're at the top of your game in the kids magic market, perhaps you may experience a welcome tap on your shoulder. And any way that you look at it, KGB offers an exclusive club that's the best of the best.