

Raue magic show raises funds

By Annie Alleman For Sun-Times Media April 2, 2014 2:24PM

Whether you like vanishing object, the hapless hypnotized or talking dummies, there will be something for you at Nothin' Up My Sleeve.

The 12th annual magic show spotlights magicians and entertainers all while raising funds for the Raue Center for the Arts in Crystal Lake. The show is at 7 p.m. April 4.

The pre-show starts at 6 p.m. in the lobby. It is produced by Glenn Chelius of Crystal Lake and Nino Cruz of Lake Geneva, Wis.

"We have everything from jugglers and fire-eaters and ventriloquists, so it's a nice variety," Cruz said.

"We keep changing it up and trying to make it better every year. Everyone seems to enjoy it. It's not just a children's show and not just an adult show. It's a little bit of everything, which is cool."

The pre-show consists of Cruz, a magician and hypnotist; and Chelius, a ventriloquist and magician, greeting people as they enter. Some of the other performers who do close-up magic will be on hand also.

"From there, it's non-stop," Cruz said. "It's usually 90 minutes. Once, it was two hours. You know performers, we're all hams."

Performers are picked by auditions and word of mouth. This year's emcee, Dennis DeBondt, is a 6'7"-drink of water known as the Sears Tower of Magic.

He studied with Second City and is known for his delightful mix of comedy and magic that's appropriate for all ages, Cruz said.

Jim Sommers is a 50-year magic veteran making "Nothin' Up My Sleeve" debut. He has no grand illusion, just presents a solid show of comedy and magic. He's not a household name, except if you're a magician, Cruz said.

"We also have Jeannette Andrews. Jeannette does manipulation with cards and balls and silks," he said. "She has a cool act."

Then there's 14-year-old ventriloquist Noah Simmons of Huntley, who debuted at their show two years ago and has since seen his star on the rise. He has a YouTube channel and has been personally visited by Jeff Dunham.

"This little guy is pretty good. We're pretty proud to have him back," Cruz said. He serves as an inspiration for kids in the audience.

"We make sure everyone's act is different and we keep the variety going," he said.

There will be music, audience participation, magic, hypnosis, mind-reading and "not your typical magic show," Cruz said.

Tickets are \$17-23. Raue Center is at 26 Williams St., Crystal Lake. Call (815) 356-9212 or visit rauecenter.org.

Other performers include Jim Jensen, Plaz Garcia and Bryan Knight.