

World Sword Swallower's Day to be celebrated in Orlando

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The Sword Swallowers Association International reports that there are less than a few dozen professional sword swallowers actively performing around the world today.

On World Sword Swallower's Day, Saturday, February 28, 2015, the world will have the rare opportunity to witness them defy death and do what they do best -- doing the impossible and swallowing swords -- all at once!

Sword Swallowers Association International (SSAI) President Dan Meyer announced the 8th annual World Sword Swallower's Day to raise awareness of sword swallowers worldwide. Founded by SSAI and co-sponsored by Ripley Entertainment, World Sword

Swallower's Day 2015 will be celebrated on February 28th at 2:28 pm in conjunction with February as National Swallowing Disorders Month.

"Last year we had 44 sword swallowers swallow 89 swords at 14 Ripley's Believe It or Not! Odditoriums worldwide. This year we expect a record turnout with over 50 sword swallowers doing incredible stunts and setting record numbers!" Meyer said.

"We sword swallowers have been risking our lives to perform sword swallowing for over 4000 years," explains Meyer. "But many people either don't believe it's real, or they think the art has died out."

"We established World Sword Swallower's Day to promote this ancient art still carried on by a few dozen surviving performers -- to raise awareness of the medical contributions sword swallowers have made in the fields of science and medicine, to honor veteran performers, and to raise funds for esophageal cancer research and the Injured Sword Swallower's Relief Fund." Meyer explains.

"Most of all, we do it to correct myths and educate the public and medical community by doing free demonstrations on this day around the world."

"Many of us have been performing for years and we love our work!" explains Meyer, a 35-time world record holding sword swallower who performs at Ripley's Believe It or Not museums and speaks in 35 countries around the world.

For World Sword Swallower's Day 2013, Meyer swallowed a 23 inch sword and used it to pull a 3700 lb car out of Ripley's Believe It or Not Baltimore. "World Sword Swallower's

Day is a great chance for us to show the world what we really do and how we do it!" "Most people don't realize the contributions sword swallowers have made to the fields of science and medicine over the past 150 years." Meyer explains.

In 1868, a sword swallower was enlisted by Dr. Adolf Kussmaul in Freiburg Germany to develop the first rigid endoscope. In 1906 a sword swallower underwent the first esophageal electrocardiogram in Wales.

Other sword swallowers have been prodded and examined by doctors and medical institutes over the past 150 years without recognition.

"We want to change all that. That's why we celebrate World Sword Swallower's Day." Meyer explains.

A full version of this article can be found at: <http://www.myfoxorlando.com/story/28218680/world-sword-swallowers-day-to-be-celebrated-in-orlando>