

MUM

MAGIC UNITY MIGHT

THE SOCIETY OF AMERICAN MAGICIANS

JULY 2012

CHRIS BONTJES:

SECOND GENERATION

PRESIDENT OF THE S.A.M.

PAGE 36



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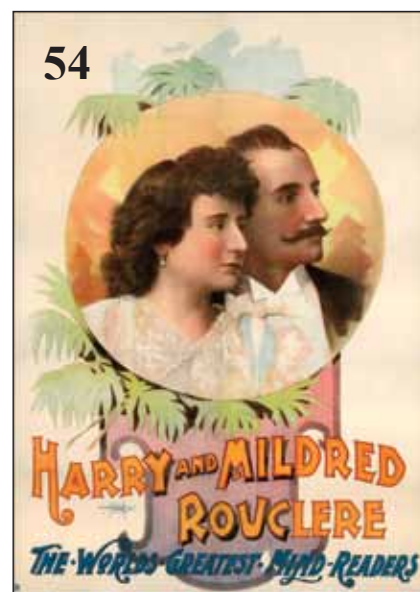
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Editor's Desk

Michael Close

Chris Bontjes, who is the subject of this month's cover story, will establish a first when he is sworn in as president of The Society of American Magicians at the national convention in July. That occasion will mark the first time that a father and son have both served as president of the S.A.M. I knew Chris's dad, Gary; we crossed paths at several conventions. He was a great guy and was an effective and conscientious president of the Society. I look forward to working with Chris in the months ahead; he begins his term with a unique accomplishment, and I'm sure he will provide the S.A.M. with a year of thoughtful leadership.

It has been a pleasure to work with Vinny Grosso for the past twelve months. Vinny made a great effort to put into place some much needed projects (such as a revamped S.A.M. website) that will continue into the future. On behalf of all compeers, thanks, Vinny.

In May, I had the opportunity to spend a little time with Harry Anderson, who gave a public show and a private lecture/workshop at the Class Act Dinner Theatre in Whitby, Ontario. (And my thanks to David Merry for being such a great host.) Harry's lecture was an in-depth examination of the show he had performed the night before, including a valuable discussion of "conceit" (the result of intellectual activity) vs. "instantiation" (the period during which a conceit is presented to another by example, or expression). It is very rare for a professional to reveal the inner workings of his current act, and Harry is to be commended for doing so. (But, to be honest, his act is safe; the entire performance is so personality driven that no one could successfully copy it.)

One of the little gems tipped in the lecture is a gaffed book that Harry created called *Practical Magic*. You'll find my review of it in this month's Informed Opinion. Another nifty trick is Where's Tom?, which is Harry's take on Mitsunobu Matsuyama's Paradox Card (*The Chronicles*, page 1,235). In Harry's trick, the performer shows a US two-dollar bill that has been cut into pieces. With the back of the bill up, a spectator assembles the pieces, showing that they form a complete bill. The pieces are turned over, and the spectator reassembles them. When she does so, she discovers that there is now a large hole in the bill where the portrait of Thomas Jefferson should be. The missing piece is revealed in a surprising way. This trick is handmade by Harry, and is the perfect thing to carry in your wallet. Contact Harry at the email address given in the *Practical Magic* review for more information.

As you read this, the S.A.M. national convention is just a few weeks away, and it promises to be a top-notch event. Several great, well known Vegas performers are part of the line-up, including Johnny and Pam Thompson, Joaquin Ayala & Tanya, Kevin James, Fielding West, Nathan Burton, Luna Shimada, Dan Sperry, John Cassidy, and, of course, the Mac King and David Copperfield shows. You may not have heard of John Cassidy, but I predict that his act will be one of hot topics of discussion in the dealers' room after the evening show. He is hilarious.

Speaking of the dealers' room, make sure you spend some

cash with the dealers during your time at the convention. With each year, the cost of transporting product to the convention venue, gasoline, lodging, and food increases; but the dealers make the effort because they know that a vibrant, lively dealers' room is a big part of any convention. Show them you appreciate their efforts; open your wallet and buy a few things.

As in years past, *M-U-M* will offer coverage of the convention, but due to the fact that the convention falls at the end of July, those articles will not appear until the October issue. I'd like to do something a bit different this year and include comments and observations from those of you who attend the convention. This need not be a big homework assignment; a paragraph or two will be fine. Email them to me at mumeditor@gmail.com.

I am dismayed that during the three and a half years I've been the editor of *M-U-M* I have so often had to end my column by publicly saying goodbye to friends. May was a particularly tough month in that regard.

Jack Kodell died on May 17, 2012, at the age of eighty-four. While bedridden with a case of rheumatic fever at age thirteen, Jack was given some magic books to help pass the time. The magic bug bit and held on. Jack moved to Chicago in 1941 and met George Boston, who served as a mentor and advisor. Together with Abraham Cantu (who was one of the pioneers of dove magic), Boston and Kodell developed the "A Fantasy in Birds" act in which Jack produced and manipulated parakeets in the way that other magicians handled billiard balls and cards. Jack performed all over the world, appeared on such television shows as *The Ed Sullivan Show* and *You Asked for It*, and was an inspiration to generations of magicians.

Tony Blanco lost his fight against colon cancer on May 28, 2012. Tony was a journeyman magician, in the best sense of that word. Tony, who was a graduate of the Ringling Brothers Clown College, worked in Las Vegas for twenty years, many of those at Circus Circus, where he appeared as Lucky the Clown. He was a magician, a clown, a juggler, a mime, and a comedian.

In 2005 Tony moved to Fresno, California, to work for Paul Gross at Hocus Pocus Magic. He established himself, performing at birthday parties, fundraising events, private parties, restaurants, local TV shows, and Fresno's annual Rogue Festival. He was a frequent performer at public library summer reading programs.

Tony was diagnosed with colon cancer in January, but chose to keep that diagnosis quiet, only recently sharing the news with a few magic friends. His fiancée, Jill Bedford, said, "Up to twelve hours before the end, he was still planning for shows. In his mind, he was going to get up tomorrow and he was going to start rehearsing. That's the kind of person he was." Tony Blanco was fifty-one.

Cherie Kay Sanders of Houston, Texas, died of a brain aneurism on May 26, 2012, at the age of fifty-one. She was a busy, full-time professional magician and hypnotist, and her natural charm and exuberance made her an audience favorite. She was a great and gracious hostess; Lisa and I stayed with Cherie while on a lecture tour a few years ago, and her hospitality was unmatched. But most of all, Cherie was just a great pal; if, after hours at a magic convention, you spotted a knot of people laughing and engaged in lively conversation, the odds were very good that Cherie would be in the middle of that group. She exuded energy, enthusiasm, and a love of life. For her many friends, her sudden passing has made the world just a little less fun. ★

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President's Desk

Chris Bontjes

I would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you for bestowing upon me the highest possible honor by electing me national president of The Society of American Magicians.

I am aware of the tremendous responsibilities and obligations that are entailed with this office. In accepting it, I am prepared to devote a considerable amount of time and energy towards fulfilling the object of our great Society, as stated in our national constitution and bylaws:

"The object of this Society shall be to promote and maintain harmonious fellowship among those sincerely interested in magic as an art; to maintain and improve the ethics of the magical profession; and to foster, promote, and improve the advancement of magical arts in the field of amusement and entertainment."

It is my desire to build upon the firm foundation that has been laid by recent past national presidents.

THE MORE THINGS CHANGE...

The opening to this column was not written by me. It is a quote from "The Prez Sez" in *M-U-M* Volume 61, No. 4 (September, 1971) and was written by my dad, J. Gary Bontjes.

My inauguration as national president marks the first time in the history of the S.A.M. that a father and son have both served in the office. With that in mind, I decided to look to Dad for inspiration as I prepared and planned for writing these columns. I began to read his columns with the idea that it might be fun to share a peek into the past of the S.A.M. to see how things have changed. I thought I might even be able to draw a parallel here or there between the S.A.M. of the past and the present. I did not find what I expected. While differences between the past and present certainly exist, I was amazed at the number of parallels.

Over the past several years, the S.A.M. has implemented many changes designed to help us keep pace with changes in technology and in the world around us. Paperless membership, SAMtalk, Facebook, Twitter, and magicsam.com are just a few of the recent developments that were not even dreamed of in 1971. All have helped S.A.M. compeers to connect, share, and grow in magic and fellowship; they have helped our Society to make a successful transition into the twenty-first century. I am excited about the changes we have made and the benefits they have provided our members, but it is the similarity between 1971 and today that I am happiest about.

Through all our changes and advances in technology, our focus remains unchanged. The S.A.M. is, as it always has been, focused on promoting harmony and fellowship among those truly interested in the art of magic. We continue to promote ethical behavior within the magical profession. We remain dedicated to the advancement of the art of magic. Our concern for the personal magical growth of our membership has not wavered. The S.A.M., for all its changes and technological advances, continues to follow the path set forth in the back room of Martinka's Magic Shop in 1902.

I find this to be excellent news because, at its heart, the S.A.M. continues to be about people, about the love of an ancient art (Magic) that brings us together (Unity), and about the strength we can gather through sharing that love with others (Might).

So please allow me (really me this time) to thank you all from the bottom of my heart for allowing me the honor to serve as the national president of The Society of American Magicians. I am truly humbled to follow in the footsteps of so many past national presidents. I hope to continue to build on their successes while maintaining focus on the objectives of the Society outlined above.

A THEME FOR THE YEAR

Many recent past national presidents have chosen a theme as a goal for the year and/or to create a point of focus. My theme comes from my history. As you will find if you read my feature article, my theme is the reason I am a magician, and the reason I became national president. The theme is simply this – Get Involved...and Pass It On!

Dad became involved as an officer in the S.A.M. because he loved the art of magic and felt it was his duty to devote some of his efforts to give back to that art. I became involved because my family passed on the love of the art and the importance of involvement.

In my service to the S.A.M. thus far, I have visited many assemblies and have found that the healthiest and most active assemblies are those where the most members are actively involved. Assembly growth happens when compeers turn some of that involvement toward passing on the love of the art of magic and the fellowship of assembly membership.

Getting involved requires time and effort. Passing it on requires more time, more effort, and patience, too. I have found, however, that the more time, effort, and patience I invest in something, the more I receive in return.

MORE FROM THE PAST

Dad's first presidential column continued to say, "The final test of how well your national officers perform depends upon the full support of the membership at large. With this firmly in mind, I ask and encourage all of you to take an active part in the affairs of the Society. Perhaps Theodore Roosevelt said it best: 'Every man owes some of his time to the up-building of the profession to which he belongs.' This also applies to the Society. Your elected officers can do little without the help of every member."

Our Society grows and thrives because of the efforts of those who *get involved*. It continues to survive because of the efforts of those who pass it on. Involvement is the key. *You* are the S.A.M. The elected officers and the entire national council are here to serve the S.A.M.; they are also here to serve *you*. But we can't do it alone.

My theme for the year is a challenge to you: *Get involved!* Serve as a committee member or an officer in your local assembly. Perform or share ideas, or teach magic at assembly meetings. Help to plan and/or perform in a Magic Week show or a show for veterans. Attend the national convention. Help a member of the national council with a project. Recruit a new assembly member. Perform at meetings. Mentor. Encourage other assembly members to participate, share, and help with assembly meetings and activities. Start an S.Y.M. assembly.

In other words...pass it on! ★

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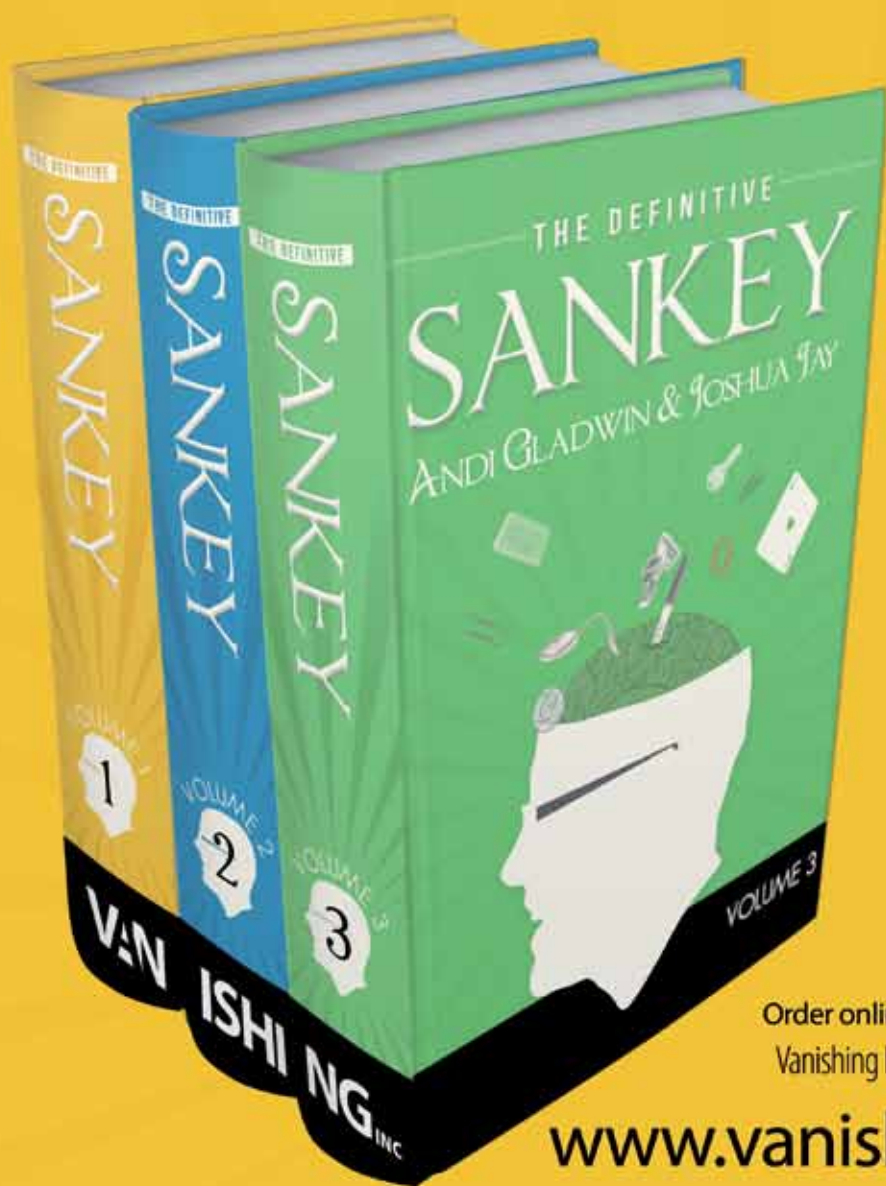
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1

MICHAEL RUBENSTEIN AND GEOFF WILLIAMS LECTURE

NEW YORK, NY— Parent Assembly's May meeting began with a short business meeting that featured a lot of good news. The 103rd Salute to Magic is nearly sold out and several members volunteered to help



From Left: Giacomo Bertini, David Roth, Rabbi Jack Glickman, Dr. Michael Rubenstein, and Jordan Linker

out. The nomination committee's recommended slate was announced, and the floor was opened for nominations for all positions. Richie Magic's gravesite restoration committee announced the completion of the restoration of Al Flosso's grave, and a new show scheduled for June 20. PA1 membership overwhelmingly supported Richie Magic for RVP. Our business concluded, we then adjourned and took a short break.

Our after-meeting event was a new lecture by coin specialist Dr. Michael Rubenstein. Among the attendees were two special guests – coin maestros David Roth and Giacomo Bertini. The lecture featured effects that did not require the classic palm.

The lecture began with the Wishing Well (a three-coin production) and followed with

Twilight Zone (an in-the-hands Wild Coin). These two routines combined well. Michael then showed his stand-up handling of David Roth's Coins, Purse, and Glass routine and clever handlings of the classic stack of boxes. He closed the first half with a card trick that utilized coins, cards, and some clever props.

After a short break Dr. Rubinstein demonstrated the Talahassee Jumping Coins Across, a new presentation of the classic Silver Extraction trick and his version of the classic Coins through Table. He talked a bit about how he had revisited the trick a few years back, updating the handling that he had used since his teens.

A week later we hosted a lecture by Geoff Williams. Geoff entertained a crowd of about thirty members with a variety of entertaining effects and humorous presentations suitable for close-up and parlor. Highlights included a tape recorder that only played when it was plugged into a drawing of an electrical outlet, a teddy bear sticker that vanished off a card and appeared on the spectator, and a seemingly impossible card location in which the spectator did all the work. All of the effects were easy to do. The Magic Table had a few new faces visit – magicienne Ali Shelley and Scotland's Peter McLanachan treated the table regulars to some wonderful magic. If you're in NYC stop by the table Friday 12:30 until 2:00 at the Cafe Edison. —Jordan Linker

Mt. Sinai Hospital, Goldwurm Auditorium, 1425 Madison Avenue (@98th street) Contact Jordan Linker Linker.Jordan@

gmail.com SAMPAl.com for more information.

2

MAGICAL DIVERSITY

SAN FRANCISCO, CA— At the May gathering a strange, exciting energy stimulated the mages, who anticipated wonders to be revealed. Magical routines applying easy techniques and dressed with entertaining, imaginative stories dominated the evening. Corky LaVallee, presenting the teach-in, demonstrated several versions of the cut and restored rope. Because the method is straightforward, engaging stories enchant and delight. Tamaka offered a different handling and story to fit.

Tonight's theme was bar magic. Adding authenticity, bar food was offered the patrons. Ever practical, Walt Johnson printed business data on a blank business card by typing on the back of his hand. Stu Bacon made a bet with Jack Langdell. Although Jack correctly identified the upside-down King, weirdness prevailed. The King's back was a different color than the other three Kings.

Returning to the stage, Corky amazed us with two routines, Clip-it and Rubik's Cube. First Corky predicted the exact line in the news article he was asked to clip. Then he showed an easy method to solve the Rubik's Cube challenge. He threw the cube into the air. When it landed, each side had a single color. Peter Kim applied mental power to identify the exact word selected from a borrowed book. Peter's skill at receiving his assistant's projected image was excellent. Nathan Ng assisted

Hippo Lau with two routines. First Hippo challenged Nathan to catch a ten-dollar bill before it landed on the table. Nathan was unsuccessful, so Hippo retained the bill. Magicians always win this bet. Next, Nathan's chosen card was found at the designated location in the deck.

Betting Walt an imaginary beer, Rob Shapiro adeptly found the selected card. Rich Seguire confirmed that Cups and Balls can be performed with items available at a bar: disposable coffee cups and napkins. Bill Langdell assembled a mobile sculpture from a wine bottle, cork, toothpick, and forks. Michael Baker wanted to buy a drink with foreign currency. When the bartender refused to accept the money, Michael changed it into U.S. currency. Daniel Dock amused us with a humorous effect. After giving Peter two black Aces, Daniel transformed the Aces into red Queens. John Caris, with Jack's help, applied spirit power to revolve the propeller on a wooden stick. Mary Caris enjoyed the performances and participated in vanishing the bar food. —John Caris

Golden Gate Assembly 2 meets first *Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. at Community Room of Taraval Police Station, 2345 24th Ave., San Francisco. *July meeting will be held on Thursday July 5. Tamaka Tamaka3715@aol.com (415) 531-9332

4

FUNDRAISER AND CHILDREN'S CONTEST

PHILADELPHIA, PA— On April 12, 2012, members of Assembly 4 joined forces with members of I.B.M. Ring 6 to perform

at a benefit for the Michael J. Fox Foundation in Sicklerville, New Jersey, for which Fred Siegel ably served as the master of ceremonies. Prior to the evening show, Reba Strong entertained the crowd with close-up magic. PNP Mike Miller opened the show with his wonderful dove act and then vanished a borrowed dollar bill that miraculously reappeared inside an orange.



Assembly 4 performers at the Michael J. Fox Foundation: From Left: Jim Capobianco, Reba Strong, Jeff Carson, PNP Mike Miller, Fred Siegel, Marc DeSouza, Ed Schmidt, Eric Van Wie, (Seated) Aurelio Pontarelli

Ed Schmidt followed Mike with a high-energy performance that included a very funny celebrity prediction and a five-card routine. Jeff Carson then cracked everyone up with his comedy juggling. Fred Siegel and Eric Van Wie (the world's greatest magician) kept the laughs coming with some brilliant improvisation. The show organizer, Aurelio Pontarelli, performed a humorous and mysterious mindreading act with his friend, Jim Capobianco. Marc DeSouza then wowed the crowd with his one-cup routine followed by the levitation of a table with the assistance of an audience member.

Our May meeting featured our Children's Contest, which was a resounding success. The contest began with Charles Murter performing a colorful and inspirational silk and ball transformation. After Charles, Keith Frye deftly executed a very classy silk dying routine that culminated in the produc-

tion of a silk fountain. Next, Kurt Garwood pulled what seemed like an endless array of silks and a stream of flags from a Square Circle. After Kurt, first-place winner Bobbie Festa, a.k.a. Penny the Clown, did an enchanting mutilated parasol effect set to music. Second-place winner Jane Armstrong then delighted everyone by introducing her rabbit friend, Mr. Hopperfield, who correctly predicted the identity of an animal that had been freely selected by a member of the audience. After Jane, third-place winner Sam Sandler did his signature Change Bag routine with the assistance of Linda Sharlin that had everyone in stitches. Next, Reba Strong managed to pull everything from

a rubber chicken to a jumbo toothbrush from what had previously been shown to be a perfectly flat tri-fold screen. After Reba, Ed Cohen demonstrated a clever recycling-themed Cups and Balls routine that used old vegetable cans. Peter Cuddihy then closed the contest by singing the story of the Gingerbread Man, during which the principal character vanished and then reappeared at the end. Everyone in attendance witnessed some amazing magic. —Peter Cuddihy
[James Wobensmith Assembly 4 meets the third Thursday at 7:00 p.m. at the Bustleton Memorial Post, 810 \(American Legion\), 9151 Old Newtown Road. For more information: www.sam4.org/](http://www.sam4.org/)

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STRIVING(S) FOR PERFECTION

OMAHA, NE— Tonight started with President Bob Gehringer



Bob Charleston, Marc Jacobi and Mark Strivings

reminding everyone that next month we have a contest. Bob then introduced Professor Emeritus Tom Zepf, who introduced Mark Strivings and his program.

Mark told us a little about himself, including his interest in mentalism, hypnosis, music, and other things magical. He is also co-holder of the world's record for the shortest conversation between two total strangers. (If this or any other writings spur your interest, you should hear his lecture.) The "show" started with a card trick performed with a red-blue rough-smooth deck, followed by an effect called Chip Shot done with five cards and money. Next, he showed us the Star Miracle deck effect that produced the chosen card from a Himber wallet. He also showed us Rossini's false cut (from *Tarbell*).

Perhaps no words can describe the Accessible Astonishment, in which several audience members selected cards, numbers were chosen from a Keno slip, and an audience member offered a quarter. He produced a business card from an envelope with three accurate predictions. Symbol Minded was a simple trick in which he predicted the chosen symbol chosen from a deck of symbol cards. Kenton Gets Bent led us to believe a spoon was twisted and a penny was depressed.

After a short break for a gusher from the local drinking fountain he showed a nifty book test. He challenged us after performing an effect in which four people thought of cards and the chosen one was produced from a deck – reversed and with a different color back.

Suffice it to say it was *not* what we thought. Producing boxes of farm animals he made us believe a chicken had jumped from one box to another (similar to the Piano Card Trick). Lastly, he performed an effect with the ACME thought transmitter (Airzooka) that left the assistant puzzled and the audience laughing. After three hours the two-hour lecture was over leaving the audience satisfied. —Jerry Golmanavich
Omaha Magical Society Assembly 7 generally meets on the third Monday of each month at the Southwest Church of Christ near 125th St. and West Center Road (right across from Hooters). jerry.golmanavich.golubki@cox.net (402) 390-9834 www.omahamagicalsociety.com

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GREAT LECTURES

ST. LOUIS, MO— May 10, 2012, was the date of the David Stone lecture. David came to us from France. He gave a great lecture that started with the production and disappearance of silver dollars. He taught us a great and easy-to-master magazine prediction, fooled us with classics, and posed for photos. While performing, he was interesting, engaging, insightful, and out-right hilarious throughout his lecture. David sold most everything he performed for us at reasonable prices, but he had so many goodies! Visit David Stone's website for all of his great effects.

May 24, 2012 was the Kozmo lecture. It was a great lecture



David Stone takes his magic seriously

by an experienced street magician. We all stood around a street magician's setup, to feel the effects as his audiences do. He taught not just effects, but how to engage and keep the audience to see what happens next. Then we sat down and he explained what he did, how he did it, and *why* he did it *that* way. Effects were very well thought out and workable. You don't already get *Reel Magic* magazine? You don't know what you are missing, reel-ly! —Daniel S Todd

Assembly 8 meets on the 2nd & 4th Thursdays of each month, 7:30 PM to 9:00 PM at Mount Tabor United Church of Christ, 6520 Arsenal Don Becker Contact joydonbeck@charter.net (636) 947-7963 Assembly8.com for more information.

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EVENING PANCAKES AND COMEDY MAGIC

BOSTON, MA— Gathering at a local International House of Pancakes on May 9, our group enjoyed a few pancakes and other light fare while compeer Jim Loscutoff presented a pre-meeting workshop that featured a clever variation on the Rising Card, a fast-paced three-coin Matrix, and a card routine in which a blank deck was transformed into a regular one. Jim described how he incorporates familiar approaches into the creation of illusions that are unique and unexpected.

The evening's special guest, comedy magician Fielding West, then entertained us with his lecture and shared his insights into mixing comedy with magic, which is unquestionably his forte. During his long and varied career he has cultivated a wacky approach to his material, which was startling enough to drop our jaws open more than once, notably when he appeared to spray paint from a can onto his bald spot. What seemed initially an ill-conceived stunt produced such flattering results

that several assembly members later contemplated engaging in the sincerest form of flattery. After the paint on his scalp dried, Fielding emphasized the parallels between routines in comedy and magic, each of which is constructed to include a story with a beginning, middle, end, and payoff.

As he performed a series of sleight-of-hand manipulations, Fielding shared recollections of Dai Vernon's advice and described how an unexpected additional twist can breathe life into a familiar illusion. The often-seen disappearance of a bottle into a paper bag, for example, was made much funnier and more shocking by ending it with the production of a water-filled champagne flute. Another surprise included a routine in which one canned drink was shaken vigorously and opened with minimal fizzing while another unshaken canned drink doused the un-



Fielding West with feathered friend and flummoxed fans

prepared assistant when the tab was lifted. Perhaps the most striking illusion that we witnessed during the evening, however, was the inflation and swallowing of an entire balloon. Finally, the production of a dove and similarly-sized objects was discussed and we could barely harness our enthusiasm for the approach described. Altogether, the evening was an especially informative one that included both chuckles and gasps. —Jim Ellison

Herman Hanson Boston Assembly 9 meets the second Wednesday of the month

except January, July, and August, at 7:30 PM at The Magic Art Studio, 137 Spring Street, Watertown, MA 02472. www.facebook.com/bostonmagicians

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MAY MEETING

CINCINNATI, OH— May 11, 2012, was election night for Assembly 11. The following were elected: Leland Penington – President, Patrick Thernes – Vice-President, Bill Pryor – Treasurer, Sergeant-at-Arms – Joe Papania, and Secretary – John Martini.

The lecturer was Judge Ray Corns, a former circuit court judge, commonwealth attorney, motivational speaker, and (since 2003) a weekly commentator on NPR's *WoodSongs Old Time Radio Hour*. "The sky is not the limit; we are" was the thought-provoking title of Judge Corns's magic lecture. He talked about the "powers" we have to succeed in our endeavors. He demonstrated the Power Pause, the Power Opener – "As Elizabeth Taylor said to each of her husbands, I won't keep you long!" Another power opening he uses is the "hot book" – Monica Lewinsky's diary. Other Powers are: Power Timing, Power Reader – never cease to learn all you can, Power Advertising, Power Act, Power Props (put together an act that you can do all by yourself, anywhere, anytime, and that will transport easily – in a briefcase or attaché case), Power Laughs, Power Close, and Power Opportunities ("We are surrounded by insurmountable opportunities." – Yogi Berra). Judge Corns demonstrated some of his favorite effects – Milbourne Christopher's High Sign and Troublewit. This was a warm, humorous, and thought-provoking discussion with lots of practical tips for all of us.

The magician of the month contest had three performers. Denny Metz presented

his version of Get Sharkie, in which a selected card in a deck cannot be found after it is selected; it is discovered in Denny's pocket. Larry Payne performed a routine involving a mirror and arrows penetrating it through a magic cloth; the mirror remains unbroken. Don Hinton the presented a mentalism effect involving a book test. The judges selected Larry Payne as the winner. —John Martini

Queen City Mystics, SAM Assembly 11 generally meets on the 2nd Friday of the month at Haines House of Cards in Cincinnati, Ohio. www.assembly11.com

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2012 INSTALLATION BANQUET

DALLAS, TX— On May 1, 2012, Brookhaven Country Club was the site of the 2012 Installation Banquet of the Dallas Magic Clubs. Members joined for a stunning meal in a great setting. Entertainment for the evening featured internationally acclaimed cruise ship magician Fred Becker and the legendary John Calvert. Dal Sanders performed emcee duties for the event.



Mike Smith presents award to Daryl Howard

The banquet also featured the installation of new officers for 2012-2013, including Mark Jensen (President), Derrel Allen (Vice President), Frank Seltzer (Sergeant-at-Arms), and Reade Quinton (Secretary/Treasurer). Dr. Mike Smith stepped down as the president of the DMC, and received a

wand for his year of service.

The board of the Dallas Magic Clubs also decided to create a new award for a member in recognition of his or her dedicated service and exceptional accomplishments. The Award was named after life members Chuck and Joannie Lehr, who have given more to the DMC than anyone in its history. The winner of the first presentation of this award was Daryl Howard, who has made generous contributions to the club, including acting as the club photographer, writing a column for the monthly newsletter, performing at the monthly meetings, and delivering a lecture at one of the club meetings.

The Dallas Magic Club, Assembly 13 meets on the third Tuesday of each month at Crosspointe Community Center (see www.dallasmagic.org for directions). Reade Quinton reade.quinton@gmail.com (972) 400-0195.

17

MAGIC & TOM CRAVEN

SPRINGFIELD, MA— After planning our summer get-together at Look Park, we finally settled down and had some great performances this month. Jeff Pyzocha brought his old Tenyo Dynamic Coins to show us the different phases of magic; appearance, transportation, solid-thru-solid, and then disappearance. Rich Pinsonnault did a fantastic Larry Jennings trick, Transmutalated, changing the color of the



P.J. Pinsonnault performing for Tom Gentile

deck backs. Peter Askalis used his special senses taught to him by Banachek to find a small baseball placed under one of six plastic cups by a spectator. Tom Gentile's famous O.J. Card Stab had us laughing with each prop used. Ed Kazar's Nun Trick showed us how to find the two red Queen's sisters.

Rich Gilbert performed Brian Caswell's Inevitable, matching cards telepathically. Bob Carrol used some Cameron Studio cards of himself as a young magician to find a spectator's signed card and having it appear on the back of the card in the young magician's hand. P.J. Pinsonnault ended the evening with his latest card routine, getting spectators to use their imaginations and favorite colors or music. He did Larry Jennings's Tacvisor, spelling out all the Aces.

The following week Tom Craven came to visit for a spell. His lecture was top notch. He started off the night with his bottled air pitch and Jailbird Jack card routine. He did a nice ring and rope routine and some cell phone mindreading. He was most gracious to our club by donating a copy of his book *My (Almost) 50 Years in Magic*, which was raffled off and won by Rich Pinsonnault. His magic was entertaining and easy to perform with inexpensive materials. The next morning he did a special teaching clinic for some of us. Thank you Tom for an informative weekend of magic. —Karen Gibson

Dr. I.R. Caulkins Assembly 17 Meets the first Friday of every month at 7 pm at Pinsonnault Moto-X-Equipment, 69 East Street, Ludlow, MA Rich Gilbert rgilbertmagic@yahoo.com (413) 247-7659 www.assembly17org

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SLYDINI PRESENTATION

HOUSTON, TX— May was another good month for magic in Houston. Bill Wisch visited

to present an interesting lecture on the magic of Slydini. Bill's many stories of Slydini added greatly to the lecture, which was both entertaining and insightful. Scott Wells is doing a fine job of bringing top quality lectures to Houston, and this was just one of many we have lined up for this year.

The mini lecture this month was on coin magic. Gene Protas led the session with a few of his favorite coin vanishes. Max Bradshaw gave a nice demonstration of his retention vanish. Scott Wells and Frank Price both contributed expert knowledge on the use and knowledge of key coin moves and some great magic as well. This was a fine session in which everyone learned something.

We had another great session of magical performers for the evening. We wish to thank all of our performers at the May meeting. They were Frank Price, David Hinken, Dick Olson, David Rangel, Mark Melcher, Max Bradshaw, Scott Wells, Randy Stulken, Gene Protas, Johan McElroy, Miles Root, and Shane Wilson.

Don't forget the TAOM Convention this coming Labor Day weekend, to be held here in Houston. Visit TAOM2012.com for more information on this upcoming event. —Miles Root

Assembly 19 meets the first Monday of every month at the IATSE Local 51 Meeting Hall, 3030 North Freeway, Houston TX. A teaching lecture begins at 7:30 pm with the meeting beginning at 8:00 pm.

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EXCELLENT LECTURE BY DAVID CORSARO

HARTFORD, CT— David Corsaro presented one of the best lectures we've had in years. Coming from a



David Corsaro under the watchful eyes of the entire group

marketing background, David focuses his lecture on ideas that would be of value to everyone in the room. He interspersed tricks with essays on personalizing, audience connection, and marketing your magic. Among the tricks were Baby Gag (which included tips on how to throw in a surprise ending), Mallrats (a mathematical trick that doesn't look mathematical), and Can I Call You Sometime, wherein a shuffled deck is spread to reveal a chosen phone number. David's lecture was delivered with energy, enthusiasm, and a PowerPoint presentation, which made it very easy to keep up with his explanations. Book him as soon as you can; your assembly will thank you. —Dana Ring

Angelo's On Main 289 South Main Street West Hartford, Connecticut 06107 Dana Ring d.ring222@att.net (860) 5239888 www.sam21.org

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THE MAGIC OF GEORGE MÉLIÈS

LOS ANGELES, CA— The May 21, 2012, meeting of the Southern California Assembly 22 was to be a much-anticipated lecture by Martin Lewis, but alas it was not to be. An injury to his hand a few days earlier prevented the performance of magic, so the lecture is postponed to a date in the future.

Unable to find a substitute lecturer, the assembly opted for a Video Night, something that has not been done in years.

The assembly program for the evening was the viewing of *The Magic of George Méliès*, a DVD containing a biography and summary of his film work as well as a number of short, mostly comedic vignettes of Méliès's turn-of-the-century film work.

Méliès began his career as a performing magician after purchasing the Theatre Robert-Houdin in Paris. He soon began presenting films at the theater, which combined techniques of stage magic with special film effects. Méliès is now generally considered to have been the father of special effects cinematography.

After the program, everyone enjoyed the always-bountiful table of foods and treats provided by Corrine Murphy. Many lingered late into the evening with impromptu performances and discussions of magic. —Steven L. Jennings

[Southern California Assembly 22 meets the third Monday each month at 8:00 PM, St. Thomas Moore Parish Hall, 2510 South Fremont Avenue, Alhambra, California Ed Thomas magicmred@earthlink.net \(213\) 382 8054](#)

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KEY CARD MAGIC

ELMWOOD PARK, NJ— Our first order of business was a vote to nominate a Regional Vice President for the North Atlantic Region. A vote was taken at this meeting and Eric DeCamps got the nomination. He has been a strong supporter of the S.A.M. and its goals for over thirty years. Meir Yedid was selected as our delegate to the upcoming convention.

The evening's theme was the use of key cards. Meir Yedid showed us a brand new design for Bicycle Cards that closely resembles the original with an angel. It would make for a good key card. Meir gave everybody a sample.

Guest Warren Kaps had a lot

of tips about using key cards. He had John Mintz shuffle the cards and cut any card. Then Warren cut to a card matching its value. Warren is editor of the second edition of George Kaplan's *The Fine Art of Magic*, and distributed copies of chapter one, Techniques for the Short Card.

Richard Bangs performed Jeff Williams's Devastation effect, which garnered much discussion and input.

John Henderson was next, with a card effect dealing any number between ten and twenty, while Bill Schmeelk did the same, and then both cut the deck and did it two more times. John asked Bill to turn over the card on top of his packet; it matched the card on top of John's packet.

John Mintz showed Judge Gene Austin a trick using three "witnesses," which happened to be two freely selected cards plus Mintz's written prediction of the cards. Guest Harvey Berg did a mental effect, having four people each get thirteen cards from a shuffled deck. One person was chosen to have his cards divined by Harvey, and he got all thirteen!

I did an impromptu selected card at any number, which I was doing for the first time. I have to thank Bill Goldman for his One for the Money routine.

Eric DeCamps wrapped things up with a silver dollar routine, which multiplied to three silver dollars. He also found a selected card by mentally causing one card to reverse itself and then used the value of it (five) to count to the selected card. The cards used to count turned out to be four Aces!

We had good camaraderie and good ideas at this meeting with a new circular seating arrangement by new president Phil Schwartz. —Del Dixon

[Assembly 25 meets at the VFW Hall, 6 Veterans Place, Elmwood Park, NJ 07407 Phil Schwartz quackmagicphil@aol.com \(201\) 497-8179](#)

www.livemagicguide.com/sam25

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JOG MY MEMORY

ATLANTA, GA— Debbie Leifer introduce the evening with a membership performance by Rick Alston. Rick performed Aldo Colombini's Predictability. Rick was voted unanimously into membership.

Jim Driscoll, our newly elected assembly president, had a card chosen and asked four people to play Follow the Leader with their card packets. Cards were cut, passed to other people, and cards were discarded. The person who first chose a card to could deal and stop at random. When the four packs were placed on the table, the top card of each pack matched the chosen card by number. Guess we have to keep him.

Terry Wenham performed a memory routine by Harry Lorayne. He also had a pack of cards with holes in them and a red ribbon through the pack. A card was chosen by committee, eliminating cards until a single card was chosen. Terry pulled on the pack in his hand and the chosen card was the only one left on the ribbon.

Mal Simpson gave us a lesson in quantum physics with cards. He had an "x" placed on a card in the deck, then presented another deck, which had the "x" on the same card. Jim Mangham performed his version of Professor's Nightmare and several other rope routines with different colored ropes.

Gene Hendrix had your humble scribe as his assistant for Simon Aronson's Side-swiped. He took a new trick right out of the box with an instruction card in the pack. He magician proofed the deck with rubber bands and when the bands were removed, the chosen card was on back of the instruction card.

Dan Garrett produced at color-changing card box, and then

performed his King Brain deck routine. He also did a paddle trick with an arrow on it.

Our Professional Development tonight was on Harry Lorayne by John Miller. John said that the book *Close-Up Card Magic* changed his life. He also called Harry the Yoda of memory training. John spoke of Harry's prolific writing and his time as a TV entertainer. John then taught Vernon's Aces and Big Fellow, Little Fellow. It was a presentation enjoyed by all. —Carol Garrett

[Assembly 30 meets the second Tuesday of the month at Picadilly Cafeteria, I-85/North Druid Hills Road, Atlanta, Georgia.](#)

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RINGS AND STRINGS

INDIANAPOLIS, IN— The theme for our May 7, 2012, Assembly 31 meeting was "Rings and Strings." Master of Ceremonies Jim Croop kicked off the evening with a very fun version of Diamond Jim Tyler's Ring and String Routine with his own patter; he ended with Ron Vergilio's Off Ring.

Shawn Hull then shared with us a piece of sculpture he had recently purchased, much to his wife's dismay. It was a model of a hand enclosed in a glass case. Continuing with the theme of the evening, Shawn then placed a ring on a rope. The ring eventually disappeared, only to be found on one of the fingers of the sculptured hand.

Taylor Martin, explaining that rings are nothing more than



Jim Croop assisted by Dee Saul

simple circles, then proceeded to do a very nice rendition of the Afghan Bands. Finally, Tom Winterrowd, in an effort to be “fair and square,” reminded us that the classic Linking Rings started out as eight rings, then six, then three. He showed us only one ring, which suddenly became a square.

Following the presentations there was a stimulating discussion regarding the history of rings on ropes (strings), which goes back at least to the 1500s. Reflecting on the pros and cons of using borrowed rings generated several horror stories. The conversation drifted onto the multiple variations of the Linking Rings – mentioned were effects such as floating rings, linking coat hangers, barbed wire linking rings, and linking rings with black-light effects.

The election of officers for the coming year resulted in all of the current officers being re-elected: President – Steve Spence, First Vice President – Don Miller, Second Vice President – Taylor Martin, Secretary – Karen Miller, Treasurer – Jay Newby, and Scribe – Dale Benson. —Dale Benson

Assembly 31 meets the first Monday of the month at 7:00 pm. If the first Monday conflicts with a holiday weekend, we postpone the meeting by one week. Unless otherwise announced the meeting location is the Irvington United Methodist Church, 30 Audubon Road on the east side of the city. See our website for details. Steve Spence sspence@mediationalternative.com (317-507) 4534 www.sam31.com

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GO WEST YOUNG MAN

POUGHKEEPSIE, NY— It was an awesome month to be a member of Al Baker Assembly 35. In early May we celebrated our assembly’s seventieth anniver-

sary with a fabulous banquet. Members, friends and family at this extravaganza enjoyed wonderful food, excellent company, spectacular magic, and even a cake. As amazing as it was to celebrate seventy years, even more amazing is that one of our founding members is still active with the club. Ed Fitchett received a special video tribute followed by a citation from National President Vinny Grosso for all



Fielding West Explains the Nuances of the Newspaper Tear

of his wonderful contributions to the world of magic.

After Ed said a few words, the magic began with George Schindler emceeing the evening, keeping us laughing throughout. Vinny came back to the stage and performed a couple great escape pieces. Matt Leskanic displayed some incredible manipulation, showing us why he’s one of the up-and-coming young people in magic. Headliner Fielding West showed why he is a headliner. He had everybody rolling in the aisles with an amazing variety of effects. Thanks to Mike Bochar, Marty Steinberg, Terry Morgan, and Wally Libenson for doing the strolling magic. Thanks to Vinny, Matt, George, and Fielding for their wonderful performances. A special thank you goes to Derrin Berger, Frank Monaco, Joel Zaritsky, Mike, and everybody else who had a hand in putting this tremendous evening together.

A couple weeks after the banquet, members enjoyed

Fielding lecturing on many of the items he performed at the banquet. He explained some of the effects done with a dove at the banquet along with telling us a great Johnny Thompson story. Members learned how to perform a great newspaper tear. We saw a giant coin vanish followed by a Fielding’s wonderful version of the vanishing bottle with a special twist. Magically inflating a balloon, covering up a bald spot, ripping the head off a bird, shaking up a can of soda with no immediate ill effects, and many more secrets were revealed. What an amazing source of information and inspiration for all of us. Thanks, Fielding, for being part of a magical month that won’t be forgotten. —Craig Kunaschk

Al Baker Assembly 35 (usually) meets at 7:30 p.m. on the second Tuesday of the month at the Milanese Italian Restaurant, 115 Main Street, Poughkeepsie, NY. www.compumagic.com/sam35

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FEBRUARY AND MARCH

DENVER, CO— It looks like the Mile High Magicians Society has a brand new bag. February was host to a bring-a-bag-of-stuff night and all the members had a shot at making magic out of it.

Hosted by club editor Matthew Brandt, members on hand were engaged into choosing between an assortment of everyday objects such as clothespins, paper cups, tissue paper, nuts and bolts, and so on. Everyone was allowed to choose a few items and then given time to come up with their own unique routine.

Longtime magic guru Stuart Hayner was on hand and chose an excellent combination to recreate some standard magic traditions. Lewis Peacock was outstanding in a mini rendition of the milk pitcher trick using paper and plastic cups and a pencil. Junior member T.J.

was hilarious by rigging up a money grabber in his back pocket. Eliot Baskin and club Treasurer Dave Elstun paired up together and used a creative idea with rocks and valentines. Club President Chad Wonder used a brand new baby’s diaper to shower the crowd with magic and Glenn Proulx and club Sergeant-at-Arms Larry Betz created some sleight-of-hand improv magic.

Everyone was refreshed with an assortment of Girl Scout cookies and a cool fruit punch.

March offered our Mile High Membership an interesting and useful lecture by Cody Fisher and a chance to do some spring-cleaning by holding our yearly flea market. —Connie Elstun

Assembly 37 meets the second Thursday of the month at Riverpointe Senior Center in Littleton Colorado. Learn more at Chad Wonder chad@ldomagic.com www.milehighmagicians.com

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CONVENTION GIVE AWAY SPURS ACTIVITY

KANSAS CITY, MO— Our May meeting was attended by our faithful regulars and a couple of visitors. It was nice to see Bev Dowling, who gave us a report about the recent International Clown Convention held in Kansas City just a couple of weeks ago. Robert Finn had a guest with him, Parker Sinclair, who will become an associate member after board approval.

There were many performers this month, with Chad Bixby leading off, followed by Laremy Shultz and Jordan Byrd. Dennis Burks shared one the routines that he has used for many years working in the field of safety education. Justin Scott, Rod Sipe, and T. Texas Terry showed their deft skills. Not to be outdone, Shaun Rivera did what we call hitting for the cycle, in honor of the baseball all-star game being held in KC this year. Hitting for

the cycle in magic terms would be performing a close-up routine, followed by a stand-up or stage routine, then an item for show and tell, and then what we consider a home run, a teach-a trick. Each member received a ticket for each of the four categories and also one for attending the meeting. This all leads up to our big convention give away in 2014, with one lucky member getting a free registration and hotel to the I.B.M./S.A.M. combined 2014 convention in St. Louis.

Upcoming events include a lecture by Dan Garrett in August. Visitors are always welcome at our usual meeting place, The Westport Coffee House Theatre, 4010 Penn., KC MO. Details at our website.

Assembly 38 meets the third Tuesday of every month at The Westport Coffee House Theatre located at 4010 Penn. Kansas City, MO at 7:00 P.M. Rod Sipe rod@eatfire.com (816) 916-3655 www.samkc.com

52

POTPOURRI MAGIC

SAN ANTONIO, TX— On May 3, 2012, Brother John Hamman Assembly 52 held its monthly meeting at La Madeleine Restaurant. President Joe Libby called the meeting to order. We had sixteen people in attendance, including members, wives, guests, S.Y.M. Assembly 114 members, and their parents. Welcome to guest Richard Blake. Congratulations to our newly elected officers for 2012-2013: Paul Amerson – President, John Dahlinger – Vice-President, Doug Gorman – Secretary/Treasurer, and George Castillo – Sergeant-at-Arms.

Tonight we had an open theme night. Starting off the performances was Joe Libby, who performed the Delbin Blotter and Shrunk Head. He was followed by Dwayne Stanton, who did the card effect Phil.

Drake Stanton amazed us with a toothpick penetration through steel, and Doug Gorman performed Scotty York's Color Changing Knives. Paul Amerson entertained with Copenetro, Ray Adams performed Dan Harlen's Awakening, and Michael Tallon did Significant Hour by Brent Geris. Don Moravits baffled us with Mockingbird by Max Maven, George Castillo performed his version of the Delbin Blotter, and Hector Marquez, Jr. did a teeny weenie trick with a teeny weenie deck of cards. Paul Mims closed the performances with a ring and rope routine, followed by the card effect Push Through Spellure.

Door prize winners were Dwayne Stanton and Doug Gorman. Dwayne won a DVD, *The Magic of Thinking Creatively*, and Doug won Quentin Reynolds's *Five Minutes with a Pocket Handkerchief*.

Brother John Hamman Assembly 52 meets at 7:30 p.m. on the first Thursday of the month at La Madeleine Restaurant, located at 722 N.W. Loop 410. The restaurant is inside Loop 410 on the access road between Blanco Rd. and San Pedro. For more information, contact douggorman@att.net.

56

APRIL – MAY ACTIVITIES

DAYTON, OH— Our assembly had a busy and fun April. Ken Klosterman invited us down to his Salon de Magie. It was a very good time. Thank you, Ken.

Later in April we held our



Paul Burnham and Marvin Griswold at annual banquet

annual banquet. We had a fantastic turnout of both compeers and guests. Rodger Lovins provided the entertainment. It was a very nice banquet.

In May we welcomed a new member, Jo Ann Kinder, to our assembly. Edwin McDonald came up with an interesting theme for the month, "Home-crafted Props." I loved this theme, and it appeared that everyone at the meeting did, too. Many interesting items, props, etc. were performed and demonstrated by Edwin, Stan Goode, Fred Witwer, Marvin Griswold, Pat Griswold, Stephanie Griswold, Matthew David Stanley, Scott Miller, and Paul Burnham. Thanks to Scott Miller for refreshments and Carl Day for the meeting place.

—Paul D. Burnham
Assembly 56 meets the Third Friday at 7:30 p.m. location varies. Contact Barbara Pfeifer (937) 433-8604 for information.

59

A BUSY MONTH

PORTLAND, OR— A casual look at the calendar wouldn't reveal the intense activities in the background, but April was a busy month for the magicians of Assembly 59.

The first item was our April meeting held in our new (or old, depending on how you look at it) digs at the Elks Lodge in Beaverton. This is the meeting in which we traditionally hold the Leo Haglund Most Entertaining Card Trick Contest – this being the seventeenth iteration. Over the years that contest has produced some pretty varied acts, emphasizing entertainment, but including playing cards – usually to a lesser degree. Performers this evening followed this trend.

Tonight's performers were Bob Eaton, Mel Anderson, Tom Waldrop, Michael Roth (as T. Rex), David Lemberg & Tom Cramer of the Tom and Dave Show, and Danny Schreiber

aka Professor DR Schreiber. John Edsall was the last act. He called Stan Kramien up to be his assistant. For those readers who know Stan, he can be quite a critic. After three effects, John had dazzled the master showman who said, "How'd you do that?" which is the highest form of praise a magician can receive. In the end, traditional card skills presented in an entertaining way won the day. John Edsall was voted the winner.

Also that evening Tom Waldrop was awarded the Duane Duvall Horse's Brasses Award, given for the first time. Those members considered for nomination "shall have demonstrated innovation and exceptional commitment to magic by personal endeavor and through works that build, further, and enhance Assembly 59 and/or S.A.M. National." Duane also presented the club with a check for \$500 to make certain that the award is given in the years to come.

That would be enough for any active club, but there was more. The following Saturday members of Assembly 59 performed for a benefit for St. Jude's Hospital at Molalla High School, which it was my privilege to co-emcee and direct. The performers were Bob Eaton, Tom Waldrop, Larry Seymore, Andy Turner (his Oregon premier), unicyclists Brian and David Adams, Professor DR Schreiber, Tim Woods, and Mel Anderson. As long as I've known many of these fine magicians, there were a few whom I'd never seen perform for the public.



Tom Waldrop accepts Horse's Brasses Award

The club hasn't put on a big show of this sort in years, and the magicians involved are eager to reproduce the event. That's what magic's all about, after all. —Glen L. Bledsoe

Assembly 59 meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month except July & August at The Beaverton Elks, 3500 SW 104th, Beaverton, Oregon 97005. Details at www.sam59portland.org Glen L. Bledsoe glenbledsoe@mac.com (503) 581-2795 www.sam59portland.org

71

FUN MEETING OF VARIATIONS

ALBUQUERQUE, NM— The Assembly 71 meeting in May got a break from fairly warm days with a mild evening and magic. Our turnout was fair, since we were fast approaching the Memorial Day holiday. Gene Herria started us off with a ESP effect with strange premise about the rise of Nazi Germany and Hitler. Jerry White did a variation on the Svengali principle with matched pairs. Don Johnston did a gospel version of the Chinese Laundry Ticket. Robert Bass did an effect that required that appearance of a flower in the spectator's hand; the club came up with a variation on the card box to resolve the problem. Vice President David Dunlap did a Dai Vernon effect called The Challenge.

We took a small break then started round two. David Brahinsky started the second round the Emerson and West effect Sympathetic Aces, Robert Bass did a handkerchief card rise from *Tarbell*, Don Johnston did a rubber band penetration with gospel theme and the old comedy bit the thought transmitter, Jason Fosso found a card with card shuffler, David Dunlap did a Tom Burgoon effect called Snake Eyes, and Gene Herria ended our evening

with a two-card predication. —Mr. David Brahinsky
Assembly 71 meets at the Magic Juggler Shop at 3205 Central Ave., Albuquerque, NM at 7pm on the third Thursday of the month. Contact davidbrahinsky@comcast.net (505) 235-2997 for more information

77

ELECTIONS AND MAX KRAUSE

LONG ISLAND, NY—With elections for President of the United States on everyone's minds and TV screens, it was a slice of old fashioned American pie to have two North Atlantic RVP nominees, Eric DeCamps and Ritchie Magic, speak to the Mystics at our May meeting.

After voting, we clapped loudly for lecturer Max Krause. He stressed creativity as one of the most important things for a magician to possess. Opening with Magication, he left us thinking "Why didn't I create this?" It was a perfect opener. Lie Detector, Impromptu Supreme Serial Killer, and BTIL, UnfathomaBill, and others had us astonished with the powerhouse mentalism and magic that fits in your wallet. Mental Killer used an I-Phone and made it into a must-have tool for mentalism. Max closed the first half of the lecture by bringing back the Six-Card Repeat, now known as Poker Story (The Royal Flush with stranger backs made for a nice finish.) and Predic-torn. After the crowd left his dealer table, Max gave two fast tips on magic before hopping to a demo of M.U.D., In Tune, and Mentalist Dream Box. Next month, we'll be having our annual dinner with entertainers, Joe Starr, Magic by Elle, Ziggy, and illusionist Scott In-terrante. Until then, see you at the diner. —Lou Johnson

L.I. Mystics Assembly 77 meets at 7:30PM on the second Monday of the month at The Community United

Methodist Church, 100 Park Blvd. Massapequa, NY. For more information, check www.limystics.org.

88

AAMC MAY MEETING/ IMPROMPTU MAGIC

ANN ARBOR/YPSILANTI, MI— We had an interesting meeting theme for May at the Ann Arbor Magic Club – Impromptu Magic. Marvin Mathena brought in a box of everyday objects; pencils, dice, rope, strings, rings, coins, and a whole lot more. Our members were given a little time to look over everything and figure out what they could perform with these odds and ends. We were also told that we could bring in our own "every day" objects if we chose to (just in case we couldn't find what was needed in the box).

First up was Tyler Sousa, who took a straw, balanced it on top of a saltshaker, and moved his hands on the sides to make the straw spin. Next was Isaac Weiss, who performed Will the Cards Match. Then Isaac said he wanted to show his youngest sister some magic, so he took a small heart-shaped trinket, "swallowed" it, and had it come out from behind her ear. Jim Placido turned one gold coin into two. Bill Brang did a prediction using a die. Jack Hartley brought a whole



Isaac Weiss shows his sister magic

hat full of magic from home to make us all laugh.

Ray Wojciechowski had a funny rope trick with patter about tying shoelaces. For my trick I used two strings and three pencil sleeves, to make the Granny's Necklace. I then had two volunteers pull the strings while I took the middle sleeve out. Dan Jones did a rope and ring trick, created by Aldo Colombini trick! Marvin Mathena folded a giant dollar and attached four paper clips; he then pull the dollar apart and the paper clips were linked together. Marvin ended with two ropes, two rings, and a pencil; with the rings on the ropes and the pencil in between, he removed the pencil and the rings came off too. It was a fun time just with everyday objects! —Randy A. Smith,

AAMC Hank Moorehouse Assembly 88 meets the second Wednesday at 7pm at the Faith Lutheran Church, 1255 East Forest Ave, Ypsilanti, Michigan. Contact Randy A. Smith at randy.remarkable@gmail.com (313) 562-3875 www.aamagic.org for more details.

95

MAGIC-FILLED MAY

VANCOUVER, CANADA— The May 2012 meeting at the home of new member Jeff Christensen was the start of a magic-filled month. Opening the evening of Gizmo Magic was Ray Roch, who made a sponge dove appear on a wand. Jens Henriksen displayed his shrunken wallet, complete with shrunken money and credit cards. Dennis Hewson was next with a block on rope that he magically made go up and down. Reg Donnelly showed an origami hexagon with printed ads that changed to maps, spots, a cube with the words ON and NO, to a spiral, then to real money. Jeff Christensen performed a cold-read-



**Jeff Christensen, Larry Hass
and Rod Chow**

ing cube with a divination of a chosen word. Anthony Young amazed with the penetration of a mini magic wand through a piece of glass. Lon Mandrake did a prediction effect with guest David Parker using a deck of "Horror" cards; he then performed a different prediction effect involving Vegas-girls cards.

Ray Roch returned with his Impossible Box and the three-shell game. Henry Tom did the Digital Dissolve coin penetration, with special effects from Pure Smoke. Guest Jeff Orr borrowed a card from Lon, made it flip over in his hand, and then suspended it. Host Jeff Christensen finished off with his Impossible Card Trick. Thank you to Henry Tom for taking notes of the May meeting.

The next events in May were two back-to-back lectures, one week after the other. We had great turnouts at both. The first lecture featured the street magic of Kozmo, who literarily took the magicians out on the street (actually the concourse of the college) for the performance segment to give a real feel of his busking techniques and high energy magic. Back in the room, Kozmo shared a wealth of valuable advice and interesting anecdotes. The following week, local magicians were treated to the philosophical teachings of Dr. Larry Hass, author of the insightful book *Transformations*, regular columnist in *M-U-M*, and Associate Dean at the McBride Mystery and Magic School. Larry not only

performed some amazing presentational magic pieces, but also went into great depth about his two deep secrets to create a fundamental transformation of one's tricks into real magic.

Larry and his lovely wife Marjorie are a nice couple, and everyone had a wonderful time chatting with them after the lecture. —Rod Chow

The Carl Hemeon Assembly No. 95 meets the first Tuesday of each month at members' homes. Contact Rod Chow at rod@rodchow.com (604) 669-7777 for more information.

104

A CHAMPION RETURNS TO ASSEMBLY 104

SALEM, MA— The Bill Towne School of Magic session, taught by Len Lazar, wrapped up a season this night, earning Len the thanks of President Bill Jensen for an exceptional year of classes.

Because this was our annual election meeting, last minute nominations were invited; none were offered, and the standing slate of officers, with the addition of Rob Snider as second vice-president, was elected without opposition. The slate for next year: President – Bill Jensen, Vice President – Eddie Gardner, Second Vice President – Rob Snider, Sergeant-At-Arms –



Jay Hubbard goes Wild

Jon Hubbard, Secretary – Bob Forrest, Treasurer – Kathy Forrest.

Our lecturer for the night was the gifted Gaul, Boris Wild. We have had the pleasure of visits by Boris in the past, demonstrating the virtues of his highly original marked deck and other Wild creations. This lecture's concentration was, as Boris put it, "a little different," centering on being original in our own magic. Its title: "Creativity and Impact."

This was the perfect antidote to many lectures that leave behind a trail of clone performers parrot pattering in their wake. Boris nailed it from the beginning by reminding us that we already have what we need, in drawers and closets filled with props. He outlined steps for "doing it differently." In his relaxed and charming manner, Boris taught a master session on bringing our own creativity to the magic. His example of a magician who used the string tail of a balloon to bring new life to The Gypsy Thread was priceless.

When Boris launched into examples employing the tools that had won him his victory at FISM, his trusty cards, we figured "J" Hubbard our resident card curmudgeon would be left out in the cold (but he ended up buying a marked deck).

Boris taught and delighted for a couple of hours that included, inevitably, both the workings of his famous Boris Wild Marked Deck and performance of his FISM winning KISS routine. It added up to a very entertaining and worthwhile conclusion to our Assembly 104 season.

By evening's end, lines formed to purchase lecture notes and, of course, cards. —Bob Forrest

Information on SAMCON and on Witch City S.A.M. Assembly 104 can be found at the website. Assembly 104 meets the first Wednesday of each month, September-June, at 7 p.m. at the First

Baptist Church of Salem, 292 Lafayette Street, Salem Massachusetts. Bob Forrest captainalbrights1@comcast.net (339) 227-0797 www.sam104.com

112

GAME SHOW NIGHT

CONCORD, CA— Attended by an intimate crowd of fourteen, our April meeting had as its theme Game Show Night. But before the festivities began, Ric Ewing won the attendance award raffle.

At that point, moderator Kara Ewing began our game show. The idea of the evening was that each contestant, after answering a magic history question correctly or incorrectly, had to perform a magic trick using props picked from a random brown bag. Some of the props were complete; others were incomplete.

First up was Roy Porfido, who chose a breakaway wand and a coin vanish. Ric Ewing followed by hypnotizing a wooden block that dropped along a rope. Then Rod McFadden took a rope and performed four knotty tricks. Contestant number four, Bill Sparacino, performed a coin vanish. And Jerry Barrilleaux worked with an invisible deck of cards. Doug Kovacich, the sixth contestant, ended up with a gizmo that locked and unlocked a rubber band (you had to be there). Then Loren Lind manipulated a pair of inner-outer boxes. The eighth contestant, Bob Holdridge, performed with a ring that had a hole in it (again, you



**Bill Sparacino uses a dollar bill
and a rubber band to link two
paper clips**

had to be there). Fred Nelson then performed with a mysterious prop that I now cannot remember. But he was good. Finally, Dave Anderson performed with a sponge ball that the Easter Bunny left. For some reason or other, I have no difficulty remembering that prop.

After the show, Roy Porfido presented the Trick of the Month, a magic force card that Larry Wright had created for him. It was called How Do Kids Want to Spend their Summer. By following instructions on Roy's printed card, an assistant was lead to choose Roy's Magic Camp. Speaking of that camp, Roy announced that he's gearing up for it and already has a slate of performers – Ric and Kara Ewing, Douglass the MagicMan, Zappo, Dave Anderson, and Larry Kluger, who performs as Lariat Larry when he is rope spinning or storytelling.

To conclude the evening, there were a few off-theme performers. Bill Sparacino performed a paper-clip routine with a rubber-band variation. Bob Holdridge followed with a prediction that used a deck of cards and a die. And Ric Ewing concluded the evening with a mentalist routine in which a spectator's card was named. Ric named the card Lucy, and surely enough, the spectator's card indeed turned out to have been named Lucy. —Dave Anderson

Diablo Assembly 112 meets on the third Wednesday of every month at the Round Table Pizza in Concord. Doug Kovacich douglas@the magicman@hotmail.com (775) 435-4824 <http://sam112.com/>

115 SPECIAL OCCASION MAGIC

CHALOTTESVILLE, VA— Assembly 115's May 4 business meeting was short and focused on ideas for mem-



George Buckley performs Mis-Made Flag

bership growth and future live streaming of our meetings. President David Clauss updated the members on preparations for our first lecture of the year with Geoff Williams on May 17. During the S.Y.M. portion of the meeting an instructional teach-in on card handling was given by George and David. Reviewed were the Elmsley count, Jordan count, overhand shuffle, and OLRAM subtlety. Participants were provided with an Eight-card Brainwave routine.

For our S.A.M. portion, Dan Rowan started off the "Magic for Special Occasions" themed evening with a rope routine, telling the story of how he caught a leprechaun who gave him three wishes. He proceeded to tie three knots in the rope and vanish each one in a unique way. Dan was generous to share the inner workings of this fine routine. Nathan Clauss presented his handling of a Geoff William's Happy Birthday spelling trick. He shared with the group how this effect could be modified to present for other special occasions. George Buckley presented his patriotic mis-made flag routine complete with his very impressive hand-made change bag. He also presented a "This, That and the Other" routine involving a three-leaf clover, a pot of gold, and a leprechaun.

Dan Hall presented Poof, a version of John Fedko's Top-

sy-Turvy Smiley Face, which was a monte-like routine using four cards. The bunny changed positions in a fan of cards finally vanishing completely and reappearing in a wallet. He also presented Wayne Houchen's French Kiss. In this effect a spectator's signed card transposes with the magician's and ends up between the magician's teeth. David Clauss showed a Father Cyprian effect in which the spectator cuts to the four Aces. He followed with two routines in which he lost the Aces in the deck and proceeded to find them first by having them return to the top of the deck and finally by cutting to each buried Ace. Also attending the meeting was Ed Schmitz and daughters Ashley and Elizabeth.

Assembly 115 meets the 1st Friday at the Pavillion Building in Forest Lakes North Subdivision. Contact David Clauss, visionenhancement@comcast.com for more information.

120

LECTURES BY MICHAEL BAKER AND TROY KEEFER

CHAMPAIGN, IL— There was no business meeting. The meeting began with President Jim Percy introducing Dennis Reed, who presented a certificate to Dorothy Schultz in honor of re-naming the I.B.M. Ring to Don & Dorothy Schultz I.B.M. Ring 236.

Troy Keefer (aka Yort Spades) opened with a mini-lecture. Troy does mostly restaurants, kid shows, and nightclub magic. His emphasis for doing magic is to have fun, smile, and laugh. He demonstrated a trick called Copy Cat Jacks.

Michael Baker of Peoria continued with his lecture. He demonstrated the Five-card Trick, sausage finger, Gazinta Boxes, sponge balls, and a 52-on-1 card trick using unusual cards and an unusual finish. He also told us the

story of the Lost Adventure of Diamond Jack. Michael closed his lecture by telling us that he rarely performs any more, that most of his time is spent building apparatus. He showed us a Nest of Boxes that he built. They were very well constructed and very beautifully decorated. Michael also had a large notebook that was filled with pictures of magical things that he has built.

It was an enjoyable meeting and I am sure that everyone could take something from the lectures. A big magical thank you goes to Troy and Michael for lecturing and entertaining us. —Ken Barham

Assembly 120 Andy Dallas Assembly meets the third Wed. 7pm, (except Nov. and Dec.) For location call Jim Percy at 217-494-2222 or Ken Barham Sec, 2318 Winchester Dr, Champaign, IL 61821 217-841-5616 email: Kebram@aol.com

127

ROPE MAGIC NIGHT

WALLINGFORD, CT— The May meeting started with a brief business meeting. There was a discussion about the public shows where many assembly members had performed. Other business included information about the change to a temporary summer location. For the next three months the meetings will be held at the Libero Pensiero Society, 91 Dudley Ave., Wallingford, CT.

The magic activity for the night was rope magic. The host of the evening was Dave Wyskiel. First up was Jeff Duskos, who tested his forth-



Ray, Chick, and Dave learn a rope trick

coming act for a Seymour show with Slydini's Paper Balls. Then, Bill Hoagland performed Rope Through the Body. Chick Kelman, helped by Al Palmero, executed the Cut and Restored Equal/Unequal Rope Trick. Last but not least, Dave Wyskiel demonstrated many rope effects, including the Drop Not Rope Trick, Tarbell's Chinese Chain, and the Scarf Through the Neck. Remember to visit with us at the Libero Pensiero Club for our July and August meetings! —Anthony Martin

Our Summer meetings for June, July and August are at the Libero Pensiero Society, 91 Dudley Ave., Wallingford, CT. Contact Anthony Martin tonymartin@snet.net (203) 287-0805 for more details.

136

MAGIC OLYMPICS IN TUCSON

TUCSON, AZ— This month's meeting opened to a paltry twelve people. What happened to the "Assembly"? We have a great venue, with a stage and a bar, we have some of the best magicians in the world who take time out of their busy schedules to make it to the meetings; what happened to the rest of you? You have no idea how much fun and informative these meetings are.

A date has been set for the 25th Stars of Magic – August 25, 2012; that's only a couple of months away!

After a short break, we gathered for the highlight of



John Shryock and Art Trillo assists Mike Bekedam during Magic Olympics

the evening, the 2012 Magic Special Olympics. Contest results: Gold – Art Trillo, Silver – John Shryock, Bronze – Randy Atha, Gold (colored) Cup – Kenny Stewart.

Congratulations and thanks to all who participated. I think I speak for all who were present when I say, "It was a lot of fun for all." —Gary Husson

John E. Alexander Assembly 136 meets at 7:00 p.m. on the first Monday of each month at the Fraternal Order of Eagles, 1530 N Stone Ave Tucson, AZ. Contact Gary Husson profgary@prodigy.net (520) 616-8004 for more information.

150

WITH A TWIST OF THE WRIST

FORT MYERS, FL— Prior to the May 8 gathering, a generous member gifted all thirty-five attendees with six-inch pieces of colorful plastic shaped like an oar for a rowboat. "They can be used for paddle-move effects," he said. When several members admitted unfamiliarity with "the paddle move," Tony Chaudhuri was dragooned into doing a mini-lecture on how the basic sleight can be used in countless effects.

Demonstrating its versatility, he made stick-on stars jump from one side of a paddle to the other, change colors, and multiply. Next a Hot Rod erupted with gems of a chosen color, a multi-colored stick turned into a black wand with silver tips, and a paddle with pennies affixed suddenly sprouted dollar bills on both sides. In a discussion afterwards, one member told of buying inexpensive pocket knives at flea markets and switching the sides to turn them into color-changing pocket knives like those costing \$100 at magic shops. Another member said he'd seen Harry Blackstone perform "the move" onstage with a three-foot-long paddle!



Jim Flaherty and his dopey-rope

Next, a half-dozen brave performers stepped up to try to impress the gang. Jim Flaherty demonstrated a rope with three ends – no, four ends, no, wait, two middles, no – well, you get the idea. Dave Lounsbury rejoined the club after a short hiatus and made a card disappear. (Well, the pips went.) In response, Wally Feather attempted to make a full deck of cards appear from a small envelope. (When it didn't quite come off, he noted that he'd bought the effect from fellow member Tony Dunn and had received no instructions. "It would have worked if you'd paid me for it," said Tony.)

After Secretary-Treasurer Dick Payne introduced two guests from England, Allen Monroe and spouse, and announced that longtime member Don Cox was successfully recovering from a minor heart operation, a bunch of guys headed to Perkins' Restaurant. A few ordered drinks, but just to practice the paddle move with cocktail stirrers. —Don Dunn

Assembly 150 meets the second Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. at Myerlee Manor in Ft. Myers, FL. Contact Richard Payne richardhpayne@aol.com www.FMMA.org for more information.

157

MAGIC, MATH, NEW MAGICIANS

BEAVER, PA— The Mystic Magicians of Beaver Valley

(#157) welcomed the IBM Ring #13 for a combined meeting. Announcements were made about upcoming events: the S.A.M. convention in July and the GPMN picnic in September.

Teach and Learn was on "Mathematics and Magic" coordinated by Don Moody. He brought six different projects that he performed and explained, and he included written instructions for each one. Other members had suggestions and ideas to add. Ray Lucas emceed the performances.

Doug Ries performed a torn and restored toilet paper effect, a card penetration effect, and the Goblin Bell. Tom Chidester showed how he could make the printing on a pencil move up, down, disappear, and get larger. He then performed Will the Cards Match. Chris Williams from Ring 13 performed his third trick for membership by balancing a straw on a salt-shaker and turning it from left to right without touching it. Merlin Oldham blew up a long balloon and put in his mouth, until it disappeared.

Ray Lucas performed a clock-effect card trick. He also caused a participant to pick the only two red-backed cards in a blue-backed deck. Bill Cornelius had participant pick a page from National Enquirer and add up the page numbers. Bill wrote down a prediction and it matched. Trent Rapp had participant pick a card and place it face down in deck. Trent snapped fingers, and the cards turned face up and face down. Sean Evanick presented his first trick for the membership to the Mystics. After he apparently missed on a written prediction, he held a flame behind the paper and the writing changed to the correct card. Eric Davis had someone choose and sign a card that he put in a paper bag. He stabbed the card through the bag. He then emptied the cards from the bag and pulled out a shot glass of water. —Judy Steed

The Mystic Magicians of Beaver Valley meet at the Towne Square Restaurant in Beaver, PA meets the second Thursday of every month. Judy Steed (330) 525-5389

160

LECTURES AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

WILKES-BARRE/SCRANTON, PA— With several officers busy preparing for the “Carnival of Hope” to benefit a local cancer resource center, the meeting was conducted by president pro-tem Dan Kosloski, who presided over an abbreviated business meeting.

Several lecture options have been presented over the past few months and the club is eagerly preparing for a business lecture by David Corsaro. Several other names have also been suggested for upcoming months.

With a shortened business meeting we moved right into performances.

Phil Crosson was up first with a most entertaining version of the Professor’s Nightmare. Three unequal pieces of rope became equal in length. The equal lengths were tied together and wound around his hand. The individual lengths were then magically restored to their original lengths.

Dave Jenkins arrived with nothing, but decided to do something with nothing. By asking various members to name their favorite playing card, Dave was able to give an accurate “psychic” reading to each one.

Michael Kattner concluded with his project from our post meeting round table. Michael had Dave and Dan Kosloski as volunteers as he showed a collection of various coins. Asking Dan a series of questions, Michael had Dave secretly write down the name of the coin he thought Dan would select. After a series of free choices on Dan’s part, the only coin left was not a coin, but a subway token. Dave

had correctly predicted that Dan would select the token. —Dave Jenkins

Assembly 160 meets at the Iron Skillet restaurant at the Petro Truck Stop, 98 Grove Street Dupont, Pennsylvania
Dave Jenkins djen9999@gmail.com (570) 392-9459
<http://www.nepamagic.8m.com/>

161

JEFF CARSON & BOB LITTLE VISIT SAM 161

SCOTCH PLAINS, NJ— In March, Assembly 161 had the very talented Jeff Carson lectured for us. Jeff likes stand-up magic and had many great ideas to share. Jeff gave us insight from his many years of being a working magician. Jeff showed us his slow-motion version of the Professor’s Nightmare and added that you should never perform it with white ropes while wearing a white shirt. “Otherwise, it’s a mime act,” he quipped.

Jeff also gave us suggestions on the use of the Fantasio candles, Bounce/No Bounce



Bob Little

Balls, and his version of the stab effect using eggs. Using a large indoor fan, Jeff performed his Poor Man’s Card Stab. He also tipped his idea on Seven Keys to Baldpate. Overall, Jeff took effects that we know and put a unique twist on them to show how a bit of thinking and creativity can “put a spin” on these standards. Finally, Jeff gave a performance only of Cuba Libre, an amazing and mystifying bit of magic.

In April, Pat Colby our S.A.M. RVP visited our meeting. We were honored to have Pat join

us for dinner and our lecture.

Our lecturer for April was the Living Legend himself, Bob Little. Bob has been around seemingly forever and has a vast knowledge of magic. Bob began with some tips on card magic, including spreading them on the table and revealing a selected card using a card waterfall. He demonstrated card scaling and sliced through an outstretched newspaper page. Bob showed us an inscrutable cut and restored rope that is so easy that many of us should be using it soon.

Minute after minute, Bob went back to another card idea, opening a fresh deck each time, until the floor was covered with playing cards. Bob showed his unique in-the-hands Haunted Pack that intrigued us. Bob had a lecture kit that explained everything he taught us. Included in the kit were gags and clever ideas.

Being that our lecture was held the week of the one hundredth anniversary of the sinking of the Titanic, Bob generously handed out facsimiles of the original menu and a pin depicting the famous ship. Bob has the energy and excitement level of a teenager; he is very impressive. If you have the opportunity to see Bob Little lecture, get there; you’ll see a master at work. —Christopher J Smith

Assembly 161 meets at the Stage House Restaurant, 366 Park Avenue Scotch Plains, New Jersey 07076. Contact Christopher J Smith 908-332-4224 sam-161@comcast.net (908) 850-8765 <http://www.sam161.org> for more details.

181

MAGIC IN MAY

HIGHTSTOWN, NJ— Our May meeting was wrapped around a workshop by PNP and Hall of Fame member Dick Gustafson. The night’s theme was Rope and Coin magic, and Mr. Gustafson started his workshop with a presentation of a classic cut and restored

rope effect from Edward Victor’s 1937 book *Magic of the Hands*. Victor’s effect, which he called My Rope Trick, is a multi-phase effect that ends with an examinable rope for the audience.

The workshop continued with Ted Collins’s Panama Rope Mystery and other rope effects from the *Tarbell* series. Dick brought along enough rope for everyone to follow along, and soon the whole group was participating.

Mitch Geier continued the magic with his version of Professor’s Nightmare. Magicians, please do not discount this



Mitch Geier, Dick Gustafson,
and Coco

effect. I have seen Mitch do the Professor’s Nightmare for large audiences, and it is a crowd pleaser. Mitch then taught a simpler version using rope sets that our club President Stephen Sloan had prepared for each member to follow along with and then take home to continue practicing.

ERYX, our club Dean, performed Dean Dill’s Nana’s Necklace, which is a great carry-around effect, and a commercial version of another *Tarbell* effect, Grandmother’s Necklace. Jimmy Brown followed with a dollar and penny effect that he has not published in any of his lecture notes. Jimmy did a coin Matrix with some unique handlings and a very large ending. The magic performances were finished by Coco with an effect he calls Johnny’s Mom. Then it was off to the local diner for the after-the-meeting meeting. —David Zboray

Assembly 181 meets at the First United Methodist Church, 187 Stockton Street, Hightstown, NJ 08520 on

the first Thursday of each month, September through June. Doors open at 7:00PM Stephan Sloan lands10@optonline.net (732) 757-5337 www.magicsaml81.com

184

JOINT CONVENTION

ISRAEL— The thirtieth joint convention of the Holyland Assembly and the Israeli Magic club members took place during May 2-7 at the Holon theater.

The convention was opened by Doug Scheer, who lectured on kid's performances and connecting with your audience..

The Gala show was opened with a DVD on successful international Israeli magicians such as Uri Geller, Amos Levkowitz, Asi Wind, Haim Goldberg, Gay Bavli, Lior Sosard, Eran Rayben, Lior Manor, Nimrod Hrael, and others.

The show was opened by Tomer Dudai who gave an illusion act, followed by Lior Manor with a card effect, Nimrod Harel with a mental trick, La Mime Daniel with a great mime show, Dana & Daniel with a quick-change routine, Japan's champion Ho Jin Yu with an amazing manipulation show, Shoot Ogawa, and Jan Bardi with a mental performance.

Children's show performers were: Le Mim Daniel, Zachi White with a comedy act, Doug Scheer with a funny act, Ho Jin Yu, and Tomer Dudai with a new illusion.

During the convention a few professional workshops were given by Jan Bardi, Shoot Ogawa, Doug Scheer, Andrew Mayne, Amir Lustg, and Haim Goldberg.

This was a great professional convention. Shalom. —Yosi Notkowitz

194

A FIELDING WEST LECTURE

YONKERS, NY— Our May

meeting began with the introduction of Eric DeCamps, who is running for S.A.M. RVP. Also present was PNP Fr. Cyprian Murray, who will be honored at the upcoming national convention. We are also planning a charity show in June for Gilda's Club for kids with cancer.

Then our lecturer, Fielding West, demonstrated that there is nothing like having a full-time pro share his experiences and insights with those who are striving to be the best we can be.

After a brief retelling of his life in magic, he introduced us to his multi-purpose harness which, while originally intended for dove work, was shown to be useful in producing just about anything that fit into the harness. It also involved an audience member as Fielding spoke about "breaking the fourth wall," namely the "barrier" that separates the performer from the audience.

Next he performed a paper tear that was originally Al Baker's/Slydini's and which Fielding has simplified so it can be made up in less than four minutes. It was very impressive and I am sure some of the members will be using it. The vanish and transposition of a giant coin, the cigarette through quarter, and his vanishing finger ring using a unique sleight all bore the West touch.

His thoughts on transitional magic were highly informative. Where some performers use a rubber dove or vanishing bottle as a comedy bit in which they expose the secret for laughs, West urged us to use it as a strong effect that can transition to another one. Then came his method of instantly inflating a balloon, then swallowing a totally inflated 260Q balloon and producing it again from your mouth, a la a sword swallower. Amazing!

After a brief intermission we watched in amazement as he produced a glass of water from a paper bag and then

commented on how to produce water under a spotlight so it can be seen! That was followed by instruction on using a dye tube – he used three different ones – all the while giving insights into how introduce real comedy into one's act. His concluding thoughts were on the need many performers have of learning how to speak properly, present oneself, and engage the audience. He offers a three-hour course on DVD on this whole subject.

We have rarely had a lecture that was so eminently practical, informative and downright fun. If he is in your area, book him. You will be glad you did. —Fr. Dermot Brennan

Assembly 194 meets every third Wednesday at 7:30 PM at the Catholic Slovak Club on Lockwood Avenue in Yonkers, NY. Michael Piacente mikepmagic@aol.com (914) 478-1473

198

SPACE COAST HAPPENINGS

MELBOURNE/PALM BAY, FL— We've been doing "workshop" meetings on the Space Coast. After our "abbreviated" business part, we move into magic. Ring and String expert Greg Phillips handed out his specially made ring. We learned parts of his routine along with many ring and rope moves. Everyone went home with a great walk-around piece.

We had a Dan Harlan lecture that was great, his creativity and ingenuity are incredible!

We did a show for the local Girl Scout s and split the proceeds. The show began



Joe Mc Conn and the Girl Scouts!

as they walked in, with Cory Allen and Greg Phillips.

President Greg Phillips welcomed everyone at the close-up table and did his Ring and Rope, followed by Joe Massimini and a mindreading cube and four-coin trick. Joe was followed by Cliff Silverthorne, who did several effects and closed with sponge balls. Joe McConn did some clever audience participation mind-reading with cards and coins. Cory Allen closed the set and we moved to the stage.

Cory opened with the Color Changing Handkerchief and Rocky; then he introduced Steve Hart. Steve's part included cute girls, cute costumes, and cute magic including an apple, a stuffed bunny, and laughs with a rubber chicken.

President Greg closed the show with some message magic aimed at the Scouts. He opened with Russian Rings, a shoelace routine, Under the Shadow of His Wing, and closed with Bottle and Balloon effects.

We ended up at Applebee's to discuss the show and show off some magic. We decided our next meeting should be Impromptu Magic.

In May we discussed our upcoming fund raising at a local Jazz Club. Then Greg threw stuff on the table including coins, napkins, toothpicks, rubber bands, matchbooks, swizzle sticks, string, straws and dice. Steve Hart showed Karate Matchbook and a unique vanishing coin and pen followed by Cory Allen and a different vanishing coin and pen. The saltshaker trick was tossed in. Joe McConn showed card routines he's been working on. Richard Epps demonstrated his love of magic and Pete Crummey did several effects, including coins and a thumbprint burned into a sealed straw. Cliff Silverthorne showed his vanishing toothpick; and John Anderson rounded out things with some coins effects and a ton of other stuff.

The AI Fox Assembly 198 meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 7 PM. at the Church on the Rock, 4028 S. Babcock Street, Melbourne, 32901. Across from Palm Bay High School Club. Contact Greg Phillips 1-877-98-MAGIC, Greg@GregPhillipsMagic.com (877) 986-2442 www.SpaceCoastMagicClub.org for more information.

200 MAY MAGIC

SEATTLE, WA— For our May meeting members were asked to perform any trick or routine they learned from a book or magazine that they had never seen performed on DVD, or by any other magician. Our president, J.R. Russell, started us off by blowing up a balloon; as it lost air it multiplied into a blooming bouquet of multi-colored balloons. He then took one of the balloons, blew it up, tore off the end, and then reconnected it to the balloon. Mike Jacobs used the force of his personality to get one of our members to choose a card that he had written down on another card in a tied bag. Zinger shared the history of the word “dollar” and then caused four silver dollars to pass through a hole in his hand, one at a time.

John Cameron got us thinking about yin and yang and the opposites that make up our world. He then shuffled a face up half of a deck into a face down half, had one red and one black face up card chosen from the shuffled mess, and then magically had all the cards turn face down except for the two chosen cards. Rey Marx Gereda puzzled us by having one of four shuffled piles selected by one of our members. He had a card selected from the pile and then the pile was counted under the table. After some mathematical calculations, the cards were combined with the

rest of the deck and counted to the number calculated, which miraculously was the selected card.

Evan Reynolds shared an original close-up routine he’s developing. It was an astronomical explanation of the origin of the Earth, Moon, Mars, and magic. The club members gave constructive ideas to help him improve this well thought out routine. Can’t wait to see the next iteration. Mark Paulson shared a book test routine that he’s been working on for an upcoming show. Five people chose any number between one and four hundred. A sixth spectator who had just chosen one of three books selected one of these numbers. He found the page matching the number and read a sentence on that page silently while Mark drew a picture of the idea that was represented in the sentence. Mark’s drawing was a good representation of the idea.

Chuck Kleiner helped close the meeting by sharing a three-dimensional dragon created by Jerry Andrus for the third Gathering for Gardner. —Chuck Kleiner

[Assembly 200 meets on the first Thursday of each month the King County Library from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Please check website for meeting locations. Jim Earnshaw \[jimearnshaw@comcast.net\]\(mailto:jimearnshaw@comcast.net\) \(206\) 225-6715 \[www.emeraldcitywizards.org/\]\(http://www.emeraldcitywizards.org/\)](#)

266

SUMMER BEGINS EARLY

LAKELAND, FL— Although the calendar still says spring, the weather and magic were *hot* for our May meeting. President Ed McGowan ran us thru a quick business meeting that finished with the induction of returning member Beverly Kenemuth. Welcome back Beverly!

Before the big show Al D’Alfonso did a show-and-tell on the newest book in the “ology” series of books...*Illusionology*. Everyone enjoyed

flipping thru the many fold-outs and extras in this book. A great introduction to magic, it even includes a working, pop-up Peppers Ghost illusion.

Our entertainment was kicked off by Al who did Dan Harlan’s Awakening, a new taken on the Professor’s Nightmare.

Next up, Jerry Kardos showed off his building skills by demonstration his time machine. He sent a coin into the future and then retrieved it. Always beautiful workmanship by Jerry. Elmo Bennett kept Jerry on stage with a double-card selection while he told a story of his latest adventures. We laughed so hard we almost forgot the chosen cards. Beverly took the stage and reminded us how much we missed her storytelling abilities. She told us about a lady who had to choose from many suitors; we became children as Beverly weaved her magical spell over us.

Sensational Sammy, who taught us a four Ace routine with a surprise kicker, closed the night. He followed by taking the stage and showed us his Mental Epic routine that he uses in his shows. It was a great presentation of a classic effect. It looks like Central Florida is in for another *hot* summer for magic. Visit us if your plans bring you to the area. —Al D’Alfonso

[Jim Zachary Assembly 266 meets the second Monday of the month at 7PM at the Lakeland I-HOP, I-4 & US 98 Al D’Alfonso \[keeper0499@embarqmail.com\]\(mailto:keeper0499@embarqmail.com\)](#)

274

DAN TONG LECTURE

BOCA RATON, FL— We had a very large turnout on May 7, 2012, for our magic lecture. Two new members who joined our club are giant names in local magic circles. Richard Adler was voted “Mr. Magic” for the

state of Florida. He specializes in children’s magic. Richard has an outstanding vent act in addition to his magic. He also has a magic and costume store, which he operates in West Palm Beach, Florida. Ed Oschmann was recruited



Arnold Rosen, Pres. with Dan Tong

to Florida by Bill Malone to perform at the magic bar at the Boca Resort Club. He enjoys a reputation as being one of the finest card magicians around. We are proud to have these outstanding magicians join our group.

Dan Tong is a long-time professional magician, who specializes in restaurant magic. In addition to showing us some fine magic illusions, he also gave us insight into table magic tips of what to do and what to avoid. His lecture was most informative. Here are some of the tricks he performed: Cards across (using a holdout), sponge balls, Ring Flight, ribbon escape, Malini Egg Bag, ESP routine, Bill in Envelope, and a unique presentation of Professor’s Nightmare. At the top of the meeting was a broken wand ceremony for Sheila Rubin, our former treasurer. She always had a smile on her face. Sheila was loved by all and will be greatly missed. —Marshall Johnson

[The Sam Schwartz 274 meets at the JCC in Boca Raton, FL on the first Monday of each month at 7pm. Arnold Roen \[Arnold205@aol.com\]\(mailto:Arnold205@aol.com\) \(561\) 212-2575 ★](#)

Willis Benjamin White

Willis Benjamin “Derby Bill” White of Saratoga Springs, New York, died March 15, 2012; he was eighty-seven. He was a member of Assembly 24, the Jay Gorham Assembly, as well as I.B.M. Ring 186. In addition to his love of magic, Willis was a comedian and actor. He was a U.S. Navy veteran, and later worked in probation and in administration in the New York Division of Youth. After retirement, Compeer White established a private counseling practice, which included the use of hypnotherapy. A Broken Wand ceremony was held in his honor, celebrated by both the S.A.M. and I.B.M. – Rev. Michael Douglass and Helen Patti

Robert Joseph Geer

Robert Joseph Geer died in Lansing, Michigan on May 11, 2012; he was ninety. Mr. Geer was born in Providence, Rhode Island, on March 19, 1922. He served in the Army 88th Infantry Division during the Italian campaign in World War II and was awarded the Bronze Star.

After the war, he attended the University of Wyoming, graduated with honors in 1949, and met the love of his life – Vivian Anderson. He also then completed his Masters degree from Northwestern University (1951). Both he and Vivian dedicated their lives to educating the next generation. He served in various high school and college level positions. Mr. Geer was also a life-long magician and a member of the Magicians Guild of Lansing and The Society of American Magicians. He will be remembered for his love of magic, fondness of the silver screen, his humor, his sharp mind to the end, lifelong friendships, and his large, loving family.

Henry Mozdziej

The S.A.M. joins Assembly 104 in mourning the death of Henry “Hank” Mozdziej. Compeer Mozdziej passed away May 22, 2012 at Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital in Boston at the age of sixty-one. For many years, Hank worked at The Golf Club at Turner Hill as the bartender, where he entertained many with magic. He was also a Navy Veteran who served during the Vietnam era.

Memorial Contributions may be made in Hank’s memory to the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, 9 Erie Drive, Suite 101, Natick, MA 01760 or to Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital, Oncology Department, 330 Brookline Ave, Boston, MA 02215. – Rev. Michael Douglass and Tucker Goodman

Cherie Kay Sanders

The members of Assembly 19 in Houston, Texas, and other magicians around the world were shocked by the news that Cherie Kay Sanders (51) had died on Sunday, May 27, 2012. After complaining of headaches, Cherie suffered a brain aneurism. She was found on her floor early on Saturday morning and was “Life Flighted” to a local hospital, where she was reported to have low blood pressure, low pulse rate, and no brain activity. They kept her on life support because she was a registered organ donor.

Going by the stage name Cherie Kay, she was well known to audiences and to magicians throughout the world. Her infectious laugh and engaging personality were the first things you noticed about her. Cherie was a force in the magic world, where she made her way and held her own in a male-dominated field.

She began her magic career as a “box jumper” by being the “feet girl” in all of Walter Blaney’s appearances in the USA with his Blaney Sawing Illusion; according to Walter, she did this for almost *thirty* years. Often she would jokingly claim that Blaney helped her get her feet into show business, and that “Walter really gave me a leg up.” She also played the role of the “lovely assistant” for other magicians, including this writer. She appeared in my *Pure Magic of Dal Sanders* show for several years.

Cherie quickly realized that the assistant did all of the real work and yet the spotlight was on the magician outside the box. She decided to become the person who would charm audiences with her skill, her dexterity, and her words. She worked hard to develop the skills necessary to headline her own show. She made friends with people who could mentor her. She attended lectures and invested in props that fit in well with her personality. In 2000, Cherie and I reunited on stage with Brian Nordstrom (who did a manipulation act). We toured across the United States in a show we called *Magic Mania*.

Cherie was also a successful hypnotist. In fact, her last show was a hyp act for a late night (actually an early morning) high school graduation party. Needless to say, her audience loved her and no one sensed that anything was wrong.

Even though she had several shows for different audiences, her favorite magic was for family audiences. Children loved Cherie...especially little girls, who no doubt would go home after watching her, believing that they could do magic, too.

At most magic gatherings you would find her holding court surrounded by the famous and the not so famous. She was also the person who would plan the “extracurricular” excursions and dinners and then make sure that everyone would be there on time. If you happened to be in her inner circle, you didn’t have to make plans, you were comfortable that she had already done the research, had made reservations, and had made plans for transportation. She would have also secured discount coupons for everybody, if there were any available.

I got the chance to sit down with Cherie at the 2008 Combined Convention for a video interview that has been filed with The Society of American Magicians video archives. That video was published on the S.A.M. YouTube page (www.youtube.com/HarryKellar).

The memorial for Cherie Kay Sanders was held Tuesday, June 5, 2012, at the Freedom Center in Houston, Texas. The service was organized, directed, and led by Lanny Kibbe. As an officer of The Society of American Magicians, I performed the Broken Wand Ceremony. This was followed by a “Smiles & Tears” celebration of her life at the Last Concert Café in downtown Houston. Cherie would have loved being at both of these events.

Although most people thought we were related because of our last name, we were not. That technicality *never* stopped Cherie from introducing me as her brother. She told everyone that we were family, and in a way, I guess we were. She had even convinced the Golden Nugget that as family, she wanted our rooms at the S.A.M. convention in Las Vegas to be next door to each other. She was the event planner and social director at magic conventions and she took it upon herself to make sure that I met and networked with the people I needed to know...people that I would never have had the confidence to approach myself. She knew *everyone* and *everyone* knew her and loved her.

I will miss my event planner, party organizer, personal assistant, stage partner, and roommate...but most of all I will miss my friend, who has gone ahead to get things ready for all of our arrival to whatever is next. I will miss my sister. —Dal Sanders



Cherie in her element

Please take a minute and spread a few words of cheer with a card or note to one of our less fortunate members. Send additions, changes, or deletions to: Anthony Antonelly, Chairman, Sick and Convalescent Committee, (215) 820-3192 ext. 1512. magicforfun60@aol.com

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Excerpt From: *The FFFF Book*

Author: *Various*

Description: *Hardcover, 325 pages*

Available From:

www.magicbookshop.com

The Fechter's Finger Flinging Frolic convention celebrated its forty-second year in April. Many of the best close-up magicians in the world have attended this event over the years, but this year marked the appearance of something very special, *The FFFF Book*. It often takes much longer than planned to get a book published, but *The FFFF Book* may have set a record for the lengthiest gestation period. The original book was intended to be the third in the *Magic from the Forks* series, and was slated for release *twenty-two years ago*, at the twentieth anniversary of FFFF. Bill Miesel was the first to edit the book, with Amy Stevens doing the first layout and Earle Oakes providing the illustrations. Other editors included Glenn Brown, Lance Pierce, and Charlie Randall.

Some of the most creative people in magic contributed to this book, including Paul Gertner, Steve Beam, Pit Hartling, Dan Garrett, Phil Goldstein, David Williamson, Mike Skinner, Allan Slaight, Gary Plants, Herb Zarrow, and the head "Forker" himself, Obie O'Brien.

My thanks to H&R Magic Books for allowing the following excerpts to appear in *M-U-M*. —Michael Close

TOO PUZZLING! BY STEVE COHEN

In addition to being a very visual trick, this is also quite entertaining. A jigsaw puzzle is shown, unassembled, inside its box. When completed, the picture on the puzzle would show a jungle scene. The performer now shows a small pack of cards, each having the name of a different animal pictured in the puzzle. A spectator selects one of the cards. The magician reaches into the box of loose pieces, grabs a handful, and tosses them on the table. The pieces visibly join into a complete section of the puzzle that matches the selected animal. The puzzle may then be examined!

You need a small puzzle of about 100 to 150 pieces. The puzzle picture should have many different, separate characters; mine has jungle animals on it. The routine also requires ten 3x5 index cards. To prepare the cards, cut each in half, so there are twenty half-sized cards. On half of the cards, write the animal you will force. Write a different animal on each of the other cards. With all of the cards writing-side up, the different cards should be on top of the force cards. This packet of cards is in your pocket.

To prepare the puzzle, assemble the section of the puzzle that matches the force animal. This should require only four to six pieces of the puzzle. (You may have to choose a different force

animal to meet this requirement.) Place this completed section of the puzzle underneath the puzzle box, so the picture side of the section is against the bottom of the box. Place the cover on the box, which has all of the other puzzle pieces inside.

To perform, take out the box, holding the hidden portion of the puzzle underneath. Open the box to show the pieces inside and table it so that half of the box hangs over the edge of the table. This will facilitate an easy pick-up of both the box and the completed pieces with your left hand. Your right hand shows the cover of the box before placing it to the right.

Take the stack of index cards from the pocket, writing side up. Spread about seven or eight cards, so everyone can see they're all different. Don't allow anyone to see the lower cards of the stack, since that would expose the duplicates. Square up the cards, flip them face down, and spread the top nine cards for a selection. Of course, she will choose one of the force cards. If she wants to choose a card from the lower half of the packet, perform a classic pass, which brings the force cards to the bottom, and then let her choose one.

After you force the card, place the remainder of the cards into your pocket so they're out of the way. Pick up the box with your left hand, holding the assembled portion under the box with your left fingers. Grab a small handful of the puzzle pieces with your right hand and display them for just a second.

You'll now perform the Han Ping Chien move, releasing the completed section of the puzzle from under the box. This section lands on the table under your right hand as the right hand tosses its pieces to the table. The completed section lands under the loose pieces. After all of the pieces are on the table, you must push the loose ones aside to show the assembled section. This makes the whole action seem believable, since not all of the pieces are joined.

Here is a fine point on the Han Ping Chien move: Your left hand, holding the box, moves to the left as soon as the fingers release the assembled pieces, as in Geoffrey Latta's *Ultimate Han Ping Chien* (Richard Kaufman's *Coin Magic*, pages 122-125). This serves two purposes: It directs attention away from the box, and it gets the box out of the way of your right hand's wind-up and tossing motion.

A NEW COIN FOLD BY NORM HOUGHTON

This little swindle was invented for the sole purpose of fooling magicians. "*I have a new coin fold*," you tell them. From your pocket, remove a folded piece of paper and unfold it. From your coin purse, remove a quarter. Wrap the quarter in the paper and ask, "*Does this look honest?*" They have to admit that it does. Why shouldn't it? It is honest!

Hand the packet to a spectator. "*If you'll unwrap the quarter, you'll see where the trick is.*" He unfolds the paper. Inside is a copper coin — the quarter has vanished.

The only appearance of the coin fold principle is in the patter; the trick depends upon an entirely different method.

Wrap a quarter in a piece of 3x5 scratch paper, making as small a packet as possible. Take a copper coin of similar size, such as an English penny, and wrap it in another piece of paper, making

a packet identical to the first. Unwrap the quarter and put it in your coin purse, putting the refolded paper in a convenient pocket. The coin purse goes in your right pants pocket with the wrapped copper coin beside it, on the outer side.

To perform, bring out the empty paper and open it, talking about “a new coin fold.” Take the purse from your pocket. The copper packet comes with it, hidden by the fingers of your right hand. Place the purse in your left hand with the copper packet under it. Open the purse and remove the quarter. Lay the purse on the table leaving the copper packet finger palmed in your left hand.

Wrap the quarter in the duplicate paper and apparently hand it to a spectator. Actually, you perform my Palms-up Switch, which was described in *Abra* some years ago. It’s extremely simple. Display the wrapped quarter for a moment on the fingers of your palm-up right hand; ask the spectator whether the fold looks honest. The copper packet lies on the fingers of your left hand, the back of which is to the audience. Your left thumb brushes over the quarter packet, apparently drawing it onto your left fingers. In reality, the packet stays where it is; as your left hand moves away, your thumb drops onto the copper packet. Your left hand turns its palm to the audience as your right hand turns inward to hide the quarter packet. Without pausing, give the packet to a spectator seated to your left.

Invite the magician/spectator to unfold the paper. As he does, quietly pick up the purse and put it in your pocket, disposing of the quarter packet.

You can, of course, adapt the trick for laymen. Naturally, don’t talk about a coin fold. Upon handing the switched packet to a spectator, ask him, “*Is there any way the quarter can get out of that packet without unfolding the paper?*” He must admit that there doesn’t appear to be any way. Have him lay the packet on the table and place his hand over it. Tell him that if the trick doesn’t work, he can have the quarter. Pretend to make the coin penetrate the table. Fail, and say, “*Okay, the quarter’s yours...*” As he finishes unfolding the paper, add, “*...if you can find it.*”

COINS TO GLASS BY MICHAEL O'DOWD

This routine has given me and my audiences a great deal of pleasure. It’s one of my favorite routines for close-up work in bars, on the streets, or on stage. It’s suitable for performance before children or adults alike, altering the patter slightly for each. Two assistants from the audience hold your hands as the coins travel from one hand to a glass held in the other hand. Required are a glass tumbler and five coins; I prefer large American dollars.

I request the assistance of two women from the audience and ask them to stand on each side of me during the performance. The coins are in my right trousers pocket; while the assistants join, I get four of the coins into either a classic or a Downs palm in my right hand. At this time, the glass is in my left hand.

After making the ladies comfortable, I explain that I require some coins for this routine. I produce the four coins, one at a time: the first from thin air, the second from behind my ear, the third from my left elbow, and the fourth, which drops out of my nose. As each coin appears, it goes into the glass.

I explain that I am going to pass the coins along my right arm, down my left arm, and into the glass. The lady on my left is to act

as the good witch to help me make the coins travel; the lady on my right is to act as the bad witch and to stop the coins from traveling.

I usually have some fun with the assistants at this point, especially if the assistants are good sports. I hand the glass to the lady on my left to ensure that there are no hidden pianos inside. I give the lady on my right the four coins. It is at this point that I steal out the fifth coin; I immediately sleeve it. This isn’t necessary, but it is a nice touch to show the hands empty.

I retrieve the four coins from the lady on the right with my right hand and I toss them onto my left palm. They are displayed to the audience and the lowermost coin is moved into classic-palm position. I lower my right arm and the sleeved coin drops from the right sleeve into a finger-palm position. I curl my right fingers a bit more than usual and rest my right thumb against the right forefinger. Next I turn my right hand palm up and hold it under the nose of the assistant on the right. She sees an apparently empty hand.

I toss three of the coins in my left hand to my right, keeping the fourth in left-hand classic palm. I’ll refer to this as the Utility Switch. The back of left hand is now up; the right hand is palm up as I display four coins on the right palm.

I take the glass from above with my left hand; the fingers and thumb hold it by the rim with the left palm over the mouth of the glass. The palmed coin is ready to fall into it. The lady on the left holds my left wrist while the lady on the right holds my right wrist.

I make the most of this situation with some lines to keep the fun flowing. I ask the lady on the left to say “Gillie Gillie” faster than the lady on the right can say “Abracadabra” to ensure that the coins will travel. The lady on the right uses her magic word to stop them from traveling. I count to three, the ladies say their magic words, and a coin drops into the glass. Watch the spectators’ faces – the reaction is great.

I free both hands and give the glass, now containing a coin, to the lady on the left. I toss three of the coins from my right hand onto my left palm retaining the fourth coin in the classic palm in my right hand. At this time, I grasp the wrist of the lady on my right with my right hand. This is very deceptive – everyone believes the hand is empty. I’m careful not to let the coin touch her wrist.

After showing the coins to everyone on the left, I toss them back onto the right palm; again retaining a coin in left-hand classic palm. I repeat the moves, making the second coin fly across into the glass; only this time, the coin apparently gets stuck in my collar, and I have the lady on my left hit me on the head. I usually tell her to hit me harder, and when she does, I stagger a bit and say, “*I didn’t want you to knock me out.*” I then let the second coin drop into the glass.

I free my right hand and tell the lady on the left to take the glass. I toss two of the coins from my right hand onto the left palm, retaining the third coin in classic palm. I immediately grasp the wrist of the lady on the right, saying, “*I have only two coins left.*” After letting go of her wrist, I toss a single coin back onto the right palm while retaining the other coin in left-hand classic palm.

Taking the glass again with my left hand, I ask the ladies to hold onto my wrists again. After some more fooling around, the third coin ends up in the glass. There are two coins in my right hand and three coins in the glass. After freeing both hands again, I pass the glass to the lady on the left and toss one coin onto the

left palm. I again repeat the Utility Switch onto the right palm; the coin in the left hand stays in classic palm. I show the lady on the right the last coin and tell her that this is her last chance to stop it before it passes to the glass.

I have two different handlings on the last coin. In the first case, I tell her to grab my hand before the coin has a chance to pass. Just before her hand has a chance to grasp mine, I sleeve the coin using the Dr. E.M. Roberts method in *Modern Coin Magic*. In the second case, I bend my right arm at the elbow with the fist pointing upwards. I instruct the lady to grab my wrist and then place her other hand over mine. During this action, I have pushed the coin to the heel of the right hand and turned my palm towards me. As her hand covers the action, I let the coin slide down my sleeve.

I go through the “Gillie Gillie” bit again, watching the invisible coin as it travels through the air and lands in the glass. I pour the coins onto the hands of the lady on my left and have the lady on my right loosen her grip on my hand as I slowly open the fingers to show an empty hand.

My patter, which suits my style of performing, helps to make this a most entertaining routine. I hope that you have as much fun with it as I have had for more than fifty years.

HEARTBURN BY SCOTT WELLS

Effect: A young man’s heart is torn asunder as he loses his first love, and he believes he can never recapture that burning desire he once felt. While despondent and depressed, Cupid, the god of love, shoots his arrow into the young man’s heart. A fire is lit that starts with a spark, growing to an all-consuming blaze. When the glow subsides, the heart remains whole, thus making his life complete with the knowledge that he can love again.

The name of this effect arose after one of the “Forkers” hurled a comment at me at the nineteenth FFFF before I was able to deliver my last line. The method for this is John Bannon’s Shriek of the Mutilated, but I do claim originality for the following presentation.

Preparation: Remove the staple from a pad of flash paper and fold one sheet in half. Vertically cut out a heart, making it as large as possible using the maximum amount of paper. Unfold it and make a cardboard template that you can use to make similar shaped hearts on the remaining sheets of flash paper and on a number of sheets from a pack of cigarette rolling papers.

Fold one of the cigarette-paper hearts in half lengthwise, and then accordion fold it, making a long and very narrow strip. Accordion fold this again until it is a very tight bundle.

Fold the flash-paper hearts in half and place them into the package of cigarette papers. You also need a swizzle stick; the one that I use has a heart design on the end and was given out by Southwest Airlines. Sharpen the end of the swizzle stick in a pencil sharpener. This allows you to easily stick the paper bundle onto the end of it.

Decorate the cigarette-paper package with some heart wrapping paper. This adds to the romantic theme and takes away the negative images of the cigarette papers. Attach a bit of magician’s wax to the bottom of the package near one corner and affix the folded cigarette-paper pellet to this dab of wax.

Performance: Place the box and the swizzle stick in the left-hand pocket; put a butane lighter in the right-hand pocket. Everything is now ready for the performance. Begin the routine by removing the cigarette paper package and stealing the cigarette paper pellet in your left hand, concealing it at the base of your middle and ring fingers. Casually remove one of the flash-paper hearts from the box with your right hand. Table the package and take the flash-paper heart into your left hand displaying it at the fingertips.

“In everyone’s life there is love. And there is nothing like your first love – the one that makes you feel warm and tingly all over every time you touch and hold hands. And if the first love is the best love, then there is nothing worse than to lose that love.” Take the flash-paper heart at your right fingertips and pause for a beat.

“It breaks your heart.” Tear the flash-paper heart in half. *“Tears you to pieces.”* Tear the flash-paper heart into quarters. *“And shatters your dreams.”* Place all four pieces on top of the cigarette paper pellet in your left hand, subtly showing both hands empty.

“It makes your stomach ball up into a knot.” With your right hand, pick up the pieces of the flash-paper heart along with the cigarette-paper heart; wad everything up into a ball, which you display at your right fingertips.

“All seems hopeless; nothing can replace the love you lost, the feelings you shared, or the warmth you once felt in your heart.” Table the bundle and reach into the left pocket for the swizzle stick. *“Until Cupid appears.”* Display the swizzle stick. *“When the time is right, he draws back his bow and shoots his arrow straight into your heart.”* Pick up the bundle from the table and push it tightly onto the swizzle stick.

“It goes deep and impales your very soul.” Reach into the right pocket and remove the butane lighter. *“It is there that its magic begins to work.”* Display the lighter. *“It starts as a spark.”* Ignite the lighter. *“Then, as if by magic, your heart begins to warm until it’s on fire.”* Ignite the bundle on the end of the swizzle stick.

“It burns with an all-consuming fire that leaves you feeling warm all over.” When the flash subsides, the cigarette-paper heart remains on the swizzle stick. Table the lighter and remove the bundle. Table the swizzle stick and begin unfolding the cigarette-paper heart.

“You now know that you can love again, that you can share that warm feeling with another human being, and that you can be loved by others. Your fears, doubts, and depression are removed because you are now a whole and complete person; perhaps a bit scarred, burned, and rough around the edges, but then – nothing can be as good as your first love.” Display the cigarette-paper heart at the fingertips.

Sometimes the cigarette-paper heart bundle will fall off the swizzle stick after the flash-paper heart burns. Be careful not to let a fireball singe, scorch, or burn the performing area. Also, be careful not to let the cigarette-paper heart bundle fall off the table to the floor; the effect diminishes if the audience suspects a switch.

Since you present this routine with a great deal of seriousness, you may want to interject some levity, but not enough to detract from the romantic theme you have established. ★

TECH TRICKS

**MAGIC TRICKS FOR
YOUR TECH TOYS**
BY BRUCE KALVER

CLOSE-UP LOOK-UP

If only someone would read every card, coin, and close-up magic book and reference them somewhere on the Web. Doing so would allow me to find the effect I read twenty years ago. It would also allow me to credit the originator of an effect or move. Wait a minute; someone *was* crazy enough to take the time to do this! Check out archive.denisbehr.de and see the labor of many hours of work, during which he meticulously put in the details of every book in his vast collection all by himself. He is sharing this with the magic community for *free*! Think of it as a library card-catalog for magicians. Understand that there are no secrets written out or pages copied. These are annotations to help you find what you need. Only visit if you have a few hours to look around, because you will be caught up in the vast amount of information available. Well done Denis Behr.

FROM BEYOND THE GRAVE



A few months ago in my Android magic tricks column, I mentioned an app called **Houdini's Last Trick**. The designer has ported the app to Apple so iPhone and iPod Touch users can now perform it. As I said before, this is a

fantastic app.

When you start the app, you begin telling the story of Houdini's life and career. The app is filled with all sorts of facts and information about the showman's life. There is also a photo section that shows some of his most famous props and posters. One photo is of his family, including his mother, wife, and brothers. You then tell the spectator that Houdini promised to perform a feat of magic after his death. A card is thought of; when you have the spectator zoom in on Houdini's brother Nat, he will notice that Nat is holding the selected card.

Although the idea of a card in a photo was the premise of **Psypic**, one of my favorite apps, this app tackles the method differently and accomplishes it in a much simpler way. This is the way to go! The creator has thought of everything and he includes a very entertaining routine. This one has found a permanent place on my home screen. It is easy to do on the iPhone or iPod, but is harder on the iPad. **Houdini's Last Trick** is available in the iTunes App Store for \$4.99. (Also available in the Android Market for \$4.99.)

TRICKS ARE FOR KIDS

Walking around the Apple Store, I notice the multitude of kids who either own an iPod Touch or who play with their parents' iPhone. I'm sure the kids would like to perform some



magic once in a while, so here are a few iPhone and iPod apps to have fun with.

Magic Symbols. You've seen this all over the Internet. Now your kids can perform it anywhere. The app has you perform some simple math calculations to determine a "random" number. You then look up that number on a chart of symbols. The app tells you which symbol you selected. Free in the iTunes App Store.



Magic Levitate

Trick. Okay, I know this is a goofy kind of trick, and we all know the secret, but the kids will have fun with this. By squeezing your arm, you can get the iPhone to levitate and suspend in the air. The phone goes crazy with laser-like electrifying lights

as your "powers" lift the phone. At \$2.99 in the iTunes App Store, this is perfect for preschoolers..

Campfire Magic. Mac King reveals the secrets behind eleven different illusions in this impressive video collection. Rather than the app doing the trick, it is a great beginner's course in performing some magic tricks for friends. This is a great app that will keep the kids quiet in the back seat. It's \$4.99 in the iTunes App Store.

3D PRINT MAGIC

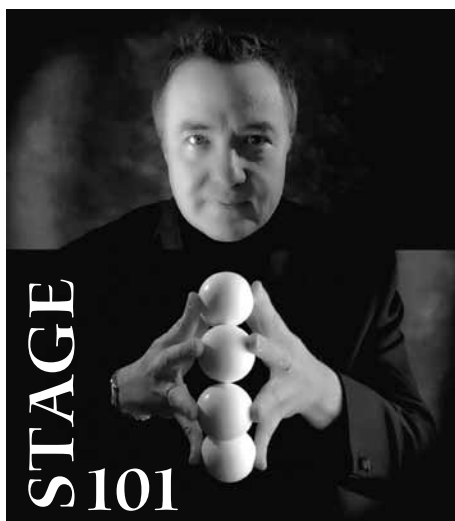


Autodesk is the company that is the leader in computer-aided design (CAD). There are now special printers that will print from CAD designs and will create 3D models of your CAD drawings in plastic and other materials.

Autodesk 123D Catch is a very magical application. Using the app, you take photos of the thing you want made, email the photos out, and they will create a CAD drawing and will print out (in 3D plastic) the part that you photographed. They will then mail it to you. The app is free. Download it and check it out

to fully understand what it can do for you. You can also visit the website (www.123dapp.com) to see pricing and such.★

Found a cool gadget, app, or website for magic applications? Share your discovery with Bruce to include in a future column. Email him at SAMtalkBruce@cox.net.



THE ORAL TRADITION

When I was a young man, I spent a great deal of time wandering around the halls of New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art. I found the incredible craftsmanship of the ancient sculpture, pottery, metalwork, and tapestry to be mesmerizing. I often wondered how these great artisans mastered their craft. Did they learn from books?

It turns out that before the invention of the Gutenberg press in 1439, most books were essentially handwritten manuscripts. The inherent high cost of making a handwritten book meant that most ancient books covered subjects that would mainly be of interest to wealthy scholars. Therefore, you may find many more ancient books on literature, philosophy, science, or religion, than you would on working class subjects such as woodcarving or sewing.

In the absence of books, the craftsmen of the past learned their art primarily through some form of apprenticeship. This basically means that they learned their trade directly from another person. Often the apprentice was a family member of the teacher and the skills were passed on in order to perpetuate a "family business."

This apprentice-and-master relationship is how much of the early magic was passed on from magician to magician. And since this was an oral tradition, there is almost no written record of the ancient magic. Take for instance the Chinese Linking Rings. We know the trick is at least two thousand years old because researchers have found a letter dated from the Western Han Dynasty in which a Chinese woman reports that she saw

the trick performed by a magician. But because of the strict Chinese tradition of learning arts via a master-and-student relationship, we have no written record and therefore no clue as to the identity of the genius who created the Ring trick.

In my opinion, there could be a downside to the apprentice method of learning magic if the student slavishly copies the teacher's magic and if he does not add his own interpretation to the trick that he is learning.

THE PRINTED BOOK

As mentioned earlier, in 1439 Johannes Gutenberg built his first movable-type printing press, which made the mass produced book possible. This invention spread like wildfire throughout Europe; at first the printing houses produced books such as the Bible, which were guaranteed to be bestsellers. Much later, as the Gutenberg presses were improved, it became cheaper to print books; as a result, more and more diverse titles began to appear. It would take about 145 years after the invention of the Gutenberg press for Reginald Scot's magic book *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* to be published, and another hundred years after that for a few more books to appear. In any case, the magic books that were published before 1868 basically tell the reader how the tricks work, but they don't provide enough information for the magician to actually do the trick before an audience in an entertaining manner.

Before the books by Robert-Houdin in 1868 and Professor Hoffman in 1876, an aspiring magician would most likely learn the craft by apprenticing himself to a professional magician. Or he would watch a professional magician many times in order to copy the performance.

But after that period, a steady stream of good magic books began to be published, and, in tandem, magic dealers arose to provide the apparatus that was described in the books.

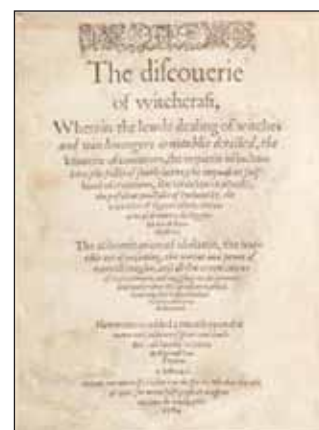
Furthermore, as the age of vaudeville came into being, the vast employment opportunities caused an explosion of creativity. This in turn led to even more high quality magic books. And so the twentieth century was a period in which a person

could learn to be a magician from reading magic books, practicing, and doing a lot of shows.

I would argue that a good magic book can offer a person a very good path to learning magic, because, in most cases, the text omits the personality of the author; as a result, the reader is forced to fill in the blanks and is therefore more apt to make a more original or, at the very least, a personalized version of a trick.

THE MOVING IMAGE

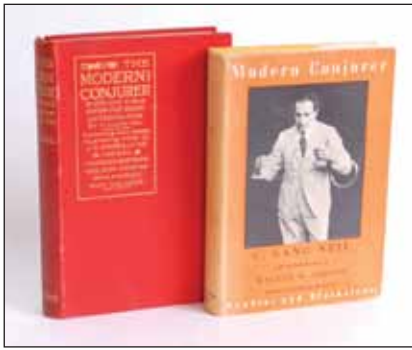
It is said that "one picture is worth a thousand words." I think that even Reginald Scot believed this to be so, because his *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* actually contained a few illustrations. Don't get me wrong, the old magic books are not picture books, but in some cases they used simple drawings to help the reader understand how a prop functions.



The Discoverie of Witchcraft



The next big visual step in the magic literature appeared in the 1902 book *The Modern Conjurer* by C. Lang Neil. In that classic book, Neil included hundreds of photographs, but it was not the first magic



The Modern Conjurer



book to use photos. What makes *The Modern Conjurer* unique for its time was that it used step-by-step photos to show what the magician looked like when he performed the routine. This gave an insight to the physical stance and attitude of the performer, which had never been seen before in a magic book. On another note, as far as I can tell it was the first book to depict a female magician, namely Lang's wife, who performed under the stage name "Mademoiselle Patrice."

I don't know who the first person was to make a movie that taught magic. A few notable early examples of this that I have seen are the Mystic Craig films from the 1950s and the Harry Stanley films of the 1960s. In both cases, they are motion picture films of magicians performing magic tricks and then teaching the secret afterwards. A few decades later, magicians continued to produce such motion pictures, except they stopped using film and instead recorded the footage with a video camera and outputted the final product to

videotape, DVD, or digital download.

This, then, is another source from which you can learn about the art of magic: by watching another magician performing, either live or on video.

HOW TO WATCH A MAGIC VIDEO

In my previous columns I have extolled the virtues of learning magic from books, but I must admit that the study of magic videos can be extremely valuable. I personally had a video recorder as far back as 1980. Back then, I don't think that there were lecture videos per se, but there were videos of magicians recorded from TV shows, and I am certain that the study of those videos helped accelerate my growth as a magician. I truly believe that had I not had access to magic videos when I was fifteen years old, I would not have perfected my old manipulation act when I was eighteen; it would have taken an additional three years.

Be that as it may, I would like to offer a few guidelines to help you when watching magic videos.

1. **Not every trick or routine is fair game.** Just because a magician is seen on YouTube, on television, or on a DVD doing a trick or routine, does not mean you have permission to do the same routine. If you have any questions about this, you can do a bit of research to check if the trick is exclusive to the performer. Often, a politely worded email to the magician should answer this question.

2. **Not every trick is for everyone.** The interaction between a performer and his audience is a complex one. Not every trick suits

every performer; an experienced performer knows if a routine is worth trying.

3. **Just because someone is on an instructional video doesn't guarantee that he or she is competent.** Today, it is very easy to make a video; consequently, there is no barrier that prevents a person from producing and marketing an instructional video. Therefore, don't automatically accept everything you see as gospel. Judge everything with a critical mind.

4. **The video is never the complete story.** There are far more magic tricks in books than will ever be made into videos. If you like a trick, do the research and learn as many versions as you can from books and videos so that you can have every possible choice available to you

5. **Don't copy exactly.** Just like the early apprentice/master way of learning can cause a student to exactly copy a routine, a video viewer can be tempted to make a similar mistake. It is far better to use the video to learn the basic framework of a trick and to add as much of your own personality into your version of the trick. ★

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Ellipsis* [ih-lip-sis] an omission of a word, sentence, or whole section from an original text

by Michael Perovich

Comments on the Glide

The glide is typically one of the first sleights we learn. It is often associated with simplistic tricks, yet Fred Kaps performs it quite elegantly in his version of The Homing Card in his appearance on *The Ed Sullivan Show* in the 1960s. (This is available on DVD as part of the shows featuring the Beatles.) The sleight allows us to show the bottom card of the pack (where this makes sense) yet pull out the card above it, leaving the original card in place.

As with many sleights, Dai Vernon had his own version. It is one I didn't really appreciate until I saw it done and explained. The description by Lewis Ganson in *More Inner Secrets of Card Magic* is serviceable, but the sleight is described incorrectly or at least incompletely elsewhere. Even the Ganson version can be augmented by focusing on the position of the hands when the sleight begins.

The sleight should begin with the pack held face up with the narrow edge toward the audience. The thumb is on one long side; the first three fingers are on the other. The little finger rests on the narrow edge near the performer's body. The free hand is held a bit above the deck, allowing the face-up bottom card to be viewed clearly. This set-up is essential to the illusive nature of the sleight. You do not start with the pack face down (unless the trick requires it, in which case this glide might not be the best choice). You begin by calling attention to the card on the face-up pack as follows, tapping it as described below.

The middle finger of the free hand now taps the face-up pack twice, about an inch or so from the edge. The finger remains on the pack at the completion of the second tap (Photo 1).



At this point, the hand holding the pack is palm up and the tapping hand is palm down. Now, in a fluid movement, this situation is reversed; the hand with the pack revolves to a face-down, palm-down position as the tapping hand, with the second finger remaining in place, turns palm up (Photo 2).

As the two hands revolve, they come a bit closer to one another. There is no perceptible movement of the fingers, although to some extent the middle finger straightens. By coming closer to each other, the bottom card is caused to "glide" toward the little finger. The little finger, acting as a spring, as Mr. Ganson correctly describes it, is pushed back. This exposes the second card from the bottom (Photos 2 and 3).



With the bottom card pushed back, the first finger of the tapping hand is now in a position to touch the second card from the bottom. The bottom two cards now move as a unit along with the tapping hand and the little finger of the hand holding the pack. This effortlessly brings the bottom card back square with the deck and simultaneously causes the second card from the bottom to protrude from the bottom of the pack (Photo 4).



Initially using the first finger of the tapping hand and then the first and second fingers, the bottom card is drawn out and placed on the table. See the exposed view of the card being drawn out in Photo 5. The cards moving as a block and the subsequent pulling out of the second card from the bottom should be in one continuous motion.

This is not quite as easy as it seems. With my hands, handling



Bruce's skin condition had its advantages. Unfortunately, when I push the bottom card back, several cards tend to spread back with it, making it impossible to pull out the second card. If you have this problem, you may have to adjust the pressure here and there to cause the bottom card to break free cleanly.

Perfectly done, this sleight has the impact of the type of retention of vision effect usually demonstrated with coins. It can almost be made a trick in itself, as you seem to be plopping duplicate cards on the table one after another.

This glide can be used to advantage in Dai Vernon's Matching the Cards (see *Dai Vernon's Inner Secrets of Card Magic* by Lewis Ganson). There is another switch involved in that trick, and next time we'll address some of its fine points. ★

a deck is almost like coating the cards with fanning powder. Bruce Cervon's natural oils were more akin to using rosin powder.

Photos by John Michael Perovich

COLOR CHANGING KNIVES

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CHRIS BONTJES: THE GIFT OF MAGIC

BY CHAR BONTJES GOTT

When you ask most magicians how they got started in magic, you will hear a story about a magic show that made an impression and inspired the purchase of that all-important first book on magic. For S.A.M. National President J. Christopher Bontjes, the story is very different. For him it was simply all in the family.

I should know. I'm his mom.

Chris's parents met when J. Gary Bontjes (dad) agreed to teach magic lessons to Charlene Pattison (me). The meeting was brokered by magic dealer Harold Martin, who had no desire to teach magic lessons (especially not to a *girl*), but thought it might be good for membership if a "pretty girl" attended assembly meetings. Harold pawned off this student on Gary because he was the only bachelor in the club.

At the time of their meeting, Gary was already active in Peoria Magicians Assembly 51 and a regular attendee of S.A.M. national conventions. His energy and enthusiasm for magic and his willingness to help soon came to the attention of the S.A.M. national council. He was elected Regional Vice President for the Midwest. By the time of Chris's birth, Gary had already started serving as RVP and was, although he didn't realize it, on his way toward becoming the national president of the S.A.M.; he was sworn in as national president in 1971 (when Chris was three years old). He was amazed and humbled by the election, and could not understand how an "unknown" could be so honored. He never saw his own contributions to the S.A.M. as anything more than being involved in something he loved.

"So," says Chris, "I was literally born into magic and involvement in the S.A.M."

Following the conclusion of his national presidency in 1972, Gary remained active in the S.A.M. national organization. Even though many years have passed since Gary's presidency, those who knew him remember the magic that was part of him.

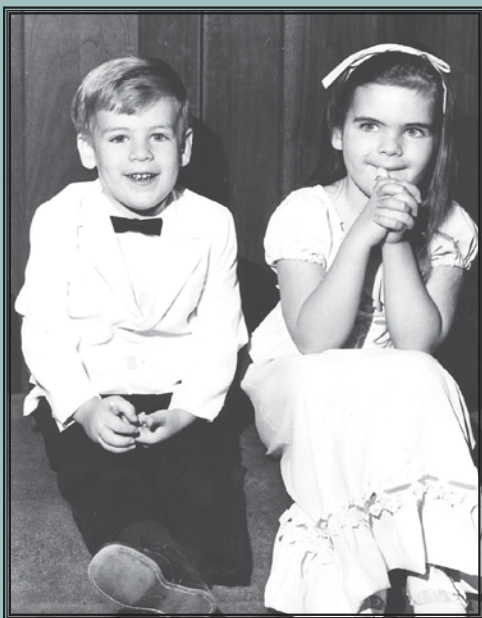
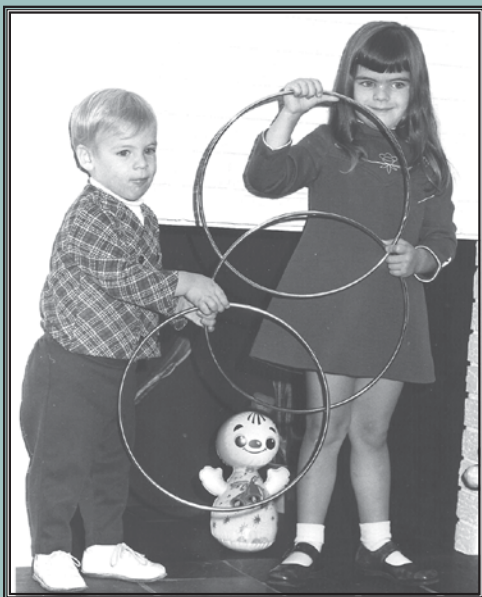
Brad Jacobs, whose presidency just preceded Gary's year, remembers administering Gary's oath of office and being happy that Gary would be next to lead the S.A.M. Brad's strongest recollection of Gary's involvement in magic followed a visit to our home. "What I do remember well was the library you added to your house just before I came to visit. I was blown away by the size, organization, and extent of the collection. Gary had a copy of every set of lecture notes published at the time – and he asked me to autograph mine. What I appreciate most is that Chris rekindled his active interest in magic and will now take the same position his dad once held – at about the same age. I think that is especially wonderful. His dad was a great guy. I'm pleased that the Bontjes name will again be part of the history of the S.A.M."

Past National President and Editor Emeritus of *M-U-M* Dave Goodsell remembers Gary's long involvement in magic and the S.A.M., saying, "When I became editor of *M-U-M* in the late 1970s, Gary had already been a Past National President for a few years. I attended every council meeting, and there was Gary, whether in Chicago, or Houston, or Los Angeles; he was devoted to the S.A.M. As I visited with him and his family in their home in Illinois, I saw how that devotion permeated his whole family. My earliest recollection of Gary came from the assembly reports he submitted to *M-U-M*. Using the superb library he had accu-



mulated, Gary gave references for every trick presented by each member of the club, each month. Now *that* is dedication. We developed one of those friendships where we wished we lived closer so we could hang out a couple of times a week instead of once every four months. I'm a rather solitary person, actually, so that is a rare friendship for me, lost way too early. To take a twist on an old pastry commercial, 'Nobody didn't like Gary Bontjes!'"

Another recollection of Gary's dedication to the S.A.M., to magic, and to his friends in magic, comes from another dear friend, PNP Dick Gustafson, who congratulates Chris as he follows in his father's footsteps as S.A.M. national president. "Since I followed Gary in the office of the president two years later, I had the opportunity to serve with him on the national council for several years. I was astonished by the tremendous volume of correspondence that he produced – literally thousands of letters to assembly officers as well as magicians everywhere. I am convinced that Gary did more to promote good relations between the S.A.M. and other or-



Cindy and Chris performing together 1970-72

ganizations such as the International Brotherhood of Magicians and The Magic Circle of London than any other president in our history.

“Gary always carried a pad of paper on which he would make notes concerning requests of other magicians...and he never failed to act on those requests. He had an extensive library that was more than simply a collection of books. Their contents were catalogued in great detail. I recall asking Gary if he could provide me with any information about the Gypsy Thread routine. Three days later, I received in the mail a long list of references to that trick. He did the same thing for countless other magicians. As a result of his many kindnesses, he became a friend to magicians throughout the world. He was particularly fond of Jay Marshall and Bill and Irene Larsen.

“Joan and I recall one of our happiest moments when we shared a rented house with Gary and Char in Colon, Michigan, as we all attended an Abbott’s Get-Together in the mid 1970s. Despite the intense heat and humidity as well as the lack of air conditioning in the school auditorium at that time, the humor of this wonderful couple created one of the most enjoyable weeks of our life. Subsequently, we enjoyed many more wonderful conventions with them.”

Dick continued, sending “best wishes to their phenomenally talented son, Chris, for an exciting and successful year as president of our prestigious organization.”

The friends we make in the S.A.M. are part of your family and never leave your heart. I am touched and humbled by the thoughts of many members of our S.A.M. family.

S.A.M. national conventions were the yearly summer vacations. The convention itself was the destination, not the host city. Chris remembers, “Growing up, I visited almost every major city in the United States, but I only saw the airport and the convention hotel. That was all right, though. We never went anywhere to be tourists. We went to be with friends and see great magic...and we always did.”

For many years, Chris and his sister Cindy had no idea that there were people in the world who did *not* do magic. The reason was simple – everyone who came to our house did a trick before they left. I didn’t realize how magically involved we were until after entertaining non-magical friends, I asked Cindy and Chris if they liked our guests. Cindy answered, “Well, they were okay, but we want to know why he didn’t do a trick.” When I asked why that seemed odd, they answered, “Everybody we know does magic – Dad, you, Gramps, our cousin, Uncle Harold (Harold Martin), and everybody who comes to visit.” It was true. We realized then that the magic community was our family.

It wasn’t long, of course, until Chris and Cindy were a part of the family magic show. They started when Chris was four and Cindy was six. There were several reasons for adding them to the show. It gave Gary and I the opportunity to share our love for magic with our children; it gave us an activity to participate in together as a family; the “cute factor” was a show-stopper; and, as Chris now explains to his audiences, putting them in the show was cheaper than hiring a babysitter.

We always put the kids last in the show. It was impossible to follow the reaction they received. They also knew that they had to sit quietly through the show and wait for their cue. After their trick was over, they didn’t have to be quiet anymore – the show was over.

As Chris grew up, Gary remained very active in magic both locally and nationally. On the local level, our house served not only as the location for lectures, but also as the



Gary and Char Bontjes performing the egg bag routine in 1980

hotel for the visiting lecturers. This saved the assembly money because there was no cost for the lecture venue or for a hotel room. It was also a welcome change for the lecturer, who could spend a night in a home instead of a motel room and eat a couple of home-cooked meals.

The unplanned side-effect of this was that Chris was constantly surrounded by some of the top names in magic. It took him many years to appreciate that this was a benefit. Gene Anderson, Michael Ammar, Eugene Burger, Ali Bongo, Anverdi, Daryl, Jay Marshall, and many others were common house guests. These were the people we ate breakfast with. At the time, Chris did not view this as anything special. It was just the normal course of life at our house. I wish there were pictures with all our guests and friends to look back on, but we only took pictures of things that seemed unusual. The pictures we hold in our memories are quite bright.

DISCOVERING THE GIFT(S) OF MAGIC

The magical life we led and the friends we made through the S.A.M. gave us many hidden gifts, gifts that it took us all time to discover. The time we spent together learning, practicing, and performing magic drew us close together as a family. It helped us to grow personally as well.

If you wonder how magic shapes a young life – and an adult life, for that matter – here's one favorite story about Chris. When he was twelve, Chris's school gathered acts for a school talent show. Chris, with our family's assistance, helped a classmate who wished to do magic for the show. After much practice, and two successful performances of the show, and with Chris as the magician's assistant, the final performance began. When one of the magician's tricks failed to work as expected, the classmate panicked and turned toward Chris for direction. As I watched helplessly, Chris simply walked toward the boy, said something to him, and they moved to the next illusion. The show was grand! When I asked Chris what he had said to the boy, his response was, "I looked him in the eye and said, 'Follow me!'" I think Chris is still the kind of leader who, when you need his help, will say, "Follow me!" and then let you be the star.

The gifts in our lives that appeared as if by magic have far exceeded the performance of any magical illusion. The way we speak, the way we think, our ethical behavior, our ability to solve problems, involvement in our communities, our respect for others, and the joy with which we greet each day have all been touched by magic.

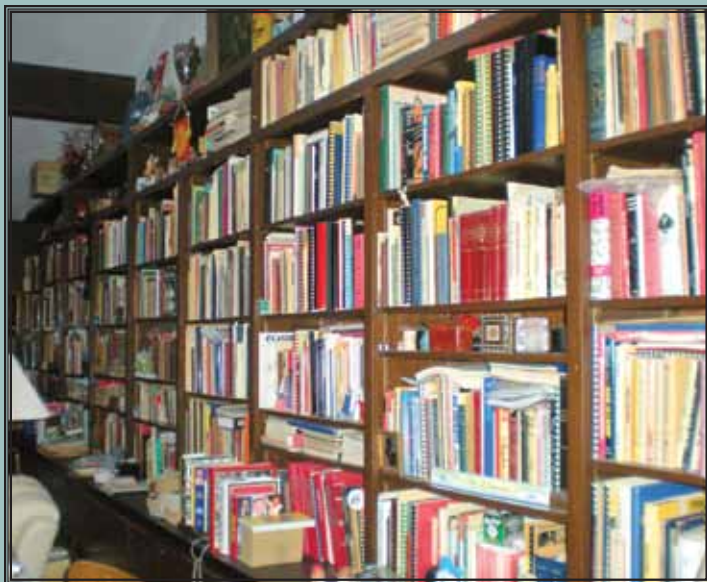
A MAGICAL "WOW" MOMENT

By his "tween" years, Chris had discovered that Gary had a great many friends in the world of magic, but had yet to be truly impressed by this fact. That all changed on a trip to Pasadena, California.

While there, we had gotten tickets to see David Copperfield perform. This was shortly after David's first television special, and Chris was very excited to see him perform live.

Following the show, we waited around in the lobby of the theater while David greeted his fans and signed autographs. When the line of fans dwindled to just a few, Gary and Chris started to walk over toward David for their turn to meet with him. While they were still some distance away, David looked up and saw them. He smiled, pointed, and said, "Gary – right?"

Chris was more amazed by this than by anything he had seen on the stage. "Not only did my dad know David Copperfield, but David called him by name from across the lobby!" It was this



Just part of Gary's library

experience that first led Chris to understand how well respected Gary was in the magic world. This began his realization of how special our life in magic was. He began to pay more attention to the magic in our house – both from visiting lecturers and other magical guests and from within the family itself.

ANOTHER "WOW"

Gary was an avid reader and collector of magic books and magazines. Over the years, he built an extensive collection of magic literature. As the collection grew, he read everything – and remembered everything he read.

Chris learned this as our family watched a television magic special. At the conclusion of the performance of an illusion, and at the beginning of a commercial break, Chris wondered aloud how the trick was done.

Gary simply answered, "Follow me." He led Chris into the library, walked straight to the correct shelf, pulled down a book, opened it near the center and, with two or three more page turns, said, "Here it is," and handed the book to Chris.

Again, for Chris, the magic was less amazing than his dad's knowledge of the books of his library. "Amid thousands of books, he walked directly to the correct book. With only a few page turns, and without looking in an index or a table of contents, he found the correct page," remembers Chris.

THE S.A.M. FAMILY

Another gift we received from our involvement in magic was becoming a part of the S.A.M. family. To call the people we worked with and saw each year at conventions our friends is to understate their importance to us. We shared our love of magic, but also our entire lives with these people. They truly came to be thought of as a part of our family.

We all understood this to be true from our side but, for a long time, we did not understand the extent to which our friends felt the same way about us.

In 1981, Gary was diagnosed with leukemia. While the disease was caught in its early stages, it was made clear to us that, though treatable, the disease could not be cured. The doctors told us that it was time to stop thinking so much about long-term plans and, instead, focus on the short-term.

We did some travelling and sight-seeing. We spent extra time together as family. And, of course, we attended the S.A.M. national convention. When the members of our S.A.M. family learned of Gary's illness, the outpouring of support was incredible. We would have attended the convention anyway because magic and the S.A.M. continued to be very important to us, but the compassion displayed by our magic family warmed our hearts. It eased our burden to know that there were so many people who cared.

In 1985 Gary lost his battle with leukemia. Again the support and friendship of our S.A.M. family was instrumental in helping us through our grief.

If I may be allowed a moment's personal comment, I would like to publically thank all the members of our magic family for the love and support you showed in our time of need. You will never know how much it meant to Gary and to us all.

One more personal note belongs here. To my children, Chris Bontjes and Cindy Swift – whether it was magic or just a blessing that made you so special, I could not be more proud of you. I will not forget your great love for your dad and your part in helping him – and me – through his most difficult moments. When he shared with you his deepest feelings about you, he was absolutely right. I love you both more than I can say.

A LIFETIME OF PERFORMING

From his very first days of performing the Square Circle with his sister in our shows, Chris had a love of performing. His magical performances seemed not to be enough to satisfy his desire to be on stage. He took up dancing after seeing his sister do that on stage. Before long, he also took up playing the trombone.

In their teen years, Chris and Cindy expanded their magical repertoire and began performing their own show at birthday parties and other small events that did not have the budget for Gary and me. This allowed the kids to expand their performing experience and to make more money than the quarter-a-show we used to pay them when they were younger.

Late in high school, Chris's trombone playing began to take over as the performance medium of choice; he chose to pursue a career as a music educator – a job dedicated to the art of performance. As was the case with Gary, Chris chose to put his magical performances on hold so that he could focus all his energy on his college education and building a career. The time required for



Chris and Julie in Pittsburgh 2011

practice and the study of music took center stage, and his love for magic, while still strong, took a back seat to his musical pursuits.

Chris's love of music and performing was his motivation for joining a community band near his first teaching job. This decision changed his life. He explains, "My first teaching job was in a town where I knew absolutely no one, but when I joined the local community band I made seventy new friends. Among the members of the band, I met my banker, my dentist, my insurance man, the pastor who later officiated at my wedding...and my future wife."



Conducting in Washington, D.C.

Julie was another band director from an area school; through their time in the band and socializing outside of rehearsals, she and Chris became good friends. After a couple of years, they realized that their feelings were growing beyond friendship and they began dating. In 1995, they were married in a church chosen largely for its acoustic qualities so that the music performed at the ceremony would have maximum effect. The performance took priority.

Shortly after their marriage, their family was joined by John and then by Jill. Although the addition of children to the family had the immediate effect of keeping Chris's focus on family rather than magic, it was ultimately the children who caused Chris to return to performing magic.

The kids' school librarian was organizing a school reading night themed, "The Magic of Reading." Julie, who followed the Bontjes family tradition by volunteering at the school, told her that Chris could help her to find someone to perform a magic show. When she came home and asked Chris who he knew that might donate a show to the school, he replied, "I could do it."

A trip to my house followed shortly thereafter, so that Chris could retrieve some of his old props; he began practicing again. By the time Reading Night came around, he had a thirty-minute show prepared. It had been a long time since a public performance, and his hands nearly shook off his arms, but when Chris saw the looks of amazement and heard the reactions of the kids in the audience, he was hooked again.

GETTING INVOLVED

Being involved in magic and other activities was part of the Bontjes family philosophy. When there was work to be done, or when someone needed help, we were there. We stayed and helped until the task was complete.

Magically, Gary was relentless in the pursuit of perfection. When considering adding a new effect to his shows, he would begin by doing exhaustive research into every method he could

find before choosing the one he felt best fit him personally. Following this, he would practice until every word and motion was perfected and completely committed to memory. Before adding a Linking Rings routine to his act, he set his alarm and woke up an hour early every day for six months to practice. At the conclusion of this time, he was ready to show the routine to the family, but not yet ready to put it in his shows. It still needed more practice.



He mentored many magicians from the Peoria area and beyond. Magicians frequently asked his advice because he nearly always had a helpful suggestion to make.

Professionally, Gary appraised real estate. He pursued and completed the highest level of education available to his profession. He was frequently called upon as an expert court witness in cases involving real estate valuation. He attributed his ability as an expert witness to his magic performance experience.

Colleagues called him regularly to ask his opinion. These calls were always taken and advice was freely given.

In addition to his professional and magical activities, Gary was an active member of the local library board. Once again, he was involved and freely sharing something he valued – the love of books.

For my part, I volunteered at the kids' school, helped organize and run school fundraisers, helped to sew uniforms and flags for the high school marching band, and did whatever else was needed to help support the groups and activities my family and I enjoyed. Gary and I encouraged the kids to pursue the activities they enjoyed, and to be actively involved in each group or activity.

The example of excellence, of helpfulness, and of involvement were set and constantly maintained. It was not something we really thought about as setting an example, it was just our philosophy. We believed in active involvement, in never giving less than your best effort, and in giving back to groups that shared our interests. We simply lived those beliefs.

This spirit became habit for Chris and Cindy as well – more through example than by design. It began with their inclusion in our magic shows and grew from there. Cindy became involved in her dance studio, became a teacher, and now runs her own studio – performing and sharing her love for her art. Chris became very involved in music and also became a teacher. His interest in magic remained and, when the opportunity arose, he and I became more involved in magic and in the S.A.M. by becoming Charter Life Members.

PASSING IT ON

When Gary died, several magicians approached us about performing a broken wand ceremony for him. We refused the ceremony because we felt that the wand had not been broken – the magic had not been lost. Instead, it had simply been passed to us and we were ready to keep that magic alive. The family continued to perform for the Breakfast with Santa show we had done for years, but I took over as the main magician.

Chris and Cindy continued to perform at the breakfasts with me, with Chris taking over the table-to-table close-up on his

own. They also continued their birthday party shows. College and starting their own families took them away from performing, but did not take away their love for magic. All through Chris's hiatus from performing, he continued his interest in magic and continued to read his *M-U-M* magazines.



John and Jill performing

Following his return to magic performance, Chris also returned to the idea of passing on his love for the art. John and Jill were eager to learn magic as well, so Chris began to pass it on. He added them to his shows performing the Square Circle. It was an especially appropriate effect. Not only was it the first effect Gary ever owned, but it was also the trick that Chris and Cindy first performed in our shows. In fact, John and Jill performed using the exact same props that Chris and Cindy had used years earlier.

Chris then turned his attention to involving Julie in the shows as well, so that the entire family could share magic as we had done in Chris's youth. This took some convincing, but Chris knew he had succeeded when Julie asked him, "But what will I wear?"

A shopping trip followed.

Once Julie became comfortable with her duties as a magician's assistant, she started to watch the audience reactions as Chris had during his nerve-wracking Reading Night show. At this point, she too caught the magic bug and has been actively involved in the planning and performance of shows ever since.

In 2010, Chris and Julie began a magic club to share their love for magic with more young people. As knowledge of the club expands, membership is beginning to grow. Chris and Julie are hopeful that they will soon have enough S.Y.M. members in the club to apply for a charter for a new S.Y.M. assembly.

After Gary's death, I became reacquainted with a friend from my high school who was a widower, and another branch was added to the magic family tree. Not unexpectedly, our S.A.M. family embraced this new part of my life. Continuing our magic involvement, Chris's sister Cindy and my husband Ed have become Life Members of the S.A.M. We all understand the value of membership in this special organization, and we will do all in our power to support it.

Our family is incredibly proud of Chris and his achievements in the world of magic and in all his endeavors. We wish him a wonderful experience as your president. I am sure he will give you his best. His is a story that, although it began years ago, has begun again. We hope you will follow his journey and follow the example that was set for him, an example that he continues to live by. Get involved in magic. Get involved in the S.A.M. And then, pass it on! ★

CHRIS'S PATH TO NATIONAL PRESIDENCY

When Chris returned to public performance, he joined Assembly 120 in Champaign, Illinois. He attended meetings regularly and began to get involved with the assembly and to help out where he could. A couple of years later, the assembly president moved away; Chris, because of his active involvement, was asked to take on the office. He accepted, and served as assembly president for several years.

In 2007, Andy Dallas – who was then the national president of the S.A.M. and a fellow member of Assembly 120 – asked Chris if he would be interested in running for Regional Vice President. Chris was humbled and honored at the thought of even being considered for such a position. He agreed to run and was elected that summer.

After a year of calling and emailing magicians all over the Midwest without having much of an idea of whom he was talking to, Chris decided it was time to meet some of these people in person. He hitched up the family camper to the truck and took his family on a seventeen-day tour of the Midwest, meeting with a new group of magicians every night or two. Again, Chris felt humbled and honored at the warm reception he got from magicians all across the Midwest and from the assembly members who got on the phone and organized a special meeting time just to talk with Chris about the S.A.M.

Chris had prepared for the trip by researching and creating a PowerPoint presentation on the many benefits of membership in the S.A.M. He talked about membership benefits with each group of magicians he met and was amazed to find that nearly every magician he met learned of one or two membership benefits they had not been aware of before their conversation with him. Seeing a need to get this information to S.A.M. members everywhere, Chris shared the presentation with his fellow RVPs around the world.

In the midst of planning a second summer tour of the Midwest – to visit the assemblies he had missed on the first tour – he received a phone call asking him if he would be interested in running for National Second Vice President.

The question shocked Chris and he was not able to answer right away. It was not a question he had considered. He was



Assembly 120 members

busy doing his best to perform the duties already entrusted to him by the S.A.M. In the days that followed, he spent a lot of time thinking about the offer and whether he was worthy of the honor. In the end, though, the time spent reflecting and soul-searching revealed nothing new. His magic family had asked him to serve. He had to accept.

As he served as Second Vice President, then First Vice President, and finally President-Elect, the S.A.M. family came repeatedly to his aid to help him learn the ropes of the job. Now, as he enters the national presidency, he feels that he is prepared, with continued help from the members of the S.A.M. family, to lead the Society through the year to come.

By following in Gary's footsteps, Chris will create a new chapter in the history of the S.A.M. This is the first time a parent and his child have both served as national president of our Society. Chris says, "Becoming the first to do anything in a Society with such a long and prestigious history as ours is truly incredible. Becoming the first second-generation president is especially meaningful for me because of the importance our family has always placed on getting involved and on sharing our love for magic with others." ★

—Char Gott

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THE ASSISTANT'S REVENGE

PART II

[Last month, Dennis described the evolution of his Assistant's Revenge routine, including his "Lady in Black" presentation.]

During 1974 and 1975 we presented both versions of the *Dreams and Nightmares* act for several magic conventions. In 1974 we did it at the MAES convention. That performance was reviewed in the December 1974 issue of *M-U-M*. Here's that review:

"Dennis Loomis and Bonnie introduced a novel act showing a toy store. Sleeping in a chair, he awakens in the store. From a small doll house he pulls out one doll, then a second, and then produces the girl dressed like the dolls. He did a rope trick, tying knots. In the Assistant's Revenge, both Dennis and Bonnie were strapped in a box by a volunteer, but the girl is the one who gets out and the man remains strapped in."

I don't believe in quibbling with the value judgments of reviewers, but I would like to set the record straight about two factual errors in this review. I only produced one small doll from the illusion before making Bonnie appear, and the Assistant's Revenge is not a "box."

In May of 1975 we appeared at the Herman Hanson Boston Assembly 9's Magirama/Magicale. This was a two-day convention, which that year was on Friday and Saturday, May 9th and 10th. This performance was reviewed in the August 1975 issue of *M-U-M*. I won't reprint the full review here, but they noted that the act was billed as Dennis Loomis & Bonnie, but Bonnie wasn't there. There was a simple reason for this. During the time we were booked and when the convention happened, Bonnie and I had separated. (Ultimately, we were divorced.) In this review there's a nice description of the toy store setting for illusions, which we used for our presentation of the Loomis Doll House.

We did the *Dreams and Nightmares* act on Friday night, July 11, 1975, for the I.B.M. national convention in Little Rock, Arkansas. In the convention ads we were billed as Dennis Loomis and Bonnie, Rising Stars of Magic. We certainly got strong reactions from the convention attendees...mostly negative. I expected we would be criticized about our levitation, because it had a "satanic ritual" presentation. But it was the BDSM presentation of the Assistant's Revenge that people remembered and hated the most. Many people at the convention sought me out to tell me that they thought it was awful!

The emcee for the show the night we did it in Little Rock was Howard Bamman. Howard was a lovely gentleman; he was a friend and onstage stooge of Don Alan, and was the former editor of the *Linking Ring* magazine. He introduced the act, and just before the Assistant's Revenge I had a costume change to get into the bondage costume you saw last month. There was no time to go to a dressing room, so I just exited into the wings and removed the outer costume I had worn up to that point. Howard was standing right there watching. As I started to take off my clothes he was very surprised, and when he saw what I was wearing underneath, he was flabbergasted. As I started to walk back onstage, he reached out and grabbed my wrist, trying to stop me; he clearly thought I had taken leave of my senses. I looked at him and I'll never forget his expression of shock and bewilderment. I yanked my hand free

of his grip and re-entered the stage. This performance was reviewed by Dick and Diana Zimmerman for *Genii* magazine. They said:

"Dennis Loomis and Company closed the show with some imaginatively staged illusions, opening with a motorized production cabinet. A dreams and nightmares sequence recalled childhood dreams with a toy land routine using a doll house. The nightmare was dramatized with Harbin's rapid escape substitution illusion in a bizarre setting. His levitation closer left the Bozos guessing when he raised the curtain behind the floating girl, giving a clear view to the back wall of the theater. Loomis deserves credit for trying to give his illusions a fresh look."

The act was also reviewed by H. Adrian Smith for the *Linking Ring*. He said:

"Dennis Loomis and Company closed the show with a flashy act of illusions, some of them entirely original and novel. A skeleton-like cabinet rotates on a bare stage, its bright lights creating a psychedelic effect. The canopy slowly lowers by itself and the magician emerges from within. The Doll House and Zigzag Illusion follow. 'The Lady in Black' is a fantasy in which the lady and magician rapidly and frequently changed places after the male half of the team is strapped in a cabinet. The performers are attired in black leather and the effect is presented with S&M overtones, providing a natural for the burlesque of the illusion the next night. The act closed with one of the best levitations I have seen in years. Puzzling and mystifying, even when the backdrop is raised, it must certainly rank among the most outstanding 'floating ladies' to be seen anywhere. The illusion closed both the act and the show on a strong note."

A few weeks later we performed at the SEAM convention, held in Greenville, South Carolina. This was very conservative territory to say the least; it's the home of Bob Jones University. This booking had been made before the premier performance of the *Dreams and Nightmares* act in Little Rock. When we arrived at the convention, folks sought me out. They had heard about the act we had done in Little Rock and were concerned that it would not be appropriate for the public show we were scheduled to close. I told them that I was planning to do the straight version of the act. They were relieved, and we were well received. However, before we could pack up, the convention director came backstage. He had received a lot of comments from the magicians attending the convention saying that they wanted to see the "dark" version of the act. He asked if we brought the costumes and props for that version. We had. Then he asked if we would be willing to do that version of the act at a special midnight show for the magicians. I agreed, on the condition that everyone would be warned about what the act was like. He promised that he would do so.

As we got ready for that special midnight show, I was concerned that there would be a small audience. But I peeked through the curtain just before we started and did a rough count; it was apparent that nearly all of the conventioners were there! The magicians received the early part of the act very well and the applause was good. But when we did the "Lady in Black" we had that same stunned silence that we had gotten in Little Rock. The next morning I got negative comments from several of the magicians present, this despite the fact that they had been warned

not to come if they were easily offended.

A day or two after I got home from the SEAM I got a call from Recil Bordner at Abbott's. Recil booked us to close the Friday night show (August 22, 1975) at the Abbott's Get-Together. Recil and the crew at Abbott's were very helpful when I made some changes to my levitation. He'd seen a tape of our appearance on *Wonderama* and had heard about our act at Little Rock. I asked if he wanted us to do the "clean" version of the act, and I was amazed that he wanted the "dark" version! And so that's what we did in Colon. Again, I got a lot of criticism for it...but at least the magic world was talking about us. My old friend Jim Robertson reviewed the act for *Genii* magazine and chastised me in print for doing it. I'm happy to say that our friendship has survived to the present day. In fact, Jim worked very hard with me on this article. He did most of the research and is solely responsible for finding all of the dates of the shows and the reviews in assorted magic magazines; he even pitched in as proofreader. Thanks, Jim, I owe you big time.

Frances Ireland Marshall also reviewed our performance in Colon, but her write-up was for *The New Tops*:

"I'm not sure Colon is ready for a couple of hide-bound flagellants, but Dennis Loomis and Company took the audience into the pages of Pandemonium and gave them a look at how the other half lives. The act is being readied for the rock-concert audiences in colleges, where it should do very well. At least, it won't have to be explained. The opening moment, where Dennis, in effect, produced himself in a version of the Tabouret Illusion, should get the act off to an exciting start. Better than the Portal, but much more trouble, I imagine."

I believe that it was shortly after the Abbott's Get-Together that we performed at NYCAN. They wanted and got the straight version of the act.

In September of 1975 we performed at Larry Weeks's One-Day Convention. There's a brief mention of it in the December issue of *Genii* by Bill Larsen in his Bagdad pages. There are also some nice Irving Desfor photos of the "straight" version of the Assistant's Revenge. He indicated that I was working with my "wife" Lucy. We weren't married, of course. Actually Larry had set up three engagements for us in the New York City area over the course of seven or eight days. We performed our "clean" illusion act for his convention, and he booked me to do a lecture for the magicians of Manhattan on Wednesday evening of that week; we also did two shows a night at a nightclub on Long Island on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.

Larry was working on one other booking. He had told me that he might be able to get me on the Bob McAllister TV show on Sunday. However, in the days leading up to our New York trip, I called and talked to Larry several times. Everything was falling into place for the week except that he couldn't promise the *Kids Are People, Too* gig. Even when we got to New York it wasn't firm. When I did the lecture, Doug Henning introduced me. He had to leave to get to the Cort Theatre to perform in *The Magic Show*. But he invited me to come to his loft in the Village later so that we could hang out. Charlie Reynolds had come to the lecture site along with Doug, and he stayed and watched the lecture. Afterwards he was very complimentary, especially noting that he liked my Cups and Balls routine and my version of the Doll House.

After the lecture, Charlie and I went down to Doug's place in the Village. Doug inquired about my bookings for the rest of the week. I told him about the nightclub on the Island, Larry's convention, and mentioned that I "might" be doing the McAllister show on Sunday. He asked why I wasn't sure, and I explained that Larry Weeks was working on it. Doug laughed a very hearty

laugh and broke it to me that McAllister and his producer, Dennis Marks, hated Weeks. Doug asked me to "Hold on a minute," and he picked up the phone. He called Dennis Marks at home and told him that he and I had been friends for years and that I did some very good magic. He made an appointment for me to talk to Marks the following morning at Metro-Media Studios. I did. He didn't ask me to audition, but we discussed the details of the performance. He told me what time to report, and that was that; Doug's endorsement was all he needed to hear.

I was surprised that the TV studio was on the tenth story of the building and I was rather concerned about getting our props up there and then finding parking. I was amazed when Marks took me over and showed me the biggest elevator I had ever seen. We were to drive our van into the elevator on the ground floor and just ride up. On Sunday morning, we drove the van off the elevator right into the space we were going to perform. It was the easiest load-in imaginable. There was a place right in the studio for the van to park.

At Larry's convention I met the young David Copperfield. He saw our straight presentation of the Assistant's Revenge and apparently was impressed. Later, when he was staging the magic for the musical *The Magic Man* in Chicago, he had an Assistant's Revenge made and did a very effective presentation that was quite different from mine. Years later when I visited David in his dressing room at Caesar's Tahoe the picture seen in Photo 1 was taken. (It used to be on the front page of my website. The caption was "One of these guys is a busy and successful professional magician; the other one you can't afford. In case you don't recognize him, that's David Copperfield standing next to Dennis Loomis.")



David provides complimentary seats to many of his magician friends and often invites them to come to his dressing room after the show. He usually gets their feedback (both positive and negative) to his performance, especially when he is working on new routines. Over the years I've met lots of magicians backstage after David's show, including Don Wayne, Chris Kenner, Gary Ouellette, Mark Kornhauser, Channing Pollock, and my old buddy Michael Keating, who was working for David at the time. At one of David's shows, I got to sit at the same table as Claudia Schiffer! Once, David was in the audience at the Magic Castle when I performed the straight version of the *Dreams and Nightmares* act. He came backstage and we sat and chatted in that very small dressing room between the Palace and the Parlor. I mentioned that we met the first time at Larry Weeks's Convention in New York City. He pointed out that we actually met the first time at Sardi's Restaurant in New York the night of the opening of *The Magic Show*. I had come into town for that opening; after the show a bunch of us went to Sardi's to await the newspaper

A HOUSE OF FIRE VISIT AMAZING FIRE MAGIC .COM

reviews. David had been in the alley outside the Cort Theatre and followed the group when we came out and headed for Sardi's. He tagged along and was able to crash the party. That was the first time we met.

Spectacle, Inc. had been on hiatus over the summer of 1975 because several of the key people were not in Ann Arbor. In the fall we had a meeting; it was clear that the motivation to continue was low. We disbanded the fledgling company and I retired the *Dreams and Nightmares* act. I had done it as the opening act for three or four rock concerts and discovered that I hated those shows. First, the huge stage was ninety-nine percent covered with the equipment for the "star" act, and second, the small amount of space we had left to work in was covered with electrical cords, making it almost impossible to roll our illusions around.

One last comment: Few of my friends in magic liked the "Lady in Black" scene, but there was one big exception...the young Franz Harary. He lived in Ann Arbor, as I did at the time, and was a junior member of our I.B.M. Ring. He had the bug for big illusions, and was quite taken with the stuff I was designing and performing at the time. Recently, I attended one of his shows at an Indian Casino in Northern California. A group of magicians met with Franz before his show and I told them about the young Franz of the Seventies. I mentioned that every time I built a new illusion, he wanted me to make a copy of it for him. Franz's comment was, "Hell, I wanted to be you!" Below is a picture of Franz and me in his suite at the Horizon Casino in Lake Tahoe after one of his shows. ★



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MAGICIANS PERFORM AT CCAW

From March 26-28, 2012, the seventh annual Conference on Crimes against Women (CCAW) was held at the Sheraton Hotel in downtown Dallas, Texas. The conference boasted over one thousand registered attendees this year, and was co-presented by the Dallas Genesis Women's Shelter and the Dallas Police Department. The conference also had an unexpected partnership with a team of local Dallas magicians, who – for the second year in a row – performed for attendees after the first day of workshops.

The CCAW provides training to those people employed by governmental or non-profit agencies in the fields of law enforcement, prosecution, social work, victim's advocacy, therapy, probation/parole, campus safety, and medicine, and who work directly with victims of crime. Attendees traveled to Dallas from forty-three states plus Washington D.C. and Puerto Rico, Mexico, and Canada.

Over the course of three days, workshop topics included domestic violence, sexual assault, serial killers, stalkers, prostitution and human trafficking, substance abuse, Internet crimes, and victim advocacy. Interestingly, this year also featured a talk titled "Detecting Deception," which caught the attention of the participating magicians.

So how did four magicians get involved in such an event? Dr. Reade Quinton, a Dallas County medical examiner, was discussing lecture topics of the upcoming conference with Bill Walsh, a retired lieutenant of the Dallas Police Department and one of the event coordinators. As the conversation went on, Bill invited Reade to the evening social event after the first day of the conference, which typically features music, blackjack tables, raffles, food, and drinks. It was considered a nice way for the attendees to wind down after the first day of workshops.

"In fact, you would love it," said Bill, knowing that Reade was also a magician. "The theme involves blackjack and gambling – you could bring a deck of cards!"

After the initial joking around wore off, Bill and Reade realized that a magician could fit perfectly into the theme of the event. Given the size of the conference, Reade called on local magicians for assistance.

"I love magic, and I love to perform, but I also acknowledge that I am a hobbyist with little experience in this type of setting," said Reade. "Thankfully, Dallas has a large and wonderful magic community, and I have many friends in the Dallas magic clubs."

Dr. Quinton was joined by two past presidents of the Dallas magic clubs – Mike Squires and Ian Richards – and National First Vice President of The Society of American Magicians, Dal Sanders.

"It has been more fun than I could have ever imagined," said Reade. "I would not consider myself experienced in table-hopping, but I do have an intimate understanding of this

particular crowd – I work with these people every day. My father and my father-in-law are both retired law enforcement officers, and I have been a medical examiner in Dallas for eight years. I can relate to these people on a meaningful level – and I understand what they are going through."

Ian, Mike, Reade, and Dal stunned the crowds with cards, coins, rings, and anything else they could get their hands on. The room encompassed one entire floor near the top of the Sheraton, with a great view of the city. Attendees mingled at small tables, catching up with colleagues, discussing cases, and making new contacts. When the magicians approached a table, there was one common thread – smiles and laughter.

In reference to the event, Bill Walsh said, "The magicians played a big part in helping the conference attendees briefly put aside the violent crimes that were discussed in the workshops that they attended throughout the day. The card tricks, the jokes, and the illusions were magical in putting a smile on everyone's face after a tough day of training."

While the magicians did not charge for the event, they did not go away empty-handed. The CCAW made a donation to the local S.Y.M. Assembly 73 that covers costs of the meetings and supplies for the year.

To Dal Sanders, the conference is exactly what being a magician is all about:

"Traditionally, members of The Society of American Magicians celebrate National Magic Week during the last week of October with charitable

donations of their time and talent. The S.A.M. named October 31st National Magic Day as a tribute to Past National President Harry Houdini, who was well known for his generosity for those who needed help. National Magic Day grew to National Magic Week and now that has grown into a culture of giving back within the organization.

"As magicians, we have the unique ability to help people forget about their problems, if only for a little while. The four of us who were invited to entertain at the Conference on Crimes against Women feel fortunate to have helped lighten the mood of the conference delegates while they pursued their incredibly difficult work. This spirit of giving back to our community is what makes me proudest of being a national officer (and future president) of The Society of American Magicians."

Events such as this highlight the need for specialized experts in law enforcement, medicine, and social services, but who gives care to these caregivers? It is no surprise that law enforcement and other experts in this arena have a higher rate of burn out, depression, divorce, and even suicide. In a conference that touches on so many difficult subjects, it is nice to know that a little magic can make a difference. ★

—Reade Quinton and Dal Sanders



From left: Mike Squires, Ian Richards, Dal Sanders, and Reade Quinton. Photo courtesy of Hailey Hamilton

Illusions of Grandeur

Seeing Double

by David Seebach

For any illusionist who stays in the magic field for an extended career and who enlarges, upgrades, and improves his or her repertoire, there comes a time when the mystery worker will require the services of twins to create an intended magical effect.

The ideal situation, of course, would be to find identical twins of the proper age who are enthusiastic about performing and being part of a stage magic show. Even more ideal would be to have these twins be the magician's daughters, but the odds of such a rare birth are not in most people's favor.

This should not, however, be cause for concern; I have found that it is not difficult to create "twins" who will fool almost any audience.

Abbott's used to offer an odd – and expensive – illusion called the Oriental Cabinets. The outfit consisted of a short cabinet stage left and a tall cabinet stage right. Both were shown empty and then an assistant entered the tall cabinet, standing upright. The magic was visual; the tall cabinet began to shrink and the short one began to expand. The assistant was found to be in the new tall cabinet. By the time I was a teenager this illusion had been dropped from Abbott's offerings, but I obtained the plans, and a good friend saw it as a challenge and commenced to build the entire outfit.

As pictured in the Abbott catalog there was a design to each cabinet. Sadly, this was not duplicated for the prop I was to use. The cabinet's sides were actually roller shades that could roll up or unroll as needed for the shrinking/growing effect. The assistants accomplished this manually. There were four posts – one in each of each cabinet's corners – that were telescopic. As I recall, the assistant in the original short cabinet was concealed via the well known method of a Doll House Illusion. And that's the position the other woman took to disappear as her cabinet shrank.

I have no idea how effective the real Abbott version was. I performed this in 1975 and I do not recall much of a reaction.

Owen Magic offered their Flyto Illusion, which consisted of two latticed cabinets of identical size. These were illuminated from within a la the Shadow Box Illusion. When an assistant was placed into a cabinet, the interior illumination revealed her silhouette. Vanishing from one cabinet, she reappeared in the other. I have never seen this act performed, but it has always intrigued me.

Three years before my experience with the home-built

Oriental Cabinets, I commissioned Abbott's to supply me with their Girl, Cabinet & Tabouret Illusion, which is an excellent prop that too many illusionists have overlooked. This is a real fooler! I premiered it in January 1972.

One year later I had Abbott's build their Drum Illusion for me. It's a "standard" version with the drum introduced on an open-front box. You see this more often today on a deceptive illusion base, but I think that's an "improvement" that fails. The old-fashioned design is much more deceptive and baffling.

My idea, back in 1973, was to stage the Tabouret and Drum together, hoisting both props up in the air and having the assistant vanish from the former and instantly appear in the latter. This concept was extremely effective. It's a sensational effect for the situation in which the performer has plenty of onstage and offstage help and a big, well-equipped venue.

To restage this act in the 1980s I began by calling some area high schools that were close to the theater I was to perform in. I introduced myself over the phone and said I was looking for female twins for an onstage role in a magic act. I was surprised how easy it was. I had a wonderful pair of twins almost immediately. Both girls returned to recreate their roles in other editions of the show.

Since I couldn't tell them apart during rehearsals, I was not worried that the audience would, either. It was key, though, that only one of these girls was ever onstage at any other part of the show.

I once again presented this routine just a couple of years ago in my annual Halloween production. We did not use twins; we used "doubles." By that I mean we dressed two assistants who did not look at all alike in matching costuming. They were approximately the same size. Costuming, hosiery, shoes, and – most important – wigs were all identical.

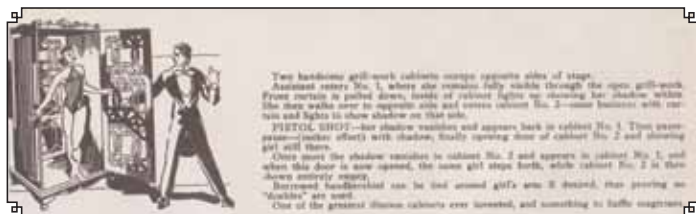
So, did they look alike? Well, not really, so the rest was just a little psychology.

The assistant who was going to appear within the Drum Illusion was Kristine. She was seen throughout the show and I made sure to use her name whenever she was onstage. As we began this routine, the other assistant came out to enter the Tabouret prop. Her name was Genevieve, but, of course, I called her Kristine.

The bunched-up fabric of the Tabouret's curtain partially obscured her face and I adopted the tactic of "Don't Run When Nobody Is Chasing You." The spectators had no idea of what



Abbott's Girl, Cabinet & Tabouret Illusion



Owen Magic's Flyto Illusion

was about to occur. Genevieve, as Kristine, vanished from the Tabouret and the real Kristine appeared in the Drum. Now the audience can inspect her as closely as they'd like, but we have nothing to hide.

The original Owen Flyto routine uses a similar subterfuge, plus they add the borrowed handkerchief feature. In this case, girl number one is introduced and a man's handkerchief is borrowed from the crowd. It's tied around the girl's arm. She enters the first cabinet, but, unknown to the observers, a second assistant is concealed within this cabinet. This second assistant has a handkerchief tied around her arm, too. The two assistants switch places; girl number one conceals herself. As the routine continues, girl number two exits the first cabinet and enters the other cabinet, where she promptly conceals herself. The magic happens and the assistant seems to travel instantly across the stage, from cabinet two back to cabinet one. When she emerges, it is the very same girl and she has the man's handkerchief to prove it all.

In 1977 I decided to add the Cannon Illusion to this mix. To this date it remains the only prop in my show that I had a hand in building. With some help from my brother I created a crude, but serviceable, version from Thayer blueprints. I've used this prop to "fire" an assistant into the hanging Drum or the Crystal Casket.

I don't believe we ever used twins; we used doubles. I always used the same switching scenario. First, I made sure the assistant was seen by the audience earlier in the show. I used her name. She was introduced and brought onstage along with the cannon. The companion illusion in which she'd reappear was not yet in view.

"Are you ready?" I asked her. She nodded, and I added, "Aren't you forgetting something? Your protection?" She reacted as if she had forgotten something and dashed offstage. Once in the wings she madly rushed to get into the base of the receiving illusion.

Her double entered from where she had run off, pulling on some sort of crash helmet or antique aviator's cap – perhaps with goggles. They didn't have to resemble each other at all. And, once again, the assistant who appeared would be the one the audience had become familiar with.

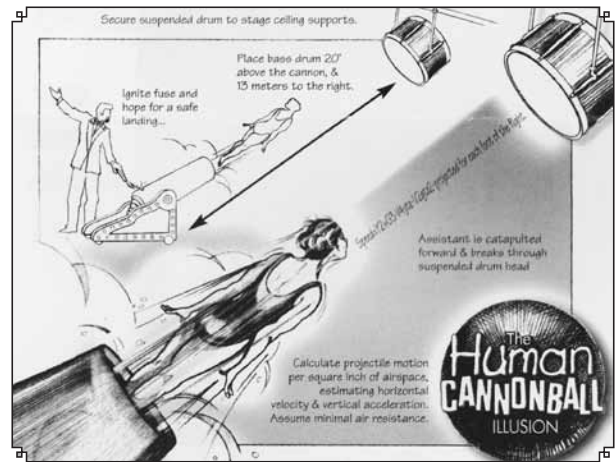
The key is making the switch when there's no "heat" on the deceit. You're clean at the end.

I am aware that hardly any reader of this article will ever actually perform the Cannon, but here is another tip that might be adaptable to other explosive situations. Our cannon had a piece of real fuse that I lit. It burned down in the familiar manner. But, it wasn't attached to anything; it was just a dummy. Our cannon was fired electrically with two pyrotechnic devices that were actually upstage of it.

"You'd better hold your ears," I admonished the audience. "This cannon is quite loud. Five...four...three...two...one..."

And then, nothing. As I counted down I hunched over a bit and put my fingers in my ears. I could often see audience members bracing themselves. When it failed to detonate, there'd be some laughter. I looked perplexed and walked around, looking into the cannon's barrel. You could often hear a gasp as I did this; the audience was thinking that a tardy explosion at this point would likely take my head off. I shrugged my shoulders and said, "I don't know; it must have been a dud."

That was the cue to trigger the pyro. The loud bang came when nobody expected it and everybody jumped. Back in 1985 we performed this four to six times a day for Oldsmobile at Chicago's Auto Show. We supplied a steel frame with a winch to hoist the Drum up. The paper head that the girl broke through was



emblazoned with the Oldsmobile logo. The loud explosion was great at drawing people over. I cannot imagine being able to do that today due to all the new restrictions on pyro.

I have also used twins for a unique staging of The Executioner's Dream or Cheating the Gallows. Over the years I've employed two different pairs of twins and had the hanging victim disappear and a previously-introduced, costumed character witnessing the proceedings "become" the victim. As before, we couldn't tell the twins apart during rehearsals so there was no need to resort to any other deception.

At Halloween to promote the Cannon and Drum combination I decided that some artwork might be better than actual photos. My talented artist, Loni Zarling, came up with a fanciful image that almost looks like the art of Paul Osborne.

As for that lucky magician who is blessed with twin daughters; well, he's me! These twins are now only nine years old, so they're a little young for stage work and, sadly, they're fraternal and not identical. They do not remotely look like each other in any way. But several years ago on a lark I set up two Abbott's Temple of Benares illusions on my driveway and let the girls play with them. You might think of it as two sets of "twins."



If you have a suggestion for a future topic, or a question for discussion, I'd love to hear from you. ★

David Seebach
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Treasures from the Salon de Magie

by Ken Klosterman



KELLAR'S CENTER TABLE



Kellar's Table

When I first started out collecting magic, my early influences were Bob Lund, owner of the American Museum of Magic, *M-U-M* columnist and collector Dr. John Henry Grossman, and Lefty's partner, Jay Marshall. But the person most responsible for helping the collecting bug take hold was Charles Kalish, a builder of clocks and watches, a photographer, and an amateur magician from upstate New York.

I met him in the back room of Magic, Inc. in the early 1970s at an early weekend gathering of the Magic Collectors' Association. Charlie was the typical brash, pushy New Yorker, and while other collectors seemed to have problems with his style, I did not. No matter what item was mentioned by other collectors, Charlie would say, "I got two of those." I figured if this was the case, perhaps he'd sell one, and so I approached him to see if he had any magic for sale.

He was quick to reply. "I got lots of magic. You got lots of money, kid?" I responded, "Well, some." He shot back, "Give me \$300 and I'll send you some magic." Three hundred dollars was a lot of money in the 1970s for a guy like me; I had only brought \$400 to Chicago on my business trip. I still needed to eat and pay my hotel bill. After meals and other expenses, I returned home without a dime in my pocket.

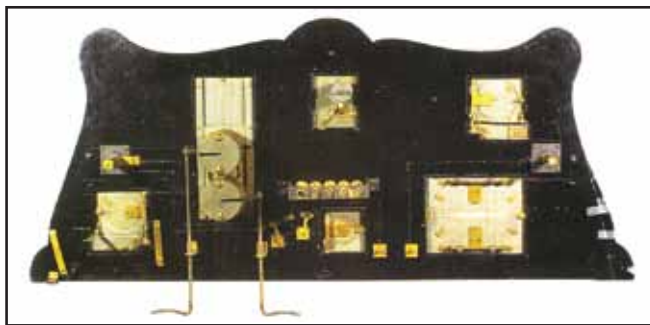
Two weeks later, two ornate tables arrived at my house. To my untrained eye, they were both fun-looking things with wires running up and down their legs, and what looked like trapdoors in their tops. My wife asked me what they were and I told her they were magic tables. She asked what I had paid for them and I said, honestly, "Three hundred dollars." She immediately said, "Send them back where they came from."

Instead of returning them, I assembled the tables and promptly painted over the gold-colored decorations (they were true gold leaf, I found out later), stuck a few nails in where they were coming apart, stacked one

on top of the other, and sat them in my garage. Days later, I received a letter from Mr. Kalish asking me how I liked the Alexander Herrmann and Harry Kellar tables he had sent me. I told him they were fantastic, although I didn't tell him I didn't know who Kellar or Herrmann were. I hadn't done my homework, but I quickly learned.

Harry Kellar was America's favorite magician from the time of Alexander Herrmann's death in December 1896, until he retired from active performing in 1908. He was a magician of the old school and performed in the period when a conjuror's formal evening dress evolved from satin knee breeches to "modern" long trousers, but he was very much a man of the nineteenth century. So too was much of his equipment, especially his all-important center table.

Kellar's table, 35½-inches high and 55½-inches wide, was an integral part of his show. It was not only a point of display for some tricks, but it was also essential in the accomplishment of many of Kellar's favorite feats. Included in the tabletop are no less than thirteen different secret devices, including pistons for the operation of his Devil's Head Card Production illusion, electrical connections, traps operated by wrist pressure - one spring loaded and large enough for a full-size rabbit - and wells with hidden elevators to raise and lower props (used to secretly transpose objects). Seen here from the underside, the tabletop is a mechanic's delight.



The underside of Kellar's table

The style of the table is Louis XV, but there is no evidence that it was built in France. How Kellar acquired the table is unknown, but the provenance is from Kellar to the Mysto Magic Co., and then with John A. Petrie to the Petrie-Lewis Co. collection. Subsequently it was owned by Samuel Cox Hooker, Charles Larson, John McManus, the Circus Museum of Sarasota, and now the Salon de Magie. To the very end of his life, Kellar retained his old-time table. ★

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I LEFT MY CARDS AT HOME by STEVE MARSHALL

Bob Eaton



Born in Condon, Oregon, a small town with a population of less than a thousand, Bob Eaton was initiated into the world of magic at an early age. His grandfather loved to do simple magic tricks, like making a paddle trick from a matchstick; his uncle was a professional gambler who would show Bob card moves and tricks.

Bob's interest in magic continued throughout his childhood, but he didn't seriously get into magic and performance until he got older and moved to Portland. "I saw an ad for a course in party magic that was being offered at the Portland Community College and I decided to take it. The teacher's name was Stan Greer; he was a member of the S.A.M., I.B.M., and a local group called the Portland Society of Magicians. I got involved with these groups, and it just progressed from there." Bob also credits magician Duane Duvall for being particularly helpful to him when he was starting out in magic.

When Bob first started going to the Portland magic meetings nearly forty years ago, many of the "old-timers" who attended the gatherings had once been vaudeville performers and magicians on USO tours. I was curious to find out what lessons he learned from performers who had been around during those times. "One of the most important things they taught me about performing was to make sure that the audience likes you. If they like you, it's pretty hard to mess up. But the most important thing they talked about (and were most adamant about) was to always show up on time. If you show up late, you already have two strikes against you." They also taught him about the importance of shined shoes, which he still feels very strongly about today. "A pet peeve of mine to this day is when I see a performer with a nice tuxedo, a good haircut, all of his props shined up and looking good, and I look down at his shoes and they look like he waded through a mine-field in them."

Bob is a regular poster on SAMTalk; he mentioned on that forum that in his entire magic career he has never purchased a single instructional DVD. I was curious to know his reasons for this, since DVDs are so popular these days. Here is his reply: "Well, the fact is that guys have loaned me a few DVDs, and I've looked at them and all that but, quite frankly, they bored me. I would just rather have a book in my hands. Now I can see that there is a use for DVDs, and I think they are terrific learning tools; I'm not disputing that at all. But I would

rather look at a book and come up with my own presentation and my own way of doing it, if that makes sense. I have all of

the classic magic books in my library to study from. If you want to learn a new trick, read an old book!"

Although Bob has done over seven thousand shows in his life, his "day job" for forty years was as a barber. He said that since people also knew that he was a magician, he would occasionally do tricks for them, especially kids.

Bob is also a very creative guy who likes to look for his magic props in a variety of different places: Ace Hardware, Jo-Ann Fabrics, Michael's craft stores, TAP Plastics, and dollar stores. He calls these places "magic stores without directions." (By the way, TAP Plastics have retail shops out west, but they also have a great website where you can order a variety of plastic materials: www.tapplastics.com.)

Since retiring from his "day job," Bob is now able to devote more time to magic. He performs everywhere from corporate events to daycares and from birthday parties to library summer reading programs. He confesses that libraries are his favorite. "When you show up on time, or early, they are absolutely thrilled to death and love you already. The parents are happy because it doesn't cost them anything (I'm getting paid by the library district). The kids are usually on their best behavior since they know that they have to be quiet and self controlled in a library, the venues are always nice to perform in, and the parking is generally close to the entrance. I really can't think of anything bad about it."

Having Bob around, the residents of the Portland area will be entertained for years to come.

Germination By Bob Eaton

Here's something that Bob uses as a quick trick for kids. Sometimes it is used as a quick warm-up for a birthday party or library show.

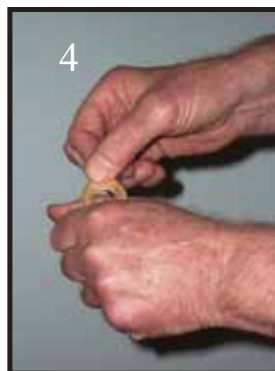
You will need a rubber creature – a monster (scary) finger puppet that can be found at party stores or toy stores, especially around Halloween – and a large metal fender washer that can be found at a hardware store (or in that junk drawer in the kitchen, where you will probably find the rubber monster finger puppet, too).

Place the washer in your right pocket and the finger puppet in your left pocket; you are ready for a quick, fun, and magical bit of business.

In performance, secretly get the finger puppet on your left ring finger and raise your hands up in front of you. Wrap your right hand around your left, making sure you can raise the ring finger up and down (trial and error will work), bringing the critter into view. (Photo 1 shows the performer's view; Photo 2 shows the audience's view.)

Rub your hands together a bit and say very frantically, "Oh, I forgot to wash my hands; they are filthy!" Raise the finger puppet into view, saying, "Look it's a germ." Raise and lower it a few times, playing it for as much reaction as you can get.

After a few up and downs with the "germ," steal it off in a right-hand thumb palm (Photo 3), saying, "I have to wash my hand!" As your right hand goes to your pocket with the finger puppet thumb palmed, close your left hand tightly as if you are holding the germ. Your right hand goes into your pocket. Leave the critter and bring out the washer as you say, "I have my hand washer right here." (As Bob says this he looks at the parents, who usually chuckle at the pun.) Now push the washer into your left hand, which is still in a fist (Photo 4). Make a "washing" motion with your hands, and open them to show that the germ is gone (Photo 5).



Steve's Stuff

When Bob told me about this trick, I could see it playing well on many levels. I could see the kids shouting that they see the "germ," and I could also imagine really playing this up for the right groups. I also love bad puns and the "hand washer" gag certainly fills that bill.

If you do thimble moves, you could make the "germ" vanish and reappear or even jump from finger to finger or hand to hand. Since those finger puppets are made of rubber, they sometimes can be a little difficult to get off your finger. If this is a problem, try putting a little talcum powder inside the puppet or putting a thimble inside the puppet. I know that some of you out there in magic land are going to get a lot of mileage out of this one. Have fun, and keep your hands clean! ☆

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Roger Blakiston (AKA Jolly Roger)

Unlimited Possibilities

THE TEST OF TIME (WITH A LITTLE RHYME)

Occasionally, there are routines that you learn at a young age that are so good they stay in your shows forever. The routine I will discuss here is one such routine. It goes back to the days when I was a teenage drama student in England in the 1960s and secured my first job in the theater. It was a non-speaking role in Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* at The Swan Theatre, Worcester. There was an actor/part-time magician in the play by the name of David Wood. He played the character of Feste the Jester. Many British magicians will know of David Wood; he toured the UK for several years with *The David Wood Magic and Music Show*. He is also a well-known playwright of children's plays such as *The Gingerbread Man*. He wrote a fantastic book called *Theatre for Children*, which I would highly recommend to all children's entertainers. After many years, I have linked up with David at The Magic Circle on my annual visits to the UK.

On discovering that we had magic in common while acting in *Twelfth Night*, David informed me that there was a local magic club called The Worcester Wizards. We went to one of the lectures there together. It was by a gentleman named Len Belcher, a prolific writer and inventor who had a regular column in the British weekly magic publication *Abracadabra*. This routine has been adapted from an idea he shared with us at this particular meeting. The principle used in this routine is sometimes known as the Panama Rope. I have developed this presentation over the years, and, as far as I know, this is the first time it has been published. All that is required is a piece of soft rope, white or colored, and a pair of scissors. I actually find

that some of the colored nylon rope readily available these days at stores like Home Depot works just fine. I would suggest you remove the core to make it a little softer.

As you know, I hail from England, and on those shores we tend to use the word "skip" rope rather than "jump" rope. I guess Americans jump whereas the Brits like to skip. I leave it to you to decide what to call it. I start the trick by explaining to the audience that we had a family over to our house recently, and this little girl had been given a skipping rope for her birthday. Unfortunately, the rope was too long for her to use as a skipping rope. I then demonstrate to the children my skipping ability, which causes lots of amusement as I keep tripping up during it. I state that obviously the "soap" is too long to skip with, so it needs to be cut in two. The kids will correct me and shout out "rope" This misnaming of words throughout the routine always gets a fun reaction, so milk it for all it's worth!

"For this I need a pair of *skissors*." The kids correct me and are only too eager to

tell me that the word is *scissors* (without the "k"). I then false cut the rope in two (use your favorite method to accomplish this). The method I use is to hold the two ends of the rope about an inch apart in my left hand, between the thumb and forefinger. The back of the hand is facing the audience. The loop of the rope hangs from the hand. With my right hand I pull up the loop of rope, switching the center for the short loop in the normal way. I cut the rope, leaving the short piece looped under the long piece, with my thumb and fingers concealing the link. Holding the two apparently separate pieces of rope in the left hand, lift up the right one by the right end and explain that the rope is now too short to skip with. Tie the short piece around the center of the long piece two times to form a knot. Once again the rope is too long.

I tell the kids that I have decided to make a "candle" at each end of the rope. The kids will correct me and shout out "handle!" Make a loop at each end of the rope to form a handle. I would suggest that each handle be about a foot in circumference. To make the loops, I tie a square knot (Photo 1), what in England we call a "reef knot." If you don't know what this is, ask a Boy Scout! Having done this, I say that unfortunately the rope is now too short. I hold it up, one loop in each hand to demonstrate this. I even try to skip with it, once again causing much amusement from the kids. I then proceed to cut the rope near each knot, next to the single protruding piece of the square knot; this will leave a slip knot in the rope. Do the same with each handle. You are left with three slip knots in the rope. (For more detail, see Ted Collins's Panama Rope Mystery in *The Tarbell Course in Magic Volume 2*, page 368.)

I tell the kids that the rope is now exactly the right length to skip with, but the problem is that there are three knots in the rope. (I pronounce the word as "ka-not.") The kids will correct me. I ask one of them to tell me how to spell knot. She will often say



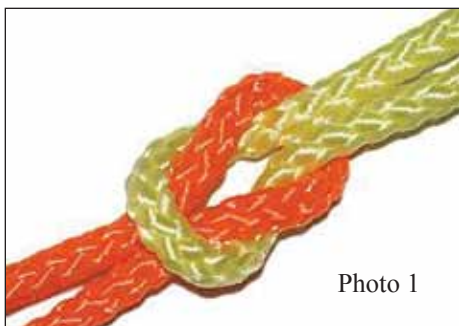


Photo 1

“n-o-t.” This usually gets a good reaction from any adults present. Even if one of them spells it correctly, I can respond by saying, “That is what I said, ka-not!”

The magic then begins. I take the scissors and cut each knot, restoring the rope. I just put the scissors through the center of the false knot and cut it; the pieces will fall to the floor. Alternatively, you could pull each knot off the rope and throw them out to the audience. This usually causes the normal pandemonium as the kids wrestle to catch the knots. Now that the skipping rope is the right length to skip with, I can invite a little girl up to demonstrate her skipping ability. As a reward, I allow her to keep the rope.

So there you have it. There are lots of bits of business, and I have no doubt you can add a few of your own. A nice touch is to use some of the various comedy scissors on the market during the routine, such as Jolly Roger’s Ridiculous Scissors (Photo 2), or “cut/no cut” scissors. Another addition is that while you are telling the story of the girl and the skipping rope, every time you pause in the story when the rope is not the



Photo 2

right length, or it still has knots in it, you get the children to say “Awww.”

I have always loved magic and

I’ve always loved poetry. When I first performed this routine over forty-five years ago, I wrote a little poem to accompany the routine. You will see that the words in the poem fit exactly with the actions you are taking during the performance. It is not the greatest literary work, but I was only a teenager, so I thought I would share it. You may want to come up with one of your own if you like this approach.

*Good evening ladies, gentlemen.
To you I now present
A magic act in poetry
For which I have been sent.*

*I hope you’ll all enjoy it,
And that none of you’ll be bored.
For my first trick I have with me
A long, white piece of cord.*

*This cord is meant to represent
A small girl’s skipping rope.
As on the morn of Thursday last,
This small girl couldn’t cope.
The rope was much too long to skip,
So she cut it while it was taut.
The sad result of this was that
The rope was now too short!
(This rhymes if you have a British*

accent)

*The next thing that the small girl did
Was to tie the ends in two.
The rope was now, of course, too long,
But she knew what to do.*

*She took one end and made a loop
And then she formed a knot.
She did likewise the other end
Now things were getting hot!*

*The rope was too short as before
But she did not give in.
She stood outside and thought a while;
She knew that she could win.*

*Her brain in tune, the answer clicked;
She’d use her magic strength.
She cut the rope next to the knots.
It now was the right length.*

*Now here is when the magic starts,
For those of you who are bored.
She took the scissors, cut the knots,
And found the rope restored.*

Younger children like rhyming stories.

As a matter of fact, one of my favorite routines for very young children is Freddie the Frog by Albion Magic of Birmingham, England. This entire routine about a frog, a log, and a duck is set to a very clever but simple poem.

In my youth, I wrote a poem to accompany the Egg Bag. For a good laugh, I am going to share it with you here:

*For my next trick I have a bag
And a nice hard-boiled egg.
The bag is empty as you see,
Please watch it now I beg.*

*I’ll place it into the black bag,
And make the magic pass.
The egg has vanished from the bag.
Will it return, alas?*

*To get it back, all need be done
Is say, “Wong-foodle-dee.”
The egg is now back in the bag,
As all of you can see!*

If there is a routine that has been in your repertoire for a long time, then it is almost certainly a big hit in your shows, or you would no longer be doing it. The fact that it has been in your shows for all these years means that you like performing it and it gets a good reaction. However, it is my opinion that there is room for improvement or added creativity in every trick we do. The tricks that we have been doing the same way for many years may actually be the ones that need revisiting. Even if a routine works well in its present form, that does not mean that it is perfect. Using the creative thought process, you have the opportunity to change something good into a masterpiece. Your performing style may well have changed over the years, so why not take the challenge of leaving your comfort zone and allowing your old favorites to reach even greater heights?

With that said, I am going to disappear into my magic room and come up with some new ideas for additional bits of business with my magic skipping rope! ★

Please continue to email me your thoughts and suggestions at ComicMagician@cox.net

The Nielsen Gallery

Mildred and Rouclere - Portrait

Dimensions: One-sheet 30" x 39.5" • Lithographer: Donaldson Litho. Co. • Date: 1890s • Nielsen Rating: Rare

In the 1880s, while Alexander Herrmann and Harry Kellar were battling it out for the title of "America's favorite magician," a young performer was busting his back and paying his dues on the road to magical greatness – Harry Rouclere, a man of firsts.

Born on June 3, 1866, in Patterson, New Jersey, Rouclere first became interested in magic after seeing the performance of Francois Blitz, one of the many imitators of the well-known magician Signor Blitz. By January of 1879, Rouclere was appearing as "The Boy Magician."

This multi-talented performer started out with a trained dog act in the circus at the age of thirteen, performed on the trapeze, worked magic and mind-reading in sideshows, and even portrayed a spiritualist medium to great success. Along the way he learned the trade at the feet of legendary magicians like Charles Andress and E. Cooper Taylor.

His first brush with fame, however, came with his juggling. According to historian David Price, his only real rival was the famous juggler Nelsonia, and so he teamed up with him and they toured as "The Delmonico Waiters." He was the first juggler to work in a dress suit; he was called the "Fashion Plate Juggler." While working the circus he met and befriended the Steens, a husband-and-wife team of "telepathists," from whom he learned a mind-reading code act.

In 1889, Rouclere married Mildred May Searing, a song-and-dance girl who was already well known as Millie May. He was twenty-three and she was twenty. From this point on, their star rose steadily. Their first season was the most successful; they ended it playing Tony Pastor's Theater in New York.

During their second season, an opportunity arose for them to tour as spiritualist mediums; they changed their names to Ellington and Cook. A signature effect, presented as a spiritualistic feat, involved Harry being secured in handcuffs and placed in a large canvas bag bolted down to a platform; he then escaped from the bag and cuffs and reappeared inside a locked truck. It was at this time that Harry became the first magician to have local committees from the town where he was appearing build their own box for the experiment, preceding Houdini's practice by many years.

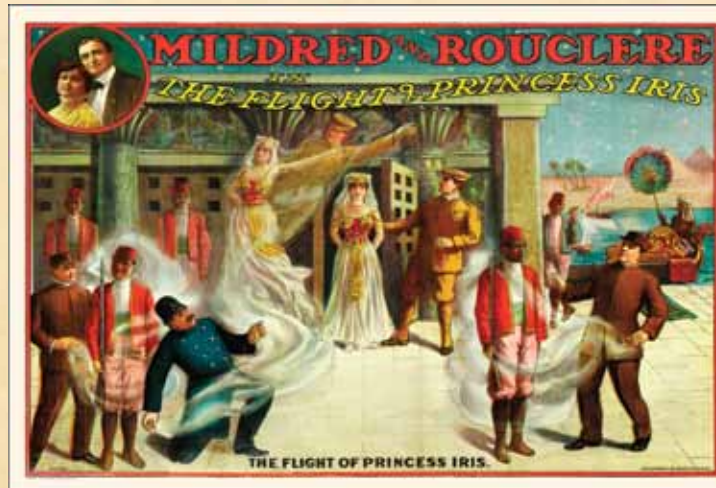
It was their mind-reading act, however, for which they are best remembered. Building upon the code learned from the Steens, they called their act "Mildredism." She came on stage and was hypnotized. Harry went down into the audience, where spectators whispered instructions into his ear indicating actions they wanted Mildred to do on stage. This might be reading a passage from a book, rearranging the chairs on stage, or coming into the audience to find a concealed hairpin. All these requests were accomplished perfectly without a single word being said by Harry.

While touring the southern states in 1897 doing magic, mind reading, and spirit phenomena, Rouclere also became the first person to ever use a condemned man to promote his show. In North Carolina, he learned that a public hanging was to take place; he got an audience with the condemned man. David Price writes:

"The poor fellow was told that the show included spiritualistic effects. He reasoned that if the dead were truly contacted during the 'séance,' he might be one of those contacted. So, with the hangman's noose around his neck, he was permitted to voice his last words. He told the crowd that after the hanging he might appear at the theater but he wasn't sure. The convict's statement assured a full house for Mildred and Rouclere."

Rouclere invented a number of illusions, including the Moth and the Flame, the Automobile Mystery, the Clown and Bear, the

Double Boxes, and the Flight of Princess Iris, featured in this month's column. No description of the illusion could be found, but programs list Mildred as the princess and Harry as the captain of the guard; other cast members played two convicts and an officer. The first scene was "The Harem of the Sultan," and the second scene was "The Catacombs of Egypt." The poster seems to depict a transposition of a man, the vanish of the princess, and something to do with jail cells and prisoners. Of all their illusions, it was the most prominently promoted.



Mildred and Rouclere - Flight of Princes Iris - 1890s Rare

In 1900, the team decided to lead a more leisurely existence and retired from the road to operate a very successful hotel in Ridgewood, New Jersey. It served as a hub for all the famous and near-famous magicians in the country. For several years they toured annually for ten weeks, but eventually gave that up as well.

An avid and early pilot, Rouclere became the first magician to ever attend a magic convention by airplane. When he later became the official Santa Claus for Ridgewood, it was only natural that he should utilize his plane. Thus, he became the country's first flying Santa Claus; he even parachuted presents to the children before he landed to officiate at the official Christmas tree ceremony.

He was an early member of the S.A.M., the first living magician to have an assembly named in his honor, and was also a member of the I.B.M. Mildred died January 7, 1938, and Harry followed on February 3, 1943. Their daughter, Mildred Yull, performed for a time as "Rouclere Junior."

I'll close this piece with a quote from a writer for *The Sphinx* magazine who wrote beneath a photograph of the Roucleres, "Rather than a biography, this note is a slight tribute to a couple whose entire lives have been devoted to the art of magic, and who are beloved by magicians throughout America." ★

—Tom Ewing



INFORMED OPINION

LATEST PRODUCT REVIEWS

Compiled and Edited by W. S. Duncan

This is not a review, just a heads up from one card magic fan to his peeps. Along with the usual box of tricks this month, we received a promotional packet for a new collection of DVDs. The products themselves were not submitted, just the promotional materials. In this case, that might be enough.

The DVDs are called *Essentials in Magic*; each one features Daryl teaching a collection of tricks using a standard trick deck. The DVDs cover Joe Berg's UltraMental Pack (here called the Invisible Deck), The Mental Photography Deck (aka Nudist Deck), the Svengali Deck, and the Stripper Deck. If you don't know the name Daryl, you should probably pick up one of these to acquaint yourself with his work. If, like the rest of us, you've been enjoying his magic and lectures for decades, you probably know much of what is covered (at least according to the contents list). But you probably also know some young person who needs to be put on the right track, and at ten bucks apiece, these are a good way to guide someone who just blew his allowance at the magic shop. Thought you should know.

BEST OF BRITISH BOOK EDITED BY MARK LEVERIDGE

Available from: magicseen.co.uk and Amazon.com

Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies

Price \$40.00

REVIEW BY DAN GARRETT



Some of the best magic minds in the UK have been featured in *Magicseen* magazine, now in its seventh year. Recently, the editors of this publication sent invitations to a select group of the most respected British magical thinkers, and this excellent collection, compiled by Graham Hey, is the result of that project.

The list of the two-dozen contributors will contain names you will recognize, as well as some young guns who are just beginning to appear on our magic radar. Here's the list: Ian Adair, Jasper Blakeley, Paul

Brook, Chris Congreave, Wayne Dobson, Matthew J. Dowden, Peter Duffie, Chris Dugdale, Geoffrey Durham, Wayne Fox, Paul Gordon, Paul Hallas, Gary Jones, Mark Leveridge, Simon Lovell, Shaun McCree, Marc Paul, Scott Penrose, Harry Robson, Alan Rorrison, Tim Shoesmith, Mark Shortland, Lee Smith, and Paul Stockman. I notice that a few of these wizards no longer reside in the UK, but all of them have their origins there.

You'll find a true diversity of material here for your enjoyment. The effects run the gamut of close-up, stand-up, and mentalism, with a couple of fine essays thrown in to give you plenty of food for thought. It would be difficult for any magic aficionado not to find something to like in this collection.

There's so much here I could review, but I will only touch on a few items I particularly liked. I was working on a new mental effect with an interesting premise, shared with me in private by Danny Orleans, when I read the effect STP (Switch, Tear, and Peek) by Gary Jones. It has a great method (inspired by Jay Sankey) that fit the bill for me perfectly. I've always loved the Jack Chanin stand-up move in which a ring is penetrated directly

onto the center of a rope. Some of us have attempted to adapt this move to a close-up ring and string presentation. Mark Leveridge contributes a terrific handling of this idea. Geoffrey Durham reveals his design for a new rope gimmick, superior in many ways to gimmicks with which you may be familiar. These gimmicks can be difficult to make, if you are not a craftsman. One can hope that they will be available for purchase at some point in the future. There are a couple of stage mentalism routines I can't wait to work up and present to an audience.

Each contributor gets his photo and a short magical résumé before describing his piece. The illustrations are all first-rate. Crediting of ideas and inspirations is abundant. This potpourri of prestidigitation is original material, not items reprinted from the magazine. There's a lot of bang for your buck here. Recommended.

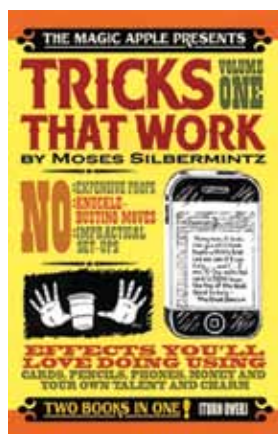
TRICKS THAT WORK (JOKES THAT WORK) VOLUME 1 Book(s)

By MOSES SILBERMINTZ

Available from dealers and Amazon.com

Price \$14.95

REVIEW BY DAN GARRETT



Some readers may be old enough to remember the old "Ace Doubles," which were two novels in one book. When you finished one book, you turned it upside down and read the other book. This is one of those two-in-one books.

Tricks That Work. Let's examine the "trick" side of the book first. There are about ten low-skill, high-impact effects with everyday objects. Note that Mr. Silberman considers an iPhone an "everyday object." The author credits several famous magic names for his inspirations, including Tommy Windsor, Robert Baxt, Ken

Brooke, and Ed Balducci. I doubt you'll perform a lot of these, and some will not stand the test of time, but there are several hidden

gems in the ore. To use the old cliché, “these are each worth the price.” I won’t reveal which ones they are.

Moses gives an introduction to each trick, and then clearly explains how to make and perform each one. He also gives a performing script; kudos to him for concentrating on the importance of the story and engaging the audience as much as the trick itself. At the end of each trick is a suggestion or two on how to improve the trick or make it more to your liking.

Jokes That Work. I generally agree with my colleague Norm Osborn, who has stated more than once in his reviews his bemusement at the idea of buying a book of jokes. We both know that you are not going to find in print those one-liners that are going to make you a famous comic or comedy magician.

The book on the other side of *Tricks That Work* contains jokes and one-liners that are categorized for easy reference. A few categories include: volunteers, audience members, business groups, politics, women, and religious groups. Unfortunately, as you might guess, a few of these belittle the audience or volunteer. This is something that is definitely not good for you, or the rest of the magic world.

Although the author claims to have been very careful not to include material from any professional comic’s repertoire, there are many lines that you have heard before, which may fall into the category of “public domain.” That being said, there are also lines that are quite good, catchy, and refreshing. Many are ad-libs for situations that have been anticipated.

The sagest advice the author gives on this side of the double-book fence is to adapt the jokes to fit your personality and to write your own jokes. Silbermintz gives some good advice on how to go about doing this. Use the jokes given as examples and use the principles of comedy to arm yourself.

My friend Trevor Lewis is a student of comedy. He has amassed a huge library of most of the comedy, joke writing, and funny anecdotes in print in the English language. He has read them all from cover to cover. For him, it’s all about understanding the principles of comedy and the thinking behind writing jokes. He learns to be funny by example. A wise man!

Unless you are a TV personality who needs new jokes every day, it doesn’t make sense for you to buy jokes, even from a former head writer for Jay Leno. Take Moses Silbermintz’s advice between the jokes and learn to write your own. This book will get you started, at least, if you use it in the “write” way. I give this a limited recommendation. The price is good, if you apply the material wisely.

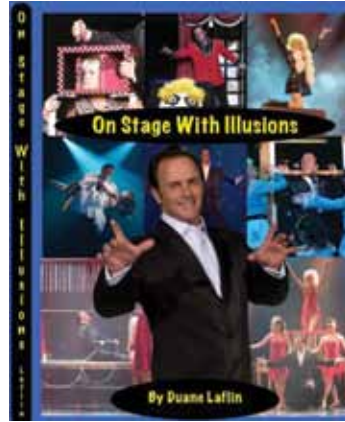
ON STAGE WITH ILLUSIONS BOOK By DUANE LAFLIN

Available from the author: www.LaflinMagicStore.com

Price \$69.00

REVIEW BY JIM KLEEFELD

When you think of big-time illusionists, your thoughts may immediately go to Las Vegas. Duane Laflin may not be the first performer to come to mind. But his style of career is much more accessible than some of the multi-million-dollar Vegas deals, and that, if nothing else, should lead any budding stage performer to study this book. For over 170 pages, Laflin guides you through almost everything you need to know to become an illusionist, whether you present the big show once a year, or twelve times a week. Honestly, after I finished reading this book I sat and tried hard to think of something he left out, and came up with only one topic that is missing (more on that in a moment). From formatting



the show to choosing assistants’ costumes, to developing a marketable personality, just about everything an illusionist does or needs to do is covered.

Laflin writes with a tight but personal style so that you can almost hear him talking directly to you. Many times he reiterates that the book is partly a personal journey, and that you may want to go about defining your career another way. But it is hard to argue with his success. He and wife Mary

have worked full-time most of their lives and have worked club banquets, church fundraisers, theme parks, traveling stage shows, and nightly performances in their own permanent theater. He has learned something from each experience and shares openly with his readers. So ideas and thoughts garnered from his journey are worth noting.

The book has 118 photos of illusions, assistant costumes, poses, staging, animals, publicity, audiences, and more. It consists of twenty-three chapters, each dealing with a specific area of concern. Some chapters are short – one or two pages – while others go on at some length about a topic. Most interesting to me were the twenty-five discussions of specific illusions. Laflin explains what is good, bad, and workable about the Origami, Zig-Zag, Assistant’s Revenge, Lion’s Bride, DeKolts Chair, and many more. His observations and insights into using each illusion are clearly spelled out. He tells you which illusions need a proscenium stage, or an assistant in a tight costume, or a shorter presentation. While these are mostly his personal opinions, they are based on his owning, traveling, and performing with each illusion, so his advice is well worth considering.

The book also gives practical advice such as where to buy illusions and costumes, which illusions work better with large backstage areas, and which ones break down easily for travel. Laflin discusses using wild cats and large animals in an act, how to advise and direct your assistants or dancers, and the hows and whys of adding music to your show. He even discusses how to audition assistants and how to structure rehearsals. The only component I felt was missing was any discussion of business. The Laflins have performed single shows for individual clients, have contracted to present a three-year run of full-evening shows in a client-owned theater, and most everything in between. In a book this comprehensive, he might have added some discussion about what to ask for or what to look out for in contractual arrangements. Perhaps he felt that this was beyond the scope of the book, but he does include plenty of advice on how to spend your money wisely when buying illusions.

Even if you do not perform illusions on a large stage, Laflin offers plenty of guidance for staging and routineing that can be applied to smaller tricks and smaller shows, so it’s still a book you should consider. If you just want to buy a used Zig-Zag and get your wife to help, this book will give you good solid advice. If you plan on expanding your act to perform on the large stage, want to begin earning more money by traveling with a bigger show, or are just interested in how it all works, this is a great book to dive into.

If you already have your own illusion show in a permanent theater, you will still find plenty of thoughtful insight into staging and formatting illusion routines. In fact, I can think of

one performer in Branson and two in Vegas who definitely should have this book. And, probably, you should too. It's a great read.

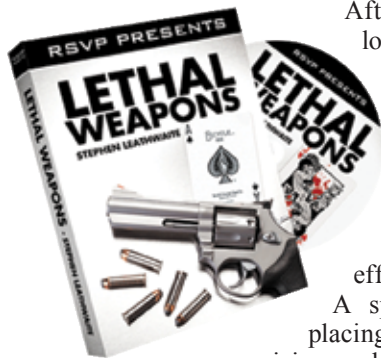
LETHAL WEAPONS DVD By STEPHEN LEATHWAITE

Available from: www.rsvpmagic.com

Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies

Price \$29.99

REVIEW BY DANNY ARCHER



After what I thought was an overly long introduction sequence, (when will producers realize that if you are watching the intro on the DVD, then you must have purchased the DVD and do not need to be enticed into buying the DVD), we begin with an effect called Triplets of Fate.

A spectator selects three cards, placing them into his pockets. The magician explains that he has three cards in his pockets. The magician removes his cards first, one at a time, and each card not only matches the spectator's, but they are also in the same pocket positions. This is a self-working effect that should get a good reaction from a lay audience. After performing the effect for two spectators in a bar, Stephen is joined by Mark James for the explanation.

Kindred Spirit uses two spectators and two decks. Each freely chooses three cards and places them into various pockets. The same cards are in the same pocket positions. This is the same basic effect as the first trick, adding in a simple shuffle sequence.

Chris Carter's Anniversary Waltz is a classic effect in which two signed cards fuse together creating a memorable souvenir. I have my own handling of this effect, as do most working pros. Stephen's version is called Snap & Revert; it muddles and obscures the plot so much that I was thoroughly confused by what I saw.

An effect called Transformer has a selection left out-jogged in the middle of the deck. Two random cards are plunged into the pack as it is dribbled to the table and the selection is caught between them. This uses the Transformer Control, a move I would urge you to avoid and instead learn the Top Card Cover Side Steal. The Transformer Control looks "movey" when Leathwaite performs it, and if a move looks dicey when the creator is doing it I tend to keep my distance. Once again, I use this sequence in a Multiple Selection Routine and can attest to its effectiveness, if performed with a deceptive handling.

Next up is a Dream Card effect called Heli-Transpo. The spectator selects and signs a red-backed card, which is left face up and out-jogged in the center of the deck. The magician removes a blue-backed card from his pocket and shows that it matches the selection. For the climax, her signature vanishes from her red-backed card and is found on the magician's blue-backed card. This one uses the Heli-Palm and will take a bit of practice to learn, but it will play well.

Disposable is Stephen's vanishing lighter routine (and was to have been the name of the DVD according to Mark James). Using a disposable cigarette lighter you light a cigarette. You then visibly crush the lighter into a small ball and give it to a spectator to hold. Included on the DVD is a PDF file containing the artwork you will need to make the gimmick. (The artwork is based on a

UK lighter and not the BIC lighters we in the US are more familiar with.) This looks pretty cool, but in America most indoor venues will not let you smoke, so finding a place to do this effect will be problematic. If you can find a place to do this, and can think of a way to routine this without lighting a cigarette, it can be a fun, quick effect.

We return to the pasteboards for Flip Flop. A card is selected, signed, and left face up on half the deck. The other half of the deck is riffled on top and the selection is now seen to be on top of the deck. This will take some work to master (and it starts from a weird position) but it would make a nice addition to an Ambitious Card effect or used as a standalone trick. The DVD concludes with the Toolbox Section, featuring in-depth instructions on the Heli-Palm, Flip Flop Control, One-Handed Deal (this I liked), the Clock Cut, and the Transformer Control.

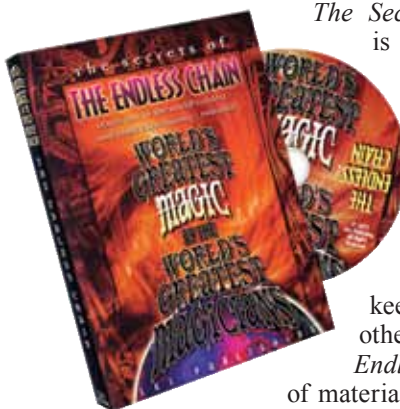
Camera work and sound were okay on this two-and-a-half-hour DVD, with only a few times that shadows got in the way of a clear view of the action. It is hard to figure out who this DVD is aimed at. Some of the effects are self working and some will require serious chops to learn the needed move. Disposable is cool but the smoking aspect will limit its usefulness. Overall I would have to advise people looking for card effects to keep looking.

THE SECRETS OF THE ENDLESS CHAIN DVD By L&L PUBLISHING

Available from: www.LLPub.com

Price \$19.95

REVIEW BY PAYNE



The Secrets of the Endless Chain is yet another in the *World's Greatest Magic* by the *World's Greatest Magicians* series put out by L&L Publishing. This is an ongoing series of DVDs whose number, like the chain featured in this one, seems to be endless. In keeping with the format of the other DVDs, *The Secrets of the Endless Chain* is a repackaging of material relevant to the subject that

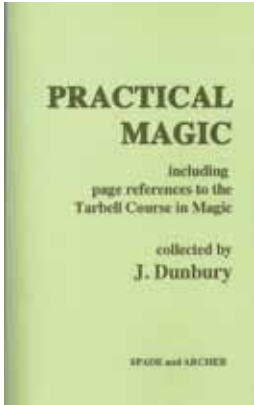
has been gleaned from L&L's immense collection of video recordings. With a collection as vast as L&L's, you'd think they could have offered more in-depth information. For the amount of material that is on this recording, it really should have been titled *Some Secrets of the Endless Chain*, or better yet, *A Couple of Secrets of the Endless Chain*. A comprehensive overview of this classic gambling scam this is not.

All we have here are performances by Johnny Thompson, Bobby Bernard, and Phil Matlin, followed by each explaining his handling of what is basically the same three-phase Fast and Loose routine. Each performer demonstrates a slightly different method for throwing the chain, and Mr. Thompson tips a variant to the layout. But for all intents and purposes all you get on this DVD are minor variations on a pretty basic routine. There are much better DVDs on this subject out there. If you want to add a very simple, bare-bones version of this trick to your repertoire without spending a lot, then this is the DVD for you. But if you want a serious in-depth study of this age-old effect I'd look elsewhere.

PRACTICAL MAGIC TRICK WITH PROP
BY HARRY ANDERSON

Available from: Harry Anderson at harrythehat@mac.com
Price \$45.00

REVIEW BY MICHAEL CLOSE



Those of you who have seen Harry Anderson's show *Wise Guy* will certainly remember its finale – a hysterical combination of card counting, card memorization, the Magic Square, and interpretive dance. Harry's presentation of the Magic Square is unique: the matrix is constructed on a 30" x 44" piece of paper that is folded in such a way that the performer can only see one square at a time. (In other words, the performer never sees the entire matrix as the Magic Square is constructed; the folded-up paper apparently gives no clue as to the relationship of any one

square to the whole of the grid.)

I worked as the piano player/sidekick in *Wise Guy* on a couple of occasions a few years ago; at that time, Harry would get the number for the Magic Square by simply asking a spectator for a number between 50 and 150. Later, having completed the Magic Square during his card memorization/card counting/crazy white man dancing demonstration, Harry reminded the audience of the number, unfolded the paper, and then revealed the Magic Square and the remarkable number of ways that four cells added up to the chosen number.

Harry has recently come up with a different (and sneaky) approach to the number selection. He shows a small, paperback book titled *Practical Magic*; this book is a listing of the best and most practical effects (with page number references) from the plethora of magic tricks found in the eight-volume *Tarbell Course in Magic*. A spectator calls out a number between 50 and 150 (the range restriction is justified by patter) and the trick at that number is looked up. It is Card Counting. Harry then launches into the preliminaries of his Card Counting routine, and later, after the Magic Square has been completed, he reminds the audience of the number that the spectator chose (the number that, apparently, dictated which trick was going to be performed). In this way, the choosing of a number becomes more organic and less contrived; consequently, the revelation of the Magic Square is even more amazing.

The *Practical Magic* book has several built-in features. Although Harry uses it to force the Card Counting trick (and I'll explain a little more about this in a moment), the book is designed to force the Magic Square at any number from 50 to 150. At the same time that this citation is shown to the spectators, the magician secretly gets all the information needed to construct the Magic Square. No calculation (other than simple addition) and no memorization (if you use Harry's large-paper presentation) are needed. The "introduction" to the book is actually a possible patter scheme you can use to introduce the book to your audience. The "appendix" is actually the complete instructions for the Magic Square routine.

There are other sneaky things built into this book. Because of the way the book is organized, it is possible to force other tricks. (Harry forces Card Counting, as described above.) Since several

of the effect names fail to provide any clue to what the actual effect is (Multum in Parvo, Mindful Deck, Mystic Twelve, Hallucination), you could combine the Magic Square with any other effect of your choosing. (It requires some small adjustments to get the necessary Magic Square info, but this is a simple thing, once you understand how the book is laid out.) I'm currently experimenting with several combinations for a casual, close-up setting.

Harry Anderson has been researching and developing his Magic Square routine for many years. This current incarnation may just be as good as it gets. The *Practical Magic* prop isn't for everybody, but if you have ever wanted to do the Magic Square in your stand-up show, Harry's method is the way to do it. Highly recommended.

(To receive a list of products and ordering information, drop Harry a note at the email address listed above.)

MIND BALL TRICK
BY DAVID REGAL

Available from: davidregal.com
Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies
Price \$55.00

REVIEW BY PAYNE



From clever and funny creator David Regal comes Mind Ball – a trick in which the revelation of two selected cards becomes an act all by itself. Here's how it plays. Two spectators, one man and one woman, are each invited to select a playing card. The spectators are instructed to form a clear mental image in their minds of the cards

they selected. Once this is accomplished, the magician brings out the Mind Ball; he tells the spectators that this marvel of the age is going to read their thoughts and reveal the identities of the previously selected cards. The spectators will be dubious of this claim as the "marvel" seems to be indistinguishable from that common toy, the Magic Eight Ball. The Mind Ball is passed between the spectators (or even members of the audience) and the selected cards are eventually revealed.

This is a great little prop that, in the right circumstances and in the right hands, will provide both the performer and the audience with a lot of fun. It does, however, have a few drawbacks. First, since it can only reveal the identities of two cards and the gender of their selectors, the trick isn't repeatable. So if your audiences are limited only to friends and family, this has a pretty short shelf life. It also requires some theatre skills, because there is a great deal of impromptu work involved in the presentation. Mind Ball works exactly like a Magic Eight Ball, so there is no guarantee when and in what order the cards will be revealed, or how often. (Though Mr. Regal has done what can be done to tip the odds in your favor.)

Besides revealing the cards, the Mind Ball will also tell you things like "Not Exactly Houdini," "I Hope This Works," "This is Taking Too Long," and even "Magic is Sexy," so you might think twice if you want to do this for the under twenty set (or the under forty set if you're as old as I am).

As you can see, the presentation isn't set in stone; it is fluid, and you'll need pretty good improvisation skills to roll with whatever the Mind Ball decides to throw at you. Which of course

makes this routine, for those with the proper skill set, a delight to perform, because no two presentations will ever be exactly the same.

The prop is the size of a Magic Eight Ball, so if you're thinking of adding this to your strolling or restaurant work you'll have to take that into account. This is something you'll want to keep in your case; it's too bulky to keep in a pocket. It comes in a full-color or cardboard box and it looks like something you got at a gift shop instead of a magic store. It will look perfectly innocent sitting on a desk or a bookshelf in your office or magic room. All in all, this is a winner in my book.

You get the Mind Ball, a cardboard box to keep it in, a second cardboard box to use when the first one wears out, and the instructional DVD. What more could you ask for?

SHARED DREAMS TRICK

By MARCELLO INSUA

Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies

Price: \$49.00

REVIEW BY JOSHUA KANE



Marcello Insua's Shared Dreams is his take on Alan Shaxon's classic Confabulation routine, in which the performer is able to show that he dreamt or predicted in advance a number of choices that his audience would make during the performance. In this rendition, a stack of three envelopes is used in place of a gaffed wallet. You must create a story to justify the existence of two of the envelopes; the third contains the prediction that holds information that matches several items freely chosen by your spectator(s). The loading of the prediction into the envelope is not as innately simple as the wallet version, but when mastered it has the capacity to make the effect stronger, because the paper is larger than that found in most Confabulation-type routines, and it is more natural for a letter to be in an envelope than in your wallet.

The handling has a medium learning curve and the routine included has charm and is open to a wide range of themes. The props are natural in look and feel, and can be readily made up on the road or as replacements when the envelopes and papers included run out. The DVD has both a Spanish and an English language track, and provides some of the most detailed instruction on Confabulation that I have seen to date.

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Insua knows his sources and credits them; acknowledgements include Alan Shaxon for originating the effect and also Ron Wilson, René Lavand, Al Baker, Paul Le Paul, Alex Pandrea, and others for their contributions. Shared Dreams is Marcello's first product offering in the field of mentalism. I look forward to seeing his future releases.

This is a packs-flat, plays-big, low-tech, replaceable-on-the-road effect and is worthy of your consideration.

MISSING TRICK

By CHARLIE FRYE AND ALAN WONG

Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies

Price \$25.00

REVIEW BY ANTONIO M. CABRAL

The ad copy states that "Missing is much more than just another gaffed card trick." I'd argue that it is, in fact, much less. There's no real trick to it, and the cards aren't really gaffed; they're simply unusual. You get a little vinyl wallet with two playing cards, a Spade and a Club, with the pips and indexes cut out. The idea is to somehow switch, say, a regular Five of Spades for the one with all the holes in it and watch the jaws drop. And if you hold the card in front of a black backdrop for a few moments (e.g. your shirt, your pant leg, a close-up mat), you get a "fascinating optical illusion" in which you'd swear the card is completely normal as long as you keep your fingers out of the way.

I will say that the cards are very well-made. You're not going to get cards that look this good at home with an X-Acto knife. The instructions state that the ways of bringing the gaffed card into play are limited only by your imagination, and they're not kidding. You're on your own to work out the actual, practical details of just how the heck you're going to ring this card in, what the effect's going to be, and how you're going to casually maneuver the card in front of a blackboard or a mime to get that "fascinating optical illusion." The cut-out cards don't really lend themselves to hiding as part of a double card: the pips don't line up on the front and you get little shadows on the back. The instructions don't tell you that, or anything else other than how wonderful and weird these cards are. They don't even supply the missing pip chads so you can produce them as evidence of some kind of "transporter accident" failed transposition. It might be worth supplying your own, though. Basically, you're buying the cards. What you do with them is up to you.

Don't misread me; I don't think Missing is a bad idea for a trick at all. It's just that for \$25, I think the average magician is going to want something more to go on than the promise of an "eye-popping miracle" that they have to invent themselves. If you're interested in Missing, you might want to have a few ideas in mind before picking it up.

CELEBRITY PRESAGE TRICK

By MIKE MAIONE

Available from: www.MikeMaione.com/celebritypresage.html

Dealers contact the creator at the website above

Price \$70.00 each, \$180.00 (all three)

REVIEW BY MARC DESOUBA



Mike Maione performed this very funny and baffling effect at the 4F Convention this year and it got a great reaction. I sought out Mike to get more information; he informed me that he had just put this on the market. I purchased a

set from him immediately. So, what is this routine with the fancy name? It's a wonderful marriage of the Baby Gag and a book test. Mike credits inspiration from Penn & Teller, Martin Cox, Bill Abbott, and my own effect, Baby Hugh-y.

You begin by talking about the really stupid things that some celebrities do. In fact, you have a few books that have been published extolling these ridiculous exploits. In addition, you show an envelope that contains a prediction. One of the books is freely selected and the book is shown to contain facts about a

variety of stars. One of the pages is very freely selected and the name of the celebrity on the page is called out. Let's assume it is Tom Cruise. The performer removes the prediction and a picture of a baby is seen. The performer states that it is Tom Cruise at the age of three months. What if they had chosen Julia Roberts? The paper is turned over; it shows the same picture, but the baby has a red bow in her hair. What if they chose Lady Gaga? The paper is opened and it is the same baby picture, but wearing heavy eye make-up and outrageous headwear of some sort. Finally, the paper is opened again to reveal a picture of Tom Cruise as he is today. Mike also has an alternate prediction using Facebook profile pictures that is splendid. (I don't want to give it away; it will get around fast enough, I'm sure.)

What you are buying is a forcing book. Well actually, from one to three forcing books. Celebrity Presage comes in three different formats with three different titles. Each volume is really well made. They look just like the type of books that you'd buy at a book store discount table, or at an airport gift shop anywhere in the US. You also have a choice of Tom Cruise or Charlie Sheen as the force name, but Mike will make up custom books for an added fee. The method is not new, but it is really excellent. By riffling through and stopping at random places, the book is fairly shown to contain over one hundred different celebrities. The name is forced by either having a spectator give you a page number or by riffling through the pages and having the spectator stop you at any point. Both procedures are very fair looking, and the books work perfectly every time. The only downside is that the books cannot be examined, but in the context of this routine, I don't feel that is important.

These are not cheap, but they certainly are not as expensive as most of the gaffed book tests on the market. Each one costs \$70, but you can buy all three different formats for \$180. To be fair, many of those more expensive book tests have a number of different features built into them. Unlike some of those others, however, this one is built for one effect only. Personally, I feel this effect is really excellent, has great comedy potential built in, and is very commercial. I have already used it in front of "real people" and it has garnered great reactions. I highly recommend it; it's up to you to decide whether you want one or all three. Either way, you can't go wrong.

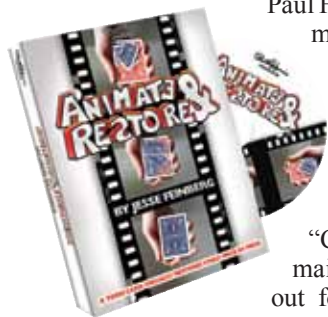
ANIMATE AND RESTORE DVD AND GIMMICK By JESSE FEINBERG

Available from: www.jessemagic.com

Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies

Price \$39.95

REVIEW BY DANNY ARCHER



Paul Harris presents this nifty bit of visual magic from Jesse Feinberg. The camerawork and sound were very good and everything is well explained on the twenty-six minute DVD. Let me start by explaining the effect. Jesse shows an envelope addressed to him that contains a "Card Puzzle" that he received in the mail. He opens the envelope and pours out four torn, blue-backed card pieces onto a red deck. The individual pieces start to move; they twist and turn as they slowly creep into their correct position. The card is turned over and the creased, yet

restored, card can be given away as a souvenir.

Included with the DVD is the specially designed gimmick. Jesse explains how to customize the envelope. (It's a special Tyvek envelope, and you get two, which is a nice touch.) I liked the fact that interspersed with the video is text that reinforces, and sometimes enhances, the visual information being provided. This helps make learning much easier.

Jesse shows you how to prepare the gimmick to perform the trick. There is very little in the way of sleight of hand required to perform the effect, but that doesn't mean it works by itself. There is no palming, nor are any traditional sleights involved. You are also instructed in how to make a new gimmick in case the one provided you wears out, or if you want to make it up with Tarot cards. The animation sequence looks great.

There were two points I wasn't happy with. After the pieces are dumped out, the envelope held in the right hand is placed into the left front pants pocket. After the last piece moves into place, the envelope is retrieved and used to flip the creased and restored card over. The envelope then must be pocketed. Sleights cannot be substituted for these steps. Care with your presentation will be needed to minimize these two points. But the animation sequence is so strong that I think it will overshadow these moments in the spectators' minds.

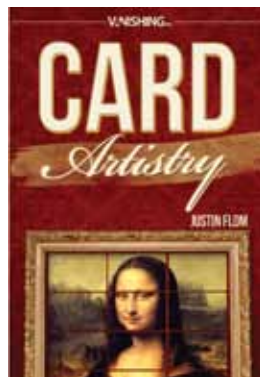
The other strong points are that it can be done at anytime in your set with any deck. It is not that hard to learn or to do. For strolling performers, the reset time, thought short, would have to be done without anyone seeing what you are doing. To sum up, this is a nice piece of strange that I think you will have fun performing and your audiences will enjoy watching. Recommended, with the two caveats noted above.

CARD ARTISTRY DVD AND SPECIALLY PRINTED CARDS By JUSTIN FLOM

Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies

Price \$35.00

REVIEW BY ANTONIO M. CABRAL



If you're looking to add a more artistic flair to your card work, you can do no better than a thorough study of performers like Michael Vincent, Mike Skinner, René Lavand, and Tommy Wonder – or, you could go the literal route and use a deck of cards to paint the Mona Lisa. Justin Flom's Card Artistry is a big, fat, flashy closer of a card revelation. After the performer has a card chosen, remembered, and lost, he weaves one half of the deck into the other to create a mock paintbrush. And then, he literally paints long strokes on the close-up mat to form an actual picture of the Mona Lisa holding the selected card.

The actual effect goes all the way back to Nate Leipzig, who used the mock paintbrush idea as a single card revelation. Flash forward to Chris Kenner, whose Paint by Numbers from *Totally Out of Control* used the same idea to produce four royal flushes (and which inspired Doug Conn's Flush Brush). In Card Artistry, the trick goes from a metaphor to reality with the appearance of an actual picture. You have your choice of either the Mona Lisa holding the selection or an image of a head X-ray with the selected card "on the spectator's mind." The cards look good

and are printed on actual playing card stock, so they'll blend in nicely with your deck of choice. An enterprising soul might even print up their own personal (or personalized) image to appear on the cards – after purchasing the effect, of course. Vanishing Inc. was also kind enough to include a couple of extra cards to allow for the revelation of a different card upon occasion, so that this doesn't end up being "the trick where they always pick the Three of Hearts."

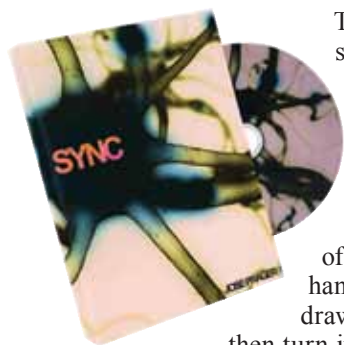
The instructions are very clear, and the basic version of the effect taught isn't bad at all. If you perform a close-up set with any non-card items, ringing in this deck for a closer is a no-brainer. If you only perform card magic, you might have to plan your strategy a little more carefully. The trick is very easy to do, and you don't even need to do a faro weave; the trick still works with a riffle shuffle. Card Artistry actually resets easily, too; gather the cards in the order you "painted" them and you're ready to go again. In addition, the cards you need to swap out to reveal a different force card are right on the bottom of the stack. It does require a close-up mat with enough space for a sixteen-card rectangular layout, so this might not go into your table-hopping set. Depending on the restaurant, maybe it shouldn't anyway.

The trick is charming, pretty, and striking. My only reservation about it is the climax of the chosen card. If you can create an actual painting with a deck of cards, who cares what the hell the card was? It's something to consider from a presentation standpoint, while you're considering how and why you turned your deck into a paintbrush in the first place. Certainly if this type of effect fits your performance style, this is an item well worth your money.

SYNC DVD WITH GIMMICK **By JOSE PRAGER**

Available from: PaperCraneMagic.com
Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies
Price \$29.95

REVIEW BY MARC DESOUZA



This is a very clever, very simple system that allows you to secretly gain the knowledge of a spectator's simple thought. Some would call this a peek device, but that would not be a truly accurate description. A spectator is asked to take out one of his own business cards. He is handed a Sharpie pen and asked to draw a simple object on the card and then turn it over. The card is placed on your hand for a moment, but is immediately given back to the participant; he is asked to put it in his own pocket. You can instantly reveal the object drawn. There are no secret glimpses of the other side of the card; there are no external gimmicks. With practice, the participant could write a number or word and you can instantly gain the information.

So, what are you buying here? The gimmick supplied is a Sharpie pen that looks like the real thing...because it is. It has been very cleverly "adapted" for this particular use. I would love to tell you exactly what that change is, but that's what you are paying for. Suffice to say that it allows the information to be transferred instantly to you in a very natural way and everything can be examined. You leave all of the "evidence" with the participant

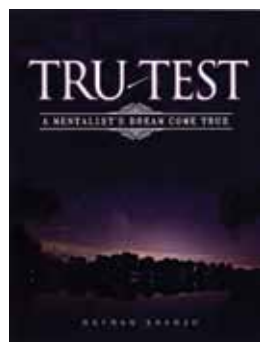
and they will be none the wiser. The DVD is sixty-two minutes long and provides all of the information you need to know about how to make additional pens, so you don't need to buy them from "your favorite online magic shop." Just pop down to your local office supply store and you can make yourself a new one in about five or ten minutes. In my opinion, that is of high value.

The entire video shoot features Justin Miller performing the effects and teaching; the creator is nowhere to be seen. Mr. Miller does a very credible job of teaching the material, as well as imparting additional knowledge on performance. The essential information could be compressed into twenty or twenty-five minutes. The remaining forty minutes of the disc are filled with some variations of the basic handlings, discussions about the use of materials other than a business card, and some additional effects using pennies to draw objects on. These are transposition type effects and seem pretty much of a waste to me. The effects and handlings are fairly cluttered and I would not recommend them. Thankfully, the basics are very worthwhile and the concept is superb. I would recommend this product to anyone looking to delve into a little close-up mindreading.

TRU TEST TRICK **By NATHAN KRANZO**

Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies
Price: \$99.95

REVIEW BY JOSHUA KANE



Tru Test by Nathan Kranzo is an updating of U.F. Grant's Tru Test Magazine Test, which was released to the fraternity almost four score and seven years ago. In that effect, a magazine page was forced and a word or words upon the page were revealed. The gaffed page that the spectator was directed to contained the repetition of a series of words that could be pumped for and revealed by the knowledge of a single letter. The updating, according to Kranzo, lies primarily in the updating of the gaffed magazine page from being designed to fit *Reader's Digest* to being of the size and basic appearance to fit an issue of *TIME* or *Newsweek*. The increase in size, of course, has mandated an equivalent increase in the number of times the words are repeated. Certain words inevitably leap from the page. The eye is gifted in its ability to identify patterns.

Unfortunately, the text on the page also borders on nonsense and has at least one typo that a national magazine would not have let go to print. The eye-drawing flaw of "we we" served to remind me that pages not used for performance could be used to toilet train a puppy. "inthe" also stood out, as did the photographer's name of John Smith. The photographs themselves are black and white, which looks outdated in this age of typically full-color spreads; one of them looks completely out of place on a page labeled "Technology." The words are also published in alphabetical sequence prominently enough that my wife, upon picking up the page from my folder said, "Oh, a gaffed page." This might have passed muster in the original, but it should have been discarded for this new version. She also noted more than one prominent typo and remarked that most weekly magazines have their name, issue number, and date printed on the page. Audiences notice such incongruities, even if only subconsciously. Even when they cannot

cite the reason for suspicion, they do know something is not right.

The principle employed has been exploited much more effectively in the past by Larry Becker and Ted Karmilovich. Because the audience is aware that you know which page they have turned to, this can unintentionally end up playing as a memory feat instead of mindreading. The instructions for maximizing the impact of the effect are slim and instructional at best. The nuances that separate a trick from a miracle are absent. This was a potentially good idea that has unfortunately missed the mark in its execution.

BACK TWIST TRICK BY MATHIEU BICH

Available from: www.MathieuBich.com

Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies

Price \$29.95

REVIEW BY MARC DESOUZA



I consider Mathieu Bich to be one of the five best creative minds in close-up magic today. He has consistently come up with refreshing new plot lines and methods for over ten years. He has received international recognition recently with his

FISM-winning effect Spread-wave, which he used to successfully

fool Penn & Teller on their British

TV series. His latest effect, Back Twist,

takes a more standard effect, Twisting the Aces,

and turns it on its ear. The magician fairly spreads a face-down fan of four blue-backed cards. One by one, the cards turn to red-backed cards. The cards are cleanly turned face up and spread to reveal four Aces, which are dropped onto the table.

You are supplied with a special packet of cards, an instruction booklet, and a DVD. The cards are very cleverly gimmicked using several principles simultaneously to produce this remarkable, visual effect. The booklet teaches the simplest handling of the effect in both English and French. Unfortunately, the font is far too small for my aging eyes, so thank goodness for the DVD. The disc is well produced and Bich very clearly teaches three different handlings. The simplest doesn't seem terribly magical at first. It is obvious that you are turning the cards over, but the payoff at the end will surprise even the best posted magicians, as well as laymen. The second handling makes the turnovers far less obvious and a bit more magical looking. Finally, he teaches a flourishy version that is very quick and has even more impact.

The best version is performed, but unfortunately not taught, on the DVD. It utilizes Lee Asher's Asher Twist and this version is a knockout. I can certainly understand Lee not wishing to have his signature move taught on this DVD, when it is one of his own best sellers. If you know Lee's move already, you will be able to apply it to what you receive in this package. If not, Mathieu provides a link to a special page on Lee's website where you can get a special combo deal (at an additional cost) to learn the full handling. This is the certainly the best way to go if you wish to perform the effect, but it would now bring the total cost to over \$40. You will need to judge for yourself if that price is worthwhile for a packet trick that lasts about one minute. Personally, I feel that the impact of the effect makes it a worthwhile investment, so this gets my recommendation.

BIONIK BENDER TRICK

By DAVID PENN

Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies

Price \$130.00

REVIEW BY JOSHUA KANE



In the 1970s, Uri Geller astounded the world with his performances of alleged psychic abilities. The skill that stuck most in people's minds was the bending of spoons and keys. Since that time, mentalists and magicians have become the

bane of hostesses worldwide as they assaulted cutlery in restaurants and private homes and inadvertently locked spectators out of their homes and automobiles. There have been many devices made available to allow one to bend metal in real time during performance, and a number of DVDs, books, and courses have fleshed out enough impromptu methods to get one blacklisted by the local caterer.

Most performers, when bending cutlery, have focused on spoons and forks. The display of either being bent is extremely visual and makes for an interesting post-show artifact. Few performers have focused on the bending of knives. There are good reasons for that, all of which have been ignored by David Penn.

Bionik Bender is a device specifically built so that you can bend the blade of a knife. This product and its routine are wrong on a variety of levels. The device must be custom bent so that it can be worn over your belt. Penn asserts that your spectators will not notice it, although it is in full view. This is not terrible if the belt is black, because the device could be mistaken for the kind of clips salespeople wear for non-smart cell phones (without the phone). The look is a bit incongruous for dinner parties or professional situations. The bend produced, when it works, is akin to the kind of bend achieved by bending a piece of metal in a door jamb; in other words, a right-angle bend. The beauty of a fine bend on a fork, or a spoon bend is in the alteration of the condition of the object while maintaining its basic form.

As a child, I was taught that when handling a knife I should hold it by the handle and keep the pointy end away from my body and the bodies of others. Mr. Penn's caregivers seemed to have neglected that basic bit of safety instruction, because the gaff and its use require the performer to hold the knife by the blade and to bring the blade into contact with your body to insert it into the gaff so that it can be bent. This necessitates that you either turn your back, or look as if you are about to commit *harakiri*. Most magicians should not have a knife in their own hands, pointed at their own bodies. After the bend is revealed, the knife can then be handed to an audience member to show that they can neither unbend it, nor bend another like it. The idea of handing an object with a serrated edge back to a spectator and then challenging them to unbend it is foolish. Equally foolish is to be demonstrating it in the first place, as imitating the event could lead to grave injuries. Not all knives will bend when pressure is applied. Quite a few will shatter (a query to Richard Osterlind, one of the top metal benders in the country confirmed this potential problem). Penn recommends that you carry your own knives with you, which would avoid this problem and facilitate an easy bend. However, this changes the effect from looking like an impromptu one to being merely a real-time bend. And even if one uses knives provided by one's host, can an effect be considered impromptu if you have to

wear the gaff?

A subtlety inspired by Dr. Sawa's Spoon Bend is included on the instructional DVD. You will need a vise and a hacksaw to construct it or a visit to your neighborhood blacksmith or metal cutting shop. For the price, I feel that Penn should have simply included it. I do not recommend this product. If you wish to bend cutlery, I encourage you instead to buy Banachek's *Psycho-Kinetic Silverware* DVD or contact Richard Osterlind for his *Secrets of Metal Bending DVD/Metal Blast* book combo deal.

KEYLICIOUS DVD AND GIMMICK

By JEFF PRACE

Available from: *PaperCraneMagic.com*

Distributed by *Murphy's Magic Supplies*

REVIEW BY NORMAN BECK



This is another DVD, along with all the props, from a young magician named Jeff Prace. Jeff is a seventeen-year-old kid from the state of Illinois; his website tells me he has been doing magic since the age of seven. The strong suit of the DVD and of Jeff's magic is that you cannot help but like the kid. In fact, I liked *him* more than I liked the *trick*, and I think there is a lesson to be learned there. I am not certain, but I suspect that Jeff was out shopping and came across a very clever item that he figured out could be used as a magic prop; he bought it, played with it some, and Keylicious was born.

So what is it Kelicious? It's a sort of Copper/Silver routine in which a key is removed from a key ring and a sequence of transpositions occurs between the key and the ring, most of which feature a one-handed transformation of the ring/key.

The DVD is well shot and the explanation is very good. This is my first experience with Jeff and I know a great deal about him from this DVD. He is serious, respectful, polite, and very clever. I hope that he keeps all of these traits for a very long time. You can see a clip advertising the effect on the Paper Crane Magic website. Please visit the site and take a look at Keylicious; if you do, you just might find a trick that will make it into your close-up case.

XPAND DVD AND PROP

By CHRISTYRIOUS AND BRANDON DAVID

Available from: *PaperCraneMagic.com*

Distributed by *Murphy's Magic Supplies*

Price \$24.95

REVIEW BY NORMAN BECK

Christyrious and Brandon David are the creators of this prop. The running time of the DVD from start to finish is 1,020 seconds. I could tell you that this is seventeen minutes, but 1,020 seconds sounds like you are getting more for your money. In addition to the DVD, you get a bonus DVD with other applications for the gimmick.

The effect of Xpand is that you have a card selected (forced) and signed; the card shrinks and stretches back to its original size. You can hand the card out after you're done. They tell you that the transformation requires no cover and that you can take it out of the box and perform it. However, they never mention on the DVD how you get the gimmick into play or out of the way after the effect,



but then that's a lot to discuss if you only have seventeen minutes.

I actually took the gimmick, worked up the trick, and performed it in my office; the responses I got ranged from "Is that it?" to "That sucks."

I will tell you now you need cover to do this, and the trick is angle sensitive. Xpand cannot be performed with someone standing directly behind you. I wanted to give the creators a fair shake, so I performed it three more times. During those performances I got lukewarm, but positive responses (similar to those from the overly-pierced young lady on the DVD), and my spectators were fooled.

I am just about at the point of thinking that perhaps this trick is better than it appears when you first take it out of the box. But I'm still on the fence about this one. If you made me lean one way or the other, I feel certain that I would tip towards a "no" vote, but I could be wrong. It's possible someone could make this effect into something better. ★

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INSIDE STRAIGHT

BY NORMAN BECK

QUESTIONS

Time is the one thing in this world that puts us all on a level playing field. It doesn't matter who you are – the bum on the street or Bill Gates. You have twenty-four hours each day to accomplish something, no more, no less. As I get older, time is the thing I value most. I don't want to spend time with bad books, or with people who are boring or boorish. Businesses interview people to see if they want to invest time and money in them. They ask questions like: Where do you see yourself in five years? What is your single biggest achievement? What is your biggest weakness? And the list goes on and on. These are stock questions that usually receive stock answers; they don't really tell you a lot.

I have my own five questions that I like to ask people; after they answer the questions I have a pretty good idea about how much time I want to spend with them. The way in which a person responds to the questions often tells me more than the actual answers.

When I interview a person for a job, here are the five questions I ask:

1. What five historical figures would you like to invite to a dinner party?
2. You are stranded on a tropical island; you have adequate food, water, and shelter. What other five things would you want to have with you?
3. You find \$5,000. What would you do with the money?
4. Which five books would you recommend to a person?
5. What five things have you never done that you would like to do?

I sometimes follow those up with "When did you become an adult and how did you know?"

These questions always evoke responses that lead to a conversation that is off the standard interview path. Often, the person answering the questions is slightly knocked off guard, and I want to see how they handle this. The answers won't always tell me that I want to spend time with a person, but they *always* show me someone whom I shouldn't waste time on.

In magic the questions would change, but only a little:

1. What five magicians, living or dead, would you have over for a dinner party?
2. What are your five all-time favorite magic books?
3. What are your five favorite tricks to perform for the paying public?
4. What are your five favorite DVDs? (This is almost a trick question in that it's hard for most people to even list five good ones.)
5. What are five non-magic books that you would recommend?

If a person responds truthfully, I discover a great deal about who they are, and I do so in a very short amount of time. Do these questions allow me to read a person with one hundred percent accuracy? No. Can they help? It depends. In some situations (like a job interview or a first date) a person will be on their best behavior and might provide answers that they think I want to hear. But these questions will still make them somewhat transparent. I find them to be very helpful. ★

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Christian Painter

Mental Breakdown

EMOTIONAL MISTAKES

It's astounding to me that so often we must learn our lessons the hard way. Sure, there have been many entertainers who have warned, cautioned, and advised us on how to step around the potholes we encounter when performing; although we understand these lessons intellectually, there is a part of us that sometimes fails to fully absorb these warnings. We rush out into dangerous territory and get mugged. Then suddenly, we understand at a level that a book, a video, or personal instruction by itself cannot convey. It can only be learned at an emotional level by a hard punch in the face. This is a story about such a lesson.

How many times have we been told to concentrate our attention on the people in our audience who are enjoying our show? Focus on them to help amplify the energy and response from the rest of the audience. Do not concern yourself with the couple of individuals who are not emoting or who seem to be uninterested in your performance. Years ago, my wife warned me that this was a lesson I was not learning well. If I found myself challenged by the one person in the audience who was not laughing or clapping, I would turn up the energy on those specific people. My attitude soon changed.

My wife and I were performing at a college in Virginia. There were about a hundred and fifty people in the audience. The show was going very well; the audience as a whole was laughing and clapping at all of the appropriate times, except for one girl in the front row.

She was about nineteen years old, pretty, but with a sour look on her face. No matter what I did she seemed uninterested and apathetic to my fantastic performance. By contrast, her friends were quite animated and provided me with full belly laughs. She just sat there, like a toad.

I could smell the stench of her disinterest. It invaded my senses, short circuiting my rational thinking. I tried to avoid it. I tried to concentrate on the masses of

people who were enjoying the show, but she stuck out like a tuxedo with brown shoes. She just sat there, in the front row, with a scowl on her face. Why did she have to sit in the front row? Fine, I decided to accept her challenge; I'd *make* her enjoy my performance.

I turned up the energy. I directed some of my jokes and commentary towards her, but little if any reaction came from her. My frustration reached a boiling point; I took a running leap into the frying pan of regret.

I looked at her point blank and said, "Everyone's having a good time, what's the matter with you? Did your parents die last night?" There was a momentary roar of laughter from the audience until they realized she had just burst into a torrent of tears. Her friends, who were my biggest fans, suddenly shot bolts of lightning from their eyes directly at me. One of them relayed that her grandmother, who had raised her since she was seven, had died last night. Ouch!

My own ego and a ridiculously juvenile comment had just ruined a fantastic show. The show did recover somewhat (and the girl did forgive me), but this was a defining moment for me. I tortured myself for weeks thinking about how callous I was in my actions. I'm pleased to report that I have never repeated that awful mistake. In fact, I learned from it and it has paid me back in the years since.

Some years after that moment of poor judgment, we were playing in a magnificent and yet petite theater. The seating capacity was about one hundred people. We had played two shows on the prior day and the audiences were warm and enthusiastic. This was our last show and the theater was full. We were about fifteen minutes into the performance and I noticed an elderly man sitting in the front row. He was easy to spot because he was the only one not enjoying the show.

I had a momentary impulse to focus my attention on this gentleman and to make him like the show. However, I simply recalled the hideousness of my past mistake. I quickly let it go. I didn't ignore the man but I didn't worry about his somber exterior, either. The show moved along and came to a successful end.

My wife had also noticed the man in the front row. Katalina complimented

me on my restraint; she knew it probably bothered me. I smiled and told her that I had already learned that lesson, painfully well. We both laughed and went out to the lobby to shake hands with the audience as they left the theater.

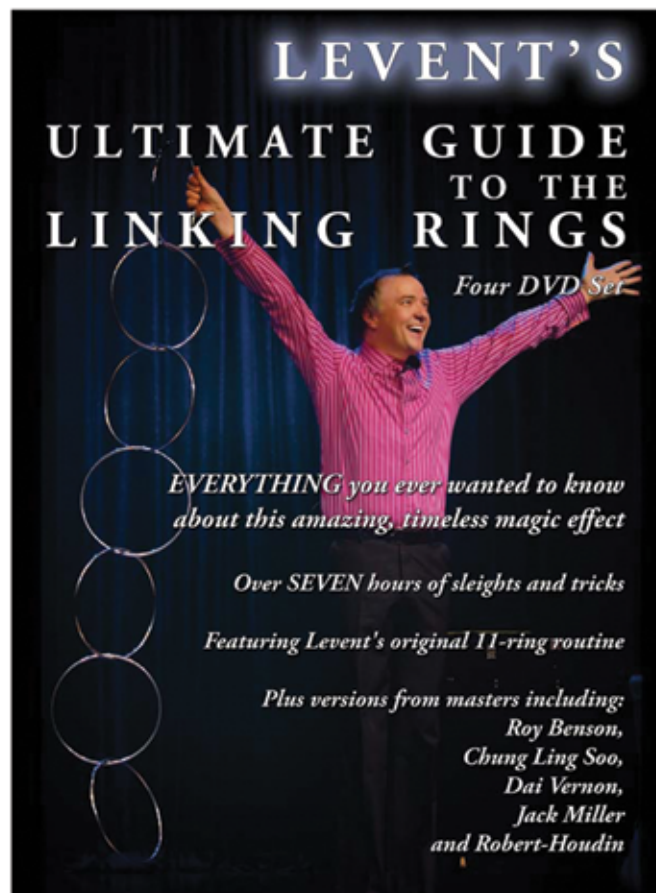
In the lobby, we enjoyed the company of the audience, exchanging stories and conversation. As the last of the people left the building, the theater manager handed us an envelope. It was from the somber man in the front row. We were struck with surprise and curiosity. Quickly, we went back to the dressing room to find out what message it contained.

Inside the envelope was a hand-written note on the program. It said: "I want to thank you for such a wonderful performance. This has been an important day for me. My wife died six months ago and I have been deeply depressed ever since. A couple of friends dragged me to your show. I did not want to go. However, watching you and your wife being so marvelous with the audience and so loving to each other on stage filled me with real joy. It is the first time I have laughed since my beloved passed. Thank you very much for bringing a smile to an old man."

My wife and I were stunned. We sat in silence for a long time. When we read it to the theater manager a few tears ran down her cheeks. She had known this man for a long time and knew of his wife's death. It was a moving and touching moment for all of us.

The man sitting in the front row was wearing a frown on the outside because of the hardship he was going through, but on the inside he was smiling and laughing. We never saw his laughter or smiles because they were taking place on the inside. As performers, we must be careful when we evaluate our audiences. We never know what might be taking place in their heads. We don't know what emotional battles they might be fighting as they sit in the audience watching our show.

We have to remember that many times people come to our shows to escape, for a little while at least, the challenges in their own lives. We have to respect our audiences, even when we think they are not reacting appropriately to our marvelous miracles... because we might just be working a deeper miracle that we aren't even aware of. ★



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George Schindler

The Dean's Diary

FRASNIA

It was just after David Copperfield made his jet disappear on TV that we were gathered on the high school football field in Colon, Michigan, with most of the Abbott's registrants in attendance. Karrell Fox assembled us, all holding hands to form a large human circle around the airplane we used to recreate this impossible illusion. This plane was somewhat smaller than David's 747 and was made of balsa wood from a kit.

Our master of ceremonies did not have a microphone, so he used the bottom end of a juggling club and spoke a bit louder than usual. I am not sure what he said, but no one else did, either. It was no wonder, since the speaker was the magical chatterbox, Sid Lorraine.

In the evening, Sid, Bruce Posgate, and I shared several pitchers of beer at the Veteran's club. I had met Sid years earlier when we both performed at a Jack Hughes's Wizards Weekend at King's Lynn, England, in 1977. I recall being upset with Pat Page, who compeered the show and who did nothing to help Sid regain his failing voice during his pitchman act. Years later I booked Sid at one of the conventions I produced at Grossinger's Hotel; backstage, the booker prodded me to "Get the guy a glass of water, for god sakes!"

For those who never experienced the joy of watching Sid's act, the product he pitched was an elixir called Frasnia. One drink was all he needed to bring back the voice he was slowly (and, of course, purposely) losing. Back in 1984, I recounted my first meeting with Sid and his wife Rene. The story bears repeating. We met in London; Bernard Hughes picked us up and packed us into a very small station wagon. There is no better way to get to know people than by sitting on their laps for a five-hour drive.

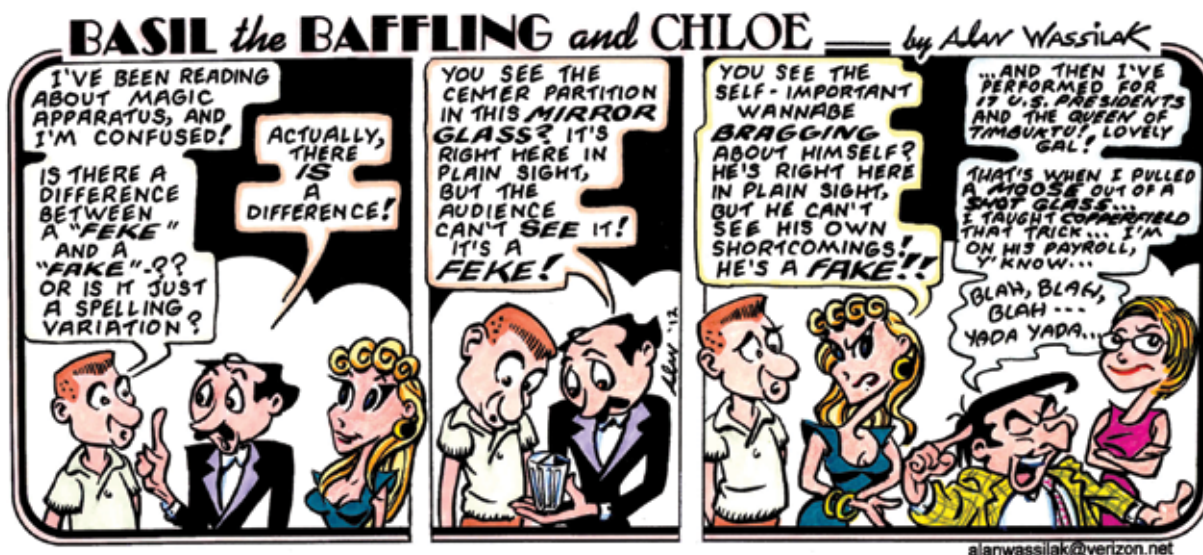
During the first hour the bumps we felt were from a flat tire. So we had time to stretch and remove our luggage while awaiting the replacement of the bad tire. The experience was made more memorable by the light rain that began to fall while we stood huddled at the side of the road.

Once in King's Lynn, we had plenty of time to get to know this delightful couple. We talked of art, museums, music, and very little about magic. After the convention, Nina and I hired a car and offered to drive Sid and Rene to the small town of St. Neots (a town about fifty miles north of London), where Sid was born. The trip turned out to be more fun, with an unforgettable picnic on the way out of town. We bought fresh steamed crabs at a small market; Sid preferred only a sandwich. As it turned out, Sid was a wise man. We stopped at a parking area at the side of the road and realized that that we had no way of cracking the crab shells. Huge black-

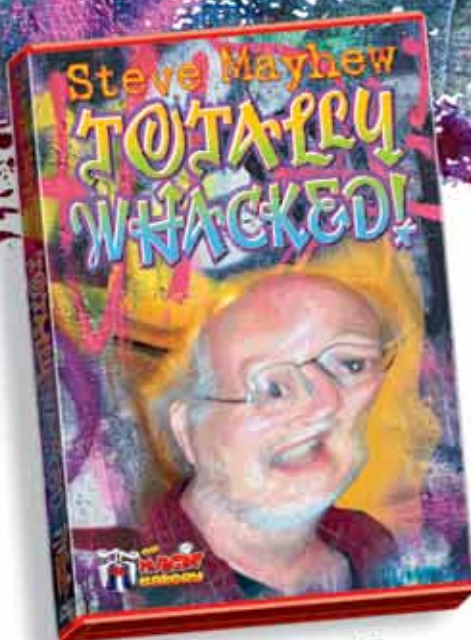


Sid Lorraine

birds swooped down at the hood of the car waiting for scraps. Sid casually munched his sandwich while the three of us tried everything, including using a tire iron to batter the shells to a fine powder...along with the meat. We really should have brought some Frasnia with us. ★



He's Erdnase with an arrow-through- the-head.



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Rod Danilewicz

Confessions of a Paid Amateur

ARE REGIONAL CONVENTIONS VANISHING?

Comments have been appearing in the prominent magic publications about the loss of several regional conventions. I wondered if this might not be strike two. First we lose the brick-and-mortar shops and then the conventions fade away for lack of dealer support.

Each spring, Abbott's hosts a flea market and auction, basically a huge yard sale for magicians. My goal this year was to interview anyone willing to speak with me about my "strike two" theory. Surprisingly, none of the magicians I spoke with thought the loss of real magic shops was a factor. A few even felt there were not enough brick-and-mortar shops left to affect how the pendulum swings. Red flag number one.

Most felt the problem was the lack of youthful participation. "There's no young blood at these conventions. It's the same bunch of old guys every year and the same old format." Red flag number two.

This led to the question "Do you have any young people in your local club?" "Well, now and then one will show up and blow us away with his technique. He'll attend a couple of meetings and never come back." Red flag number three.

The next logical question was "Why do you suppose that is?" "They all want to be street magicians today. Everything they want for that is on the Internet." Ah yes, the old Yogi Berra defense: "If they don't want to come, we can't stop them."

"Is there anything you'd like to add?" "Yeah, we need another Doug Henning to make magic popular again." I believe the superhero we are all willing to sit back and wait for is out there, somewhere, right now. It might even be the kid who blew you away at your meeting. He has the talent. But he needs the connections to get him noticed. What he *wants* might be on the Internet, but what he *needs* can only come from those of us who have been there and done that.

There may be some validity in the

observation that youthful magicians shy away from our established gatherings. There were only a few young people at the flea market. For the record, I am one of the old guys. I'm sixty-nine and have been around magic for thirty-plus years.

If I was a neophyte, full of excitement and dreams of where magic might take me, I'd be eager to attend conventions or club meetings. It wouldn't be long before I'd become disillusioned. I would find myself rubbing elbows with guys willing to show me their archaic thimble routine, but were hesitant to share the real work.

There is a lack of communication. Those of us set in our ways consider the conventions to be age-old rituals. The younger set views them as moribund examples of rituals of old age. With convention season upon us, I'm going to save red flags one and three for next month and address number two: "It's the same old format every year."

I will concede the fact that smaller regional conventions do not have the resources to move the venue to a different tourist destination each year. Doing that might even negate their drawing card. It does not mean they cannot reinvent themselves at their current location.

The economy is still not good. Those lucky enough to still have day jobs can only afford one family vacation a year. The wife and kids deserve a break from all that macaroni and cheese they've been eating. I doubt that they will consider the annual trek to the Magnificent Mystics of Muncie convention a fun-filled respite.

I'm pretty sure every regional convention is a short bus ride from a mall, amusement park, zoo, or museum. If the convention planners would include transportation and reduced entry fees to these sites as part of a package, it would be easier for dad to convince mom and the kids they will have a good time as well. Start including something for everyone.

Because the Abbott's Get-Together is next month, I want to share some timely information. Shortly after Hank Moorehouse passed away, rumors began circulating among the magicians within driving distance of Colon that the annual Get-Together was on its last legs. Hank was the driving force behind the event for many

There may be some validity in the observation that youthful magicians shy away from our established gatherings.

years. The word was that this would be an all-out bash (being the seventy-fifth anniversary), but the Get-Together would cease to be within a couple of years. Greg Bordner, who owns Abbott's, was kind enough to grant me an interview and discuss the rumors directly.

He readily acknowledged that Hank's death added considerably to the work load of the rest of the staff with regard to the annual event. He wants everyone to know that the Abbott's Get-Together is going to remain a solid fixture of the summer convention circuit for a long time to come. Work has already begun on next year's gathering and the dates have been set in stone for August 7-10.

If any of you attend a convention this year and you see young magicians there, at least feign interest in them. Ask how long they have been in magic and what their favorite type of magic is. Show them something they can use. Make them aware of local clubs and magic shops.

We all like to brag. If the youngster you befriend this summer makes it to the big time, you can honestly say, "I gave him a lot of advice when he was just starting out." Just don't push it by trying to convince your buddies that it was your thimble routine the kid did when he won FISM.

If anyone has thoughts to share with our membership on how we can save the regional conventions let me know at polishwiserd@sbcgloball.net. ★

THINKING THE IMPOSSIBLE

by
Ramón
Riobóo

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