



# The Servante

Official Newsletter of the Bruce Chadwick SAM Assembly 138 Alliance of Illusionists

Volume 2023 - Number 6 - June 2023

Next Monthly Assembly Meeting - Thursday June 20, 2023 - 7:00 pm

Illusion Warehouse, 3917 McCart Ave, Fort Worth, Texas

Three blocks north of Seminary Drive/Across from the Public School

## WHEN THINGS GO WRONG

The main core activity of the Monthly Assembly Meeting of the SAM Assembly 138 Alliance of Illusionists will feature a panel discussion on Tips and Tricks and Being Prepared: The Art of Dealing with "When Things Go Wrong." Members are also invited to bring any magic effect, routine, or act and share their performance at the meeting.

The Executive Committee will meet before the meeting at 6:00 pm. All elected officers should be in attendance, and any other dues-paid-up member of the club may attend as well. Visitors may not attend Executive Committee meetings.



## MINUTES OF THE MAY 2023 MONTHLY ASSEMBLY MEETING

The main core activity of the 7:00 pm May Monthly Assembly Meeting of the SAM Assembly 138 Alliance of Illusionists featured The Night of the Thumb, an evening dedicated to Thumb Tip magic. Over a dozen members and guests brought their favorite routines and shared their performance. In addition, Jack Lindsey, Robin Byers-Pierce, and Steve Aldridge joined the meeting via Skype. Also in attendance was visitor John Smith.

Bruce Chadwick started the meeting by showing a huge yellow box that he recently acquired from the Dallas Magic Auction, and then proceeded to produce members Sara Pylant and Cindy Bighorse. President Bernie Trowbridge briefly went over the main core activities for the meetings of the remaining 2023 year. Our Assembly agreed to endorse the west Texas Midland-Odessa Black Gold Magic Club, which is petitioning the national SAM for Assembly membership.

Jack McCoy then proceeded to produce a string of flags from a rolled-up dollar bill. Gary Poe managed to avoid stabbing his hand with a thumbtack that was under one of three sacks, and then demonstrated a very well-done cards across routine. Charles Montroll shared delicious homemade macaroons with the group. Connor Branach presented a fun book test and then proceeded to draw a picture of a lightbulb on a piece of paper and cause it to light-up.

William Wee-bo Beaty presented a montage of effects including a D'Light routine complete with sound, light a candle with his thumb, mysteriously cause a flame to move from candle to candle, make a torch turn into a rose, and proceeded to make a candle disappear. Lonnie Olander presented a fun book test and then caused a snake in a paper sack to find a selected card. Bruce Chadwick told the group about the history of the thumb tip and then showed some handling of how he makes a handkerchief disappear. The meeting then adjourned with many members hanging around for fellowship and find new wonders in the Illusion Warehouse magic shop. The night was fun and enjoyable for all.



## MINUTES OF THE MAY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

President Bernie Trowbridge called the May Executive Committee Meeting of the SAM Assembly 138 Alliance of Illusionists to order on Thursday May 18, 2023 at 6:00 pm in the Museum Room of the Illusion Warehouse. A quorum was present with officers President Bernie Trowbridge, Vice-President Lonnie O'Lander, Secretary Bruce Chadwick, Treasurer Cindy Bighorse, Historian Jack McCoy, and Member at Large Charlie Montroll in attendance. Not in attendance was Sergeant at Arms Connor Branach.

The latest Executive Committee minutes as presented in the SERVANTE were approved. Treasurer Cindy Bighorse gave a brief Treasurer's report. She reported a previous balance of \$5349.20. From that were monthly expenses of \$13.86 for Mail Chimp leaving a current balance of \$5335.34. Secretary Chadwick reminded the committee Donna and Steve Byrd still need to join the national SAM organization and do their new member introductions.

Bernie Trowbridge was recognized as the club's new representative to the Texas Association of Magicians. Cindy Bighorse was recognized as the new TAOM Secretary/Treasurer.

The main core activity agenda for future 2023 Monthly Assembly Meetings was discussed and approved:

- June - Tips and Tricks – Being Prepared (Panel Discussion)
- July - Zoey and the Illusion Warehouse Night
- August - Weebo Night – The journey from the corporate world to fulltime entertainer
- September - AOI Swap Meet
- October - Mini Lectures – (3 lectures 3 different magicians 30 minutes long)
- November - Preparation for public show fund raiser - Proposed November 18 Public Show Fund Raiser / Officer Nomination. Discussion about possibly using the Isis Theatre in the Fort Worth Stockyards (Bighorse). Also offered was the idea of Close-Up performances at the Illusion Warehouse.
- December - Christmas Party and Officer Election

Secretary Chadwick asked the committee to pay for a new Coroplast graphic sign for the magic table usually used by the magicians during Monthly Assembly Meetings. The sign would have the SAM logo as well as the title "SAM Assembly 138" and "Alliance of Illusionists." Bernie Trowbridge said such a sign would cost somewhere in the \$50 range from his Maxam Graphics company. Bighorse made the motion to approve the request, and Lonnie Olander seconded the motion. The motion was approved by acclamation.

Secretary Chadwick said the club had received correspondence from Scott Wells who ramrods the magic lecture series here in Texas. The correspondence said that future lectures would be \$300 plus hotel room.

With no further business, the Executive Committee was adjourned for the start of the May Monthly Executive Committee meeting.

Respectfully submitted,  
Bruce Chadwick, Secretary





So, the magic continues! This is a continuation of last month's column on some of the magical opportunities there are in the Metroplex.

I know I have mentioned it in past columns and during meetings that I was excited to be the club's president for 2023! I knew it was going to push me to get more involved in the art I love so much. For the last several years I wanted to do more with it but always allowed my JOB to take over the scheduling of my time. But as president I was able to convince myself that in order to do a good job I needed to be as involved as I could. Let's say I have tricked myself into believing I'm doing this for all of you! And you're welcome!

So, on your behalf, already this month I have attended Family Magic and Comedy at the Improv and Magic in the Living Room. The Improv in Arlington and Addison both do a "Family Magic and Comedy Show" on alternating Saturdays. On the Saturday it is in Arlington at Noon and then on Saturday at Addison it starts at 2:00 PM.

I attended the show in Arlington where Mike Squires is the regular magician and was performing on the Saturday I attended. There were several tables of families with small children and a few teens as I sat at my table alone. I was fortunate that when Mike got up on stage, he introduced me as a fellow magician alleviating any tensions from parents wondering who this creep was alone at a family show. Or not!

Mike's routine was very funny and highly entertaining to all. He has managed to put together a show that entertains the kids without using what I would consider tricks for kids. For example, he does the torn and restored newspaper and has everyone in the audience involved. His linking ring routine used a small child which was brilliantly done! During one part of his ring routine the child was able to magically separate 2 of the rings and then looked over to his dad and just beamed! Mike did a great job of giving many of the small kids and teens the opportunity to shine on stage with him. If you have never seen him perform, you should.

As I mentioned last month Magic in the Living Room takes place in Richardson on the first Tuesday of the month. Last month if you remember they celebrated the clown's birthday month so there was more clowning around, pun intended, and not as much magic so I went back this month to get my magic fix.

This month's show was standing room only with a slightly heavier mix of magicians to laypeople including some from the AOI magic club. The magic starts almost from the moment you sit down as there is always a walk around magician performing close-up magic at your table. This month's performer was Daryl Howard who was entertaining everyone with one of his coin routines. Dal Sanders hosted the show as he most often does while his wife Cinde welcomes everyone at the door. Cinde also does an amazing job of periodically checking with everyone to make sure they are enjoying themselves.

The other performers for the evening were Brian O'Neill, Matthew Martin, Jeff Lee, Christopher Lyle and Randi Rain. All are area magicians with their own unique style of magic and sense of humor. There was a lot of audience participation which you can only imagine with a room full of magicians really added to the laughs with their quick wit and sense of humor. It really was a great evening!

I know for many of us it is a long drive to Richardson but I think if you find yourself with nothing to do on the first Tuesday of the month, except for next month when it will be on Wednesday July 5th, I think you fine a night at Magic in the Living Room worth your time. As magicians we should try to get out and help the art as well as support fellow magicians. Besides, it's always helpful to see others perform. I have been trying to go to as many magic events as possible this year and I can honestly say I have left all of them with something I can use to me better! Until next time, Bernie

## EMERGENCY KIT CONTENT IDEAS

In the book THE SUCCESS BOOK Volume One, page 91, JAY MARSHALL’S LIST OF MAGICIAN’S NECESSITIES is presented. Frances Marshall states, “In several different places in this book you will find references to emergency kits which performers have found essential to their peace of mind, and success of show. It is impossible to do performances more than a half dozen times without the unexpected happening – something breaks, something sticks, something is forgotten. You are suddenly faced with an emergency and that’s the last thing you want to have to cope with when you are trying to look your best and do your best.

The only way out is to assume from the beginning that anything that can happen will happen and be ready for it. Jay Marshall used to have a typed list stuck on the inside lid of one of his suitcases, and he made it a point to keep that assortment of gear with him at all times in the car. Even though he is now semi-retired from show business, he still has many of the items packed with his show equipment. For the fellow doing the occasional club date, some of the things are not vital, but for those on school show tours, and working almost every day on kid shows, etc., the list is a must.”

The following list was compiled by Bruce Chadwick and is a combination of the Marshall list and augmentation from Chadwick’s own experiences from performing professionally. Feel free to use the list and add or subtract items from it as needed. Using a good tool or fishing box is a good way to stay organized and prepared.

409 Cleaner	Eating Utensils Plastic	Magnifying Glass	Salt and Pepper	Toothpaste/Brush
Aluminum Foil	Elastic	Mask	Sandpaper	Towel
Antacid	Emergency Blanket	Matches	Scissors	Towelettes
Antiseptic	Emery Board	Mercurochrome/Alcohol	Screwdriver	Tweezers
Artificial Sweetener	Envelopes	Mirror	Screws	Umbrella
Aspirin	Eyeglasses, Spare	Mirror Small	Sharpie	Underwear, Spare
Baby Powder	Facial Tissue	Money	Shaving Razor	Vitamins
Band-Aids/Bandages	Feminine Supplies	Mouthwash	Shoelaces	Washcloth
Black Touch-Up Paint	File	MRE’s	Soap, Dish	Water Sterilizer
Bleach	Fingernail Clippers	Multi-Function Tool	Soap, Hand	Water, Bottle of
Bobby Pins	First Aid Kit	Needles and Thread	Socks	Wax
Bolts and Screws	Fish Hooks	Nylon Cord	Solder Iron/Solder	WD-40
Bulldog Clips	Flashlight	Padlock	Spray Glue	Whistle
Business Cards	Flesh Paint	Pain Reliever	Stamps	Wire
Buttons	Gloves, Cotton Work	Paper Clips	Stapler	Zip Lock Bags
Can Opener	Gloves, Latex	Paper Plates	Sterno	Zip Ties
Candle	Glue Gun and Sticks	Paper Towels	Straight Pins	
Carabiners	Glue Super	Paper, Writing	String	
Cell Phone Charger	Granola Bar	Pen and Paper	Sugar Packets	
Chalk	Hammer	Pencil	Sunscreen	
Chemical Light Sticks	Hand Sanitizer	Pins, Straight	Super Glue	
Cigarette Lighter	Hand Tools	Plastic Bag	Tape Measure	
Coffee	Handkerchiefs	Plastic Storage Containers	Tape, Masking	
Comb	Insect Repellent	Plastic Utensils	Tape, Packaging	
Cosmetics	Keys, Spare	Pliers	Tape, Scotch	
Cotton Balls	Kleenex	Q-Tips	Tape, Surgical	
Cough Drops	Knife	Razor Blades, Single Edge	Tea	
Cuff Links Extra	Lacquer Thinner	Rope	Thimble	
Cup	Laxative	Rubber Bands	Thumb Tip	
Dikes	Lip Balm	Ruler/Measuring Tape	Thumbtacks	
Drink Mix	Lotion	Safety Pins	Toilet Paper	
Driver’s License, Copy	Machine Oil	Salt	Tongue Depressor	

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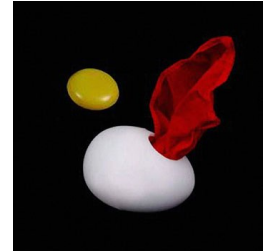
JULY 23-26, 2023

THE SOCIETY OF AMERICAN MAGICIANS  
JULY 23-26, 2023

# ACQUIRING MAGIC EFFECTS

Bruce Chadwick MA, M.Div.

Without a doubt, magic is a fun and rewarding endeavor. It is often as exciting for the magician as it is for spectators, and especially when it comes to the continuous discovery and acquisition of new magic tricks.



New magic tricks are created daily from old concepts as well as from new principles and techniques. Inventors look to new technology and adapt and create from it. Other magic tricks are the grandchildren of older effects. There is a never-ending stream of new concepts and designs that keep the art of illusion populated with new and refreshing ideas. Some tricks “come and go,” while other effects become classics that last for generations.

Magic tricks have traditionally been distributed through “brick-and-mortar” magic shops located throughout the country. Magicians who have access to a local magic store are very fortunate. There is nothing quite like seeing magic tricks and illusion apparatus in full view at the magic counter. Observing magic tricks “in the flesh” so-to-speak helps magicians determine the strength of effects. Quality and workmanship is easier to evaluate. Whether or not an effect fits a person’s repertoire and performing style is also usually simpler to determine.

Magicians with access to a brick-and-mortar magic shop tend to befriend the proprietor and stay loyal. This is smart because magic dealers are often skilled in the art of magic. Most have tremendous knowledge and wisdom. They usually love the art of magic and give it their all. The average magic dealer is more than willing to give advice and help fellow magicians become more accomplished, and especially when they see magic potential in a customer.

Unfortunately the number of brick-and-mortar magic shops have decreased worldwide in recent years. In 2023, it was reported that less than one-hundred magic shops still exist in the United States. Economic viability, inflation, supply chain issues, politics, and many other obstacles have made it very difficult for most entrepreneurs to run traditional brick and mortar establishments. Also in modern times the traditional 40% mark-up from wholesale price to retail price is no longer adequate. Even so, some magic wholesale companies have even pushed for mark-ups less than 40% on particular items. However the reality of simple economics forces most magic shops to at least “keystone” mark-up, i.e. buy it for a dollar and sell it for two. This is why it is so painful to many shop operators when customers ask for a “discount.”

Magic shop proprietors that have sustainable businesses usually rely on multiple streams of income to make ends meet. In addition to retail sales, many magic shops manufacture magic items, teach magic lessons, and perform magic shows. They also present magic lectures, write magic books, sell at magician’s conventions, and sponsor magic clubs. Many magic shops amplify their retail sales by offering costumes, make-up, balloons, party and theatrical supplies. Many magic shop proprietors even have other “non-magic” business avenues to help them make ends meet.

In addition to selling in their retail store fronts, most magic shops offer mail order sales. At one time, magic stores used magic catalogs, periodical advertisements, and other forms of printed literature to spur mail orders. Reading through a magic catalog was a real treat for magicians of yesteryear. Catalogs came in many different shapes and sizes.

While the printed word is still supreme, printed catalogs have largely been replaced by online communication. Nowadays magic dealers and manufacturers primarily use websites, social media, email, and other electronic forms of Internet communication to market the sales of magic effects.

As in the days of the printed catalog, electronic offerings usually follow the same basic pattern. The name of an effect is generally listed along with some sort of artwork or photos that give a visual suggestion of an effect. This

is supplemented with a written description that describes in detail what the audience sees as the trick is performed. Sometimes short videos are used to give additional information.

If a magic effect requires some skill and is not entirely "self-working" (that is, the trick almost works itself with very little skill required on the part of the magician), the trick description usually mentions it. If a trick involves a new principle, often the description will emphasize this as well.



Magic dealers are in business to make a living, and so most magic dealers usually describe their effects in the best light possible. Fortunately most magic dealers are reputable people who love the art of magic and generally do business with honesty and integrity. Also most reputable magic dealers refuse to sell magic tricks that are questionable or not well made.

Obviously trick descriptions do not usually reveal the secret of the effects. In fact a large part of the value when magicians purchase magic tricks are their secrets. There is even a growing trend in magic for magic shops to sell Internet "downloads," which are usually media files consisting of PDF's and videos.

Magicians should always make their purchases carefully. Except for the rare occasion of defect in workmanship, most dealers will not refund money or make exchanges.

As magicians purchase magic tricks, they should always remember that magic tricks are nothing more than theatrical props. Magic is about performance and entertainment. Thus a casual magic shop demonstration usually does not justify an effect's true potential.

One magician may see a trick as just ok. Another magician may take the same apparatus and use practiced handling and presentation to create a miracle. It is up to the magician to take a prop, routine it, and add showmanship that turns it into artful entertainment.

Also purchasing an effect does not necessarily imply that a magician should immediately use it. The magician who purchases a magic trick in the afternoon and then puts it in their show that evening is questionable. Determining a thoughtful presentation usually takes time and it is a process that should be carefully considered.

Many magicians keep magic effects on their shelves for weeks, months, and sometimes even years before they attempt to perform it in front of spectators. This is one reason many magicians never sell their magic props. While a magician may not see the full potential of a prop one day, on another day a magician may get an epiphany. An old effect that may have been gathering dust on the magic shelf may suddenly become invaluable.

When magic tricks are purchased, they usually come with instructions. The printed sheets often follow the same format as their catalog description and present the perspective of what the audience sees. Instruction sheets then usually explain the secret and handling of the effect with text and illustrations. Some magic manufacturers also maintain online video links that instruct an effect's working to help viewers understand basic handling and presentation.

Some instruction sheets come with "patter stories" which suggest what a performer might say during performance. Fortunately most magicians don't use suggested patter word-for-word. It is recommended that if magicians use suggested verbiage, that they use it only as a source for inspiration to develop their own patter and original presentations.

Magic tricks come in a wide variety of price ranges all the way to a couple of dollars for a pocket trick, to thousands of dollars for large stage illusions. However magicians should never think that the more expensive the item, the better the item will be. It is not the expense or even the quality of the item that makes good magic. Rather it is the presentation and ability of the performer to effectively perform the effect that makes good entertainment.



One performer may take thousands of dollars' worth of apparatus and get only a mild response from an audience. Another performer may take an ordinary piece of rope and bring the house down. There are millions of magic effects and even more presentations. The value of magic tricks is in their performance and entertainment value, and not in the apparatus itself.

Smart magicians should also try to remember the impact a trick has upon them the first time they see it performed. Once the secret is known, there is a tendency for some magicians to mentally devalue the prop. This is unfortunate because the same magic that astonishes a magician who first sees an effect performed, will also astonish a spectator the same way they first see it performed.

While some magic apparatus may seem expensive, it should be remembered that magic tricks are not usually mass-produced. Most magic effects are constructed through "cottage industry" with a few dozen or less of a particular effect being made at a time. Rather than some type of huge magic factory, most apparatus is made by individuals working in their home workshop, garage, or even at their dining room table. Sale prices must pay for not only the creativity an individual has put into an effect's invention, but also cover the costs of manufacturing, marketing, and sales.

It is easy for a magician to invest a lot of money into the art of magic because most magicians must go through a lot of material to find their repertoire. Much experimentation, trial, and error usually occurs in the process. However this is not to say that magicians shouldn't make wise purchases. Impulse buying should always be minimized. Some magicians even map a plan of where they want to go in magic and buy accordingly. It is possible for even the beginner in magic to develop a feel about what sort of magic is most appealing to them.

At the same time, magic availability is often very limited, and the period of obtainability is often very short. The magician who takes too long to decide whether to buy an effect may discover the item is no longer available.

When choosing magic effects, magicians should carefully consider where they typically perform and the types of audiences they will typically entertain. A children's show performer should pursue magic that is geared toward children's presentations. Magicians who find pocket tricks most appealing should probably steer toward close-up magic. The magician who performs for bigger audiences should probably consider larger apparatus that is more visible. Magicians should buy the stuff that's fits their performing style. Careful choice of material where possible will progress a magician rapidly.

Also magicians should realize that owning a lot of magic apparatus or knowing a lot of magic secrets does not make them a good magician. Magicians who are great performers have chosen a few effects and learned to do them exceptionally well. This is the stuff upon which reputations are made.

Many magicians also spend a lot of time making their own magic effects. They take ideas from books, periodicals, related apparatus, and construct new effects to fit their performing style. Other magicians take existing apparatus, modify it, and decorate it to fit their character.

Also the value of magic books should be emphasized. Books are an invaluable source of knowledge and inspiration. The core of most magic knowledge is contained in a relatively small number of magic books. Books contain the principles, psychology, and secrets that make tricks work.

The magician who reads magic books is the magician who has a firm magic foundation. Knowing principles are the catapult that helps them invent new things, see the insights used by others, and learn magic history and heritage. Books are a necessity for one who moves forward in magic. They are a beneficial investment, and they usually retain their resale value monetarily.



## BENEATH THE TRAPDOOR #4 WE'VE SEEN THIS ONE

Ken Weber, author of the book *MAXIMUM ENTERTAINMENT* suggests that only a small amount of people have ever seen live mystery entertainment. Indeed, only a very small part of the world population has seen any magic or mentalism in their lives.

You can do the same twelve tricks your entire life and let that precious dozen effects be your entire professional repertoire. Since most audiences have never seen magic (or you for that matter) then it would be easy to repeat those same twelve tricks and do them well enough so that it seems fresh to your new audience, every single time. But... what about those audiences who have seen a great deal of magic already?

Recently I celebrated my twenty-first birthday again for the thirteenth time. The family took me out for a pleasant dinner at a Japanese steakhouse; the kind of place where dinner is the show in the Benihana type of atmosphere. I've been to a few of these places and this particular location is a local favorite of mine.

The chef rolled in his cart of ingredients from the kitchen along with utensils and a few novelty do-dads to put on a great show. Being an entertainer I'm always eager to see something fresh and new. With a big rush of fire on the grill the show was underway. The chef cut vegetables faster than you've ever seen. Stacks of onion layers were filled with burning oil to create a miniature vegetable volcano oozing out fire and smoke. Guests at our table were challenged to catch chunks of rice in their mouth as they were tossed through the air. It was delightful, but I had seen it all before.



I was a fairly regular customer at this grill as were many others in the restaurant. Even though the staff changes over fairly often, the material presented by the chefs is often the same from one chef to another. It's a pleasant surprise when we see something new by our chef but it's rare that this happens.

The same issue lies in magic. There are magic fans (not magicians or magic hobbyists) out there who love attending magic shows. They can be found at places like Las Vegas casino theaters, at the Magic Castle and other magic-heavy venues. These people have seen it all. They love magic and they are hungry for new magic. The problem is that there is very little "new" in magic. Magicians often settle for monotony and mediocrity. It's common to see the exact same magic show performed by a new magician. Copycat magicians tend to do much of the same material over and over.

The best examples can be found on cruise ships. Magicians who work ships tend to do much of the same material as other cruise performers. Half-Dyed Hanky and Cards Across are two textbook examples of common cruise ship pieces. They are ideal for use by cruise performers because these items

pack very small and play big on stage. Prop cases are filled with lightweight material so magicians can fit the majority of their act in their overhead luggage on a plane. I'm not suggesting that there is anything wrong with these tricks or the magicians that do these effects. I too have a fly-on suitcase act that I can do in a similar fashion.

The issue becomes the audience. In his book *Cruise Magic 101*, Nick Lewin warns against this issue. Cruise ships have a large demographic of frequent cruisers. These cruise guests cruise at least once a year, usually more frequently than that, and they have seen a LOT of magic. Once they've seen Silk to Egg a dozen times there is no surprise factor anymore. It takes a lot of thinking and creativity on the part of the performer to show something new and complete with original routining.

There was a time when the same problem was found in magic contests. I remember attending numerous SAM and IBM magic convention stage contests where the same effects were being done by performers who were dressed oddly similar, and they would even perform to much of the same music!

Like many magicians, I frequently do children's magic events. Sometimes when I remove a pack of cards or some other iconic item from my prop case you can hear a kid say, "I've seen this one." Usually, this statement is a lie. Kids have seen something similar or seen a magician on television do something with cards or whatever object and in need for attention and validation they claim they've "seen it already" to try to get credit with their peers sitting around them. But if a child can predict the ending to your magic effect, then it might be time to shake things up. Perhaps another magician in town has also been doing the Strat-o-Spheres or Metamorpho Spot Can and the kids know what's going to happen. Maybe the kids have even seen you doing the same trick before. Shake it up! The sanctity of magic is the art of surprise. If there is no surprise, there is no more "wow factor" and the magic is lost.

The level of copycat magic out there is enormous and magic fans are taking notice. We don't ever want an audience to feel like they've seen it all. A good magician should be able to do original magic effects (or at least magic effects that are seldom seen or long forgotten so it's still fresh on the audience), combined with original routining. The idea is to create a thrilling and unique experience for everyone in the room including experienced magic audiences who otherwise would say "we've seen this one." Let's work hard to surprise our audiences and do something unique that audiences have likely never seen before and never will see again.

Challenge: What's one thing you could add to your act right now that you can honestly say is truly unique and original enough that not even magicians in your local club would recognize it? Start with just one routine and go from there and make something new.

What are your thoughts? Write to me at [bronsonchadwick@gmail.com](mailto:bronsonchadwick@gmail.com)



JACK  
♠♠♠



E M C C O Y  
A A O P A  
T R I T Y  
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S

Do you know who Ken Krenzle is? How about J.K. Hartman, or T.A. Waters? Derek Dingle? Bro. John Hamman? Harry Lorraine (recently passed)? Gary Kurtz? If you're a young magic person or beginner they all may be unfamiliar to you. I could go on with many others whom I began my venture into this artform with. Magic isn't new by any means, nor is brilliant magic. Here at T.I.W. I glance at Bruce's shelves in the shop and see many absolutely amazing books which customers don't even give a glance. 'The Stars of Magic' for example, how many know the famous magic inside that classic?

There's no listing on the cover, so pretty much no one except those who've either purchased it or got so badly fooled (don't care for that word) by one of the tricks (another word I dislike) inside and begged for the source. When that book first came out it was sucked up like by the magic community like jello squares and is still in print.

Any time someone asks me a book to recommend, the already mentioned 'Stars of Magic' but another is 'The Secrets of Bro. John Hamman', a book full of absolutely mind-boggling magic using new and original methods. Bro. John Hamman was extraordinarily clever and created some of the most brilliant sleights magicians still use today. Unfortunately, that book isn't readily available unlike 'Stars..'. For that reason, I'd like to explain a variation of a Bro. John Hamman stunner called 'Watch Me Like A Hawk' (*The Secrets of Brother John Hamman, pg. 44, Kaufman and Greenberg Publishing, 1989*). His creation involves a side-steal which I've never been able to do smoothly, and the effect is too clever to pass up on, so I modified it slightly which replaced the side-steal with a top palm, which for me is far easier. As a utility move, the following allows for an unbelievable and stunning instant vanish of a selection. It's spectator mental directing at its finest.

**Bro. John Hamman's amazing move for which he provided no name** — The following move I'm about to teach you kept magicians stumped for a long time until Bro. John finally revealed it. He could do it flawlessly. It's not a difficult sleight but must be done in a casual manner, which Bro. John was a natural at doing. I'm going to teach the move and then will explain the rest of my variation.

**What the Move Accomplishes**— With no extra cards involved, the 4 aces are dropped face down onto the table and a selection placed on top, also face down. The magician doesn't know the selections identity. He picks up the packet and very clearly removes the aces from the bottom, one at a time, showing each ace's face, leaving the selection in the other hand, which is then placed onto the table. No matter how close people watch and without any extra moves, 4 aces are shown once again and dropped on top of the tabled selection, immediately picked up, turned face up and tossed to the table, the selection suddenly vanished! Remember, they just saw 5 cards and now 4, and your hands are empty, everything examinable. Ponder for a moment how such a thing can be possible.

Hope you don't mind my backyard backdrop (or is it bottomdrop?). Remove the 4 aces and 1 extra card. For explanation purposes arrange the aces in diamonds, hearts, clubs, spades from the bottom up. Place the extra card (selection) on top. Hold the packet in the left hand. The middle finger pushes rightward the bottom card. I wrap my thumb over the top to aid in holding back the cards above it. The right hand approaches, thumb above, fingers below (illustration A).



The right hand removes that pushed off bottom card and rotated palm downward to display the face of the ace of diamonds (illustration B).



The left middle finger pushes over the bottom card again. The right hand rotates back palm up and approaches the left (illustration C).



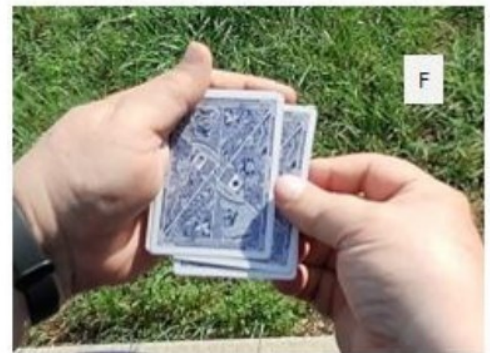
The right hand takes the pushed off card below its held card, removes it and rotates to show the face of the ace of hearts (illustration D).



The left middle pushes it's bottom card to the right. **Note: For teaching purposes I also down-jogged the card slightly. Normally, the card is pushed straight rightward.** As the right hand move leftward, its thumb pushes its top card slightly leftward (illustration E).



The top card of the right hand's double is shoved into the left thumb crotch and aligned with the left's packet. The left thumb clamps this card against its others at the front left corner. The right hand, as before, removes the left's bottom card as its top card (ace of diamonds) is retained by the left hand (illustration F).



The right hand rotates to display the ace of clubs. The left hand gets it's cards (actually 3 though believed to be only 2) nice and square (illustration G).



The right hand rotates back palm up. During this time the left thumb jogs its top card up and leftward slightly as its index tip keeps the bottom 2 cards perfectly square (illustration H).



The right hand pinches the left's double under its cards and moves rightward, the left retaining only its top card (illustration I).



The right hand rotates to show the ace of spades (illustration J).

**The move is complete. You've displayed all 4 aces which they've seen in the exact order you originally stacked them for the observant spectator. I hope, if you're a card person, you understand the value of this move. Of course the cards can be anything other than aces, let your imagination flow! Notice how the main sneaky bit is done on the 3rd count. Theoretically it could be done a different time but the 3rd count is the most deceptive, leaving the beginning and end counts clean. It's the fact they see the top(?) card so visibly on the last count that in their mind it must be the selection.**



**Watch Me Like A Sparrow** — Remove the 4 aces and in displaying them arrange in red-red-black-black order from the face. Place the packet face down on the table. Spread the deck face down and request a volunteer remove any card and remember it then place face down on top of the aces. While they're doing this be looking away and putting the rest of the cards in the case. Pick the stack up and do the previously explained move, thus apparently removing the 4 aces from below the selection, showing each one as you do. Place the left's card onto the table. Of course the spectator's believe this to be the selection. The right's packet is placed face up in the left hand. Casually raise the left hand towards your face as you look at the single tabled card and mention you not knowing its identity. During this, with the left thumb, slightly push over its top (face) card and glimpse the selection. Lower the hand back and turn the packet face down. As you speak, casually take the top card into the right hand, then the 2nd on top. Place both of these on the bottom. A red ace should now be on the face, the selection on top. No need making a move out of this, you're simply toying with the ace packet as you speak.

Look at the table card and as you mention only they knowing its identity, top palm the selection into the right hand. Reach the hand into pocket, leaving the selection and bringing out a coin, pen, keys, anything for a logical excuse for reaching. Place the item on top of the table card, and explain you'll further the difficulty in your secretly gaining access to it. It's so funny because you've already done everything, discovered their card's identity and gotten rid of it even. See how powerful this illusion is. You're clean before the drama even begins. Turn the 3 aces face up and do a 3 - as - 4 Elmsley count, which is just like a normal Elmsley except on count 2 a single is pushed off instead of the usual double. Everything else is the same. They've seen the same red ace twice but goes unnoticed. Remove the item off the table card and drop the 3 aces (believed to be 4) face down on top. Explain they will absorb the selection's identity. Touch their top and name the selection for the 1st surprise. Pick all up, turn face up, separate and toss the packet to the table in a flourish, showing the vanish as you say, *"Wow, the aces got carried away with the absorbing thing!"*

**Tutorials for Alex Elmsley's 'Elmsley Count' can be readily found online and at our club meetings.**

## OBITUARY/METRO

OBITUARY | MILTON LARSEN

# Co-founded Hollywood's landmark Magic Castle

LOS ANGELES TIMES

LOS ANGELES — Milton Larsen, who as co-founder of the Magic Castle transformed a falling-down Hollywood mansion into an iconic private club that attracted top magicians and their fans from around the world, died Sunday. He was 92.

Larsen passed away in his sleep in an apartment a short walk from the Franklin Avenue landmark, according to his niece, Erika. The cause of death was not known, she said.

A gaming entrepreneur purchased the property last year, but Larsen continued to be a frequent and beloved presence at the Franklin Avenue clubhouse. After an awards show Thursday marking the 60th anniversary of the club, he stayed at the bar "until the wee hours," his niece said.

Larsen spent decades in television as what he called "a

gag writer" for shows including *Truth or Consequences*, and it was from the window of a TV studio on Hollywood Boulevard and Highland Avenue that he first spotted the turreted residence that would become the Magic Castle.

A financier had constructed the Edwardian-style manor house with French and Gothic elements in 1908, but it had fallen into disrepair by the 1950s, with shutters dangling and a yard overgrown with weeds. Larsen tracked down the owner.

"I told him about this crazy idea of turning it into a club for magicians," he recalled in a 2017 interview with the *Washington Times*.

Larsen was born into a family of magicians in Pasadena in 1931. His father, William, was an attorney who once represented Harry Houdini's widow and left the law to practice magic. His mother, Geraldine, had a children's show on KTLA called *The Magic Lady*.

The club they launched Jan.

2, 1963, offered free membership into what they called the Academy of Magical Arts to subscribers to the magic magazine *Genii*. The academy is now a nonprofit with its headquarters at the Magic Castle and more than 6,000 members from 40 countries.

The club attracted those who could perform, those who preferred to watch and celebrities including Cary Grant, Muhammad Ali, Johnny Depp and Ryan Gosling. All who visited were treated to the property's unique decor — stained glass windows, secret passageways, urinals that talked — and strict dress code that required coats and ties for men.

Video game mogul Randy Pitchford, a magic enthusiast and club member, bought the club in April 2022 and installed Erika Larsen as president.

Pitchford is founder and president of Frisco-based Gearbox Entertainment Co.

In addition to his niece, Larsen, is survived by his wife, Arlene, and his nephew, Dante.



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## DFW AREA MAGIC HAPPENINGS

### FORT WORTH SAM ASSEMBLY 138 ALLIANCE OF ILLUSIONISTS

Meets on the third Thursday of each month, 7:00 pm at the Illusion Warehouse party room and magic shop located at 3917 McCart Avenue, Fort Worth, Texas 76110. Contact communications@allianceofillusionists.com or go to <http://sam138.com/alliance/> or Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/162025544420781/>



### FORT WORTH MAGICIANS CLUB INC AND REN CLARK IBM RING 15

Meets on the first Thursday of each month, 7:00 pm. See <https://fortworthmagiciansclub.org/>

### MID-CITIES MAGIC CIRCLE

Meets monthly. See the Mid-Cities Magic Circle Facebook group.

### DALLAS MAGIC CLUB, SAM ASSEMBLY 13 AND IBM RING 174

See [www.DallasMagic.org](http://www.DallasMagic.org) for meeting information.



### IMPROV COMEDY CLUBS IN ADDISON AND ARLINGTON

Both comedy clubs periodically host weekend comedy magic shows. For more details go to either [www.ImprovArlington.com](http://www.ImprovArlington.com) or [www.ImprovAddison.com](http://www.ImprovAddison.com).

### MAGIC IN THE LIVING ROOM

Periodic magic shows every 1st Tuesday at 7:00 pm at The Line Public House, 940 E Beltline in Richardson. See [www.MagicLivingRoom.com](http://www.MagicLivingRoom.com) for more information.

