



The Servante

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

Volume 2026 - Number 5 - May 2026
Monthly Club Meeting - Thursday May 21, 2026 - 7:00 pm
Illusion Warehouse - 3917 McCart Ave, Fort Worth, Texas
Three Blocks North of Seminary Drive

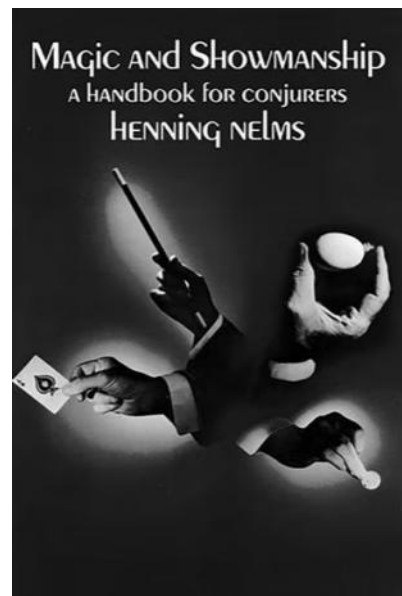
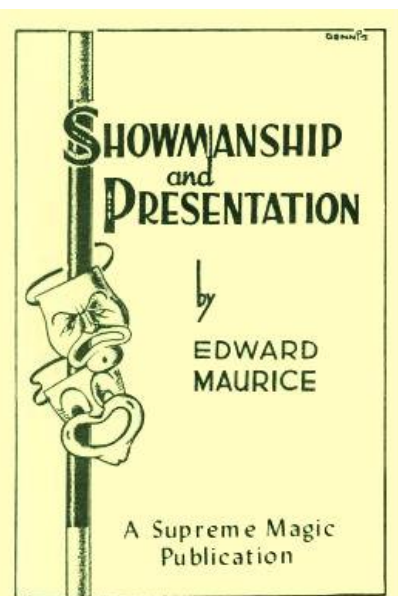
MAGIC AND SHOWMANSHIP

On Thursday May 21, the SAM Assembly 138 and Alliance of Illusionists will have its monthly club meeting. There will be several teach-a-trick presentations, a book review by Caleb Westeen, a workshop on Showmanship by Bruce Chadwick, and another small auction of magic tricks donated to the club by Buddy Hoyt. The meeting will be held at 7:00 pm, the Illusion Warehouse magic shop, 3917 McCart Ave. All 2026 members in good standing (2026 dues paid up members) and guests are invited to attend the meeting.

Additionally the club's Executive Committee will meet at 6:00 pm. All officers should be in attendance, and any 2026 members in good standing may attend as well. Visitors may not attend Executive Committee Meetings.

ABOUT THE SHOWMANSHIP WORKSHOP . . .

Bruce Chadwick is a well-know professional magician, magic dealer, and illusion fabricator who has made the Illusion Warehouse his home for over 30 years. Performing for most of his life, Bruce is very knowledgeable about magic performance, acting, directing, and theatrical presentation. He worked with Warner Brothers for a number of years as a special effect consultant where he studied presentation, blocking, and focus of attention from the perspective of several acclaimed film directors. Bruce also holds a Master of Arts degree in Theatre Arts from Baylor University, with emphasis on directing and design. He is also highly acclaimed as an expert in the field of illusion mechanics. **Also all 2026 dues-paid-up members of the clubs will be given a free copy of Edward Maurice's famous book MAGIC AND SHOWMANSHIP.**



MINUTES FROM THE APRIL MONTHLY CLUB MEETING

The Thursday April 16, the Alliance of Illusionists/SAM Assembly 138 featured a night of "Gambling, Card Magic, and Games of Chance." Members, guests, and attendees who wanted to participate were encouraged to bring one or more related effects, display them and perform them at the 7:00 pm meeting, the Illusion Warehouse, 3917 McCart Avenue, Fort Worth, Texas.

First on the agenda was Eric Miller, the consummate high-end magic collector and poker enthusiast. Since many magic card effects are related to poker and its rules, Eric provided a very informative talk and PowerPoint presentation on Texas Hold'Em Basics. Then he provided the group with a few good stories about his gambling experiences. He concluded his lecture by showing some of his exquisite stage-size versions of the classic Three Card Monte effect painted by Rick Heath, the artist for the Le Grand David and His Own Spectacular Magic Show in Beverly, Massachusetts. Eric's presentation was absolutely thrilling in every respect.

Jack McCoy was next with a version of "sugar and spice" where the four kings magically cut out of a deck turned into four aces, and then into a royal flush. Lord George Ferrin took the stage and dealt cards to come up with the winning hand, a royal flush versus four aces. Later he showed how cheaters work with methods such as the bottom deal and dealing a royal flush with spades.

Matthew Welsby showed his Mental Dice effect, where he was able to faithfully predict the throws of dice. Gary Poe presented a nice routine with three regular cards and one odd card. He then showed some unique handling of his TCC Color Changing Knife set. The meeting then concluded with the auction of several magic effects donated to the club by Buddy Hoyt. It was a fun meeting that was full of camaraderie and fellowship, the hallmark of SAM Assembly 138 and the Alliance of Illusionists.



APRIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

President Hare Evison called to order the April 16, 2026 Executive Committee meeting of the SAM Assembly 138 and the Alliance of Illusionists at about 6:05 pm in the Illusion Warehouse museum room.

A quorum of officers were in attendance including President Hare Evison, Vice President Gary Poe, Secretary Bruce Chadwick, Treasurer Lonnie Olander, Sergeant at Arms Jack McCoy, Historian William Weebo Beaty, and Member at Large Caleb Westeen. Also in attendance was member in good standing Clarke Broadus.

The minutes of the March Executive Committee Meeting as printed in the April issue of the SERVANTE were approved by acclamation.

Treasurer Lonnie Olander presented the club's April financial report. The club's previous report Operating Account balance was \$2075.92. The club received \$23.64 from dues and \$10 from the March Hunt auction, with total receipts being \$33.64. The clubs had two disbursements, one for \$13.86 or MailChimp and a second \$90.93 payment to Maxam Graphics for the banquet plaques. This leaves the club with a current working balance of \$2004.77.

The club reaffirmed their commitment to work with the Dallas Magic Club to sponsor the Henry Evans lecture on Thursday April 30, 2026 at the Mellow Mushroom restaurant in Arlington. Each club will pay half of the lecture fee and hotel expense.

Discussion ensued regarding the magic tricks San Antonio magician Buddy Hunt donated to the club. At the club's March Executive Committee Meeting, Caleb Westeen volunteered to sort the collection. The club auctioned off a few of the items at the March meeting, albeit the auction was a bit disorganized. The club will continue to auction other items at ensuing meetings, with about ten items chosen to auction off at the April 16, 2026 monthly club meeting. The auctions will be led by Westeen. It was recommended by Chadwick that the club send Buddy a thank you note composed by President Hare.

Jack McCoy gave a quick overview about the status of the club's Facebook page. It was agreed that one of the requirements to be a moderator or administrator of the group is that said people must also be members in good standing (current year dues-paid-up members).

With no further business, the meeting concluded about 6:45 pm to start the April monthly club meeting featuring a poker lecture featuring gambling, card magic, and games of chance. Central to the meeting will be a poker lecture and magic collectibles display by Eric Miller.

Respectfully submitted,
Bruce Chadwick, Secretary





FROM THE PRESIDENT'S TOP HAT

Welcome once again, friends and fellow lovers of magic! As we gather beneath the brim of the President's Top Hat, this monthly column continues to celebrate the art, humor, challenges, and unforgettable moments that come with being part of the magical community. Whether you perform on stage, practice behind the scenes, or simply enjoy the wonder of illusion, I hope these reflections inspire you to keep growing in your craft and finding joy in the experience along the way.

The Show Must Go On

As we move into the month of May, we are greeted with warmer weather, longer evenings, and plenty of opportunities for entertainment and magic shows. This time of year always gets me thinking about ways to improve my performances. I'm constantly searching for the right routine, the right music, and for some reason, I always convince myself that if I just get one "new bigger effect," then *that* will be the trick that changes everything. Ha!

Over time, though, I've realized something important. Sometimes less really is more. I find myself cutting back on certain tricks and focusing more on what truly works for my audiences. Any magician can fill an hour with magic, but keeping your audience engaged from beginning to end—that's half the act! Especially when performing for children, keeping everyone focused and entertained can become a magical challenge all on its own.

Of course, every magician eventually meets the child in the audience who proudly announces, "I know how you did it!" Ha! I've learned to handle those moments with humor and kindness. Sometimes I'll say something like, "You may think that's how it was done, but I assure you it wasn't. And if you know the secret, go tell your parents and come back when the show is over!" Even when I remind the audience to keep their guesses to themselves, kids are naturally excited and eager to share what they think they've figured out.

Truthfully, those are often the children most fascinated by the magic. At the end of the show, I'll sometimes bring them over and demonstrate a little sleight of hand they can't quite explain. I remind them that magic isn't always about fooling people—it's about entertaining them, creating wonder, and bringing joy to the room. If my goal were simply to fool someone, I'd perform close-up sleight of hand all day long. But a magic show is about much more than secrets; it's about creating an experience people remember.

Preparing for shows has its own adventures too. Packing the van, making sure I didn't forget my blazer, microphone, banner clips, or some important prop—it always seems like there's something missing! Ha! But one thing I've learned is that no matter what happens, *the show must go on*. Even if something gets left behind, somehow it always works out in the end.

And when the night is over, the props are packed away, and I'm driving home with a van full of magic apparatuses, I feel accomplished. I feel grateful knowing I expressed myself, entertained others, and hopefully gave people a few laughs and memorable moments along the way. That feeling is what makes all the preparation worthwhile.

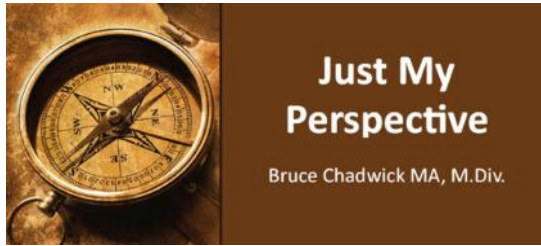
So until I discover the "next big effect," create the next routine, or find another way to improve the show, I'll keep working with what I have—trying to make it stronger, more meaningful, and better than the last performance. I may not practice every single day, but I learn something from every show.

Until next month, keep the magic alive and continue the show business!

— Hare Evison

President of the Bruce Chadwick SAM Assembly 138 and Alliance of Illusionists 🧙 ✨

"Until the curtain rises again, keep the magic alive—on stage, in practice, and in the moments that matter most."



THEY DON'T KNOW THAT THEY DON'T KNOW

Generally speaking, I enjoy seeing other magicians perform. Occasionally however, I encounter performers who I don't enjoy. In fact, I find some of them revolting. Understand that I do give magicians the benefit of the doubt. I watch them perform more than once. I give them as much leeway as possible before I judge them. We all have bad days. However when I loathe them over and over again, I scratch them off my "need to be saved" list.

I have thought about inept performers many times and have tried to analyze what causes them to continuously grovel in mediocrity. Know that I rarely judge a performer based upon the magic effects they choose to perform. Rather it is their personality, demeanor, and the attitudes they project that I usually find objectionable. This can include being pompous, arrogant, self-centered, contemptible, unpleasant, insulting, and a host of other adjectives I can't put into writing. When they project a "I can do something you can't do" attitude, and thereby perform in a way that makes an audience look stupid, I cringe. Apparently, they have no idea that their smugness and conceit is not entertaining. I especially loathe bullies with decks of cards, which can be extremely boring.

The sad part about it is that some performers apparently don't realize how negative and mundane they are when they perform. They don't seem to realize that audiences don't respond well to pompous personalities and smugness. Most of these performers don't have the faintest idea what it means to win over an audience, and they don't understand that their attitudes can keep their audiences from having a good time. I call this the "snootiness" pitfall, which doesn't further the art of magic. Such performers are not entertaining.

Indeed magic has natural crevasses that many performers fall into. Of course the first rule in magic is, "You have to fool them." If a magician doesn't fool audiences, they are not performing the art of magic. However "fooling an audience" is often misunderstood. When magicians make "fools" out of their audiences, that is bad. Being cocky, arrogant, self-centered, and making audiences feel inferior, is revolting at best.

Also one of my greatest pet peeves in magic is when a magician demonstrates magic only as puzzles. When a performer thinks that audiences are going to admire them for the cleverness of their trick's secrets, they are poor entertainers. Magic is the art of creating performance that is entertaining. Rarely is the demonstration of magic puzzles entertaining. Unfortunately many magicians are nothing more than "magic demonstrators" who don't seem to realize that their presentations are not entertaining. Simply put, they don't know that they don't know.

Occasionally performers ask me for advice. It is refreshing when they ask. I enjoy sharing and try to make my criticisms positive. However, I also remind myself that my opinions are just my opinions and not a consensus for everyone. Unfortunately sometimes "performers" don't want to be helped. So if they don't ask, I usually just keep my mouth shut. There is no use throwing pearls before swine. I have learned through experience who will probably respond with "Who are you to critique me?" That's ok. They deserve to boil in their own soup.

There is an old saying that "knowledge is power." Certainly this is true. Also as most seasoned performers amass knowledge, they also realize how little they really know. This is the process of life, and it is how a person learns to be a good performer. Experience is the ladder one must climb to gain wisdom. A performer who is exceptional is usually the performer who has been tempered through time, trials, and tribulations. Usually such performers have also listened to their peers and reflected on good advice.

So if you ever see me walking out on a magician's performance, please don't panic. I am probably just going to the bathroom. Probably.



CLUBS

I know how I had written in the past that I had a fear of performing. I performed this weekend. I had the shaking hands for the first few minutes. I have not reached a level of experience that I don't still have some nervous energy going on but it is not fear, dread or sheer terror causing it anymore. It is built up adrenaline. As I start to perform the fight or flight type response that the adrenaline is meant to deal with finds a different avenue of release. It is now fight, flight or perform. The shakes quickly went away and I had a blast.

I am not a natural performer. I do not like being in the spotlight. I don't care for meeting new people or talking to strangers, but I do love magic and I love sharing this magic that I love.

My fear of performing was pretty strong. You can read books and articles or listen to podcasts but I don't believe they could ever get a person like my past that fear. I determined that there was no way around this fear so the only path was through it. I would have to force myself to perform. I knew that wasn't a fair thing to do on the poor general public. That is what brought me to the magic club.

In the club I saw some others pushing through their fears and occasionally awkward or failed performances. I saw that they yet lived. It wasn't important that it wasn't great. It was important that they got up and pushed themselves through it and that the next time they would be a little better. I am not speaking of skill. I learned that there can be a big difference between what you can do in your magic room and what you can do under fire.

The club has provided a place to perform and reach my goal of getting past the terror but it has done much more. In the club I have found kindred spirits that have become friends. I very much look forward to the monthly hangouts. I would like to get together for some mid-month jams. I don't know if y'all are aware but online social media groups are generally pretty toxic environments which makes it extra sad that they are causing the demise of non-online clubs and gatherings as a whole and that includes magic clubs.

Face to face human interaction is under full assault. Companies run you through chat bots and self check outs. We keep up with friends through social media instead of visits or phone calls. People learn magic from YouTube. I am not saying that there is not some good instruction in the mechanical things if you can find it buried in the bad. I am saying that you won't get camaraderie there. You won't perform there and have a friend you can ask for an honest opinion to help you improve. Maybe you are already God's gift to magic. If so, go to a club and help others. I want all magic better.

Clubs don't have to die out. Clubs still offer something real that can't be found online. How do we reach out to a generation that has largely only lived online and extend a welcoming hand...an actual human hand...not an emoji? Let's talk about it.

Gary Poe, Vice-President
SAM Assembly 138 and
Alliance of Illusionists



MARK WILSON'S COMPLETE COURSE IN MAGIC

My This Month I was starting to do a review on a piece of magic I learned early on and it is still a fantastic effect when done to full potential. It is the corn in a ball of yarn. The bare bones of it are hanging in the wall of the magic shop and contain the harder to make required gimmick.

As I reached for Wilson's Complete Course in Magic to get the page number for reference it occurred to me that I should just review the book. Page 209 is where the coin in yarn can be found by the way.

Most that have been in magic for awhile are familiar with this book and know that it is probably the book most recommended for beginners. Don't let that deceive you into thinking the magic is only suited for beginners. The book has 503 pages!

The reason it is so recommended for a beginner is that it assumes you know nothing starting out. It starts with a description of what playing cards are and moves to basic card handling followed by self-working effects before moving to sleights. The book is great about teaching a sleight followed by a good trick that you can put it to use with. That is a great way to learn.

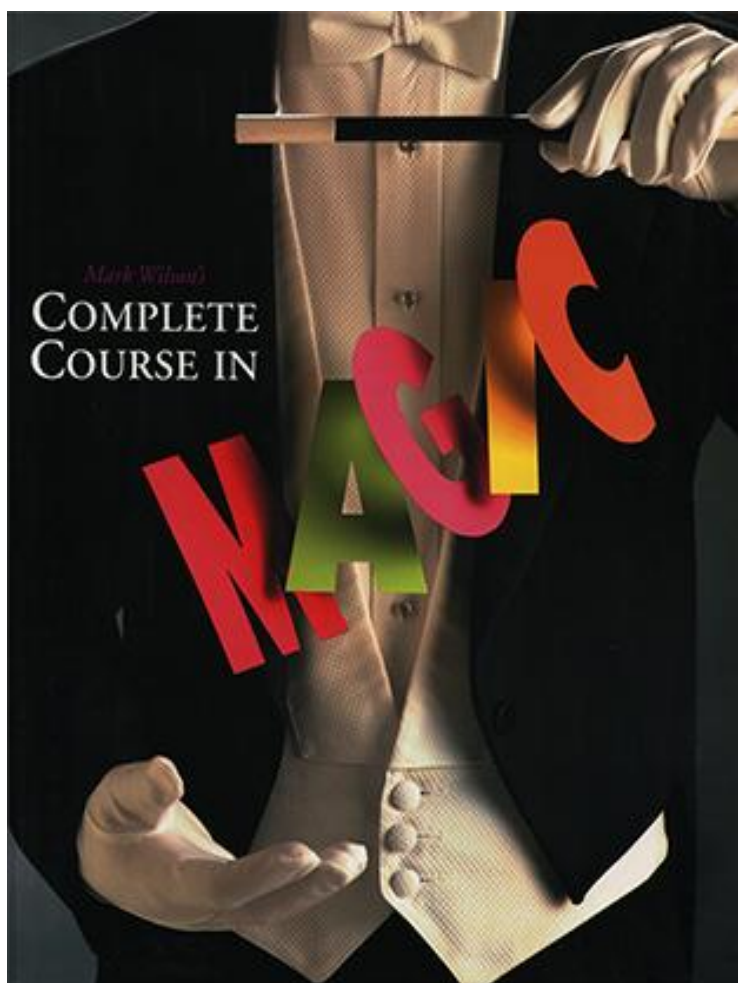
The playing card section is about 160 pages and will give a person a solid card magic foundation and some solid effects.

Wilson's does not stop at cards. Next you get coin and money magic. You go from basic sleights to coins across, coins through table all the way to bill in lemon.

After money magic we get rope magic, silk and handkerchief magic, impromptu magic, mentalism, bar bets, contraption construction, sponge balls, cups and balls, stage illusion construction, and then more tricks using what was learned. I view it like a condensed Tarbell course but easier to read.

Beginner? You begin building a skyscraper by building the foundation. I use the foundation I learned from Wilson's all the time and some of my favorite tricks came from there. I was fortunate to have been steered to Wilson's in the beginning. It is still an excellent reference text.

Wilson's is easy to follow and has great illustrations. If you have not gathered from what I have written, it belongs on your shelf. It is one of a very few books that could take you from layman to well rounded magician. 10/10



JACK
♠♠♠♠



E M C C O Y
A A O P A
T R I T Y
H D N I !
S S C
S

This is an early experiment of mine from the mid 1990s. My goal was for the 3 royalties of identical suits to somehow mesh together in perfect suit and rank order after showing

the 4 jacks, 4 queens, and 4 kings in separate stacks and simply dropping one onto the other then onto the last. I managed to succeed and later refined it twice, even reverse engineering it where the trios magically separate again. This is from my book, *'Impossibilities—The Collected Works, pg. 269'*. My 2nd version 'A Royal Mesh' can be also found in the same book, pg. 240, and 'A Royal Mesh Rewound' can be found in *'A Underground Magician's 7th Book', pg. 20'* which explains yet another process plus the re-separation effect.



Effect: The 4 jacks are shown and placed on the table in a stack, a story told of the 4 sons going out to a club. The story continues about the 4 queens and 4 kings not getting along so the kings went out together to get drunk and maybe do other king-worthy things. The 4 queens went out looking for them. After a little interacting the 4 jacks are dropped onto the 4 queens, then all dropped onto the 4 kings. Immediately the packet is ribbon spread and each group of 3 adjacent cards are removed. When turned over, each group is the jack, queen, and king of the same suit, together and in order, the sons getting parents back home.

Setup: Arrange the royalties in the order shown to the right. Remove the 4 jacks and place in separate locations in the deck but maintaining their order. Do the same with the 4 queens, then the 4 kings.



Arrange the kings, queens, and jacks in the above order, from the top down:
KD,KH,KS,KC,QH,QC,QS,QD,JD,JS,JH,JC

Performance: 1. Remove the deck and turn the cards faces towards you. Spread from the face, up-jog the 4 kings, strip out and place in a face up pile on the table. Repeat, this time removing the queens, placing them onto the kings, then repeat with the jacks. The stack will now be in the order explained above. Pick up and square the packet.

2. Grasp the packet in right hand, biddle style. Singly peel off the four jacks, one-at-a-time into the left palm. Revolve this group face down and place it on the table.
3. Peel off the top queen showing (diamond). Now as the next queen (spade) is peeled off the packet and the left hand is beneath the packet, the queen of diamonds is secretly stolen (loaded) back onto the bottom of the right's packet (below the king of hearts). Single-peel the queen of clubs then hearts off on top of all. The spectators will think the four queens are there, but actually there's only three. Revolve that packet face down and hold it in a deep left hand dealers grip.
4. Singly peel the top 3 kings, keeping them separate from the face down queens by an oversized pinky break. This isn't a hidden gap, in fact you want the spectators to be aware the packets are intentionally being kept separate. Poke the last held king with the secret queen squared as one into the separation (above the 3 queens). Turn the face up block to face down and flush on top of the 3 queens. To the spectators, you simply showed the queens, then the kings. The actual order of the packet is from the top down: QD,KD,KC,KS,KH,QS,QC,QH. The jacks are face down on the table in clubs, hearts, spades, diamond order from the top down.
5. With the right hand, reach for the jack stack, during this time the left hand obtains a one-handed break below its top 2 cards, which is simply thumb pushing the top 2 cards rightward then retracting, obtaining the break as the packet is squared. With practice you'll be able to do this by feel alone. Alternately, simply spread and close the face down packet as you talk, obtaining the break in standard fashion prior to obtaining the jacks. Turn the jacks face up and hold in right hand biddle grip.

6. With the left thumb peel the top jack (diamond) off and assists in revolving this jack face down to the bottom of the jack packet, the right hand using the left side of its packet as well to aid in this. When the left hand returns to peel off the next jack, the two cards above the break (queen and king of diamonds) are loaded onto the bottom of the jack packet. The left thumb now peels the jack of spades off the top of the packet and revolved face down onto the bottom of the packet, the right thumb keeps a small separation between it and the packet. Peel off the next jack (hearts), revolving it face down onto the bottom of the jack packet. Now, before the last jack (clubs) is peeled off, the two jacks below the thumb break are secretly loaded onto the top of the king/queen packet. After the unload, the jack of clubs is peeled, revolved face down and placed on the bottom. Place this four card packet face down onto the table. To the spectators you simply displayed the four jacks, using a small flourish during the process, and they are now face down in a packet on the table.

7. Hold the packet in the left hand, dealer grip. With the left and right hands, spread over the top 4 cards, barely spreading the 5th card as well. Close the spread, catching a pinky break below the top 5 cards. Grasp the packet from above by the right hand, biddle style, keeping it gripped with the left hand as well. The right fingers need to mask the entire front of the packet. The left thumb lowers onto the top card. The left hand moves leftward, taking the bottom three cards (those below the break) and the top card as well. In other words the right hand strips the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th cards from the right side of the packet, though the left hand does the moving, the right hand remaining motionless. Place both packets onto the table, the left's stack becoming the middle pile, the right hand's stack becoming the rightmost pile. The spectators think you removed the top 4 cards, which they believe to be kings, closed everything, then placed both packets on the table. To them, the queens, kings, and jacks are in separate piles on the table.

8. Pick up the middle packet, turn it face up and Jordan count the packet, apparently showing four queens. Revolve this packet face down and place it back onto the table.

9. Pick up the rightmost packet, turn it face up, and Jordan count it, apparently showing four kings. Revolve this packet face down and return it to the table.

10. With the left hand grasp the middle (queen) pile in 'glide' position. Remove the bottom queen (hearts), turn it face up and place on the table in front of the packet as you place packet back down in the middle spot. Pick up the 'king' packet and remove the 2nd from bottom card per glide, turn it face up and place in front of the stack as you set the stack back onto the table in the rightmost position. Pick up the face up queen and king and hold together and spread. Use a monte-type move as you rotate them face down to end with the left hand now holding the king and the right hand holding the queen. Poke the right's card into third position from the top into the rightmost stack. Poke the left's card into the second position from the top of the middle stack. Be sure you don't flash any faces during this. Now pick up the 'jack' pile and drop it onto the 'queen' pile, then both onto the 'king' pile. It should appear to the audience that all you did was pick up the 2 face up cards, talked about them for a moment, rotated them face down, returned to their original packets, then stacked the 3 groups together.

11. Referring to the lower 3 images, ribbon-spread the packet and remove groups of 3, starting from the top. The spectators will be quite surprised to see that the values are now interwoven and each suit together as well! Separate each group of three from the others each time for a final display.



Afterthoughts: This might seem clunky but with a couple run-throughs you'll see everything moves fluidly, getting the steps memorized being the biggest challenge. It's not a rushed thing. The Jordan counts really sell the illusion of separated ranks. Tutorials for the Jordan count, the glide, one-hand pink breaks, and biddle peels and steals can be found online, and I'll be more than happy to teach anytime at the club meeting. I'll leave the patter for you to decipher as it would take up another page, and to be honest there's probably better stories. In 'Royal Mesh' I changed the patter to 3 nightclubs with 2 men jockeying for a woman's affection, and in the end each trio leaving together. I'll just leave it at that.

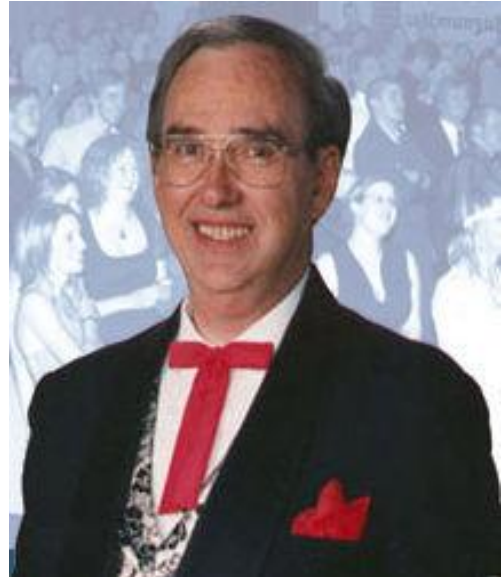
WALTER BLANEY'S DOUBLE SIX THEORY

Almost every magician knows that you have good audiences and bad audiences, good shows and bad shows. A lot of that has to do with how you're presented. Are you close to the audience and not separated by a big empty dance floor? Or is there enough light? Is the microphone working? Can you go on shortly after dinner if you're a banquet act, and not after an hour and a half of dead speeches and awards, and everybody's like this (bowing his head like they are disgusted or sleepy)?

Then comes the fun part. You've got to come out and wake them up, if half of them haven't already left! But what happens when all the conditions are right and the show is as best and professional as it can be?

In Las Vegas casino (shows), the first show may be just fantastic and the performer kills. Then at the second show, you just can't get them (the audience) going. They just sit there. Then the next night the first show is the dead one and the second show kills. Now, why is that?

I remember Johnny Carson on The Tonight Show was talking with Joey Bishop, another great entertainer, and they were talking about this very thing. Why is it that this happens? The shows are the same. The audiences are packing the theater. There's a great band playing. The lights are all perfect. The sound is all perfect. Everything is the same. But why is the first show bad and the second show good, and then vice versa?



So they (Bishop and Carson) start talking. Is it a full moon? Is it ions in the air maybe? What could cause this to happen?

My thought is what I call the "Double Six Theory." Every audience is different. In gambling, arithmetic takes a great part. Out of a thousand rolls of the dice, arithmetic says 26 throws are going to be double sixes, and another number are going to be double ones, and then double fives, and then fours, and threes, and so forth.

By the law of averages, how often are you going to get a double six? Twenty-six out of a thousand times. Not necessarily out of a thousand, that's like out of a million. Every thousand, and you average all them together. In some thousands, you might get 56 double sixes. And the next thousands, you may get four double sixes.

Now think of the double six as an outgoing jovial convivial person, like an insurance salesman that has to have a personality, and can sell you know (to be successful in selling insurance), as compared to maybe an engineer that's just as brilliant or more, but he's just a little more of a quiet person, not effusive and so on.

Well what happens (on the first show) when you kill, you've got all these double sixes, way more than 26 per thousand, and that show goes great. So when you entertain insurance salesman's conventions,



that's probably the best audience you can get, because everybody that's got to be that way or a double six, or they can sell insurance, right? They've got to sell insurance. So (the audience) is out there having a good time. They laugh and so forth.

Then there's some nights when there were just four or five double sixes, and you hear just 4-5 ladies laughing, but there aren't enough out of 1000 to give the audience going. And so you sweat and you keep working hoping you can finally break the ice and then get them going.

I've started some shows where it was just terrible. I have this trick where I come on twirling a rope (like a cowboy about to lasso a calf), and it looks real until the music stops and it's a fake rope. That's my audience tester. If they are good audience and everything, they'll just laugh and I know I'm in.

And on other nights I'll finish with the music, stop, and "dah duh." I'll stop and then there's just silence. I'll put it aside (the rope hoop upside down on the floor), put my hat on it (what is now the upright) like it's a hat stand and I know I've really got to go to work with this audience.

You start off kind of slow, and then by the time you finally do the bird cage (vanishing bird cage), and you get the two ladies up, and you start joking with them, and the ice starts to break. About halfway through, you burst the dam, and they're on your side, and they like you, and then it goes well. Then you supposedly get them in the palm of your hand, and you can play them like a harp.

It's just that you have the timing and experience. That's when it's really fun, when you've got an audience really going.

And I'm after the laughs. You're doing good magic, but I'm after making them laugh, laugh, laugh for 45 minutes straight without any dull moments. And so if a joke doesn't get a good laugh, after a few times it goes out of the show. Then a funny thing will happen, and boy that stays in the act. So that that's kind of all part of the game. Everybody's got to find that magic themselves, to create and push it across the footlights.

Transcribed from the online video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3F0EPEAUo-U>

Walter "Zaney" Blaney - February 11, 1928 - November 19, 2020

Walter Blaney was a proud native Texan who stood at 6'6". He was born in Dallas on February 11, 1928, the son of William H. Blaney and Harriet Silvus Blaney. Walter attended Woodrow Wilson High School and obtained a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Theatre from the University of Texas in Austin. Developing an early fascination of the magical arts, he started performing as a magician during his college years. During those same years he met and married the love of his life, Joyce Lottie Sefcik. Together after graduating from UT in 1949, the couple began traveling the entire country with Joyce assisting Walter performing magic for school assemblies. With Houston's booming economy, the two decided to settle in south Houston near Hobby Airport in Glenbrook Valley on Dover Street. He and Joyce had three daughters: Becky, Carol and Shannon. Walter was a devoted family man and developed a huge circle of friends. An avid Republican, he ran for Congress in 1968.

As a master showman, Walter's career took him around the world performing for various cruise lines, numerous conventions, banquets and trade shows. Walter was best known in the magic world for his own creation of the floating lady illusion. Though there are many methods of presenting the classic illusion, Walter's original version fooled even the magic fraternity for over a decade. His Texan style of presentation and wit combined with his originally conceived magic brought him great praise and recognition all over the world. He was invited to appear on many national and international TV shows including, The Tonight Show with Johnny Carson, The Merv Griffin Show, The Michael Douglas Show and The Dinah Shore Show among many others. He was also commissioned by six Texas governors as Texas' Ambassador of Goodwill. Walter also received many distinguished magic awards over the years including The Performing Arts Fellowship by The Academy of Magical Arts, The Lifetime Achievement Award by The Academy of Magical Arts, Magician's Hall of Fame of the Society of American Magicians, and the International Ambassador of Goodwill by the International Brotherhood of Magicians.



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◆ AI Overview

Magicians generally charge **between \$300 and \$1,500+ for private parties, with high-end or corporate performances often ranging from \$2,500 to over \$10,000**. Fees are typically set per show, rather than hourly, and depend on the performer's experience, demand, travel requirements, and the type of event. [🔗](#)

Price Breakdown by Event Type

- **Children's Parties:** \$350 - \$1,500.
- **Small Private/Adult Parties:** \$1,000 - \$1,500+.
- **Corporate Events:** \$1,500 - \$5,000+ for standard shows, with top-tier talent often exceeding \$5,000-\$25,000.
- **Virtual/Zoom Shows:** \$500 - \$1,500. [🔗](#)

Factors Influencing Cost

- **Performance Type:** Strolling/close-up magic is often priced differently than a full-stage, illusion-heavy show.
- **Experience & Reputation:** Well-known, specialized, or highly-skilled magicians command higher fees.
- **Location & Travel:** Local performers are cheaper; hiring someone who requires lodging or significant travel adds to the cost.
- **Peak Season:** Higher rates are common during holiday seasons or popular wedding times. [🔗](#)

For a quality, professional performer for a standard event, a budget of at least \$500-\$750 is recommended. [🔗](#)

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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 chadwickillusionist@yahoo.com or go to www.sam138.com. Also 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

See the Mid-Cities Magic Circle Facebook group.



DALLAS MAGIC CLUB, SAM ASSEMBLY 13 AND IBM RING 174

See 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 or 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 for more information.

