

Nashville Magic Club, IBM Ring 37

NEWSLETTER



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Alan Fisher and David Williams Wow the NMC!



Alan and David wowed the club at the May meeting. In this month's newsletter we get to know them a little better.

Jason and Alan's Discussion

Jason: How did you get started in magic and how long have you been in the IBM?

Alan: The basic story we told in our "In Concert" performance was true (but I took some theatrical license with a few of the details). My Dad's cousin, Melvin Bane, was a part-time magician who performed at my 6th birthday party. That's when I knew I wanted to be able to do magic. I had my first paid show when I was 9. It was for the Catholic Daughters of America group in Charleroi, Pennsylvania (we lived in a neighboring town). I did 25 minutes and got paid \$25. From then on I booked about 2 or 3 shows a month in the area. I first joined the IBM when I was in high school. Within a year of graduating college I joined the national tour of an off-Broadway show for 6 years and started doing comedy clubs in-between bookings. Since I wasn't home a lot and couldn't get to any meetings, I dropped out of the IBM in the mid to late 80's. I rejoined a decade later as I got back into magic more.

J: Do you have a favorite

trick?

A: The easy answer is my favorite trick is whichever one makes the audience applaud. For me, I love any effect where I can interact and improvise with the audience. That's why I hardly every do a silent act. I just can't see me keeping my mouth shut that long.

J: What type of magic do you enjoy the most? Close-up? Stand-up? And why?

A: I've always been a cabaret performer who did some close-up so I could work walk-around at corporate events. I guess the actor's ego in me always wants to be the center of attention in a room when I'm performing. I get that on stage. But in the last decade or so I've been developing more and more routines/effects that are close-up. I find as I get older I like the intimacy of the style. I'll never stop doing stage work but I am more excited about booking close-up work than ever before.

J: Who (what type of audience) do you enjoy performing for the most?

A: I love a theater-type performance where the audience is there specifically to see a show. It's a totally different mindset in their heads (and thus a much better response) than if they came for purpose "A" and, oh yeah, there's a magician over there if you're interested. I thrive on club

crowds where it's more of an anything-goes atmosphere.

J: How has your performing style developed over the years?

A: It's been heavily influenced by the comedians and entertainers I watched on TV and adored as a kid. Everyone from Sid Caesar to Carol Burnett and all the greats in-between. If you want to understand my sense of humor, mix Mel Brooks with Chuck Jones' animated classic "Duck Amuck" and you get me. As for magic, I didn't have many inspirations as a kid except Mark Wilson's "Magic Circus". Then in the mid 70's you had the explosion of magic with things like the TV series "The Magician" and Doug Henning on Broadway in "The Magic Show" (which I got to see). But for the most part, I just did whatever came naturally – which seemed to be make people laugh. The hardest I've ever worked on routines were the ones where I was doing straight, serious conjuring. Those are the toughest for me.

J: Alan, tell us about how you combine your sense of humor into your magic?

A: It's almost like asking someone how they combine inhaling with exhaling. I have to fight *not* to add humor into things I do. It's easy when I'm in a play and portraying a character. But when I'm me,

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Bargatze's Musings – What Was I Thinking?



Note from the Editor: Stephen had double knee replacement surgery right about the time that I asked for articles for this newsletter. Since the surgery I have spoken to him and he has said, more or less, "What was I thinking?" He is doing quite well and is actively rehabilitating his knees, but immediately after surgery this is the article that he sent me...

OUCH
CRAP
THE PAIN
KILL ME

That ought to do it.

Alan Fisher Interview, continued

A: I have to go for the laugh. As I first look at an effect, it has to spark something in my imagination. It needs to click in the back of my head that I can do something with that. Then after I learn the mechanics, I start improvising with the prop until I come up with a framework of a presentation I like. Then it's time to get silly and start adding jokes or bits. A lot will come out in performances, either in front of friends or colleagues or a real audience. I'm always editing material and looking for new moments to add.

J: Alan, we've seen you perform some great magic with your daughter in the different club shows you are involved with. Tell us about that.

A: Claire is a unique child with special challenges. But she loves being on stage. Every now and then she'd help with a small show by bringing props out. I taught her a few simple mind-reading routines that we could do. So a few years ago I asked her if she wanted to play a bigger part in a club show. She warmed

up to the idea once I explained she'd have more of a starring role in the act (she doesn't like the term "box jumper"). So I looked for bigger illusions than I had done in decades (did more of them in my 20's) that would be easy to construct and be centered around her in some way. Making a grand entrance in a Shadowbox was perfect. Then doing a double Bi-Section illusion (Andrew Mayne's) gave us a chance to both have the magic happen to us and play with the crowd a little. Both routines were silent as was the finale of that act, the In-Half illusion (again, Andrew Mayne).

Early on we talked our way through the routines without music, just to get the sequence of the moves. For In-Half, I wanted to have a mini vignette where we told a story with the magic. I wrote a script and we rehearsed lines as if we were going to say them. That way when we added the music and removed

the lines, both of us knew exactly what we needed to convey to the audience through our actions and emotions. I'm delighted to say that audiences really seemed to enjoy the routines and Claire just lit up on stage. It was a great adventure for her and a valuable learning experience for me as I forced myself to be serious and do 'real magic'. That was the real trick.

J: Is there anything else you would like to share with us?

A: I was honored to be asked to perform for your Ring and thrilled that our efforts were so well received. I really did want to make the night special and, as always, challenge myself to grow as an entertainer. I'd always wanted to create a theatrical production about magic and this opportunity gave me that chance. Thank you.

-We continue this article with David Williams interview on page 4.

Upcoming Meetings, Shows, Lectures and Conventions

Nashville Magic Club and Middle TN Magic Club Combined Picnic and Swap and Sell – June 14th beginning at 4:30 pm in the fellowship hall at the Florence Church of Christ, 6732 Old Nashville Highway, Murfreesboro, TN. Doors open at 4 and it costs nothing to shop. Tables are free to members of both clubs and are \$10 to non-members. Food will be served around 6 pm. Please RSVP to president@nashvillemagicclub.com so we know how many burgers and dogs to buy.

Nashville Magic Club, June Meeting – June 26th, 2014 at 7 p.m. at Andrew Price Methodist Church at 2846

Lebanon Pike, Nashville, TN.

You won't want to miss Shank Kothare and Ed Ripley as they share the act they are competing with at the IBM/SAM Combined Convention! And Vickie Gibson will be giving a mini-lecture on silk fountains. Join us!

Street Theatre presents The Magic of Gary Flegal - July 5th at 8 pm at Street Theatre, 1933 Elm Hill Pike, Nashville, TN.

Gary's audience joins him for a wild and whimsical journey where they become part of the show. It's a magical adventure full of awe-inspiring mystery and uncontrollable laughter.



June's Meeting Theme is...Something Old, Something New, Something Borrowed, Something Blue!

It's the traditional month for weddings. People in olden times had recently taken their annual baths around June and could stand to get up close and personal, so many couples decided to tie-the-knot since each person was at their most presentable and least stinky time of the year. Show us some magic with something old, something new, something borrowed, or something blue (and we mean the color).

Help Us Reach More Magic Enthusiasts

If you are receiving this newsletter, you qualify as a magic enthusiast. I know I certainly am.

I want this newsletter to get out to as many people who enjoy the art and craft of magic as possible.

We need your help! Make sure we have your correct email address, mailing address, etc. Right now, the newsletter is strictly electronic, but who knows, maybe one day we'll even send out a hard copy newsletter as well.

You can also help the cause by forwarding these newsletters to anyone you know that might be interested in magic. That's right, anyone!

We all have to get started somehow. It's my hope that these little newsletters may help spark the interest, then fan the flame of this great art that we enjoy sharing with each other.

Don't hesitate! Forward this newsletter to some of your friends, then make

sure you invite them out to the next club meeting.

We want to make as many new friends as possible and spread the fun!

-JM

Classified Ads Tricks for Sale

Hospitality Trick (as performed by Lance Burton)

Rabbit Ringer Deluxe

Blades Through Arm

Twisting Arm Illusion

Abbott's Sword Basket

Kaboom Box

Flying Carpet Illusion

For more information about these magic tricks for sale, contact Wayne Clemons at magicwayne40@gmail.com.

David Williams Interview

Jason: How did you get started in magic?

David: When I was 9 years old I saw a magician at my school in Ashland City, TN. It was the most wonderful thing I had ever seen in my entire young life. I was hooked. I went to the library and checked out the only two books on magic in the library. I kept checking them out the whole school year. I built my own props and ordered what I could afford from the back ads of the Boys Life magazine.

When I was in the 9th grade I found out my English teacher's husband was a magician. I was always asking her questions about her husband and what he was doing; kind of being a pest. One day she asked me to stay after class. She told me her husband was going to do a fundraising show for one of the clubs at the high school and he would like for me to do a trick in the show. I panicked and was scared to death of the idea of being in a real magic show. I remember being back stage right before I was to go on and my teacher's husband looked at me and asked "Are you nervous?" I said "Yes" He then said "Have you practiced?", again I said "Yes". "Then you are ready, go out there do your best and it will be great" I did exactly what my teacher's husband said to do. I pulled a lemon out of an empty can, got my first applause, and it was great. A long time member of Ring 37, Mr. Tommy Hart gave me my first opportunity to perform magic on a stage. Even today when I think back on that day I get emotional. God bless you Tommy.

Later on that same year Tommy got me in touch with a family who had a collection of magic from a family member who had passed away. The family wanted to give the props to a young magician who could use them. I thought I had hit the jackpot. I was in business. I put together a show with the props and at the age of 13 began performing magic in talent shows, banquets, church events, etc.

J: How long have you been in the IBM?

D: I have been a member of the IBM for 14 years.

J: Do you have a favorite trick?

D: Several; Jeff Hobson's "Balloon Dog", card, coin, and ball manipulation, and silk magic.

J: What type of magic do you enjoy the most? Close-up? Stand-up? And why?

D: I enjoy stand up first, but close up is a close second. I really enjoy entertaining people. I love the idea of taking people out of their day-to-day lives full of stress or boredom and taking them back to the time they were a child and saw the world with wide-eyed wonder. Seeing people young and old experience mystery and wonder for the first time or the first time in a long time is what gives me the most satisfaction.

J: Who (what type of audience) do you enjoy performing for the most?

D: I like the theater setting best because you have the most control over what you can do. There are less distractions and the audience has more focus on the performance. I really do like all types of audiences; children's shows, family shows, adult performances and corporate mixers, cocktail parties, etc. They all have their different needs, effects, and challenges but the bottom line is we are all big kids at heart. We all want to be entertained and have fun. It is up to us to as magi to understand these different wants and needs, address them, and deliver a quality product.

J: How has your performing style developed over the years?

D: I started like most stand up guys with lots of props. My first parlor or cabaret set up looked like a one-man magic swap and sell. I started reading and studying some of the great magicians routines and I bought into the philosophy of having minimal properties on stage. I wanted the...

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Alan Fisher and
David Williams

BAMBOOZLERS – HEAD FOR DRINKING

By Diamond Jim Tyler

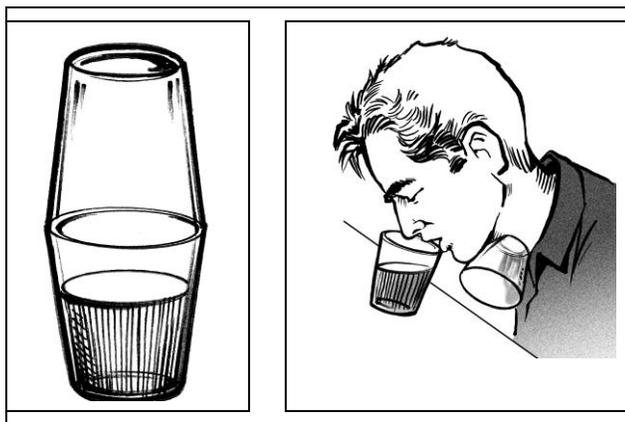
BET: Set-up two small glasses as in Fig. 1. Bet someone they cannot drink the drink without using their hands. Instruct them that the uppermost empty glass cannot touch the table. Tell them that they cannot use any sort of tools and must only use their body from the neck up.

SECRET: First use your chin and neck to grip the uppermost glass and wedge it there (Fig. 2). Secondly, you can lift the filled glass with your teeth and slowly tilt your head to drink it.

Executing this stunt will typically draw a small crowd. Select a married man from the group and say to him, *“If you pull this off then I can almost guarantee that it will garner more applause than you received on your honeymoon night!”*

Bamboozlers- The Book of Bankable Bar Betchas, Brain Bogglers, Belly Busters & Bewitchery: Volume Three by Diamond Jim Tyler is available directly from Diamond Jim Tyler’s website – <http://diamond-jim.com>

Expect the same classy style pocket-sized book. It contains 75 effects with over 100 illustrations and is bound in green faux leather, with silver gilt edges, silver foiled stamping and has a ribbon marker. The foreword of the book is by Mac King. The book is sold for \$19.95.



David Williams Interview, continued

David: magic to emanate from the magician and not because he has a “magic box”. Now don’t get me wrong, I will not hesitate to use a prop if there is no other way to make the effect happen with a non-prop method. I like the classical approach to magic so I gear my style to the greats such as Cardini, Fred Kaps, Richard Ross, Channing Pollock, Fantasio, Lance Burton and a lot of the new Asian manipulators. These Asian guys are not humans, they are machines!

J: David, tell us what it's like to study manipulation. And tell us how it has influenced your magic.

D: Manipulation for me is an obsession. It is a monster that has been unleashed within me that I have to feed daily. All kidding aside, manipulation is demanding. It takes a lot of practice, discipline, and rehearsal to get it right. There are so many things that can go wrong quickly, you have to watch your angles, you have to be careful not to flash, etc. I have a background in the martial arts and have earned a 3rd degree black belt. I believe that had it not been for the years of learning the discipline required to learn karate I would not have the patience and discipline to learn the sleights needed to perform manipulation routines. A good example of this discipline is the interlace production I did in the first card manipulation routine during the “In Concert” Alan and I did at the Ring 37 meeting. It took me 5 years of practice to learn the production to the point I was comfortable performing it in public. The manipulation sequences give me another tool to use in my magic presentations. I think it has given my opening routine more variety and more magical moments that helps to establish me as a magician in front of an audience.

J: Is there anything else you would like to share with us?

D: First, it was indeed an honor to share the stage with one of my best friends and brothers in magic, Alan Fisher. Second, I want to thank all of you guys at Ring 37 for such a warm welcome and all the positive comments and applause. I really appreciate the members of Ring 37 for giving us the opportunity to present this theatrical production of magic.

Down in the 'Boro - by Alan Fisher



As I'm writing this we're a week away from Ring 37's May meeting (as you're reading this that meeting is long over). Now why should a meeting at 37 concern someone from 252? Usually I don't give it much thought unless I'm going to be able to stop by for a visit and see all my friends in Ring 37. But this month is a bit different.

For the last several years you folks have had a feature at your meetings called the "In Concert" series. Each month a different member would perform about 15 to 20 minutes of their act. I remember seeing the very first one featuring Jason Michaels and Stephen Bargatze. At the time I thought it was an exciting concept and hoped you could keep it going. It's wonderful to know that you have. But again, what's that got to do with little ol' me?

Back in February David Williams and I were visiting 37 for Swap 'n Sell night when we were approached by your VP and asked if we'd be interested

in doing a "Guest In Concert" performance. We both agreed and later that night sat down at Fazoli's to discuss ideas. On the drive home I came up with something that I hoped would be entertaining as well as unique. It would be a one-act play about and featuring magic that I called "*A Totally Made Up True Story*". I sent David a write up on the concept the next day and he was all in.

While there's no way at this moment in time I can know how well the show went over or if it bombed completely, you (as you read this) do - provided you were at the May meeting. Hopefully it was well received. In next months' column I'll go into detail on how we put the show together and how it felt from our side. But if you saw the show and have any comments, other than "what in the world were you thinking?", we'd love to hear from you. Drop me a line at

Secretary@IBMRing252.com and I'll share them with David.

Or just tell us next month when we hope to see everyone at the combined Ring 252 / Ring 37 *Picnic & Swap 'n Sell* on June 14th. The Rings will provide the burgers & hotdogs while everyone else is asked to bring some food to share. And don't forget to bring some magic to sell or at least lot of money to spend on magic. We'll kick things off at 4:30 PM in the fellowship hall

of the Florence Church of Christ, 6732 Old Nashville Highway, in Murfreesboro.

And since the next edition of this newsletter won't be coming out until just before the big combined IBM/SAM convention in St. Louis (June 30th to July 5th), I want to remind everyone that if you're thinking of going, but haven't made your plans yet, time is running out. The guaranteed rate of \$136 a night for rooms at the Marriott's Renaissance Grand hotel is only good if you make your reservation by June 8th. Starting June 9th the price goes up. Likewise, the current cost for registration is \$495 but goes up to \$595 on June 16th. So you'd better make up your mind soon.

We hope to see you in the 'boro for any of our meetings, shows, or events. We love visitors. Remember, the magic red carpet is always rolled out for you at I. B. M. Ring 252!

The Kidz Korner by Magic Wayne



My previous articles have been about selecting the right type of tricks for your show. In this article I'm going to do something a little bit different. I'm going to give you a few hints and tips that I have learned over the years that will help you manage your show.

When you start your show lay out some "ground rules" for your audience to follow. For example, we all know that kids love to call out a Magician when they catch a mistake or a flash. We all hope not to make any mistakes, but we also know that no matter how much you practice or how many shows you perform, there is always going to be a time when we make a mistake or accidently show more of a secret than we had intended. It just happens! When it happens, kids will call you out on in a heartbeat. They'll yell out "I saw it in the other hand" or "I know how he did that". So before I start my show, I always use phrases such as this:

- We want everyone to have fun today, right? So I have a few favors to ask of you.....
- I know some of you have seen a Magician before and perhaps you've seen me before. But if you see me do a trick today that you have seen before, do me a favor and shhhh. Keep it to yourself. Because when you yell out loud that you've seen this trick, it doesn't make it as much fun for our friends.
- I do the same thing about whether or not they know how a trick is done. "I know that some of you may have a Magic Kit at home or you've seen the Masked Magician on TV. So if you see me do something where you know the secret, then shhhh. Keep it to yourself. Again, when you yell out loud during the show that you know how a trick is done, it makes it much less fun for our friends.

So why do some kids do this? Well, some of you may remember what it's like to be that age, (Maybe not Mike Berger, because it's been a long time.) In every show I do, I can always spot the kid that will try the hardest to be the center of attention by trying to be the smartest or the funniest amongst her friends. The bottom line is they

are doing this to try to get everyone at the party to like them. But quite frankly some kids just like to show off!

When I do identify that kid, I decide how would be the best way to take them out of play so they won't mess up my show. I have two methods.

1. Go ahead and give them the chance to show off by choosing them as a volunteer early on in the show. That way they have their time in front of their friends and 9 times out of 10, you won't hear another peep out of them.
2. Sometimes I can tell the kid would be too hard to handle during a routine and just be disruptive no matter what I do or say. So I wait until they make their first comment, which I know will come very soon, and I very politely look at them and say "Please don't be rude. Remember the favors I asked everyone before the show." Normally that works well.

You'd be surprised how many times, after I do my introduction, other kids in the audience will call their friends out when and if they do or say something rude. I have heard other kids say to their friends....."Shhh, remember what he said? No telling."

One other thing that is very important to remember is not to call your audience kids or children. That just makes you look like another adult standing in front of them. The most effective word that I have found that immediately puts you in their good graces is FRIEND(S). For example, "If I could ASK all of my FRIENDS to sit right here in front of me, that would be great". Also, always find a way to compliment the child when you bring them up as a volunteer. "You have the prettiest blue eyes. Did you color them with a Crayola marker this morning to make them so bright"?, or "That is one cool shirt. Can I have it after the show? Do you think it will fit me?" These are comments for a younger audience, of course. If they are older, I use phrases such as "What's up, dude" and "How you doin'" like Joey from Friends.

These are only a few of the tricks and strategies I use when doing my shows. Use them. They work for me!

P.S. - I use some of the same techniques with adults. Not quite as simplistic maybe, but I'm sure you get the idea.