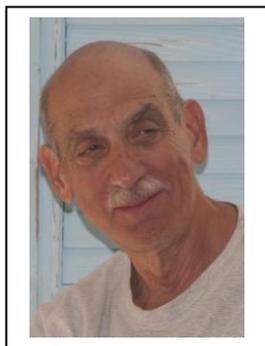




Mike Berger Graces the Stage of the NMC!



Mike was a hit at the April meeting. We chat with him in this month's newsletter.

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

Mike: I got started in magic when I was 2 years old. I was kidnapped by an outlaw group of magicians who forced me to do 50 top changes, 50 Elmsley counts, and 50 bottom deals before they'd feed me. By the age of 3, I was on the street doing Three-Card Monte to fleece the tourists. It was rough. Actually, I started in the mid-80's doing bamboozlers to entertain our family. In 2000, I did a 20-minute New Year's Eve show for our friends and got a nice response so I decided to pursue magic more seriously. I've been a member of IBM for 8 years. It was the worst decision I ever made. (Are you recording this?)

Jason: Do you have a favorite trick?

Mike: I like *Million Dollar Monte* (because it has multiple surprises) and *The Bread Trick* (because it ends up with pink underpants). But, my favorite trick is any trick that gets a big

response.

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

Mike: Neither. In close-up, people are breathing down your neck and in stand-up everyone's looking at you. Actually, I enjoy both. I like the variety.

Jason: I know you perform mostly for family and friends. Tell us about that.

Mike: I'm often asked by our family and friends to perform at holidays, weddings, reunions, informal events, and birthday parties. With our six grandkids (ages 11-18) plus cousins, nieces, nephews, and friends (ages 4-86), I seem to perform several times a month. Recently, my wife and I were invited by close friends to a brunch in honor of their out-of-town guests and our hosts asked me to do about 10 minutes of close-up magic. My next stand-up gig (for about 20 minutes) will be for 16 of our friends on the 4th of July. I don't seek out these invitations because I don't want to force myself on anyone. But they ask. And since it's pretty much the same audience and I never want to repeat a trick, I'm always documenting who saw what and I'm always developing new routines that are characterized by audience participation, everyday objects, and low

cost.

Jason: You're a member of the local IBM and SAM clubs. Tell us what you like about each.

Mike: At IBM, which has more members, I like the variety of close-up and stand-up and the more polished routines. At SAM, because of its smaller size and workshop atmosphere, I like trying out new routines and hearing suggestions and see others do the same. Both magic clubs provide the opportunity to practice and see magic, which I really enjoy.

Jason: Over the years, we've watched you develop your performing style. What do you enjoy most about doing magic?

Mike: I love it all. I love finding a trick that's within my capabilities, creating a routine that's fun to do, practicing the routine to make it instinctive, choosing and sequencing the tricks for a show, and performing to entertain our family and friends. When I'm solving the challenges related to developing and performing magic, my mind is always spinning and I feel energized.

Jason: Is there anything else you'd like to share with the club?

Mike: Yes. I think the officers should reduce the \$700 they charge me for yearly dues.

Your 2014 Officers

- Jason Michaels, President
- Dr. Gary Flegal, Vice President
- Stephen Bargatze, Sergeant at Arms
- Kevin King, Treasurer
- Jason Moseley, Secretary
- Jeff Bjorklund, Webmaster

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Bargatze's Musings – Good Tricks?



“The best advice I ever heard about whether a trick was a good one or not, was from David Williamson.”

What makes a trick good?

Let's all be honest, we have some great tricks that are still in the drawers of our magic rooms. How sad.

No matter how much we practice, and no matter how many new moves we put in with the jokes we found to make the presentation perfect, the success of the trick will be determined by the audience. That is not always the case, most of the time it is, but not always.

We must also take into account who we are showing the trick to. Just to be honest, the magic club shouldn't really count. Other magicians are just too close to magic to give real world feedback. I'm not talking about the moves or the patter, just how a real audience will accept the trick. The worst part of a magic club member's critique is that most of us like each other and we react accordingly. Now we still have guys like Frank and Kevin who will tell us exactly what they think (sometimes without even asking for it) but that is who Frank and Kevin are. They are honest to themselves and want to be honest to us. Thanks guys...I guess.

The best advice I ever heard about whether a trick was a good one or not, was from David Williamson. He said that if you are still doing that same trick in five years it is a good trick. He went on to say it will not look like it did when you started doing it five years ago, but it must be good by now if you are still doing it.

Most of you know that my son does stand-up comedy and he does it very well. When he was first doing shows here in Nashville with the Nashville comedy club guys (which is just like our magic club, but for comedians) I would attend some of the shows.

I saw some of the worst comedy ever and yet they were still getting laughs from the other members of the club and their families. It was mostly because they wanted them to laugh when they were up on stage. Nate just couldn't get a good read on his material until he headed out to where the real people were, not the people connected to that club.

I wish that one of the things we could do as a club is to find a place to practice for real world audiences. My mentor Tommy Hart found me several of those places. One was in a bar on 8th avenue and the other was the Gold Rush, across from the Exit Inn in Nashville. Both places gave us a chance to perform. Tommy was there because he wanted a place to get good, true feedback. I'm not saying the rest is history, but it was a great time in my life when I grew as a performer.

Please understand I am in no way saying that the club did not help me along the way. Actually, the club is where I put the time in on the techniques and

patter before I take it to the public. The biggest thing about the club is that I could do a trick for several months, which allowed me to get the method and the patter solid, before I put the trick out there before a real audience.

I have found, in the many years of doing what I do, that often it is the very simple that can be the most deceptive. I spent a lot of my youth learning the latest sleight-of-hand technique and the newest method that was available. If we can learn from the Spaniards, who are doing some of the most incredible magic at the moment, we should put most of our effort into the presentation of a trick. These are guys with great sleight of hand skills who are taking self working effects with simple plots (like a key card) and masking them in ways that even seasoned magicians can't figure out how the tricks are done.

I do a simple trick with a blank deck that is designed to put both magicians and lay audiences on a bus that they can't back track. It's a trick that a 6 year old could do. What am I trying to say, you ask?

It is just that a good trick takes time. Make a commitment to doing it then take it out in front of real audiences...the lay folks.

Upcoming Meetings, Shows, Lectures and Conventions

Razzle Dazzle Magic Show XXIII – May 2nd & 3rd at The Center for the Arts in Murfreesboro, TN. Our sister club, Ring 252 produces this show and it is always a lot of fun. Our very own Tom Gibson will be the Master of Ceremonies and from what I hear there will be a few great surprises. Tickets are available at <http://boroarts.org/ticket>

Nashville Magic Club, May Meeting – May 22nd, 2014 at 7 p.m. at Andrew Price Methodist Church at 2846 Lebanon Pike, Nashville, TN.

You won't want to miss Alan Fisher and David Williams who will do an In Concert Tag Team and Bart Camarata will lecture on Video Production for Magicians.



May's Meeting Theme is...Let's Make a Deal!

Magic effects share a rich history of borrowing from Swindlers and Con-Men – the difference is magicians do it to entertain. Whether it's a 3-Card Monte, the 3-Shell Game, Cups-n-Balls, Poker Deals, or just the latest con-game you're working on the streets, show us your newest swindles, cons, and gambling effects.

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.

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

From the East by Tom Vorjohan



Ah...the sweet smell of spring in East Tennessee. Where the Hell is my Claritin?!? As with all things, we have to take the bad with the good, the pollen with the flowers...and by now you should be wondering what this has to do with magic. Please keep reading.

A few weeks ago, Crossville magician and juggler Jason Murphy asked several of us to be a part of a fund-raising show on a Friday night in Crossville. Tom Gibson, Stephen Bargatze, Jason Michaels, Robert Jones and I all said "YES!" to Jason and we gave them an excellent show! I was informed later that the group had 780 paid people attend the show, and it was a huge success.

So, fast-forward with me to last week. I had been asked to perform and emcee in a fund-raising show here in my town of Maryville. I was the only magic in this show, but we had an American Idol contestant, comedy speaker, and an acoustic bluegrass band. It was an excellent show! However, there were less than 100 people in the audience, and that has just bothered me ever since. Although I had nothing to do with the attendance, it feels like I should.

Both of these shows were Christian based, and the charities that we were raising money for were Christian-based organizations. I have questioned

the advertising, the "word-of-mouth" and social media used, the talent, and everything. The show in Crossville was \$10 per person; the one in Maryville was free to anyone attending. So did people perceive the free show as worth nothing? I'm still scratching my head about it.

I've had to find resolution in the fact that I have to accept the good with the bad. Occasionally, through no fault of my own, there will be a "bad show." Outdoor shows come with weather concerns and we accept those risks, but there is so much more that has to come together for our other shows. There are so many outside factors, that it is almost magic in itself that we don't have more mediocre shows.

As the saying goes, "We live & learn." Our clubs have to take the time to let the less experienced magicians socialize with the veteran performers. There is so much to learn from the wisdom and stories of our seasoned magicians. I'm still not sure I know how to have helped the group that we did the variety show for last week, but I have told this story over a dozen times, put it on Facebook, and I have gotten some sage advice from some great friends. So enjoy the Spring and make the most out of your time with fellow Ring members.

BAMBOOZLERS – NEWSPAPER NUMBERS

By Diamond Jim Tyler

TRICK: The magician asks someone to choose any section from a random newspaper (i.e. Editorials, Front Page Section, International News, Sports, Entertainment, Classified Ads, etc.). He then asks them to remove any four page spread and to add up the four page numbers. The magician then divines the number they are thinking of.

SECRET: This is a great routine that can be done impromptu. The only thing you need is access to a newspaper that has the traditional four page layout. After the spectator chooses a section take hold of it and explain what you would like them to do next. Your instructions will be to remove any page from that section and add up the four page numbers. Pantomime this action to be clear. The numbers to add up are the inside page numbers and the two found on the back of that same sheet.

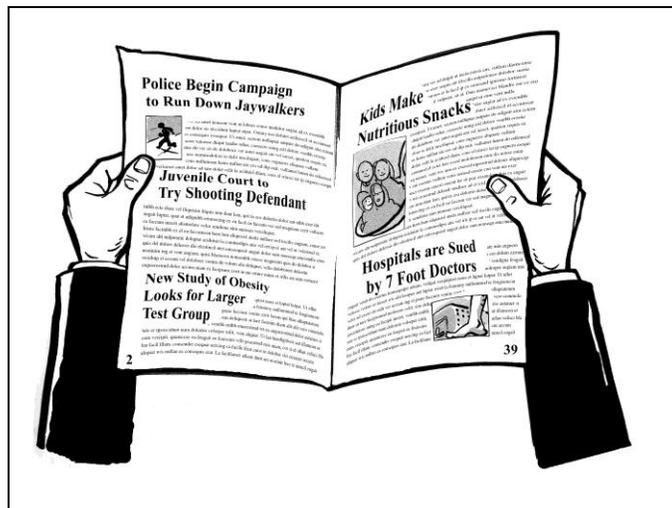
As soon as you have the section in your hands it is easy to divine what their number will add up to be. Simply add the numbers on the front and back of the first page. For example, the front page number might be page one while the back page number is page forty. Adding those two numbers together gives you forty-one. Now multiply that number by two and you'll have your final result which is eighty-two. Think about it. If the front and back pages are 40 and 1 which totals 41 added together, then on the backside of those pages will be the numbers 2 and 39 which is 41 again. Forty-one multiplied by two is eighty-two. Every four-page spread in that section will add up to be eighty-two.

It only takes a quick moment to glance at the back page numbers and do the math. This could also be done with a book. The problem with a bound book is that one cannot easily remove a four page spread. However, if you were to remove the staples from a saddle-stitched book, you could perform the same miraculous effect.

Once upon a time a good friend of mine gave me a beautiful antique dictionary. The binding came undone over time and several pages fell out and were lost. Incidentally, I couldn't find the words to thank him.

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.



Snapshot – From Joe Givan



“MAGIC – a true gentleman’s art...”
–Joe Givan

“I know how he did it!”
-Mike Pyle

“But wait...there’s more!”
-Greg Slate

Down in the 'Boro - by Jimbo Hooten



While Alan Fisher takes a month off to prepare for his "In Concert" performance with David Williams at our May meeting, Ring 252 Vice President Jimbo Hooten takes over this month's writing duties.

When I was first asked to write this month's column I was really unsure of what I wanted to write about. I was told it had to be magic related and I was at a loss as to what I wanted to say. I just sat back and reflected on all the magic that was going on in the area at the time and felt blessed to have so much going on magic-wise these last few months that it got me thinking about our Fraternity itself.

The International Brotherhood of Magicians is really everything its name says it is. If you read "The Linking Ring" you obviously know that the IBM is

represented in many different countries with articles and ring reports coming in from across the globe, thus taking care of the "international" part. Magicians, well that's pretty obvious too. We are all a part of the IBM because we not only love magic, but want to see our art continue to grow and be elevated to a much grander scale. "The" and "of" just really tie the name together and join the nouns.

My main focus was the word "brotherhood". I look back to the Winter Carnival of Magic this past March and remember seeing Brotherhood and Sisterhood in action. You see the old timers that sit at the tables imparting their wisdom and experience to the younger magi. Then there are the friends you meet that you may only see at conventions throughout the year. Or you may meet up with a group from your own area or Ring and just get to spend some time with them that is not restricted by "meeting" times or agendas. Many successful magicians can attribute their success from growing up through the IBM. Always having brothers and sisters to mentor or call on for support has been a stepping-stone to launching many

magical careers. Our passion is what draws us to the IBM but it is the brotherhood that binds us.

Through the IBM I have made some really good friends. We not only share a passion for magic, we also help each other grow in magic by critiquing routines, bouncing ideas off each other, and just being there for support. We have celebrated in our friend's successes, mourned their losses, and been a part of their lives inside and outside the magic circle. That's what brotherhood is about. We are truly fortunate to be a part of this organization that allows us to be a part of something much greater than ourselves.

Stay magical my friends,

Jimbo

The Kidz Korner by Magic Wayne



We've all heard the saying in show business.... "Never work with animals or kids". Well to me the magic community's equivalent is.... "You can't do card tricks for kids". In my opinion, this is not always true. It's all about your presentation and how you make the card trick appeal to kids. Let me explain.

So let's say we have a really cool card trick that we think will play well for a younger audience. I'm sure most of us will agree the majority of kids under the age of 10 don't know the difference between a spade or a club. Do you just throw the trick away or do you find a way to make it fit your show based on its presentation? My vote is for the latter.

I do one card trick in my show and it plays very well. I do the trick because of the fun during the presentation of the routine, not because it will be a mind blowing effect.

Here's what happens...I have a child select a card and show it to the audience. I have learned to ALWAYS MAKE SURE A GROWN UP SEES THE CARD!! Kids, because of their age, will forget a card they looked at one second ago just like Stephen Bargaetze and Kevin King. So, always make sure a grown up sees the card so they can confirm what the card was in case the kid forgets. This is not a problem only related to kids. I've seen the same problem with adults many times. This is one of the reasons why we ask the assistant who picked the card to "show the card to the audience".

Once I know the card has been seen by my

volunteer and a grown up, the card is replaced in the deck and the deck is put into a large shopping bag. Inside that bag is my friend and magician's assistant, Stinky Pete. Stinky Pete is a skunk spring animal like Rocky Raccoon.

Before I start the trick, I take Stinky Pete out of the bag and introduce him to the kids. We do a couple of the usual corny jokes and then Stinky Pete goes back into the bag. When the cards are placed in the bag I tell the kids that Stinky Pete will now look through the deck and pick out the chosen card. As the kids look at the bag, they see the bag shake and move around just like a live animal was inside the bag. No matter what the age, all the kids know that Stinky Pete wasn't real. Or was he? How else would the bag be shaking and moving around? You know the answer.....IT'S MAGIC.

After a few seconds of looking for the card and shaking the bag I tell Stinky Pete he's taking too long to find the card and he needs to hurry up. At that moment the kids see cards start flying out of the bag. The kids think I made Stinky Pete mad when I told him to hurry up. But if Stinky Pete is not real, then how did those cards fly out of the bag? Again, you know the answer.....IT'S MAGIC.

Finally I pull Stinky Pete out of the bag to show he has found the chosen card and it is stuck on the end of his nose. But the card isn't there. Where is it? It's under his tail. Eww, gross!!! At that point the card is revealed.

Hopefully you get the idea. Finding the chosen card is definitely part of the trick and the kids do understand what has happened when you find it. They DO recognize the magic in what you've just done. Along the way though I've made it more fun to watch than just having a card selected and found hidden in the deck.

The point I'm trying to make is most effects you do for grown-ups will also play for kids. You just have to decide how to make it fun.