



Magic Messenger

The Official Newsletter of the
Ann Arbor Magic Club



I.B.M. Ring 210

March 2018

S.A.M. Assembly 88

Mentoring Magic by **President Scott Mitchell**

Hello everyone,

I hope this finds you all well. We had a great meeting last month so if you missed it, you missed out on some great fun! It was a little different from meetings in the past - I talked a little about my vision for the future of the Ann Arbor Magic Club and the ways in which we would like to do that. I want to see the club evolve into something that it has not been before. It made me think about a few different things. I would like to tell you a story: I have always had a love for dove magic. Some years ago, I first saw Lance Burton on TV doing his dove act; it was so elegant! Everything from his tuxedo right down to his choice of music screams *classical magic*! I had wanted to do a dove act of my own. In the beginning, I was trying my hardest to force a classic style of performance - complete with a tuxedo style which only somewhat fit my character. I developed ideas and props that you always see along the path of classic dove productions. Every time I had felt I was moving in the right direction, I would record the whole sequence from prop introduction to the dove production. It always looked off, or I looked awkward. So, I took a step back and said, "I am trying too hard to force myself in this direction."

I went back to the drawing board scrapped the whole show down to almost nothing, dismantled my tuxedo, dismantled the props and went back to the drawing board, trying to figure out who my character was. What does my character's look say without saying any words? Getting those answers changed everything. I took that information and ran with it, to see where it led me and allowing those answers guide my decisions. The ideas just flowed and linked together. Before it was like trying to put a puzzle together with the faces of the puzzle pieces facedown. Now I am seeing a picture coming together. I am covered in tattoos with a bald head and am enjoying more of the darker style of magic. The dove show has taken on a life of on its own. It has evolved into something that it never would have become if I had kept trying force-fit it into a specific look.

Why do I tell you this long story? Because I believe this club needs to evolve - the structure of the club is great and what we are doing so far has worked, but I believe we can make it better, we can move it in a different direction and continue to grow and become something new and amazing! With this current group of amazing individuals (our members), the sky is the limit as to how far we can go! Let's work on that together! As always...

Leave room for magic,

Scott Mitchell

Adventures in Dictionary Land...

Classic novel *np.* A book which people praise, but seldom read.

Compromise *n.* The art of slicing a cake in such a way that everyone believes they received the biggest piece.

Evening *n.* The first Chinese woman ever created.

Notes from the Quill by **Secretary Joaquin M. Ayala**

Hello everyone! The March Hare is hopping in and bringing some crazy weather along with him! At our February meeting we really starting things off with a bang – no doubt provided by the popping animal balloons whizzing all over the place! Vice President Dan Jones took the stage to show the assembled members how to create various balloon figures, including a Ladybug Bracelet, a Butterfly, a few types of hats and even the old stand-by designs like a Dog/Giraffe, the Sword and others. Take a look below this article you will see a few photos of these creations that Dan created/taught, and which were enjoyed by all. A big THANK YOU to Dan for teaching everyone a little balloon twisting!

In case you have not heard, we are now a few months into the new year and if you have not paid your dues, please see Rob Krozal as soon as possible to get yourself up to date and to receive your membership cards, which have their own new look with a couple of neat, new features! Also, if you have not confirmed your contact information as well as your I.B.M. and/or S.A.M. member number information with me yet, please send me an e-mail with that information A.S.A.P!

Also last month we were joined by two of our long-time members Brian and Dawn Stapleton (welcome back!), as well as a new member candidate, Praveen Kumar. Thank you all for joining us! That is all for this month – enjoy the good weather when you can and remember, *keep the magic alive!*

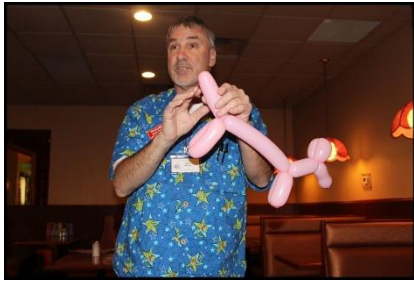
Yours in the Secret Art,

Dr. Joaquin M. Ayala de Cedoz, Ph.D. – Secretary



TRIVIA QUESTION:

This amateur magician (pictured LEFT) was born in 1899 in New Jersey. Magicians know him for creating two very well-known and commonly used magic gimmicks. What you probably do not know is that he was a professional violinist, composer, bandleader and incessant practical joker. He was a contemporary of Count Basie and Guy Lombardo. He had previously worked for such luminaries as Tommy Dorsey and Benny Goodman. Who is he??? Answer at the end of the newsletter!



**Dan Jones:
Professional
Balloon-atic and
Vice President of
the A.A. M.C.**



Further Adventures in Dictionary Land...

Grocery list, n. Something you spend half an hour writing and forget to take to the store.

Hole-in-One, n. What an amateur golfer gets when reaching down to get his ball out of the cup and his pants rip.

Morbid, adj. A higher offer.

Ex Libris by Joaquin Ayala, Ph.D.

Hello folks and welcome to the Ex Libris article for March 2018! In the February 2018 article I mentioned that I would be travelling to Chicago and sessioning with the "Chicago Sessions" group, which was started by **Ed Marlo** back in the 1960s and carried on today by two of his closest students, **Simon Aronson** and **Dave Solomon**. **John Bannon** was not a student of Marlo, but he is an intrinsic part of the core group today, as is University of Chicago Professor of Philosophy, **David Finkelstein**.

I mention this again because I was reminded of all the great material that has really come out of this group, especially Simon, Dave and John. This inspired me to do a series which focuses on books that each of these magicians have written which I will call the *Chicago Series*. This month I will focus on a few of the earlier books written by Simon Aronson. The first is called the ***Bound to Please*** (self-published in 1994), which is a collection of four of his earlier publications, including **Kabbala – the Simon Aronson Issue (April 1973)**, **The Card Ides of Simon Aronson (1978)**, **A Stack to Remember (1979)** and **Shuffle-Bored (1980)**. Undoubtedly the most notable part of this collection is *A Stack to Remember*, the one that started it all on the Aronson Stack, the memorized deck stack created by Simon. He discusses the mnemonics and various techniques for memorization, followed by various built-in features of the stack and other ways to use it.

Shuffle-Bored is another thing that Simon became well known for and is a fantastic principle with which you can create some very strong and almost self-working card magic with. For example, *Random Sample Shuffle-Bored* is a predicted Triumph, of sorts, where packets of cards are mixed faceup into face down and you show a little booklet which has "predicted" three different things about the deck in its shuffled condition, leaving room for one statistical error, which also turns out to be true! Also, within this collection are two of his most famous effects which are also marketed separately: *Ad-Jacent*, a two-selection Card Stab effect using an advertisement card, and *Red See Passover*, a Cards Across type of effect using a mentally selected red backed card which vanishes from its packet of 12 cards and appears in a packet of 12 blue backed cards.

The second title I want to talk about is called ***The Aronson Approach*** which was published in 1990 by Savaco Ltd. as a 173-page hardcover book. This is one of his shortest tomes but with no less powerful card magic inside. One of the stand-out items in the book is not so much an effect as it is a move, which Simon calls *Mark-a-Place Mates*. The move is taught here in the context of an effect where a spectator randomly finds pairs of a four-of-a-kind. It was inspired by the **Bill Simon Prophecy Move**. It accomplishes a similar result with a different maneuver. Other standout items include *Active Aces*, a very nice four Ace routine that combines the Stanley Collins Vanish of the four Aces with the Henry Christ Fabulous Ace routine, which sees each Ace reproduced in a different way. *Under Her Spell* is a combination of the vanish of four Queens with some cheeky scripting if you choose to use it, then each queen is found again by spelling their names.

Finally, there is *Simon-Eyes*, a very strong and direct mind-reading effect in which you discern two completely free mental selections, no forcing, no switching, using an ordinary deck with no gaffs and instantly repeatable in any situation with no reliance on a memorized stack at all, although one certainly could use one. It takes a long time to describe the workings, but it is not overly complicated to accomplish the effect. Also included in this book is something that became a standard feature of his books, which is a section dedicated to

further work on the memorized stack, some of the ideas Aronson Stack-dependent and other which will work with any stack you want.

The third and final book in this article is called ***Simply Simon***. It was self-published by Simon in 1995 as a 308-page hardcover book. This book covers quite a bit of ground and contains some of the strongest material that he has ever published. *Child's Play* is a pretty much self-working mental game based on work by **Dr. Bob Neale**, revolving around the game of Rock, Paper, Scissors. In short, you always know the outcome of the game without even having to look at anything, and for the final phase, you will predict the outcome! The *Aronson Stripout: Push Through Variation* is one of the best false shuffles you will ever learn but further than that, it is rather easy to do too.

The real stars of this book are *Happy Birthday*, *The Calendar Card* and *Fate*, which all revolve around a spectator selecting a random, unknown playing card which ends up matching a prediction. It is mentioned that the first of the three can be done with any easily calculable stack or memorized order, and the plot was inspired by the **Alex Elmsley** effect called *Fate's Datebook*, which can be found in *The Collected Works of Alex Elmsley, Volume 2* by **Stephen Minch**. In this context it uses a special calendar card which you can make yourself, and the Aronson Stack. Each of them produces the same effect, however, the procedures are all a bit different and some are even cleaner than others, but all very worthy of studying. Simon takes great pride in his work on this plot, and rightly so: there is a version of this effect that can be carried around in your wallet, so you can perform this anywhere on the go! The last section of the book is on his Cross-Index Index. Simon did an insane amount of work on this index which can be used with the Birthday plot, and it allows you to cover every one of 4,392 possible outcomes in a single wallet! Seriously. It takes a while to explain the whole system, but it really is quite simple to understand and use.

Well, that is all for this month folks – join me again next month as we delve into the work of David Solomon. Keep the magic alive! – **J.M.A.**



SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

If you attended the meeting last month and got your new membership card with the new hidden features in it, I have some news: The instructional video hit a tech snag and until that gets fixed, I will provide text instructions on how to use those features. You will find those instructions attached to the e-mail with this newsletter and any print subscribers will receive a copy along with their newsletter. As soon as the video issue is fixed, it will be posted, and a link will be sent out via email.

TRIVIA ANSWER

Richard Himber! Magicians know him for creating the Himber Ring and the Himber Wallet, both of which are commonly known gaffs and when used properly, very clean and strong magic can be accomplished with them.

Trick of the Month – March 2018

Our first foray into the Trick of the Month comes courtesy of the *Aronson Approach* by Simon Aronson. This is called Self Control, (pp. 24-28). You will see the bare bones of the effect here – for a lot of further detail, check out the book. This effect is from the Lie Detector plot and the spectator does almost all the work for you! *You can demonstrate the entire procedure yourself first, then have them shuffle and continue if you want to be certain they understand the whole thing.

1. Have a deck of cards shuffled and placed face down on the table.
2. Ask the spectator to cut off a packet of cards from the top of the deck, say, "...between 5 and 15 cards" and hold them in his/her lap, below the table. Ask them to silently count how many cards are in the packet and remember that number. Remind them that this number has been "randomly determined" by them. This packet is either left in their lap or placed well aside on the table.
3. Tell them to deal cards from the balance of the deck, peeking at each on and placing it face down on the table. When they come to the card that falls on their secret number (the number of cards in their cut off packet), they are to remember that card. However, once they reach their secret number, they should NOT stop dealing but continue the peek/deal procedure for at least a few cards past his random number and his remembered card, and then he can stop whenever he wants.
4. Make sure they understand the instructions and confirm that, then proceed. Now YOU, the performer, will act indifferent to what they are doing during this procedure, but you are not. In fact, you are secretly counting the number...

(continued from pg. 6) ...of cards they deal onto the pile, until they decide to stop. That is all you need to do.

5. When they finish, ask them to place the just-dealt pile back on the balance of the deck, then have them place the packet from their lap back on top of the balance of the deck and square up the pack. Remind them that you have not seen the faces of any of the cards this whole time, nor could you possibly know his secret random number. Both statements are 100% true.
6. If all procedures have been followed correctly, you now know exactly where the selection lies, though you do not know its identity. Whatever number of card they dealt to the table, the number you were secretly counting to, add one. The selection will always be that secret number, plus one! For example, say that during step 4 you secretly noted the spectator counted 13 cards, the selection will be at 14 once the pack has been reassembled.

Now it is a matter of how you choose to reveal the card. In the context of our example, you would spell a phrase that adds up to the number 14. If you spell out "Your card is here", dealing one card for each letter, the last card will be the selection. The selection will end up at a different number each time, based solely on the number of cards they dealt. You can use any phrase you like, even using the name of the spectator to get to the number you need.

The idea behind most Lie Detector spelling-type effects is that the performer keeps a close count on how many cards a spectator uses for the first question or two or three. Once you get them down to no more than 7 cards away from the selection, you can ask them the following:

- 7 cards away – Is your card a PICTURE or a NUMBER card?
- 6 cards away – Is your card a NUMBER or a COURT card?
- 5 cards away – Are your answers FALSE or TRUE
- 4 cards away – Is your card HIGH or LOW?
- 3 cards away – Did you lie – YES or NO?

The last few will get you exactly the card or one before it, meaning that you reveal the next card down.

One final idea (and a very strong one!) – Have the spectator deal the cards one at a time, face up, onto the table. They are to mentally think "**STOP**" when they see their card. You "read their mind" and call out stop when you reach your secret number (14, in our example). One could also have them deal several cards face up, dealing well past their number. You simply note the card at your secret number and you will know the identity of their card. Have fun with this one!

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Check out our Facebook Page: “Ann Arbor Magic Club”
Have a question / suggestion / comment / contribution? We would love to hear from you! Get in touch with us!
Bring a guest to a meeting! Perform! Join a Committee!

The Ann Arbor Magic Club meets the 2nd Wednesday of each month at Senate Coney Island Restaurant - 34359 Plymouth Rd, Livonia, MI 48150-1500. Meeting starts at 7 p.m. Come at 6 p.m. if you want to eat.