



On the Cover
By [Karl Rabe](#)

Magic Messenger

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The Magic Messenger

I.B.M. R...



The Official Newsletter of
The Ann Arbor Magic Club

Seasoned professional Mike Thornton "lights it up" on stage!



President's Corner
By [Sean Howell](#)

Hello,

I would like to thank my fellow compeer and friend Dan Jones for serving the Ann Arbor Magic Club admirably. Dan is the President that brought us through to where we are today. From a restaurant club that usually had some magic to a magic club that is all about the magic and consistently growing. Great changes have led to great growth and fellowship. Our membership has grown tremendously under Dan's leadership, and I am grateful for his time and efforts.

Speaking of Membership: Filling out the form and paying annual dues is only part of it, showing up is the secret to success.

Here's what I believe. Paying annual dues to become or remain a member is the smallest part of our membership. Being a paid member supports the club financially (and earns you access to club resources, electronic or otherwise) but it does not cover all operating costs and that's okay, we have other fundraisers to make up the difference.

The most important part of membership is showing up. Showing up at the meetings, showing up at the parlor show, showing up at the flea market, showing up to help or inspire another that may or may not be struggling. Seeing each other every month helps to build the relationships you often hear about from the celebrities on stage talking about "back in the day". For us, at this time, at our club, this is "the day" and the things we

do create those memories that we will cherish 20, 30, 40 years from now. But you must be present, here and now, with our fellow compeers, helping each other in each our own way. Whether its learning something new or maybe polishing an old routine. Maybe you're trying to flesh out new patter or just enjoying the variety of magic going on around you. When I started acting, I suffered from stage fright. I learned that the more time in front of a friendly audience, the easier it was to perform for an unknown audience. Time on contact: the more time I spent in front of an audience, the less it affected me. If you suffer from stage fright and that is an obstacle to performing, the AAMC is the friendliest audience you could ever want to learn new things.

The more I performed in front of people, the easier it was to perform in front of people. Our magic club has that same magical property, it's full of people who care and want to help, and I have the honor to steer for a while.

Thank you, this is going to be fun.

Cap'n Sean
President, AAMC



Secretary's Report
By [Karl Rabe](#)

Ann Arbor Magic Club – December Meeting & Holiday Party Recap

The Ann Arbor Magic Club's December meeting and Holiday Party was a magical evening filled with festive cheer, camaraderie, and plenty of magic! We were thrilled to have a great turnout, making it a perfect way to end the year.

A Fond Farewell and New Beginnings

Our President, Dan Jones, led the meeting one final time before stepping down. In a heartfelt moment, Dan introduced the new 2025-2026 Board:

- **President:** Sean Howell
- **Vice President:** Mike Bogdas
- **Treasurer:** Rob Krozal
- **Secretary:** Karl Rabe
- **Sergeant at Arms:** Tara McAllister



Dan's leadership over the years has been invaluable, and the club took a moment to express gratitude for his many years of dedicated service. His legacy will surely live on in the club's continued growth.

Dan also introduced two guests; Kevin Rosewood from Ring 89 and Trevor Elliott a guest of Kaylin "Kinetic Kay" Janiczek.

Exciting Club Announcements

Dan then turned the meeting over to a few important announcements. First up, **Tara McAllister** shared some exciting opportunities for our members. Sign-up sheets were circulated for two fantastic events:

1. **Spring Tour of Baffling Bill's Illusionarium** – A behind-the-scenes look at one of the most unique magic collections in the area.
2. **Professional Headshots at the January Meeting** – Tara arranged a special group rate for members to have professional headshots taken, perfect for any performer looking to update their image.

In another exciting development, Dan revealed that a **Member Stage Competition** will be added to our roster of annual events starting next fall. More details will follow, but we can't wait to see our members showcase their talents in this exciting new challenge.

Club Growth and Legal Updates

President-elect Sean Howell announced that the Board is working diligently on **updating the club's by-laws** to simplify and clarify them. The ultimate goal is for the club to become a **tax-exempt 501(c)3** organization by 2025, which would open the door for small grants starting in 2026. The board has been consulting with an accountant and a lawyer to ensure compliance, and we are excited about the potential growth this will bring to our club.

A Night of Magic and Merriment

After the announcements, the magic continued! Members mingled, enjoyed delicious pizza, soft drinks, and cookies, and then it was time for the much-anticipated **White Elephant Exchange**. With 15 participants, the exchange was a hoot! The highlight of the night? **Mike Thornton** walked away with the grand prize: an authentic *Mike Thornton Magic Kit*. Talk about a perfect fit!

Member Performances

The performance portion of the evening was truly a highlight. Our youngest member, **Lincoln Stone**, kicked things off with a delightful pick-a-card routine, where a chosen card magically rose to the top of the deck at the sound of his slide whistle.

Lincoln also performed an impressive linking rings routine that had everyone talking. I hope he calls it “The Lincoln Rings”.

Next, **Mike Doyle** wowed us with a mind-bending performance of Josh Zandman’s Book Test, followed by **Kevin Rosewood** who performed a signed card to the top of the deck, then sealed it in an envelope for a jaw-dropping finale.

Chuck Kimbrough added a bit of impromptu magic to the mix with his coin-in-bottle routine, using nothing but a regular coin and an un-gimmicked water bottle. **Phil Mann** amazed us with his Two in the Hand, One in the Pocket routine, which evolved into a mind-blowing double climax involving nuts, bolts, and a twist that left the crowd in awe.

Kay “Kinetic Kay” Janiczek then shared a bit of her juggling journey, performing a cascading two-ball juggle while spinning a plate – but that wasn’t all! In an impromptu challenge from Dan, Kay skillfully performed a Tissue Paper Juggle, showcasing her quick thinking and dexterity.

Finally, **April Barrett** closed out the performances with a heartfelt tribute piece in memory of the late Jim Tait. Using Naughty/Nice cards and the *Out To Lunch* principle, April’s performance was a touching tribute to a fellow magician and a beautiful way to end the evening.

A Magical End to a Magical Year

The night wrapped up with more socializing, impromptu jamming, and, of course, a whole lot of magic. As the lights dimmed, it was clear that the Ann Arbor Magic Club had ended the year on a high note – and we can’t wait to see what magic 2024 will bring!

Special Thanks

A huge thank you to everyone who attended, performed, and

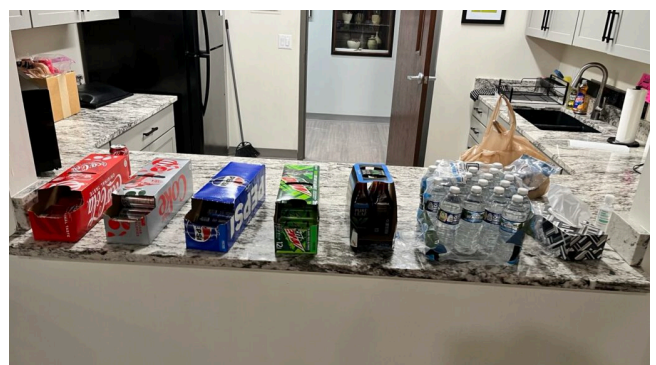
helped make the night such a success. Here's to another year of friendship, magic, and new adventures with the Ann Arbor Magic Club!



Lincoln has Sean pick a card



Dan Jones exits stage left



Do you call it Soda or Pop



Pizza Party!



Nobody got a white elephant





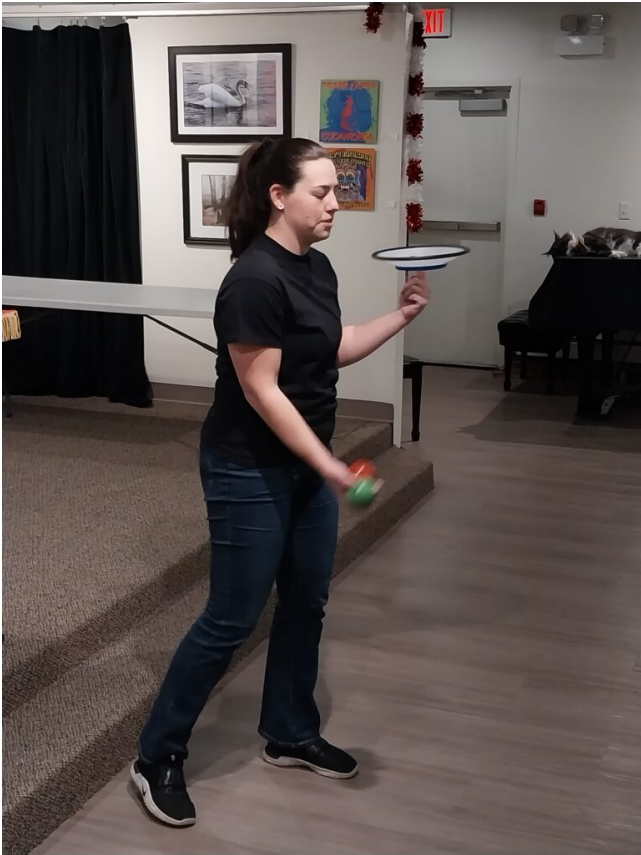
Kevin Rosewood visits from Marshall Mi



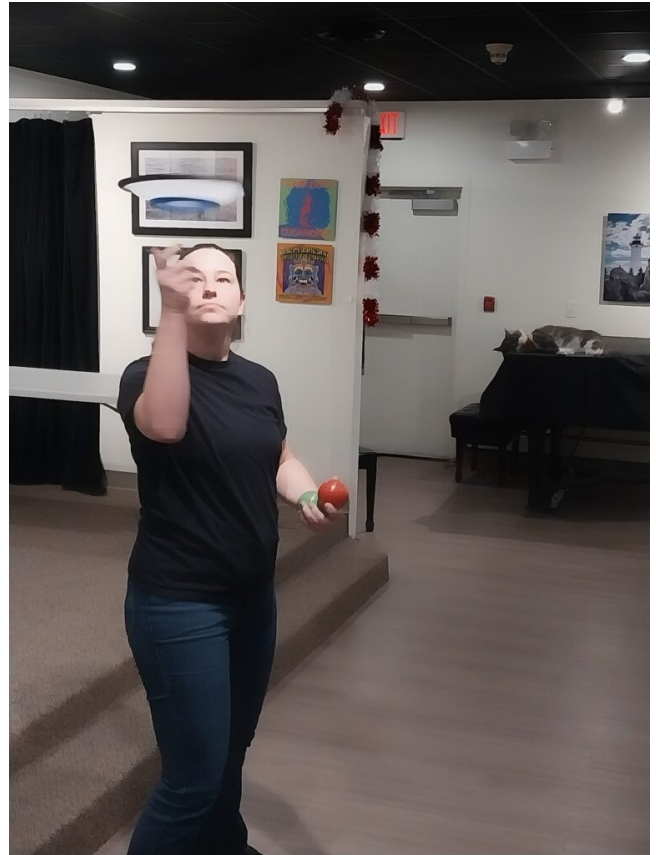
How did you enjoy the party Mrs. Lincoln?

Sean, Mirf (center), Chris

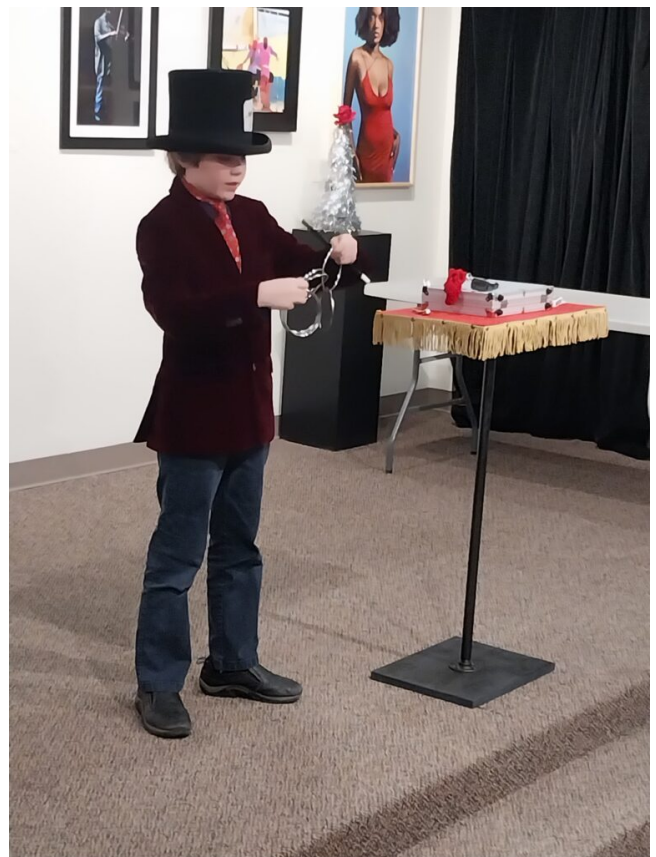




Two Balls and a Plate



Fortunately Kay ate the Pizza off the plate first...



The Magic Mann



Lincoln Rings





Screenshot









Screenshot

Photos by Mike Palko, Karl Rabe and Dan Jones



Around the Town
By [Karl Rabe](#)

Calendar of Events

Mark your calendars for our March Meeting Date. None other than **John Luka** will be presenting his **Secrets you can Afford and Will Use** lecture.

*John Luka has been an avid magic enthusiast for most of his life. Included among his mentors were Milt Kort and Harry Riser. This lecture contains material from John's book, *Uncovered*, and his DVD by the same name.*

You will find routines that range in skill level from nearly self-working to some that are a bit more challenging.

However, you will NOT find any knuckle busters in the items presented. Featured is Doubling Back Home, an incredible routine that's a real fooler. You will enjoy it.

You will find that John's lecture contains more do-able, practical, strong magic than most lectures. Come see for yourself. You'll be glad you did.

Just a reminder that the Board Meets Monthly and are open to all members who care to attend. See our calendar on our home page for details and to keep up on the next scheduled meeting. Our January meeting is face-to-face in Plymouth but the remainder of the year's meetings are via Zoom. Logistics can be accessed in the calendar item on our website.

Mark your calendar for May 24, the date of our next **Parlor Show**. Our 4pm show has always out-performed our 7pm show, so we are moving the show times to 2pm and 5pm. If you want to perform in the parlor show, contact Sean Howell ASAP.

Our Club's Birthday is coming up on February 23. Our Club received its IBM Charter on Feb 23, 1971, making us 54 Years Old. We may look our age, but we don't act it! Our influx of new young members is keeping us active. Fifty-four is the new Twenty-four!

Next Show

MAY
24
Sat
2:00 pm Spring 2025 Parlor Show Afternoon @ Plymouth Community Arts Council

5:00 pm Spring 2025 Parlor Show Evening @ Plymouth Community Arts Council

Next Meeting

JAN
8
Wed
7:00 pm AAMC Monthly Meeting @ Plymouth Community Arts Council

JAN
16
Thu
6:00 pm AAMC Board Meeting – Annual F2F ... @ Plymouth District Library

Club Events

FEB
23
Sun
all-day Club Birthday

MAR
12
Wed
7:00 pm John Luka Lecture @ Plymouth Community Arts Council

Other Events

JAN
21
Tue
7:00 pm Detroit Magic Club Monthly Meeting @ Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church

Other Calendars

- Check out John Luka's Magic page and his well maintained [list of Michigan Events](#)
- All AAMC Events and details can be viewed on the [website calendar](#).

Spotted around town...



A number of AAMC Members attended Aaron Radatz Christmas Show in Canton (L-R Tara, Karl R, Patty R, Bill, Aaron R, April R, April, Dan)



Bill Rabe at the Radatz Show



Jeff Wawrzaszek performs at the AA Library – Jeff is one of the Founders of the AAMC.



Great Turnout for Jeff's Show



Funny Business
By [Karl Rabe](#)

A more historical note this month. Jeff Boyer shared this old clipping from the Ann Arbor News highlighting the club and Ann Arbor magicians.

Ann Arbor's modern-day Merlins bring a touch of magic to everyday life

By JENNIFER DIX
NEWS SPECIAL WRITER

July 13, 1988



Almost the first thing a magician will tell you is that his or her act is unique. “Nobody else is doing exactly what I’m doing.” is a phrase frequently heard in this business. Or as the song goes, you gotta get a gimmick.

Comic duo Jeff Boyer and Jim Fitzsimmons, who grew up together in Chelsea, frequently produce live doves and rabbits in their performances around Washtenaw County. “I don’t think anyone else in the area is using live animals,” asserts Fitzsimmons.

Ypsilanti psychologist Warren Welsh performs as a Chinese magician at the Forbidden City restaurants in Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti. His act is all in mime. “I don’t know of any other restaurant magician who performs silently – I was told it couldn’t be done,” he says.

As for Lucy Smalley, “I’m kind of a novelty act,” says the 25-year-old Ann Arbor resident. One of the few women in her profession, she easily stands out among the black coats and ties. The other novel aspect of her act, she says, is her mastery of the technique known as manipulation. This practice involves producing objects seemingly out of thin air. “It’s the purest form of magic,” she says, “and it’s very, very hard, but it’s beautiful. When Smalley performs, there can be no speculation that she’s got something up her sleeve – her costume is a long sleeveless dress.

Despite the quest for novelty in their performances, most magicians readily admit that the basics of their craft have not changed much over the centuries “There’s really nothing new in magic,” says Fitzsimmons. “You just try to find original ways of presenting the material.”

“The professionals perform the same tricks again and again,”

says Daryl Hurst, a full-time performer and owner of Ann Arbor's Party Pizazz, "But people enjoy them, just as we still love the Beatles – we still love the classics."

The quest for the ultimate trick, however, tempts all magicians to some degree. The International Brotherhood of Magicians holds an annual competition with a traveling trophy that goes to the creator of an entirely new effect. The last winner was Chris Carter, a recent transplant to Ann Arbor from Springfield, Ill, Carter took the prize in 1985 for a trick which transforms an Oriental fan into a scarf. No other magician has claimed the trophy in three years.

Michigan has had a part in magic history since early in the century, Colon, a small town (population 1,000) in the west of the state, was put on the map for magicians when Harry Blackstone, one of the foremost performers of his time, decided to make his home there in 1927, Shortly thereafter, an Australian entrepreneur named Percy Abbott selected Colon as a site for manufacturing magician's props and equipment. He was given financial backing by Recil Bordner, an Ohio farmer who saw the appeal of a somewhat eccentric enterprise during the Depression years. Abbott's Magic Manufacturing Co. has prospered in the last half-century and is today one of the largest manufacturers of magic supplies.

Blackston is buried in Colon, and the Abbott's Magic Convention, held every year in August, brings hundreds of visitors to Colon for a few days. (This year's convention runs Aug. 10-13.) Colon was also the site chosen by Ben and Marion Chavez, a magician couple from the West Coast, for the Eastern branch of the Chavez School of Magic. The school is no longer incorporated but still trains a select handful of students every year in the magical arts. The late Neil Foster was considered the head of the school until his death last March. Battle Creek resident Chris Jakeway is now the name most associated with the Chavez School.

Ann Arbor itself can hold its own as a center of magical talent today. There are a surprising number of local magicians who are determined to make it as professionals, or who are already making a living with their art. They “do” birthday parties, company picnics, business promotionals and fairs to make ends meet. All agree it’s a tough way to make a living. But they share a conviction that their work is unique, and a stubborn determination to make it in the highly competitive world of show business.

“It was really a case of madness,” says Daryl Hurst. “People kept saying. “You can’t make a living at it, and that made me mad.” The native Ann Arborite is certainly the best-known magician around town, and the magic shops he has owned here have initiated numerous others – including Franz Harary, a former Ann Arbor resident who has made magic for the likes of Robert Altman and Michael Jackson – into the tricks of this ancient craft.

Hurst’s been performing in his hometown since he was a boy and stuck with it to become a full-time professional. “When people ask me if I’m making it, I tell them I live in Ann Arbor and I pay property taxes. I’m not Tom Monaghan, but we’re doing OK.” Hurst does an average of 10 shows a week, putting in some time on the road with corporate promotional and trade shows. In addition to the usual round of local birthday parties, Hurst will occasionally teach a magic class for children. He loves his work, as is evident by the tone in his voice when he talks about performing. “I love going into a small birthday party.” he says. “I love the challenge of working out in a field. Sometimes after a show, a kid will just run up and give me a hug, and that gives me a wonderful feeling.” But – “It’s just a business like any other,” Hurst says. He notes that he has cut back on the traveling recently to spend more time with his wife and 19-month-old daughter.

Boyer and Fitzsimmons, who list a comedy magic act in the Ann Arbor Yellow Pages, have been doing magic together for 15

years. The friends, both 26, currently do double duty as chief officers of the local chapter of two prestigious magic societies. Fitzsimmons is president of the International Brotherhood of Magicians and vice president of the Society of American Magicians; Boyer is vice president and president of IBM and SAM, respectively.

The Boyer and Fitzsimmons magic act includes a routine they say is somewhat derivative of the Smothers Brothers. ("I play Tommy and Jeff plays Dick," says Fitzsimmons.) Both young men have set their sights on a career in magic. Boyer makes his living as a full-time performer, appearing three nights a week as a solo act at Chi-Chi's restaurant. Fitzsimmons, who works a day job at Domino's Farms, is interested in production as well as performance. His ambition is to own and manage a magic club in Ann Arbor.

"Lucy Smalley's Hot Magic" is a name designed to attract attention, and the artist is candid about her ambitions. "I have big plans," she says cheerfully. Her eventual goal is to make it to Las Vegas, where she aims to be the opening act for big-name entertainers.

A Michigan native who has recently taken up residence in Ann Arbor, Smalley found her avocation at an early age. As a young girl she was a magician's assistant in her hometown of Oxford. She studied theater at Oakland College for two years and went on to take courses from the late Neil Foster at the Chavez School of Magic in Colon. Her "mentor" was Suzy Wandas, a Belgian woman with a distinguished background in magic.

At the famous Abbott's Magic Convention held every August in Colon, Smalley won first prize at the age of 21 – the first woman ever to take top honors. Shortly after this triumph, she got her first dose of hard, cold reality. "I had a very well-known magician take me aside and tell me to get out of it, because I was a woman and I'd never make it," she says. "Here I'd just won first prize at Abbott's and I thought I was on top of the world. But there just aren't any female role models

for magicians.”

Smalley herself challenges that statement with her work as a teacher. Among her pupils is a talented little girl, Lindsay Jansen, probably the youngest magician in Washtenaw County, if not all of Michigan. The 12-year-old Saline resident took first prize this spring at Michigan Magic Day, a statewide competition held Grand Rapids. She has been practicing magic since she was 5 and is learning the art of manipulation from Smalley.

“Suzy (Wandas) was a manipulator, I’m a manipulator, and I’m teaching Lindsay to be a manipulator,” says Smalley. “It’s a kind of legacy.”

Lindsay is already a seasoned performer at birthday parties, where she keeps up a lively patter to get her audience involved. She has a regular half-hour show with a crowning effect at the end – “I produce a birthday cake,” she says. She envisions a future in professional magic.

“She’ll probably be my major competition in a few years,” says Smalley, not without satisfaction.

Swag is now in stock and for sale. Contact Treasurer Rob Krozal to get your’s today!



Hat






Tee



Polo



	 <p>Visit the club website for past issues, calendar of upcoming events, and other features and articles.</p>		 <p>Join our Private Facebook Group to connect and exchange ideas and information with other members.</p>		 <p>Like our Public Facebook Page and share it with Friends and Family.</p>	
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The 2025 Ann Arbor Magic Club Board



President – Sean Howell



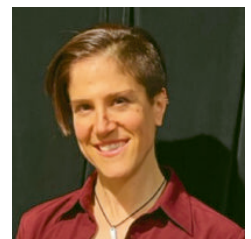
VP – Mike Bogdas



Treasurer – Rob Krozal



Secretary – Karl Rabe



Sgt at Arms – Tara McAllister

Contact the board using these email addresses

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