



On the Cover  
By [Karl Rabe](#)

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# Magic Messenger August 2025

IBM 210

AUGUST 2025

SAM 88

# The Magic Messenger



July's Featured Performers Bill and Karl Rabe perform their custom "Tennis Sphere" routine for the club. Photo by Ken



President's Corner

By [Sean Howell](#)

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It's already August and I'm wondering where the time went. I wish to thank everyone for coming out to the AAMC Picnic. I know it's a drive but it's a beautiful area. It was fun, lots of fun and fair amount of magic and Mirf.

As the dog days of summer rage on during this boost in outdoor temperatures, we must turn our thoughts to the fall parlor show. It's time to firm up the lineup. I would like to see if we can get some fresh faces on the stage.

Give me a call or pull me aside at the next meeting.

In closing, my home festival, The Michigan Renaissance Festival opens Saturday August 16 at the Festival Grounds in Holly Mich. See me for more info.

Cheers,  
Cap'n Sean

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Secretary's Report

By [Karl Rabe](#)

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This month our President Sean Howell decided to mix up the agenda a bit, alternating magic and business.

Our meeting kicked off with magic by the duo "Karl and Bill". Bill opened with a comedy string of silks production from his sleeve, but he pulled to hard and ended up pulling out a pair of silk boxers with red hearts. Then it was their unique version of Stratosphere where Bill demonstrates his new job at the Penn Tennis Ball factory pumping air out of the tennis ball tubes using the TBPU-2000 (Tennis Ball Pumper Upper 2000). Somehow the pink tennis ball for breast cancer awareness always ends up in the wrong location. Then it was their version of the linking rings. Karl is unable to link the rings but Bill does it every time. Finally they performed their most recent effect, The Indian Rope Trick.

President Sean Howell reminded us of the Annual Picnic to be hosted at his home out in the country in Albion Michigan. Details have been shared with members. Overnight campers are welcome.

Dan Jones made a pitch for volunteers for the Parlor Show Marketing Team. Dan will be leading the Marketing effort. Karl Rabe will be the overall Project Manager for the show and Sean Howell will continue to be the Producer. It is critical that we increase attendance at our shows and we need everyone's help in doing so.

Then it was back to more magic.

- Phil Mann the Magic Mann did a nice floating glass routine.
- Draygon Hibbler did a baffling two card divination.
- Fred Lenter led a spectator Dan Jones in divining three cards randomly selected by audience members.

Tom Johnson issued a Black Art Challenge to members. He brought in two Don Drake manuscripts (Lecture Notes and Black Art Breakthrough) as well as some black art props. He offered

to loan all to a member who would take it away, do some research and come back the following month with a black art trick to perform for the club.

John Russell lead a discussion on keeping magic “appropriate” for all audiences and used his performance of Passing Water by Kovari Magic as an example.

Then it was time for a round of Happy Birthday to one of our longest tenure members, Jim Ruth. [According to Hank Moorehouse himself](#), Jim was one of the first members of the SAM Assembly chartered in 1972.

More Magic.

- Tara McAllister did a straight jacket escape with a wallet steal thrown in for good measure.
- Dan Jones did a nice finger-chopper routine.
- Mike Bogdes had Charlie Palko divine a card selected by a spectator. He finally got it when he remembered to wear Mike’s special glasses.

We wrapped up with a couple of final announcements.

- Our September meeting will be an Improv Class let by the venerable John Sturk. More details to come.
- Mike Thornton has agreed to be the club’s Educational Director. Mike has demonstrated a fantastic ability to teach and share his knowledge from years of experience and his time studying under the legendary magician Neil Foster at the Chavez College of Magic. At our October meeting Mike will be presenting a learning session on magic tables and how to organize your props effectively.





Around the Town  
By [Karl Rabe](#)

# Calendar of Events

<h3>Next Show</h3> <div data-bbox="167 230 268 353"> <b>OCT</b>  <b>25</b>          Sat       </div> <div data-bbox="292 230 740 353"> <b>2:00 pm</b> Fall 2025 Parlor Show Afternoon @ Plymouth Community Arts Council       </div> <div data-bbox="292 383 740 506"> <b>5:00 pm</b> Fall 2025 Parlor Show Evening @ Plymouth Community Arts Council       </div>	<h3>Club Events</h3> <div data-bbox="858 230 959 353"> <b>SEP</b>  <b>10</b>          Wed       </div> <div data-bbox="983 230 1431 353"> <b>7:00 pm</b> Improv for Magicians with John S... @ Plymouth Community Arts Council       </div> <div data-bbox="858 398 959 521"> <b>SEP</b>  <b>27</b>          Sat       </div> <div data-bbox="983 398 1431 521"> <b>12:00 pm</b> AAMC Pop-Up Magic Shop (Flea Mar... @ Plymouth Community Arts Council       </div> <div data-bbox="858 566 959 689"> <b>OCT</b>  <b>8</b>          Wed       </div> <div data-bbox="983 566 1431 689"> <b>7:00 pm</b> AAMC Parlor Competition @ Plymouth Community Arts Council       </div> <div data-bbox="858 723 959 846"> <b>DEC</b>  <b>10</b>          Wed       </div> <div data-bbox="983 723 1431 846"> <b>6:00 pm</b> AAMC Holiday Party @ Plymouth Community Arts Council       </div> <div data-bbox="858 880 959 1003"> <b>FEB</b>  <b>23</b>          Mon       </div> <div data-bbox="983 880 1431 1003"> <b>all-day</b> Club Birthday       </div>
<h3>Next Meeting</h3> <div data-bbox="167 656 268 779"> <b>AUG</b>  <b>13</b>          Wed       </div> <div data-bbox="292 656 740 779"> <b>7:00 pm</b> AAMC Monthly Meeting @ Plymouth Community Arts Council       </div> <div data-bbox="167 813 268 936"> <b>AUG</b>  <b>20</b>          Wed       </div> <div data-bbox="292 813 740 936"> <b>6:00 pm</b> AAMC Monthly Board Meeting       </div> <div data-bbox="167 969 268 1093"> <b>SEP</b>  <b>10</b>          Wed       </div> <div data-bbox="292 969 740 1093"> <b>7:00 pm</b> AAMC Monthly Meeting @ Plymouth Community Arts Council       </div>	

## Special Event

The AAMC has a very special event planned in place of our September meeting. **Please note this requires paid admission with a discount for AAMC Members in good standing only.**

Improv for Magicians will be a led by John Sturk on September 10, 2025 from 7:00 pm – 10:00 pm at the Plymouth Community Arts Council.

## Improv for Magicians with John Sturk



John Sturk is a Past National President of the Society of American Magicians, as well as a faculty member at The Second City theater in Chicago, one of the world's most famous improv training grounds.

John recently presented this program at The Society of American Magicians Annual Conference in Nashville to rave reviews, and now he's bringing it to the Ann Arbor Magic Club.

John will not be teaching tricks in this seminar – instead, he'll be teaching techniques to help you make the most of your magic and helping your audience volunteers shine. This program also relies on active participation by YOU! You'll be on your feet actually performing some of these exercises and cheering on your fellow attendees, so don't expect to hide in the back of the room!

## You can expect to learn

- The “Yes, And” Principle
- Supporting Your Scene Partner
- Quickening Your Wit
- Improve Your Confidence
- Improvisation as a Means to Scripting

## Cost

Because of the special nature of this 3 hour event **we cannot offer our usual reciprocal discount to local clubs.** Cash at the door please.

- AAMC Paid Members only – \$15 per person
- All Others – \$25 per person

This is a great opportunity to get a healthy taste of Improv from a professional for a very low cost in a short amount of time. You don't want to miss it.

## 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](#).

## Ring 22 Event

From Johnny NY..

*Please don't forget! The next RING 22 meeting is now just ONE WEEK AWAY and it's going to the "Deal of the Century" – a CLUB MEETING and MAGIC FLEA MARKET – all rolled into one unforgettable and worthwhile event! It all happens on a SPECIAL day (MONDAY, AUGUST 18, 2025, 7:15 PM, at the Spirit of Christ Lutheran Church, 749 W. 14 Mile Rd., Clawson, MI 48017). You read that right, folks, NOT TUESDAY, but MONDAY, AUGUST 18!*

*Our TWO FOR ONE extravaganza will start bright and early (7:15 PM) and we'll feature the wonderful wisdom and magic of MIKE THORNTON, not only as an outstanding performer but also as a presenter and former student of the famous CHAVEZ SCHOOL OF MAGIC! We'll follow up immediately and open the doors to our annual MAGIC FLEA MARKET. Members only are encouraged to bring in all those magic-related items you're no longer using to sell or swap with others. We'll supply the tables at no charge, and all of the profits go to YOU! EVERYONE (including*

*guests!) are welcome to attend and buy some wonderful products at bargain-basement prices (and we'll literally be in the basement for this portion of the meeting!). There'll be plenty of time to look things over and session with friends! Don't miss this one!*

## Past Event

### **The Magic of the Mind – By Dan Jones AAMC Field Reporter**

On Wednesday evening, July 23rd John Machniak presented another fine lecture titled “The Magic of the Mind” at the John F. Kennedy Branch of the Dearborn Heights Public Library. Approximately 30 people attended including 6 AAMC Members. Included were Jodi Gladden, Frank Machniak, Jackie Clark, Brian Campbell, Chuck Kimbrough and Dan Jones.

John's presentation went almost an hour and a half with time for questions and answers and autographs. It was interesting and informative and included many examples and demonstrations of “psychic” ability and mentalist effects.

An evening well spent at the library. Thanks John.





Photos by Dan Jones, AAMC Field Photographer

## **Marvin Mathena Celebrates his 90 Birthday**

Photos by AAMC Roving Reporter Kevin Peshik

Lifetime Member Marvin Mathena celebrated his 90th birthday on Friday July 25 at the Regency at Canton. Of course, he put on a show!

Marvin is an inductee in the Michigan Magic Hall of Fame and a member of the I.B.M. Order of Merlin. He is a former President of both the Ann Arbor Magic Club and the Detroit Magic Club.

Marvin currently resides at the Regency at Canton...

Marvin Mathena  
45900 Geddes Road  
Canton, MI 48188

Visitors are always welcome. Just register at the front desk.



## AAMC Annual Picnic

By Special Picnic Correspondent Dan Jones

The Annual AAMC picnic was held on Aug. 9th at Kracken Acres the home of Club President Sean & his wife Tracy Howell.

After eating a few members entertained the crowd.

- Sean performed his “Rub a dub dub” cups and balls routine in preparation for the Renaissance Festival season.
- Sean also debuted a new effect he is working on called “Passing Waters” with Ryan Hoffman.
- Austin performed his ring on rope effect.
- Lincoln Stone amazed us with a pick a card trick.

There was some impromptu juggling and teaching happening and the archery range was open as well.

A fun time was had by all.

Thank You Sean & Tracy for hosting and donating the main courses.





Ex Libris

By [Dr. Joaquin Ayala de Cedoz](#)



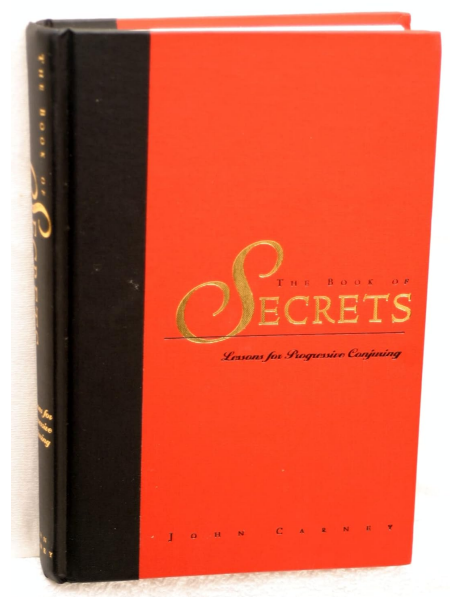
Dr. Joaquin M.  
Ayala, PhD

***The Book of Secrets – Lessons for Progressive Conjuring* by John Carney.**

Hello folks and WELCOME BACK to [Ex Libris](#), it has been quite a while – five years and seven months, in fact, but we are BACK!

First, for those unfamiliar, a short update on why the long pause: Back in January 2021, after a whirlwind six years in the AAMC, some of those spent as the Secretary, President and Librarian, my family and I relocated from Wyandotte to northern Michigan for work – specifically the resort town of Charlevoix.

It has been a crazy half of a decade, but earlier this year I was asked to come back to writing this article on a regular basis, and so I shall. If you previously enjoyed my writings, I tip my hat to you, and you may also thank long-time AAMC members **Bob Goodwin** and **Dan Jones** for prompting me to make the comeback! Now, on with the article!



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This month, we will be looking at ***The Book of Secrets –***

***Lessons for Progressive Conjuring*** by **John Carney**. We previously focused on the work of John Carney back in the December 2016 article – take a look in the Ex Libris archive on the website for a refresher. This is a 369-page, hardcover book originally published in 2002 by CarneyMagic, and is now out of print. There are rumors of a reprint coming soon, but we shall see...

There is a broad range of material covered in this book, and much of it is based on, or inspired by, magic from the “way-back machine,” which is no surprise because John Carney is a student of magic history, and he was a direct student of some big names in magic like **Dai Vernon**, **Charlie Miller** and **Fawcett Ross**. This book also contains a number of intermittent articles on self-insight, creativity, philosophy (both personal and historic) and more. The purpose of these articles is to get you to think more deeply about the magic you perform, what you wish to get out of it, and how to go about executing those visions and dreams. Some of these thought-provoking articles may even bleed into other areas and interests in your life, and they probably should!

As for the effects within the covers, there is a good bit of card work, but not necessarily as effects. It focuses more on essential techniques for the serious card worker, such as palming and culling, and a few exemplary effects are included which make use of them. The other content includes coins and magical miscellany, some of which I will highlight now.

On a personal note, one of the genres of magic which I consider the most impossible, the most magical and the most enchanting is that of cigarette and cigar magic. This is especially amplified when dealing with lit cigarettes/cigars which appear out of nowhere, multiply and vanish without a trace. The late, great **Eugene Burger** always lamented that he stopped smoking, if only for the fact that he could no longer produce a *lit cigarette from his long, spindly beard(!)*

Imagine that in the minds of your audience! The problem with that genre of magic is that I am not, nor have never been, a smoker. The techniques and effects can absolutely be transferred to similar objects like crayons and golf pencils, but that is a subject for another day. That all being said one of the best cigar routines was created by **Nate Leipzig**. That effect inspired *Just a Cigar*, which appears in this book.

I have long related the where and when of my personal favourite effect in magic, which got me interested in the first place – the Chinese Linking Rings, and in this book are two moves for the rings that come from an unknown origin. They are wonderful to watch, and even more fun to perform!

The coin magic in this book is beautiful, if not straightforward in plot. One of the greatest plots in magic is covered by his *Silver and Glass*, inspired by the work of Dai Vernon and **Edward Victor**. This is a coins-to-glass effect, and John teaches some classic sleights to accomplish the effect therewith. There is a wonderful section regarding the Paul Fox coin pail (and it was Paul Fox who attained fame for the “standard design” of cups used in Cups & Balls).

There is a section on Cups & Balls magic, much of it based on the classic routine devised by Dai Vernon and taught in the classic John Carney style. Lots of variations here, all worth exploring for your two & three-cup versions of this classic magical mainstay. The influence that Vernon and Miller had on Carney is on full display in these parts, including the section where he details the use of grapes. Side note: *PLEASE* treat yourself to the *Caffeinated Cups and Balls* (a mere \$35/USD) on [carneymagic.com](http://carneymagic.com), if you are at all interested in C&B-related magic.<sup>4</sup>

To round out the miscellany in the book, *Swing Blade* is a Paddle Move effect that is, basically, straight out of the **Edwin Sachs** classic tome, *Sleight of Hand*. Then, there is *Thimble Collection*, which absolutely reminds me of a **John**

**Ramsay**-style of magic, but is inspired, in this case, by the **Paul Rosini** *Impromptu Thimble Routine*. Thimble magic is another personal favorite – astonishing and silky smooth!

Well, that wraps up the return article for this month. I hope this inspires you to check out this book if you have it or can find/borrow a copy (if you can). There is a LOT of wisdom to be learnt from these pages. Until next month, happy reading, and I hope you enjoyed our renewed journey into yet another magic tome. Keep the magic alive! – J. M. A.

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A note from Karl Rabe, current club Secretary.

Besides being a stalwart supporter of the AAMC, Joaquin has blessed us with 70 (now 71) wonderful book reviews. You can view the archive of his past reviews dating back to 2015 under the Features selection on our home page.. or by clicking [here](#).

Thank you Joaquin.

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Funny Business  
By [Karl Rabe](#)

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This month's challenge... How many members can you name?



Member	Number	Member	Number
April Barrett		Kevin Peshick	
Bill Rabe		Lincoln Stone	
Bou-Yu Chen		Michael Reuter	
Brian Campbell		Mike Thornton	
Dan Jones		Mirf the Club Mouser	
Dave Saunders		Phil Mann	
Don Oesterwind		Rob Krozal	

Dreygon Hibbler			Robert Goodwin	
George Honer			Ryan Hoffman	
Jacki Saunders			Sean Howell	
John Russell			Tara McAllister	
Johnny New York			Tom Johnson	
Karl Rabe				

Answers [here](#)

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



Hat






Tee



Polo



Hoodie

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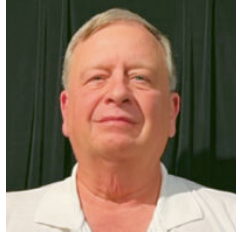
## The 2025 Ann Arbor Magic Club Board



President  
t – Sean  
Howell



VP –  
Mike  
Bogdas



Treasure  
r – Rob  
Krozal



Secretar  
y – Karl  
Rabe



Sgt at  
Arms –  
Tara  
McAllist  
er

## Contact the board using these email addresses

- [sean@howell.cc](mailto:sean@howell.cc)
- [bogd19@me.com](mailto:bogd19@me.com)
- [rkrozal@yahoo.com](mailto:rkrozal@yahoo.com)
- [krabe@comcast.net](mailto:krabe@comcast.net)
- [mcallistermagic1@gmail.com](mailto:mcallistermagic1@gmail.com)