



On the Cover
By [Karl Rabe](#)

Magic Messenger

December 2025

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The Magic Messenger

ANN ARBOR



The Official Newsletter of
The Ann Arbor Magic Club

Our own Brian Campbell arranged a special appearance by none other than the Big Kringle Guy himself for our December Cover. Thank you Kris, Mrs. Claus and all the elf and reindeer that made this possible.



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

My Fellow Compeers

I hope you had a Happy Thanksgiving and soon a Merry Christmas. It's the time of year where we take inventory of the things that we are thankful for and the spirit of giving. I wish each and every one of you a very merry holiday season.

For our December meeting we have our White Rabbit Gift exchange. Last year was a lot of fun, this year promises to be more. Here are the simple rules:

- Can be new or used but value has a \$20 limit
- Must be wrapped or bagged
- Should be magic related
- Bring the gift with you to the meeting and put your name in the hat.
- When your name is drawn you can either pick a wrapped gift or "snatch" an unwrapped gift.
- Once a gift has been "snatched" three times it's out of play.

Bring a gift and join in the fun...now for a bit of business.

Our club is healthy, active and growing. We are meeting many of our goals like increasing outreach to the community through

library sessions, summer camp, etc... We do have a cash shortfall so your board conducted a brainstorming session to address it. Two main themes were discussed, move to a cheaper location with less amenities or raise dues.

Instead of writing up a sales pitch I asked a couple other members their thoughts. I was provided the following feedback from Mike Bogdas.

Sean,

I'm writing to talk about membership to the Ann Arbor Magic Club. As a new member to the club, I want to you tell you the value that the club brings. Currently, I pay \$25.00 a year, which is roughly \$2 a month.

We originally met at the Coney Island and that was more like a fun dinner with some magic. Moving to the Arts Council, has really expanded the club and value associated with the club. I get 2 plus hours once a month of learning and watching magic being taught by numerous levels. I have been able to perform magic for members numerous times and even performed in a few shows which I would have never had the opportunity otherwise. I even won a close-up magic competition! I have made multiple friends and now even take lesson from a member.

I am in all favor for staying at the Arts Council for the better good of the club. If I were to buy a magic trick download online, I am looking to spend between \$9 to \$15 for one trick. I learn multiple tricks in one meeting alone! With the library jam sessions we have the fellowship after meetings, my knowledge of magic has expanded exponentially!

Mike

And this from Wendy Stone...

Lincoln Stone, the youngest member of the Ann Arbor Magic Club, has quickly become an example of how a supportive

community can help a young person grow. Joining a group filled with older, more experienced members could have been intimidating, but instead it gave Lincoln a space where his ideas were heard and valued. Surrounded by mentors who encouraged him to ask questions, learn new tricks, and stay curious, he developed confidence both in his magic skills and in himself. The club's welcoming environment helped him step outside his comfort zone and gain experience as a performer in ways he might never have explored on his own.

Being part of the Ann Arbor Magic Club also has given Lincoln a sense of belonging and responsibility. He learned how teamwork works in real settings—how people with different skills come together to solve problems, plan events, and support each other. By observing others and taking part in group discussions, Lincoln sharpened his communication and leadership abilities. Most importantly, the club offered him a positive place to grow socially and personally, helping him build friendships and a stronger sense of identity as a magician. As AAMC Family Members, I feel that we have received excellent value from the family membership. The meaningful benefits that Lincoln has received would be worth twice as much, and I treasure the time we've spent together nurturing his magic abilities.

Our dues are under priced for the value they provide. A modest dues increase will put our club on solid ground. For this reason the board has made the decision to raise dues but how much is fair?

Currently the board is considering a \$10 increase but I would like to hear from each of you first. What is a fair annual membership fee for the content and venue we offer? I look forward to hearing from each of you. You can call or text (734) 634-2000 or email sean@naes.cc.

I look forward to seeing everyone at the next meeting.

Cheers!

Sean

EDITOR'S NOTE: *At the November Board Meeting the Board brainstormed ideas to address our annual financial shortfall. Twenty-Six different ideas were considered. Of those, 14 we want to pursue further, 5 need further consideration, and 7 we decided not to pursue. You can see the details [here](#). -Karl*



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

November Meeting

We had a great turnout for our meeting with 23 members and one guest. Mike Bogdas was our featured performer. First he performed John Archer's Chinese Choice where random numbers selected by the audience make up a perfect amount for a buffet for three.

Then Mike performed an original effect and he performed a real fooler which he created himself. An audience member randomly chosen using a fish bowl and slips of paper thinks of a card. They open and dump a small bag of goldfish crackers (that have been in the bowl the entire time) into the bowl and out falls a card that turns out to be the chosen card.



Next up was a brilliant mini-lecture by Mike Thornton on magician tables and cases. Mike took us through the cases and tables he has used starting with a TV Tray in his early days as a young lad performing magic for schools and libraries, being taught construction of compartmentalized cases with duck tape and cardboard during his time at Chavez in Colon up to the variety of tables and cases he uses for the different types of gigs he performs today.

Key tips Mike emphasized were...

- Don't stand BEHIND your table. The magician should be front and center!
- Everything should be at your fingertips. Don't disappear

from view crouching down behind your table hunting for your next prop.

- Consider different solutions for different venue types considering portability and weight requirements.
- Consider the look of the tables and cases you use and how you want to project yourself to your audience. It is usually the first thing they see.
- Looking good, having your props well organized and at your fingertips gives you confidence and lets you focus on presentation!





Member John Russell then shared his (more budget friendly) table setup using two Dang Tables ala Barry Mitchell and two briefcases on conductor stands.

Member Ken Magee performed a trick with a wooden nickel and then passed out hundreds of wooden nickels for audience members to take home and create their own effects.



Around the Town
By [Karl Rabe](#)

Calendar of Events

Our meeting in December will be our holiday party. We start one hour earlier than usual at 6pm. We will have pizza and soft drinks. There will be a white elephant exchange. See The President's Corner for full details.

The screenshot shows a calendar interface with two main sections: 'Club Events' and 'Other Events'. Under 'Club Events', there are two entries: one for December 10th (Wednesday) at 6:00 pm titled 'AAMC Holiday Party @ Plymouth Community Arts Council', and another for February 23rd (Monday) titled 'Club Birthday' which is an all-day event. Under 'Other Events', there is one entry for December 15th (Monday) at 6:30 pm titled 'Detroit Magic Club Holiday Meeting'.

Section	Date	Day	Time	Event Name
Club Events	DEC 10	Wed	6:00 pm	AAMC Holiday Party @ Plymouth Community Arts Council
	FEB 23	Mon	all-day	Club Birthday
Other Events	DEC 15	Mon	6:30 pm	Detroit Magic Club Holiday Meeting

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](#).

Past Events

Roving Reporter Dan Jones provided the following photo and caption.



The Ann Arbor Magic Club being promoted on the television program "Celebrate Michigan".

Club President Sean Naes and member Lincoln Stone were interviewed by host Kris Benson. The show was taped at Madonna University and will air on channel 20 in the near future. Stay tuned for info when it will air.



Ex Libris

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



Dr. Joaquin M.
Ayala, PhD

Dunninger's Complete Encyclopedia of Magic by Joseph Dunninger

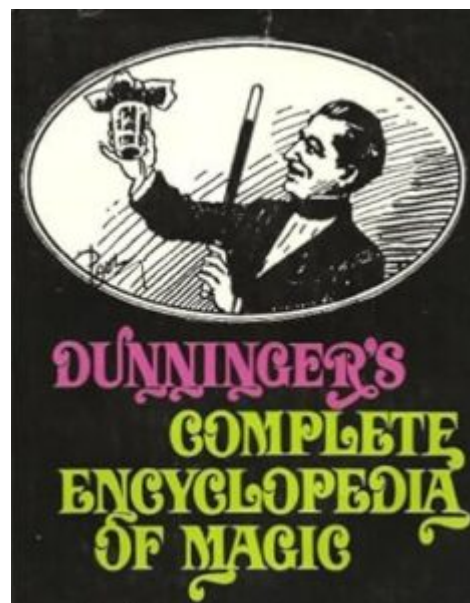
A book review by Dr. Joaquin M. Ayala, PhD

Hello folks and welcome to the Ex Libris article for December 2025! December?! Wow! We say it every year, but this year really did seem to fly by, so I thought I would talk about a book which is in the physical club library, and which some of you may have already read/seen in the past.

Dunninger's Complete Encyclopedia of Magic by Joseph Dunninger is a 288-page, 9" x 11" hardcover book first published as a combined single tome in 1967 by Lyle Stuart, Inc. Later editions were printed in 1970 by Spring Books and again in 1988 by Bonanza Books.

This is a decidedly different kind of magic book because there really is a blend of this & that, some old science-based “entertainments,” old parlour stunts and chemistry-based marvels, puzzles, there is a little parlour magic, some close-up, mentalism, stage and yes, even illusions included here. Some of what is described is questionable, questionable as to whether you would be able to pull them over on a modern audience.

The way this book is written and illustrated, the text is a little smaller and the layout is quite different from a traditionally constructed magic book, so it will force most readers to slow down and take their time reading it. In fact, this is one of those books where you would be better suited to picking out a random page or effect from the table of contents, and reading that, and bouncing around a little as your fancy or your random choices dictate.



The variety in this book is another aspect of its unusual nature in that there are plenty of effects that require no gimmicks, some that do and others that require spending a good deal of time, and possibly, money to get everything together (the aforementioned stage illusions), yet a few are nearly prop-less, and still others requiring things you may or may not already possess.

This same variety also speaks to the level of skill required to execute the things in this tome, should you wish to use the variety. There are no really knuckle-busting things in here, but the more advanced skill sets required would be things like audience management, staging, rigging, etc. There is plenty in here for magicians of all skill levels.

A few examples of things contained herein: There are three unique uses for an old inkwell or bottle to accomplish simple mental telepathy, and it is not what you might think. Very clever! There is a device that you can make to which you may impossibly link and unlink borrowed keys, rings, and similar objects. This device, given modern props that are available, may be slightly obsolete, but it is still a genius contraption because it can also be examined before, during and after the effect.

When I was younger, I particularly like the method for the Watch in Balloon because it used a simple bit of prop, and I ended up over-engineering that same method to incorporate a borrowed watch, a "cannon" and a Tommy Wonder-esque way of getting the watch "inside" the balloon for the reveal. It was one of those old-timey feeling parlour effects that I loved so well!

There is a method of moving or even slightly levitating a table on-stage using an arcane method, but it is not a solo effect – it requires a bit of thought and a hidden assistant, but it could be incorporated into spiritualism effects, perhaps a mental effect, or perhaps played as a gag throughout the show.

You will also find a fun way to make ghosts appear on-stage, and no, this is not a "cheesy/har-har" method either; you can really take this and run with it to make it more elaborate, right along with a method for the old Rapping Hand, which is usually employed in spirit Q&A types of routines where it taps a different number of times to answer "YES" or "NO."

If you enjoy visual and mind-bending illusions, there are pages dedicated to describing why we perceive them in the ways in which we do, and you can even use those ideas to create your own. There are plenty of standard and not-so-standard card effects like Static/Magnetic Cards, methods for Rising Cards and productions and vanishes of cards. There are effects

and bits using coins, paper money, crayons and coloured pencils and much, much more.

I do hope you will dive into this book and explore it because as I previously stated, it certainly has plenty of “stuff” for everyone and all skill levels, even things that require no dexterity at all. Word has it that it was also one of the first books that our current Secretary read and is a favourite of his, and with good reason!

Well, that is all for this time folks – I wish for all of you a fun, safe, joyous, and Happy ChristmaHannuKwanzikas, and a healthy, prosperous New Year in 2026!

Happy Holidays to all of you, and we will “see” you in the new year! Keep the magic alive.

JMA

Editor’s Note: As Joaquin mentioned, this was one of my first magic books. It is a great book to leave out on your bedside table, coffee table and in the days before cell phones, in your bathroom.... :-). It is a great book to pick up, open to a page and browse for a few minutes. No need to read cover-to-cover in one sitting and probably every time you open it you will find something new. -Karl



Spotlight
By [Karl Rabe](#)

As a reoccurring feature of the Magic Messenger we will

highlight a member and ask them to answer a few questions about themselves. This month the "Spotlight" is on our newest member Eric Bedard!



Where did you grow up / where have you lived?

North Bay, Ontario – moved to Windsor 1984 – met my future wife here in 1985 – moved to Victoria British Columbia in 1994 to pursue a full time career in magic

How did you get started in magic?

My Dad was a hobbyist magician

What type of magic do you perform?

Now mostly close-up & Parlor although I worked as a

headliner on Princess Cruise Lines for a decade – now perform at a restaurant in Windsor Sundays & Thursdays and I also still perform for many of top celebrities & Fortune 500 companies (see Stars Gallery on my [website](#))

What is your favorite magic book?

Henry Hay's "Amateur Magician's Handbook" really got me started; these days, anything by Christopher Barnes, one of the most creative magic minds out there, in my opinion.

Who is your favorite Magician of all time?

Steve Valentine

Do you have any words of wisdom for newer magicians?

Practice, Perform (Record) Practice – repeat, repeat, repeat

Editor's Note: Eric is truly a seasoned professional. You can read a more detailed bio [here](#). Check out his Celebrity Gallery [here](#). Eric has generously offered to lecture for the club. Look for that in the new year. -Karl



Funny Business
By [Karl Rabe](#)

'Twas the Night Before Magicmas

AAMC Insider Edition



'Twas the night before Magic-mas in Ann Arbor that night,
Not a wand tip was stirring – not even stage light.
The top hats were stacked by the chimney with flair,
In hopes that Ring 210 soon would meet there.

The members were nestled with props tucked in tight,
Preparing their acts for the magical night.
And Alex, with cups and bright balls set to fall,
Was practicing rhythms to mystify all.

Karl and Bill, that father/son crew,
Rehearsed double acts only they know how to do.
While Patty, Bill's Mom, smiled with delight –
Two generations of magic all shining so bright.

Barbara and Ming, the sweet married pair,

Prepared their illusions with showmanship rare.
Barbara, the Box Jumper, fearless and spry,
And Ming with a flourish that dazzles the eye.

Santa Brian, jolly and grand—
Donned his red suit as snow swirled through the land.
His beard was on point, his ho-ho-ho strong,
Ready to magic the whole night along.

Johnny New York, with his cards sleek and quick,
Practiced fans, cuts, and shuffles impossibly slick.
With swagger and style he controls the deck—
A flourish, a snap, and you ask, “What the heck?!”

Captain Sean, our president bold,
In pirate regalia of crimson and gold,
Raised high his cutlass (a wand in disguise),
Declaring, “Tonight, magic plunders the skies!”

Bob, with his numbers—oh, what a sight—
Proved math was pure sorcery done just right.
While Rob (not Robert), treasurer keen,
Counted coins that somehow kept turning to green.

Tippy and April, delivered delight,
With balloons and juggling and clowning so bright.
A honk of his nose and the kids would all cheer—
A clown-magician hybrid of holiday cheer.

Fred’s coin routines shimmered like silver moonlight,
Spinning and vanishing right out of sight.
Phil the Magic Mann, was charming and slick,
Brought laughs and applause with every trick.

And Jeff and the other Jeff, smiling with glee,
Prepared double-Jeff mischief for all there to see.
The Jims (yes, all three), ever ready to play,
Compared linking ring shines in a friendly display.

The Johns (all four!) made a magical crew,
Each crafting illusions impressive and new.
Kaylin brought sparkle, Ken brought finesse,
While Kevin rehearsed in his magical best.

Mark, with his smooth, theatrical style,
Made audiences grin after watching awhile.
Marvin, mysterious, practiced a feat
That made gingerbread men stand and dance on their feet!

Michael and Michael, two wizards well-known,
Polished twin routines neither fully will own.
Mike and the other Mike, cheerful and bright,
Prepped candy-cane rings for a holiday night.

Chris, Charlie, Dalton, Dave, and David too,
Had pockets of wonders they couldn't wait to debut.
Don, Frank, Jacki, Jackie, Ramiro, Roger, Ron,
All ready to magic the moment dawn shone.

Lincoln vanished his bird cage with the usual flair,
Wearing his top hat, suit and of course purple hair.
Our new member Eric arrived from Ontario
Ready to put on one heck of a show.

Lady Sarah and Keith in a flash so quick,
Vanished the Union Flag while producing St. Nick.
Dreygon had no trouble getting members to look
And amazed everyone with his unique Notebook

Sean (our Captain), now calling the cue,
Declared, "Let the great Magicmas meeting ensue!"

And SAM 88 joined with holiday cheer,
Two clubs united in wonder this year.
Then cheers filled the hall as the clock chimed midnight:
"Happy Magicmas to all... and to all a bright light!"

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



Hat






Tee



Polo



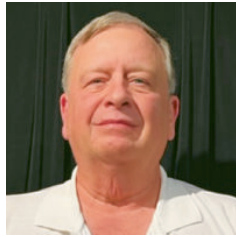
Hoodie

	 <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
t – Sean
Howell



Treasurer
r – Rob
Krozal



Secretary
y – Karl
Rabe



VP – TBD



Sgt at
Arms –
TBD

Contact the board using these email addresses

- sean@howell.cc
- rkrozal@yahoo.com
- krabe@comcast.net