

# Magic Messenger

The Official Newsletter of the Ann Arbor Magic Club / S.A.M 88 / I.B.M. 210

July 2015

## President's Corner

### Next Level Magic

I firmly believe in the concept of “continuous improvement”. No matter what we do or are, I think we should always strive to get better. So, how are you doing on that?

I like to think I'm a better person than I was ten years ago. Partly due to continuing to grow in maturity, I'm always studying ways to get better, do better, be better.

The same is true with magic. I have some tricks that I have literally been doing since I was a teenager (sometimes even with the same original props! They sure don't build things like they used to!). But I don't present them the same way anymore. Rework the concept, overhaul the presentation, rewrite the patter, voila: new routine for today's audiences. But it doesn't come easy, and it doesn't happen by itself.

What level are you performing magic? What's the next level? How will you improve *your* magic? What steps need to be taken to get there?

In response to questions at our last meeting, I shared with the group my desire to do some cruise ship magic, and the steps I've been taking to get there. (BTW, the interest and encouragement in this endeavor from you all has been phenomenal! The magic fraternity around here is so wonderful... I appreciate you all!)

First came the hard realization that my act, even though I've been doing it for years and years, was in no way ready to perform at that level! That was very tough to face. And it wasn't just the tricks I was doing... it was virtually my whole presence and presentation!

Then I had to get with mentors (Fred & Bobbie Becker) who knew the ropes and spend 9 weeks in their program understanding the whole process.

At the same time, I had to rework my act including adding 9 (*that's right: nine!*) new routines, and freshening up several more.

I wrote out a plan of action with benchmarks to track my progress.

I asked questions, made new friends on Facebook, watched others perform, and studied.

This may be the hardest thing I've ever done in my life. I've told several people that even if I never get a magic gig on a ship, it has been worth the journey to improve my performance.

So let me ask you: at what level are you performing *your* magic? What is the next level? And what do you need to do to get there? Hard questions, but well worth the payoff!

Next level: Going Up?

In other news...

Are you part of the Conjuring Arts Summer Reading Program? This amazing organization offers a *free* weekly download of a classic magic book. All you have to do is sign up at [www.ConjuringArts.org](http://www.ConjuringArts.org) This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> year and they offer some great reads!

Do you read "Vanish" magazine? Another *free* full-sized magazine (current issue is 210 pages!) in full color published by Paul Romhany. It comes out every other month and since it's digital, the information is timely and current. They also have a *free* e-mail newsletter to fill in between issues. Sign up at [www.VanishMagazine.com](http://www.VanishMagazine.com)

If you're on Facebook, there are so many great magic groups to belong (and yes, it's all *free!*). Surplus Magic Exchange (I've bought and sold so much magic through this group!); SME Talk Magic (discuss anything/everything magic); Full Circle Magic (our own Joaquin Ayala is an admin in that group); Michigan Magicians (keep in touch with our magical neighbors)... my list goes on and on. This just highlights again, the closeness of the magic fraternity that I've found so helpful over the years.

I've also been watching "Penn & Teller's 'Fool Us'" show along with "Master's of Illusion". And of course, "America's Got Talent" is regularly featuring magicians since Mat Franco won the contest last year. This is all giving us *free* publicity folks! Take advantage of (good) exposure and get busy performing!

Have a great month (lots going on and even more coming up), and I'll see you all soon!

Magically yours,  
**John Russell**

## **Secretary's Report 07/31/15**

WIZARD WARS! All wizards were present at our July gathering, prepared to compete for honor, glory and CASH\* that **John Russell** graciously provided along with the common household items to be used for our impromptu performances. Before the comical chicanery commenced three guests were introduced: **John Kwak**, a student from Minnesota attending University of Michigan, **Don Osterwind**, a past president of the AAMC (welcome back Don!). And **Scott Miller** from Ohio. Additionally, **Molly Larson**, a recent member attended a meeting for the first time. Teams of two necromancers were formed, items were selected and the fun began.

\* The "cash" John distributed was Play Money .... Denny's frowned on us trying to use it to pay our bills!

Opening the show was **Jim Ruth**, doing a solo routine involving the mysterious levitation of a long tube. A great impromptu effect Jim explained after his demonstration. Up next **Art Goyette and Scott Miller** entertained with Art using plastic caps to demonstrate the classic matrix effect and Scott performing the \$100 bill switch with a homemade giant bill and linking two large paperclips as they leaped off a folded bill. **Dan Jones and Don Osterwind** followed with two effects: comical cut and restored rope and a version of Mental Epic employing 3 scraps of paper in lieu of the prop board. The duo of **Placido and Kwak** (sounds like a vaudeville act) featured Jim performing the Tabary rope routine and John exhibiting smooth manipulations with a well executed one coin production / vanish routine. **The Two Jims (Folkl and Molnar)** displayed their artistic talents with paper and pen and **Neil Foster's** Doodles. The act concluded with a comedy card revelation and performance of **Dai Vernon's** Spellbound from the Stars of Magic. **John Russell** closed with an exhibition of The Dubious Domino / Hoppin Spots using

a hand drawn rendition of a domino.

The evening concluded with John reviewing the program for his upcoming magic show “Astounding Magic” to be presented at the Trenton Village Theater , Trenton MI, 22 Aug. 2015. John solicited comments / suggestions from the members. It was a great opportunity for all to share ideas and to get a unique insight and appreciation the work involved in preparing a professional performance. Hopefully the AAMC crew will “represent” en masse at John’s performance. Details below.



**Jim Ruth**



**Scott Miller**



**Dan Jones and Don Osterwind**



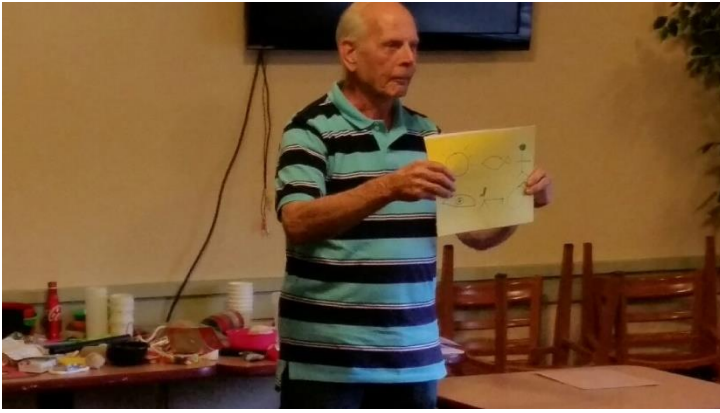
**John Kwak**



**Jim Placido**



**Jim Folkl**



**Jim Molnar**



**John Russell**



Twixt the optimist and the pessimist, the difference is droll.  
The optimist sees the doughnut, while the pessimist sees the hole.

Tim: How could a wooden leg pain him ?  
Tom: His wife hit him over the head with it!

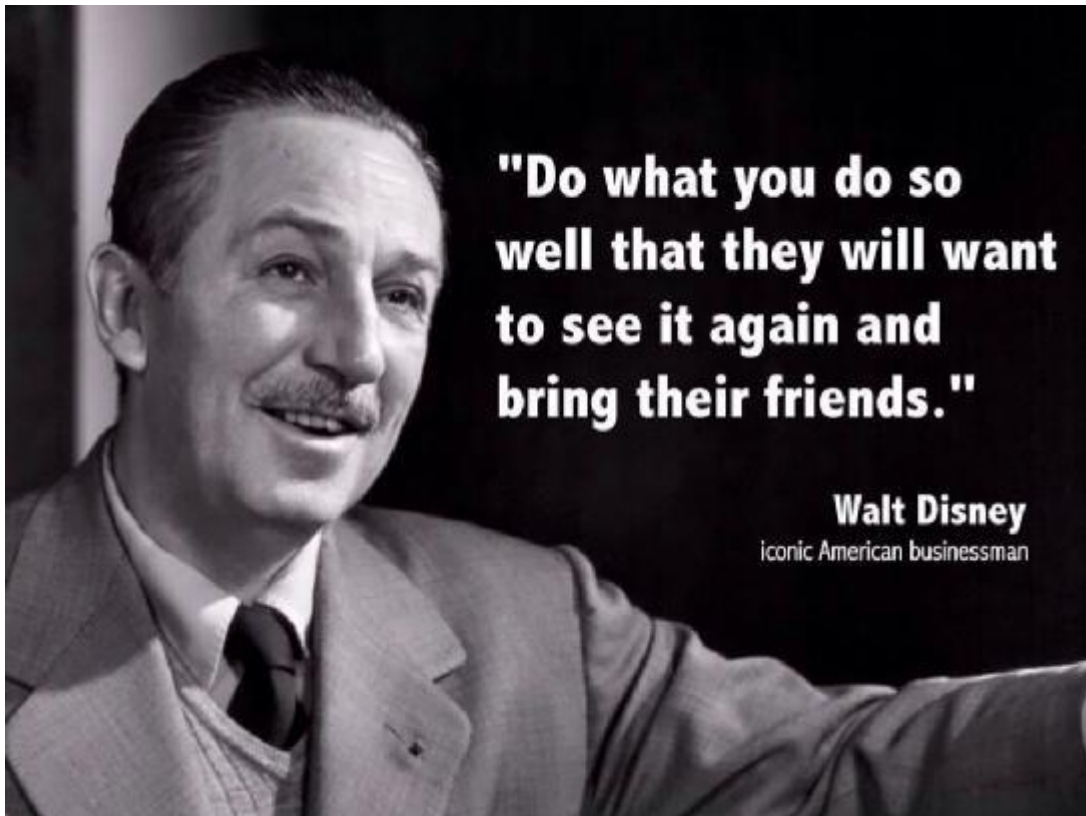


During the course of his career he won many awards, including the Grand Illusions award of the FISM (Fédération Internationale des Sociétés Magiques) in 1976. Pictured above (my photo) , from a 1980s appearance at the The Midwest Magic Jubilee, St. Louis, MO., is his version of the broom suspension using two newspaper trees (made in front of the audience), in lieu of brooms. After the suspension, he proceeded to cut the trees up as they stood erect! Where was the support ??? He also received the Mentalism Award of the FISM in 1979, for a routine in which he played Russian roulette with two loaded revolvers. He was a Member of the Inner Magic Circle with Gold Star, and was appointed to the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany in recognition of his achievements. Often assisted by his wife Helga, he appeared as a guest on the Paul Daniels Magic Show on numerous occasions during the 1980s, more times than any other performer, and was billed as "Europe's Greatest Illusionist". He often performed in Las Vegas. Throughout his career he broke eighteen world records

**Who Is It**

**?**

Answer at the end of the Messenger



**"Do what you do so well that they will want to see it again and bring their friends."**

**Walt Disney**

iconic American businessman


Exhibit Visitor: Why did they hang this picture?



Critic: They couldn't find the artist !

## **Around the Town**

**Bill Brang** is performing Wednesdays at Saint Francis Camp, Jerome MI. Each audience is different, and Bill tailors his act (props and costumes) to their interests. Quite a challenging feat!

**John Russell** is breaking in his cruise ship act Sat., 22 Aug. Grab some friends and head on down to the Trenton Village Theater for some magical LIVE entertainment!

**A**stounding  
Magic! 




BY **John Russell**  
At: **Trenton Village Theater**  
2447 W. Jefferson Trenton, MI 48183

Family Friendly Trickery and  
General Johnfoolery,  
all for only \$5!

For Tickets: [DYPAC.com](http://DYPAC.com)  
[TrentonRotary.net](http://TrentonRotary.net) or call  
Kathy at 676-9561

All proceeds benefit:



Rotary 

**Saturday  
August 22**

**Time:  
7-8:30pm**

For a complete listing of magic events in Michigan, visit **John Luka's** site  
<http://www.johnlukamagic.com/mi/events.html>

**Jim Folkl**

**Support our local brick & mortar magic shops!**

**Ann Arbor Magic & Sports Memorabilia Shops**

**Phone: (734 222-9000)**

**Email [kenmagee22@aol.com](mailto:kenmagee22@aol.com):**

**Web site <http://www.annarbormagicshop.com>:**

**Address 255 East Liberty St. Lower Level-Suite 231**

**Ann Arbor Michigan 48104**



**ABC Magic Shop**

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**(586) 790-3700**

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**Check out our Facebook Page “Ann Arbor Magic Club”  
Have a question / suggestion / comment / contribution? Contact us!**

*? Hans Moretti ?*

**Bring a guest to a meeting! Perform! Join a Committee!**