

THE SALT CITY MAGIC CLUB

# Wandogram



"Harris A. Solomon Ring" IBM #74 Syracuse N.Y.

December  
2023



“Pick a card,  
Any card”



*Harris Solomon*

**A monthly newsletter of the  
Harris A. Solomon Ring #74  
International Brotherhood of Magicians  
(the Salt City Magic Club)**

**President: Ken Frehm**  
**Vice President: David Kilpatrick**  
**Secretary: Joey Hoffman**  
**Treasurer: Bruce Purdy**  
**Sgt. At Arms: Dave Hanselman**

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**IBM Ring #74 meets at 7:30pm  
the Third Thursday of every month (Virtualy for now)**

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Please submit material for publication in the Wandogram to:

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or by Snail Mail:

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Questions? Call (315) 256-9095

**Submission deadline:**

First Thursday of the month

# Feed your Brain & Grow

*by Bruce Purdy*

**M**ost of you know who Jon Armstrong is, probably through his "Tiny Plunger" that can magically pick up exactly however many cards Jon wants. Best known as a close-up card guy, Jon has been transitioning into stand-up Magic.

How does one perform such a transition? How do you truly impress the audience? How do you respect the people in the audience, and not waste their time?

All this is the subject of Jon's wonderful book "How To Win". No, it's not about gambling - it's all about winning the audience over. How to be a winner in the field of Magic and become a better performer!

Most of the book is written in the form of short essays in which a talented and successful Magician passes on his hard-won wisdom and experience. At the end, there are also a few actual routines from Jon's act, which demonstrate how many of his principals are put to use.

As a short teaser, I'm including - With his permission - one of his shorter essays - and one I believe has great value for us all!

## Why?

**We magicians spend a lot of time worried about the how of magic effects when the why might be a better place to start.**

**Why are you making a table float? What does floating a table say about you? What problem does it solve? Does it really look that cool?**

**Magic is far more relatable if it serves a need or solves a problem. If while doing one of those things, you can make your magic look super cool, all the better.**

**All I'm asking is that when you decide to put an effect in your show, ask yourself why you're doing it. Your answer should touch on the audience as well as what that effect says about you. Ask yourself, why should people care about it?**

**Why is this worth their time? I'm not sure most people who are floating a table or dropping a bowling ball on a stage with no real presentation other than, "Look, I bought this!"**

**have good answers. Let's be better.**

Wow! the type of thinking we all should be doing!

You can order Jon Armstrong's Book at:

<https://www.cardjon.com/howtowin>

# Ring #74 Officer Report

By  
**Ken Frehm**

On the third Thursday of every month, our Ring meets at a local Denny's restaurant. We are fortunate that they provide a private meeting place to us free of charge. Our November meeting was well attended. We did a bit of business and each of us entertained the group with the latest effect in our repertoire. Plans are being firmed up for our upcoming holiday party which will be held in January.

We are proud to announce that our project of "Get Well" cards to The Linking Ring's "Sick and Convalescent" list has officially begun. We have started to send out a personal "Get Well" card to the names published each month. Our hope, of course, is to bring a little ray of sunshine to our magic brothers and sisters who are fighting to overcome illness. A sample card is included. Ring Officers, please consider doing the same. It will be an extremely good deed and well appreciated.

Sir James, Jim Turner led off our magic portion by demonstrating a few goodies he brought for sale. We were most surprised when a foot high flame burst forth from his wallet. He also greatly amused us with his Light and

Heavy Box.

New member David MacBlane performed a guillotine card effect. He visually put a metal plate through a box which contained a deck of cards. Thus, splitting them in half. David not only restored them, but he also went on to routine the same box into a "Mis-Made" Queen of Hearts mystery. David followed that up by displaying five wine glasses, covered with different colored velvet bags. Each hidden glass selected revealed that it had a small gift within. The final glass, left to the magician contained a hundred-dollar bill.

Steve Tichy performed a Gem Rod routine, displaying a couple of different rod props, one quite large and perfect for stage. Matt Timian performed a card location from a well shuffled and multi-cut deck.

David Kilpatrick showed us an antique Tenyo puzzle. The trick displayed a small black box and a short length of rope going through it. Dave visually dissected the rope into three pieces and then proceeded to pull out the rope in one healed piece. David Kilpatrick, like many of us, is a magic equipment collector. He proceed-

ed to display his trove of "Magic Coloring Books." Not only were there large and small versions, but they also employed different methodologies. Some had two and three reveals. Some had more. He called this, "Coloring Books on Steroids."

Bruce Purdy took the stage and chatted with us about his successful journey designing his own themed "Coloring Books." He also gave us some very helpful tips when performing the ever-popular magic trick.

David Hanselman, our resident master wood worker performed one of his hand-made creations. A beautiful wooden box was displayed. A spectator announced the color of his favorite gem. The lid was opened to reveal a selection of little wooden cubes with different colored stones embedded in their tops. The spectator picked out one of the gems, then opened the drawer in the front to find a piece of paper. Written on the paper was the exact prediction of the color and gem he selected previously.

Ken Frehm performed his rendition of "The Fastest Hands in the East" (a.k.a. Fayetteville, New York.) This effect was taught to Ken over forty years ago by Mr. Tony Econ. Tony was known as The Card Sharpe and was the editor of The Linking Ring's "Card Corner" for many years. Ken had a spectator select a card from

a shuffled deck. The card was buried back into the deck. Ken then displayed four Kings and four Aces. The spectator selected one of the Kings and placed it face down between the two face up red Aces and the two face up black Aces. Ken collected the cards and displayed them one by one prior to putting this packet into the helper's hands. Ken then demonstrated his extreme power of "Prestidigitation" and blinding speed by reaching into the spectator's hands and pulling out the chosen King. His movement were so fast that they were virtually invisible. At the conclusion, not only did Ken reveal that he did indeed manage to get the King out of the spectator's hands, but he also replaced it invisibly with the originally selected card that was lost" in the deck.

The evening's session also included a great group discussion on some points of philosophy of magic. When the meeting was concluded, our attendees went home sated with magic and to start preparations for the Thanksgiving holiday coming up.

Abracadabra  
Ken Frehm



**Sparkles from the Wand  
of the Silver Wizard**

**Kenneth Frehm**

Order of Merlin, Shield  
Life Member of Ring #74

Since “Thanksgiving” I’ve been trying to locate a bathroom scale that will allow me to set back the reading five pounds:}. Hopefully, all our Ring friends and families enjoyed this holiday. We all look forward to celebrating Christmas, Chanukah, sharing and performing magic at this busy time of year.

I’m very pleased to report that our “Social Media” initiative is progressing quite well. Chairman Steve Tichy has been diligently working on this. He has been developing and coordinated with other team members. We will be up and running with new strategies and a concrete program early in 2024.

I’m also very proud to announce that Joey Hoffman has sent out the first batch of ‘Get Well’ cards to the “Sick and Convalescent” names posted each month in the International Linking Ring magazine. I have already received a “Thank-You” note from one of the recipients! This is the

perfect time to spread some cheer and well wishes. Especially to those brothers and sisters in our magic community who are fighting health problems.

Please mark your calendars. Our holiday banquet is set for January 20th. We will be celebrating at The Spaghetti Warehouse. All friends and family are welcome. We will do a gift exchange for members who want to participate. We will also be formally inducting new members and officers. Of course, a magic show for ourselves, families and friends will be featured. Ample opportunity for all to do “Walk Around” and “Table” magic. The restaurant is known for its delicious food, ample quantities, and fair prices. Ordering from the menu will allow everyone their own choice of meals, courses, and prices.

December and January are months of “More.” More “To-Do’s,” more fun, more work, more expenses, more traffic, traveling, more challenges, more family,

friends, and especially more opportunities to share our talents and skills.

I encourage you to carry a bit of magic in your pocket and take a couple of minutes each day to share your talents with friends

and strangers. Doesn’t take a lot of time. Doesn’t cost any money. Will always be welcome and appreciated. As my friend George Becker used to say, “Magic is in a smile.” Spread some smiles ~ you can do it.



# Save The Date Ring 74 Holiday Party

**Saturday January 20th, 2024**

**Spaghetti Warehouse**  
**All Family and Friends Welcome**  
**Initiation of New Members**  
**Gift Exchange**  
**Magic Show**  
**Order From Menu**  
**5 P.M. Cocktails**

**More Details to Follow**

# Think of a Card

*Submitted by Ken Frehm*

**T**hink of a playing card. Got one in mind?

Although it may have felt like a free choice, think again: Most people choose one of only four cards, out of a deck of 52. For now, remember your card — we'll return to it later.

For thousands of years, magicians have amazed audiences by developing and applying intuitions about the mind. Skilled magicians can manipulate memories, control attention, and influence choices. But magicians rarely know why these principles work. Studying magic could reveal the mechanisms of the mind that enable these principles, to uncover the why rather than just the how.

Some of these principles, such as illusions and misdirection, have recently lead to interesting discoveries. For example, in one study, a magician threw a ball into the air a few times. On the third throw, however, he only pretended to throw it. Two thirds of the participants reported seeing the ball vanish in mid-air, even though it never left his hand. The participants saw something amazing — something that never actually happened.

Another example is misdirection, where the magician hides the secret by manipulating what the audience perceives or thinks. One study tracked participants' eye movements while showing them a vanishing cigarette trick. Even if participants looked directly at the secret move, they did not notice it if their attention was directed elsewhere. They looked, but did not see, thanks to the magician's misdirection.

Other principles of magic involve card tricks. Magicians can often influence people to choose a particular card from a deck, or even know which card people will choose when asked to think of one. Studying these phenomena could help us learn about the mind, as did the study of illusions and misdirection.

But before we can understand card magic, we have to understand exactly how people perceive the cards themselves. To do this, I teamed up with another researcher and magician, Alym Amlani, as well as professor Ronald Rensink at the University of British Columbia. We applied well-known techniques from vision science to measure how well people see, remember, like, and choose each of the 52 cards in a standard deck. For example, people saw cards quickly presented one after

another on a computer while they searched for a target card; their accuracy indicated the card's visibility. To measure choice, we asked over a thousand people to either name or visualize a card, then recorded their selections.

Measuring these factors allowed us to test magicians' intuitions about different cards. Our results confirmed several of these intuitions. For example, magicians believe that people treat the Ace of Spades and Queen of Hearts differently from other cards. Sure enough, accuracy for detecting and remembering was highest for the Ace of Spades, and both cards were among the most liked and most often chosen. Other cards chosen frequently were Sevens and Threes, consistent with other studies on how people choose digits.

Magicians also believe they know which cards people are least likely to choose. Now consider: Which card do you think people will name the least often?

Many magicians believe the answer is a mid-valued Club, like the Six of Clubs. Others appear to share that belief; hecklers sometimes end up choosing the Six during magic tricks. In fact, during pilot testing, when asked to name a card several people smugly asserted, "The Six of Clubs!", perhaps trying to act unpredictably. But by doing so, they in fact acted more predictably. As it turned out, however, it was the black

Nines that were chosen the least. Of the 1150 selections people made in our experiment, these cards were only chosen four times.

Several other common beliefs were also disproven. For example, magicians often say that when asked to name a card, women choose the Queen of Hearts more than men do. In our sample, we found the opposite: men chose the Queen of Hearts more than women did, and women chose the King of Hearts more than men did.

Other results appeared to be completely new. For example, people detected most cards equally well, except for the Six of Hearts and Diamonds, which seemed to be misreported more than any other cards. In other words, people saw red Sixes that were not there. Also, women seemed to prefer lower number cards, and men preferred higher ones. We don't know why.

A final interesting result was that the exact wording of the question seemed to influence which cards people chose. When asked to name a card, over half of the people chose one of four cards: the Ace of Spades (25%), or the Queen (14%), Ace (6%), or King (6%) of Hearts. If you're like most people, you may have chosen one of these cards when asked at the beginning of this article. (A full list of cards and their frequencies is also available.)

*(Continued on next page)*

But when asked to visualize a card, people seemed to choose the Ace of Hearts more often. In our sample, they chose it almost twice as often when asked to visualize (11%) rather than name (6%) a card. Perhaps something about the visualization process makes people more likely to think of this particular card.

Systematic studies such as these can help form the basis of a psychology of card magic. Magicians can improve their tricks by knowing which cards people like the best or choose the most. Meanwhile, psychologists can follow up on unexpected findings to understand why people may misreport seeing red Sixes or why the wording of a question may bring different cards to mind.

And this is only the beginning. Applying these results, we can uncover the mechanisms behind the

principles of card magic. If magicians can influence the audience's decisions, what factors enable this influence? Why do people still feel like they have a free choice? Answers to these questions could provide new insights into persuasion, marketing, and decision making. Ultimately, we hope to develop a science of magic, where almost any trick can be understood in terms of its underlying psychological mechanisms. Such a science can keep the secrets of magic, while revealing the secrets of the mind.

Are you a scientist who specializes in neuroscience, cognitive science, or psychology? And have you read a recent peer-reviewed paper that you would like to write about? Please send suggestions to Mind Matters editor Gareth Cook, a Pulitzer prize-winning journalist at the Boston Globe. He can be reached at [garethideas@gmail.com](mailto:garethideas@gmail.com) or Twitter [@garethideas](https://twitter.com/garethideas).




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## Next meetings:

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**Thursday, 14<sup>th</sup> December 2023**  
**ON LINE Virtual meeting.d**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7941606677>  
 (Please sign in at about 6:45pm)

**Thursday, 21<sup>st</sup> December 2023**  
**In Person meeting.**

**Denny's**  
*106 Elwood Davis Road*  
*Liverpool NY*

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## Save the Date!

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<b>Thu.14th December</b>	<b>Monthly ZOOM meeting</b>
<b>Thu.21st December</b>	<b>In-Person meeting Denny's</b>
<b>Thu.11th January</b>	<b>Monthly ZOOM meeting</b>
<b>Sat.20th January</b>	<b>Holiday party Spaghetti Warehouse</b>
<b>Thu.8th February</b>	<b>Monthly ZOOM meeting</b>
<b>Thu.15th February</b>	<b>In-Person meeting Denny's</b>

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