

THE SALT CITY MAGIC CLUB

Wandogram



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

February
2026



THURSTON

THE GREAT MAGICIAN

THE WONDER SHOW OF
THE UNIVERSE

Cover art by Chris Meece



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 MacBlane
Secretary: Joey Hoffman
Treasurer: Bruce Purdy
Sgt. At Arms: Dave Hanselman

**IBM Ring #74 meets at 7:00pm
the second Tuesday of every month virtually via Zoom,
and
the third Tuesday of every month IN PERSON**

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Questions? Call (315) 256-9095

Submission deadline:

First Thursday of the month

Publisher's notes

Bruce Purdy

Dear readers - Friends -Fellow Magic lovers,

With the closing of the Spaghetti Warehouse at the end of last year, we did some fast scrambling. A big “thank you” goes out to TJ, who was able to make arrangements for us to meet at the American Legion hall in Eastwood.

We held a very successful Post-Holiday banquet there, and look forward to the next year of meetings at their facility!

Plans are being discussed to hold Public shows in 2026, and spreading the love of Magic far and wide. We will need stage performers, and also close-up performers to entertain the people before the show. Help will be needed “Behind the scenes” as well. I hope everyone will be eager to get involved in one way or another.

We are always looking for new members. If you know of anyone who is interested in learning Magic, and meeting a friendly group of Magicians, I urge you to invite them to join us!.

I look forward to seeing you on Tuesday, February 17 at the American Legion!

Thurston

by Bruce Purdy

At the beginning of the 20th Century, Howard Thurston was one of the biggest names of Magic, along side of his contemporary, Houdini. Although Houdini's name is better known, today, he was more of an escapologist than a Magician. Many say that Thurston was the greatest Magician in history.

Thurston was born in Columbus Ohio (Home of today's "Magifest), in 1869. He had a rough childhood - a juvenile delinquent and wild kid. He ran away and literally "Joined the circus," being taken in by a family of travelling performers. Then two things affected his career path.

Planning on travelling by train to New York City, he accidentally ended up in **Syracuse**, where he saw Herman the Great perform. The experience was so strong, that he decided to become a Magician.

Also, whilst with the circus, The great Harry Keller was also performing there, and became Thurston's mentor.

Eventually, upon Keller's retirement, he named Thurston as his successor. He passed his the "Mantle of Magic," to Thurston, which began the "Royal

Dynasty of Magic," with each handing the "Mantle" to another Magician - the latest being Lance Burton.

By his mid 30's, Howard Thurston astounded audiences by making a horse vanish from a platform high above the stage, Vanishing an automobile, conjuring up a troupe of dancing girls, and performing the classic sawing-a-lady-in-half illusion, all while a group of audience members watched closely from the stage!

His success rested in part on his gentlemanly demeanor, which Jim Steinmeyer calls his "bank president" grandeur.

Even before he introduced his grand illusions, he rehearsed steadily with cards.

In his white tie and tails, Thurston performed incredible tricks. One, called the "Rising Card," started with an audience member choosing certain cards, as if for a regular card trick. But expectations turned upside down when Thurston put the deck into a glass goblet. He would then call up certain cards—the king of spades, the ten of clubs—and they would rise two feet in the air, into his hands.

He then went on to throwing (Scaling) cards across the stage and into the audience.

Eventually, his show grew so large that it employed a crew of over sixty people, and thirty tons of equipment! It travelled in eight railroad cars.

(Not exactly "Travel light / Play big")

Thurston said once. "I am proud of my calling as an entertainer—a dealer in magic art that involves the practice of deception without causing harm."

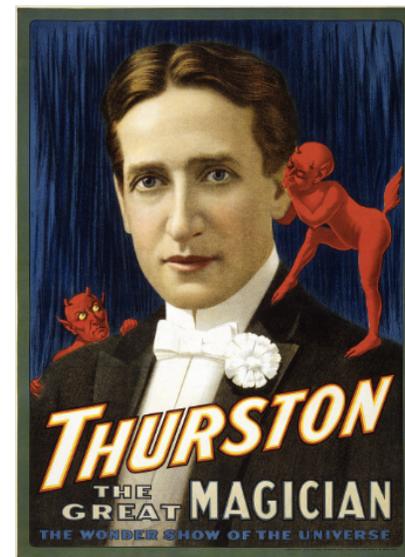
In the classic book 'How To Win Friends and Influence People', Dale Carnegie discussed his experience meeting the great magician Howard Thurston

Here's what he said:

"I asked Mr. Thurston to tell me the secret of his success...

Thurston had a genuine interest in people. He told me that many magicians would look at the audience and say to themselves, "Well, there is a bunch of suckers out there; I'll fool them alright."

But Thurston's method was totally different. He told me that every time he went on stage he said to himself: "I am grateful because these people come to see me. They make it possible for me to make my living in a very agreeable way. I'm going to give them the very best I possibly can."



Up Your Game

by Bruce Purdy

"Kodak Moments"

My eMail brings me a lot of Magicians' newsletters. Some are thinly disguised sales pitches for some product or another. Some hold good information, and short essays worth studying. I believe that the best of these come from **Ryan Pilling** in his newsletter "*Tips & Tricks for Magicians.*"

Ryan's latest issue, he talks about making your time on stage more Interesting to watch. He speaks of "Levels" used in Theatre, Improv & Dance where one actor may be standing, another kneeling and a third laying on the floor. This makes a more interesting "Picture" than three people standing in a row.

Of course, we are generally one-person shows, but we can still add a variety of positions to bring visual interest in our acts. As Ryan puts it: "Here's the common problem: The performer is a talking head. Barely moves away from the microphone, and when they do it's with all the grace of a warehouse worker wandering over to pick up a prop." (Substitute Suitcase table" for microphone, if you prefer.)

I've been involved in many Musical Theatre productions. Often a large musical number ends with the cast in a pose. Perhaps they are grouped as for a studio portrait, with some standing, some seated and others laying down. Other times they are further apart and involved in different activities, but they freeze in that position for a moment. Either way, they create an interesting arrangement, such that if someone took a picture at that moment, it would be a great picture.

Many of you have seen my Linking Hulas Hoops routine. I choreographed it with that in mind. throughout the routine, I transition from one pose to another, each being a "Kodak Moment" in other words, an interesting pose.

There are other ways that you can create a variety of positions. If you have a child on stage as a volunteer. Do you just stand there and look down at them? Try kneeling down so you can talk to them on their

own level!

Do you perform a zombie or a floating table? Allow it to pull you up onto your toes. I'm sure there are other ways you can add variety as well. The point being, Don't just stand in one place like a statue. Add visual variety, and think about Kodak moments. Even if there are no cameras involved, the eyes and minds of your audience will notice how you appear on the stage. Make it varied and interesting.

Back to Ryan Pilling, He also said:

"In his book *The Show Is The Mother of Invention* (2023) **Doc Dixon** is explaining how he packs small and plays big. One of his many excellent points is when

he says YOU, your body, is your "best and biggest prop." Use it to its fullest potential. Be more physically interesting."

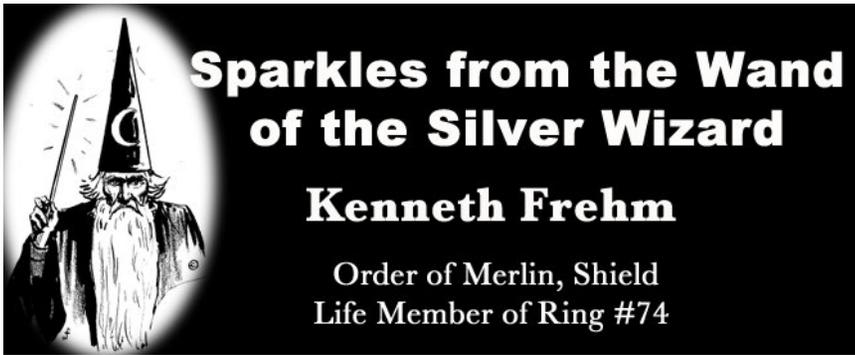
I would suggest that you check out "Tips & Tricks for Magicians," and subscribe to his newsletter.

<https://magictipsandtricks.com>

By the way, it was on this site, that I learned a much better way than I had been doing, to make my own custom jumbo cards. That is only one of over a hundred free lessons and blog posts on the site!

(Of course, he also sells a variety of his books and products. Check them out!)





In January 2026 our Ring held its holiday gala banquet. To say that it was a huge success would be a major understatement. The feedback from all the guests and our members was fantastic!

This terrific outcome was certainly not guaranteed. The outstanding results were achieved because of so many donations. These included time, monetary contributions and of course, tremendous hard work and personal efforts.

TJ Yeldon was the general chairman and accomplished much of the planning and organization. He was responsible for acquiring The American Legion Hall in which we held the event. TJ worked tirelessly to choose and coordinate the performers. He provided a significant monetary donation to our wonderful dinner. Among many other things, he made the delicious salad for the meal.

Our silent auction was a big money maker for our club. Thanks go to the men who made donations; David Hanselman, David MacBlane, David Kilpatrick, Tom Bresadola and Jim Turner. A lot of magicians went home with terrific new magic items and truly paid pennies on the dollar! There were great bargains for those who took advantage of this opportunity.

The other money maker was "Guess the Pennies." The winner would get 50% of the monies collected. Thanks goes to David Kilpatrick, along with one of his grandsons who went around encouraging many to participate in the contest. One of our guests came within a few pennies of the actual amount. He generously donated his winnings back to our club.

The head count of attendees was a bit shy of the expected number. A few of those who couldn't come, stepped up

and paid for their dinners anyway. Special kudos of course go to the wonderful restaurant who provided the delicious meal and gave us a very special price. Freedom's BBQ Hog Shack (Rt.31 Canastota) is planning to host a special magic dinner this summer. We'll have a great opportunity to present a public magic show.

Before the show, David Kilpatrick held the official ceremony of initiating the officers for the upcoming year. All the outgoing execs volunteered to continue in their roles for next year. As President, I produced and awarded special certificates to those men who made significant contributions during the year. Vice President David MacBlane, Treasurer Bruce Purdy, Scribe Joey Hoffman, Sgt. @ Arms, David Hanselman, David Kilpatrick and Tom Bresadola received these awards.

Our Vice President, David MacBlane treated us to his new musical work of art. David wrote, played on and produced our own club theme song. The title is "Impossible Illusions." You can listen to it by visiting our website, saltcitymagic.com. Totally magic infused, the upbeat song and lyrics had everyone in the audience entertained, clapping their hands with big smiles on their faces. We

stand alone in our magic community having this great musical entertainment!

The show was well done and professional. Our Stage Manager, Bruce Purdy worked tirelessly to provide, set-up and break-down the stage, the curtains, and the lights. Bruce also ran the entire Audio/Visual apparatus. As Treasurer, Bruce did the job of collecting and keeping track of all the monies from the admission fees, our auction, and the 50-50 contest.

Every performer for the show did great! No major flubs or equipment failures. Each performer shined with their magical effects and showmanship. The audience thoroughly loved the show. We received positive feedback from everyone. The magician stars were Ken F, David K, Joey, and TJ. Although not on the original bill, David Hanselman, Mike and Michelle Stanley did surprise acts.

When the guests left, a few of us stayed almost two hours longer cleaning up and putting the room back into its original condition. Tom Bresadola honchoed this important chore. He led the team who consisted of TJ, Joey, David Hanselman, and

yours truly. Tom, and Joey also helped Bruce pack up the A/V equipment. We were being closely watched by the representatives of The American Legion. Certainly, we were on a 'trial' basis. If we didn't leave the room in good order, we would not be welcomed again. I know we passed with flying colors. Thanks go to the efforts of TJ, Tom B., and the clean-up crew!

When an organization holds a significant event, one of the most important factors is the financial outcome. This holiday banquet could have put us in debt for hundreds of dollars. Of course, the results are determined by many factors. Despite about a dozen "No-Shows," and thanks to all the donations, the silent auction and the

50-50 contest, we came out ahead. TJ's efforts resulted in no charge for the room nor the normal clean-up fee. These combined fees are usually paid by the renters of the room and are well over \$400. The low final price for the food was negotiated. I'm very proud to say that we made a profit!

In summary, everyone in our ring should be very proud of the combined results. Yes, they're a few things we'll do better next time but our club certainly earned an "A+"! Thank-you to all and congratulations for a job well done! Kudos, waves of the magic wand and "Attaboys" to all.

Kenneth Frehm,
President.



Don't Use That Word

By David MacBlane

If you've got a weak stomach then the semi-profane is not for you. But, I promise, there's nothing that uses a word that over 500 million have heard everyday. (Drum Roll.....) The word is Sucks!

In this article, I will attempt to show you why you should actually celebrate each mistake you make while studying, practicing and performing. When I was first getting into the email world, I lived in NYC so was overwhelmed that someone in Hong Kong could get back to me seconds later. Then attachments came around for email and I was able to enjoy almost all of the capabilities available by leveraging technology during that period.

I spent a lot of time studying how to make my scripting (a.k.a. patter) engaging enough to keep the audience's attention and make it as entertaining and educational as possible.

Certainly I practice the trick, move, sleight, etc. many times before I begin the script, and then make my decision for which approach to take.

By approach one has to think about things like: is it a serious audience, will it be mostly children, is it full of old college guys laughing it up or some seniors in a nursing home or other facility?

Make no mistake, you can do the best effects that you create or buy because it may have been relatively

inexpensive. You can not afford to miss the "hidden" costs. I know someone who volunteered to attend a writers class I belong to. One of the most useful pieces of advice I've received from that class went something like this:

"The truth is, you're going to suck at first. In fact, your first 500,000 words are probably going to suck. So the best strategy is to try to get them out of the way as fast as you can."

This can sound a little discouraging at first, but it really just depends on how you frame it.

I've also had the privilege of learning multiple foreign languages, and when it comes to learning a language, the only way to become fluent is first to make a TON of mistakes while speaking.

The people who learn languages the fastest are those who aren't embarrassed to make mistakes, and just keep on speaking in the local language. These people make a lot of mistakes very early on, but they soon gain proficiency. And you wouldn't believe the importance of this. I handled it the same way when I was in Paris. I would

continue to speak in French even though I new I was making a ton of mistakes. But, the strategy works as I learned to use proper grammar very quickly by continuing to make mistakes.

On the other hand, people who get embarrassed about making mistakes sometimes try to avoid speaking the language in order to avoid making mistakes. These people take a long time to gain proficiency, because they're not speaking the language enough.

In both learning to write and learning to speak a foreign language, you can't get around the fact that you'll make mistakes and generally suck in the beginning.

What you CAN do is just try to make those mistakes as fast as possible.

That's the secret.

When it comes to studying magic, it's the same.

When you start studying a new sleight, move or effect—you're also going to make a lot of mistakes and just generally suck in the beginning.

But rather than shying away, the breakthrough will come when you lean into that struggle.

After all, if you're going to suck for the first phase of studying this technique—why not get that phase over as quickly as possible?

With that attitude, you can

celebrate each mistake—because you know that each mistake takes you one step closer to mastery.

Since my first 500,000 words (or so) written on magic, I never know if I hit home with someone who knows the whole story of our Club*. In any case, most of the feedback has been positive.

I've never claimed to be the best magician in the world, but it's nearly impossible to spend this many HOURS thinking and writing about magic without having a whole host of insightful and unique ideas on the topic. I'm not suggesting I have those unique ideas but when you realize the importance of those insights that's right where you'll be starting with your "serious" magic.

I'm not suggesting you have to be a hermit, so what about magic that's fun and has some off-script moments. Those kind of moments are what keep me going. My love is to watch the spectator or audience go berserk and I really pay attention to the reaction.

So you want to get to the good stuff, huh? If you don't want to go there yet, it's okay

However, if you want to be performing your magic quickly - Suck a lot and suck fast!

I hope this helps. It has helped me a lot over the years especially if I've taken a sabbatical and then come back to magic.

There's really only one way to get back into magic and that's by making those mistakes in everything you do, even if it's not magic related. We all have to learn every day. But, if you want to learn fast, you definitely need a "coach".

We call them "Ambassadors." And, I promise that our Ambassadors will be ready and willing to let you try anything and help correct the mistakes. You can even ask the Ambassador and he won't tell you what you should do - you should tell him what you want to do and he or she will give you honest feedback and help you along the way to learn the move properly. This feedback will get you proficient much more quickly than if you try it on your own. Plus the Ambassador knows that you will suck in the beginning but won't "judge" you on your performance.

So, if more members can hit the phones and the streets, we should have a plan for recruiting by

doing calling or in-person meetings within regions (e.g. "I'll cover the Armory so you can cover S. Salina") and come up with a plan to reach out to each prospective member individually.

When I practice I concentrate on one thing at a time per session. For example, you've been learning some of the method, scripting and handling and they aren't necessarily easy. I immediately thought about it and decided to use our Club as my proving ground. Now you can actually celebrate each mistake you make while studying magic and performing it. Again, for a while, you will definitely suck but if you do it for the Club, no one will judge you and many of the members may have other helpful tips to get you on the road to performing the effect perfectly.

**Club means the Salt City Magic Club AND Ring 74*



2026 Prepare to magically appear at the 78th

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Sunday, April 26th
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10:30 Dan's Famous Magic Auction!

Buyers, pick up your bidding number at registration.
 Sellers: AUCTION ITEMS MUST BE IN BY 10:15! 10% auction fee on all sales.

Buyers & sellers, see <https://mawny.org/auction> for auction procedures



closeup 1:45ish

Ryan Bliss Utica, NY

Vincent Mendoza New Jersey

Rob Thompson Chicago

John Bannon

John Bannon Chicago

Boris Wild Paris, France

Joe Rindfleisch New Jersey

Lecture, 3:30 or so
Rubber Band Master

Joe Rindfleisch

Joe Rindfleisch is a pioneer and the name in rubber band magic. His rubber band effects are visual foolers and have revitalized the genre. Joe has traveled the world teaching not only his incredible rubber band magic, but card and coin effects as well. Joe received a rare standing ovation at the invitation-only Fechter's convention – and after you see his performance and lecture, you will understand why.

This lecture will be presented more like a workshop with each attendee being given rubber bands to follow along. Several effects along with theory will be thoroughly explained. At the end Everyone will be able to walk away knowing how to do at least 3 effects!

7:00, Stage Show SPECTACULAR!

Juliana Chen WORLD CHAMPION

Master of Ceremonies Trade Show Superstar
Robert Bengel

Tiffany Sauvage
 Las Vegas/The World

Las Vegas/The World

Rob Thompson
 Chicago

OPTIONAL Morning Workshop
 8:00 am

Gustavo Raley Argentina
 Spaces limited! In this intensive, hands-on workshop – deeper than a typical lecture – you'll learn to unleash your creative process from Gustavo, celebrated worldwide as one of the great thinkers in magic! 8:00 AM, \$30

Gustavo Raley
 Argentina

50/50 \$\$\$ Raffle!
Tony Weiland
 Lockport, NY

Advance registration:
 until April 8th: \$95 each,
 after April 8th: \$105 each
 To register, use mail-in form or go to:
<http://mawny.org/registration.html>
 Inquiries: MAWNY1@gmail.com

MAWNY BOARD:
 Keith Randolph
 Bill Garmont
 Mike Joseph
 JP Lacey
 Tony Weiland
 ... with gratitude to the selfless crew

Dealer Chair Bill Gormont Presents the Bazaar of Bafflement with these great dealers...

Empire Magic Michael Lair
 Antony Gerard Joe Rindfleisch
 Niagara's First Impressions
 Card Shark Sly Designs
 Gustavo Raley Boris Wild
 Paul Richards ... and More!

Next meetings:

Tuesday, 10th February 2026
ON LINE Virtual meeting.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7941606677>

(Please sign in at about 6:45pm)

Tuesday, 17th February 2026

In Person meeting.

Eastwood American Legion

3701 James St., Syracuse

Save the Date!

Tue. 10th February

ZOOM Meeting

Tue. 17th February

In-Person Meeting

Tue. 10th March

ZOOM Meeting

Tue. 17th March

In-Person Meeting

Tue. 14th April

ZOOM Meeting

Tue. 21st April

In-Person Meeting

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